

Interdisciplinary PhD course,
Lund University, Sweden.
November 6th–7th and November 20th–21st 2019

Supervised by: Professor Tony Huzzard

Action Research (7.5 ects credits)

Action research in general terms can be understood as a diverse set of strategies or family of practices for researchers to engage collaboratively with practitioners, often in groups, to facilitate action processes that are stakeholder-focused, participatory and aim to generate outcomes that are more effective and socially fairer than hitherto. But what does this mean in terms of scientific orientation? And what does it mean in more concrete terms i.e. data collection, relations to the field and research ethics? These issues will be explored on this course. It will consist of an introduction to action research focusing on its origins, scientific foundations, epistemologies, practices and implications in terms of doing PhD and other projects. It is designed as an inter-disciplinary course for doctoral students across the social sciences who are working in close collaboration with practitioners.

Content

The History and Philosophical Basis of Action Research.

This part of the course will look at the fundamental features and purposes of action research. We will explore the theoretical roots and values of AR as well as its links to pragmatism and the early influence in particular of Kurt Lewin. Students will be invited to assess critically how and whether the aims and values of AR have materialized in some early applications of AR.

Approaches and Varieties of Action Research

This part of the course will look at various approaches to AR including action science, action learning, interactive research and so on. It will also explore more recent applications that have embraced the linguistic turn in the social sciences such as dialogical approaches and appreciative enquiry. This part of the course will also explore the possibilities and pitfalls of conducting AR in one's own organization.

Critical Approaches to Action Research

This part of the course will focus on the possibilities and dilemmas of a critical approach to conducting action research. In particular, the work of Paulo Freire and participative action research will be examined. We will also reflect on how critical and participative approaches to action research may be conducted in contemporary workplaces and organisations. We will make links between AR and change agency more generally as well as emphasising the role of critical reflexivity in change agency.

Writing an Action Research Dissertation

This part of the course will focus more on the practical aspects of doing action research as a PhD project. Topics in focus will be ethics, writing, data collection and publishing. We will also discuss how doing action research can be understood in relation to knowledge interests,

the positionality of the action researcher and how we might assess an action research project in terms of quality and trustworthiness.

Teaching

The course will include 24 hours of teaching over four days in the form of lectures and seminars.

Examination

Written paper based on student's own project or a critical discussion of the course literature.

Literature

Core Books

Greenwood, D. and Lewin, M. (2007) *Introduction to Action Research: Social Research for Social Change* (2nd edn) Thousand Oaks: Sage. (301p)

Coghlan, D. (2019) *Doing Action Research in Your Own Organization* (5th edn) London: Sage. (219p)

Freire, P. (1970) *The pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Herder and Herder. (160p)

Herr, K. G. and Anderson, G. L. (2014) *The Action Research Dissertation: A Guide for Students and Faculty* (2nd edn.) London: Sage. (216p)

Set of articles

Teachers

Tony Huzzard (Lund University) will supervise the course.
Other teachers may be invited.

Schedule

The course will be given in a concentrated format, 6th–7th November and 20th–21st November 2019 at the Department of Business Administration, Lund University School of Economics and Management.

Application

PhD students wishing to attend the course should contact, with a CV and short abstract describing their own research project, to tony.huzzard@fek.lu.se as soon as possible. An application form (see link below) is to be sent to course coordinator charlina.lunvald@fek.lu.se

<https://fek.lu.se/en/phd-studies/courses>

