REVIEW ESSAY


Reviewed by Trudie Aberdeen, PhD candidate in Educational Psychology, University of Alberta

*The Sage encyclopedia of action research* is a two-volume series of entries about action research which has been compiled by a team of editors and specialists in different areas of action research. The specializations of the editors include general action research (Greenwood), organization development (Coughlan, Dick), community-based action research (Brydon-Miller, Flicker, Hall), organizational behaviour (Friedman), action-research as meta-methodology (Sankaran), agency and activism (Gaya), participatory action research (Guhathakurta, Jaitli, Tandon), and educational action research (Zhao). They sought entries from 200 researchers in the field. The topics covered are also extensive and include the following: biographies of well-respected action researchers, concepts, epistemologies, ethics, goals, methods, methodologies, organizations and movements, philosophical underpinnings, settings, skills, spirituality, theories, and tools.

*The Sage Encyclopedia of Action Research* is not a how-to book, but rather, is an excellent tool for both those new to the field and unfamiliar with all of the concepts as well as those who have been in the field of AR for a long-time and would appreciate a list of resources at their fingertips. Each entry contains a wealth of information about important topics in the field and includes further readings. The book is well laid-out. Each entry is signaled by a double line so that the author of the entry can use headings and subheadings effectively. And despite being written by over 200 different people, the entries do not seem disjointed. In particular, I enjoyed the entry on disseminating action research. This entry listed many issues experienced with writing action research projects such as motivation, focus, criteria for evaluation, and publication. It listed 14 journals that specifically publish action research studies, including this journal.
I believe that this encyclopedia belongs in the references section in every university with an education, nursing, public health, or human ecology department. Seasoned researchers would also appreciate a copy on their bookshelves.