

Action Research Project

What is action research in educational context?

Action research is a process of systematic inquiry to improve one's practices and enhance the lives and education of children. For example, an informal educator in an afterschool program might examine the effects of the different questions posed on student thinking or how positioning students as STEM learners through their language shifts students' participation in the program or how to get students to collaborate and not just sit together in a group. Another example, might be framed out a common misconception of students and what you might do to support their understanding of a content area. One can think of an action research as a study of one's self, particularly their actions and behaviors with students, and making changes based on "data" gathered over a short period of time.

Assignment 1: Literature Review

This should be approximately a 7-page paper (excluding title page and references) regarding the purpose of the action research project. In other words, this should focus on what you intend to collect "data" on regarding yourself as an educator. For example, suppose I want to support students in working collaboratively, I would look for literature that highlights ways in which teachers have been successful in creating norms and expectations for collaborative group work.

The literature review should include the following:

1. Introduction (Why is this important?)
2. Search Process (e.g., databases, inclusion/exclusion, search terms)
3. Findings/Synthesis of what you learned
4. Discussion
 - a. Craft an argument with supporting evidence from the findings
 - b. What/How will you use the information from the review within your action research project
5. References (APA 7th edition)

Assignment 2: Action Research Paper

You should address the following in your paper. Include examples, images, and visuals as needed to highlight your process. It is expected that you will do two cycles.

1. Introduction (e.g., brief overview of what you found in the literature review)
2. Plan of action for Cycle 1 (What d/did you plan to do?)
3. Data collection and analysis for Cycle 1
4. Results from Cycle 1
5. Changes/Plan of action for Cycle 2 (What did you learn? What did you plan to do in response to what you learned?)
6. Data collection and analysis for Cycle 2
7. Results from Cycle 2
8. Reflection
9. References