

Study Questions for Esterberg's Chapter 7: Action Research

1. How would you distinguish "Action Research" from other types of qualitative research?
2. Is "Action Research" a method? An approach? A theory? A marketing ploy? Explain.
3. List four or five principles that are said to guide Action Research.
4. Esterberg notes that there are several kinds of research activities and research approaches that you could place under the umbrella term "Action Research," including Action Research, Participatory Action Research, and Feminist Action Research. What over-arching objective(s) do all three of these share? In what ways are they different?
5. Stringer (1996 – cited in Esterberg, p.142) suggests that Action Research involves three distinct processes: (1) looking; (2) thinking; and (3) acting. What are the main activities associated with each of these phases?
6. In her description of the "look" phase of Action Research, Esterberg distinguishes between "northern" and "southern" Participatory Action Research traditions. Explain the difference between the two and indicate how two people, each exemplifying one of the two traditions, would approach a project designed to address a problem such as the availability of parking for students at SFU?
7. One of the principles that the chapter on Action Research extols is the idea that "empowerment" is one of its objectives, and that sharing power, through collaborative processes, is one means by which this happens. But in what ways can "sharing power" be problematic in the action research context?
8. What are some ethical issues that arise in the Action Research context? In what ways does Action Research create difficulties for Institutional Review Boards and their processes of ethics review?