



CALL FOR PAPERS

DEVELOPING AN EMPOWERING SCHOOL CURRICULUM: A renewed focus on action research

Guest editor: [Pete Wright](#)

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Abstracts invited until 31 August 2019

Deadline for draft papers 31 January 2020

London Review of Education (LRE) invites original academic papers for this special feature

For those concerned with issues of equity and social justice in schools, differences in achievement and participation rates amongst students from different socio-economic groups pose a significant challenge. These differences persist despite having been a major focus for educational researchers over several decades. Conventional approaches to research appear to have had little impact. This feature aims to explore the potential of action research to challenge the exploitative nature of education and address the perceived de-professionalization of teachers (Ball, 2013) through involving them as collaborative partners rather than as the objects of research.

Action research involves practitioners carrying out a systematic and rigorous investigation of their own practice. It aims to develop a deeper understanding of theory-in-practice and to bring about positive social change for those involved in the research process. Action research methodologies have been under-utilized in formal school educational settings and have tended to be carried out in informal settings or in under-developed countries where the exploitative nature of practice is more overt. A recent BERA report (Wyse et al., 2018) highlighted the renewed interest in 'close to practice' research, including action research, for bringing about changes in classroom practice, while at the same time highlighting concerns over its quality. Practitioner research often lacks robustness in research design and transferability to contexts beyond those in which the practitioners are working.

We invite authors to submit papers looking at how action research can enable students and teachers who are disempowered by the exploitative nature of schooling and the curriculum. We welcome reports of studies, from both academics and practitioners, demonstrating how action research can be of high quality and have significant impact on classroom practice in a formal school setting. We also welcome theoretical papers focusing on how action research can be conducted in a collaborative, participatory (Atweh, 2004), critical (Kemmis, 2009), robust, rigorous and 'trustworthy' (Lincoln & Guba, 2003) way, and how methodologies used successfully in other settings can be transferred to the formal school setting.

References

- Atweh, B., 2004. *Understanding for change and changing for understanding: Praxis between practice and theory through action research in mathematics education*. In: P. Valero & R. Zevenbergen, eds. *Researching the socio-political dimensions of mathematics education*. Dordrecht: Kluwer, pp. 187-205.
- Ball, S. J. 2013. *Education, justice and democracy: The struggle over ignorance and opportunity*. London: Centre for Labour and Social Studies.
- Kemmis, S., 2009. Action research as a practice-based practice. *Educational Action Research*, 17(3), pp. 463-474.
- Lincoln, Y. S. & Guba, E. G., 2003. *Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences*. In: N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln, eds. *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 253-291.
- Wyse, D., Brown, C., Oliver, S. & Poblete, X., 2018. *The BERA close-to-practice research project: Research report summary*. London: BERA.

Submitting contributions

We invite original articles of around 6,000 words based on empirical and conceptual research. We particularly welcome papers and reports of research involving schools and the initial and professional development of teachers that reveal links between research, policy, and practice, and which analyse key themes in education, including public goals and policies, pedagogy, curriculum, organization, resources and technology, and institutional effectiveness.

- Abstract and other expressions of interest accepted until **31 August 2019**. Abstracts submitted by this date should be 300–500 words in length.
- Deadline for article submissions, **31 January 2020**.
- Notes for authors are available on the [journal website](#).

Send submissions to LRE's managing editor, Pat Gordon-Smith: p.gordon-smith@ucl.ac.uk

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Editor: [Hugh Starkey](#)

