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Carol Reed, a long-time elementary school teacher whose research interest is social and organizational change is also served as a teacher advocate.

Dr Reed was first president of her local teachers' association and then worked as a project facilitator charged with supporting teacher leaders in a school change initiative that involved twenty-one elementary and secondary schools. She also worked as the project director of a teacher leadership program in a consortium that included fifteen school districts and a local university before becoming an associate director of the consortium. Currently, Dr. Reed teaches professional development classes and consults on social and organizational change issues. Her book, *Teaching With Power: Shared Decision-Making and Classroom Practice* is available from Teachers College Press.

A Simple Plan for Action Research (Part B)

Teachers interested in Action Research Projects in schools should be aware that there is much speculation as to the transferabil-

ity of the results to larger populations. But this should not necessarily detract teachers from in-class research because the primary purpose of the majority of teacher initiated research is most often directed at changing and improving what happens in the classroom or in a particular school rather than at a board or whole system level. Institutional constraints on what might be investigated and how the sharing of results might compromise existing policies regarding personal information sharing and confidentiality are always an issue within institutionalized contexts and could impede the novice researcher. Yet as Paula Friere argued action research, particularly that described as Participatory Action Research or (PAR) is best suited to those willing to critically analyze and make connections between learning and the act of transformational change within political realities. A paragraph taken from Theresa Thorkildsen book "Fundamentals of Measurement in Applied Research" Allyn and Bacon, 2005 pg. 423 sums up what is generally expected of those interested in pursuing action research projects.

Action researchers engage in reoccurring cycles progressing from action, to reflection, to practical theorizing to the generation of new ideas and back to action. Educators, clinicians and other professionals try to achieve two goals. They are looking for thoughtful, practical ways to improve their own work, and sharing their professional discoveries with others.

Action research has typically six defining features:

Investigators are the agents in situations being researched.

Research starts with a practical problem and questions that emerge from a particular setting.

Actions are compatible with the values upheld in the setting.

Decisions are made by considering a cost to cost benefit ratio in

which investigators maximize practical benefits with out diminishing preexisting results.

Action and reflection are closely linked mechanism by which investigators develop their own actions and knowledge.

The nature of the problem rather than standardized procedures shapes the process and the results.

According to J. Rogers the tools of the teacher researcher include identifying a problem and clarifying a research question. Survey techniques, questioning and reflective strategies are important references points to ensure that the research question is the correct one. After one is sure of the premise, and objective, employ a strategy or intervention (action) that is aimed at changing or improving the problem at hand. Analyze the data appropriately with appropriate statistical tools. Assess outcomes and report these with plans and recommendations for future practice or study. (Rogers 2000).

It is important for anyone involved to understand that one of the fundamental principles of action research methodology particularly that called Participatory Action Research is that the ultimate goal of research is the radical transformation of social reality and the improvement of lives of the people involved. The beneficiaries of the research are the members of the community itself not the researchers. (Hall 1975) cited in Ryan and Robinson 1990.

As George Richardson and all the other contributing authors in this issue have reiterated there are a variety of projects that require attention including diversity and citizenship issues, collaboration and involvement, disparities in learning opportunities and self-becoming experiences, leadership and caring in institutional environments and the betterment of learners within the context of professional trust.