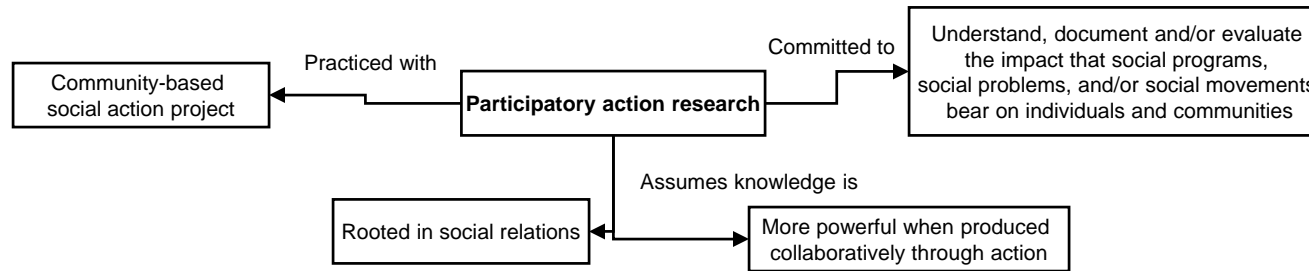


Participatory Action Research (PAR)



Fine M., Torre M. E., Boudin K., Bowen I. et al. (2004).
 Participatory Action Research: From Within and Beyond
 Prison Bars. In Weis L. and Fine M. (Eds.) Working
 Method: Research and Social Justice.

Discussion of the chapter: Participatory Action Research: from Within and Beyond Prison Bars

The authors of this chapter present a study and the process the team followed intended to: a) provide a description and background of what participatory action research is, b) to describe a project they undertook in a women's prison in New York state, documenting the impact of college on women in prison, their environment, and their post-release outcomes. And c) to present a brief summary of their findings.

My personal opinion of this study is that it was well conducted. With all the descriptions the researchers provide, I found very credible what they were able to find out. What I like the most from the chapter is the process the team followed in order to conduct the research. The researchers take a great deal describing themselves, their background and their roles in the study, not only as individual researchers, but also as a team. The team also reflect as well on how they were as a research team. They discussed in the final section not only all their biases, perceptivity, and constraints; but also their dilemmas and feelings such as frustration and perhaps anger.

In particular, what I consider gave them a lot of credibility was this iterative process of data analysis, each time through a different lens and different unit of analysis.

Other aspect of the study that I enjoyed was the story itself. This study really kept me interested and I read the study from beginning to end nonstop. The description of the context really provided me with a perspective of the situation of this particular case.