Suggested Answers to Review Questions

# Chapter 3: Action Research for Lifelong Learning

**3.1 What are the roots and early vision from which action research emerged?**

Action research emerged from the work of Kurt Lewin and John Dewey. Lewin believed that research and theory should be connected and that together they should lead to action such as social change. He believed that in order for change to occur, forces driving the change needed to overpower forces resisting the change. This change could come about through a series of phases (i.e., unfreezing, changing, and refreezing). John Dewey believed that all people were problem solvers who used inquiry to address problems. He too proposed phases of inquiry that people use to address issues in their work and daily lives.

**3.2 What kind of knowledge does action research produce?**

Action research produces local, idiographic, and contextual information .The information helps action researchers to solve problems that they face. The knowledge gained from action research should be disseminated and integrated into more general theories.

**3.3 What one sentence descriptor describes the emphasis of each of the kinds of action research discussed in this section of the chapter?**

*Participatory Action Research* involves stakeholders in the development of, carrying out, analysis, and dissemination phases of a research study.

*Critical Action Research* is a type of participatory action research that has an ideological point of view that emphasizes political possibilities and empowerment of communities within society.

*Feminist Action Research* views the world through a feminist lens and is focused on improving lives of women.

*Action Science* is used in organizations to help them focus putting theories into action and producing a learning organization in which people work together and grow over time.

*Appreciative Inquiry* is action research that focuses in on the best in people, their organization, and the world and then using the individuals to jointly develop and implement a shared purpose, vision, and goal.

*Individual Action Research* is the action research that an individual conducts to investigate a problem that he or she is interested in.

*Collaborative Action Research* involves a team of researchers with different strengths who work together developing and implementing the research study.

*Systemwide Action Research* is action research focused on changing a large entity.

**3.4 How does the action research cycle operate and why is it a never-ending process?**

The action research cycle is composed of four phases: plan, act, observe, and reflect. In the plan phase one looks forward and prepares to act. In the act phase, the investigation or intervention is carried out. In the observe phase, the researcher attends to what is happening and what the data say. The reflect phase allows the researcher to interpret the results of the research and plan the next step. An action researcher can begin the action research process at any of these four phases depending upon where he or she is. The process is never-ending because an inherent component of the action research cycle is the generation of additional questions to be answered.