Participatory Action Research (PAR) cum Action Research (AR) in Teacher Professional Development: A Literature Review

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Participatory Action Research (PAR) cum Action Research (AR) in Teacher Professional Development: A Literature Review

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Abstract

This paper reviews Participatory Action Research as an approach to teacher professional development. It maps the origins of Participatory Action Research (PAR) and discusses the benefits and challenges that have been identified by other researchers in utilizing PAR approaches in conducting research. It draws ideas of combining the features of Action Research (AR) and Participatory Action Research (PAR) to plot research cell design or teacher network design to enhance research for action, action for research and creation of knowledge and theories while solving problems occurring in classroom settings. The discussion focuses on reflective practice and andragogy as the featured characteristics of AR and PAR. These are noted to develop quality teachers to attain quality learning and quality assurance. The review also provides probable benefits of PAR framework to Philippine education; probable challenges and issues that may arise in the implementation; and future directions of PAR implementation in the Philippines aimed to attain education quality through teacher quality.

Key words: Action research; Andragogy; Participatory action research; Reflective practice; Teacher professional development

Introduction

Education is a fundamental human right that conveys wide variety of benefits and crafts opportunities both directly and indirectly (UNESCO 2014). It equips and empowers people with the knowledge and skills they need for better and nobler lives. For countries seeking for globalization, what's next after UNESCO's overarching goal of achieving Education for ALL (EFA) by the year 2015? This global education movement takes the world to an age where cross-country activities are favored through trade, commerce & investments; mode of communication, mobility of students, teachers & other professionals; and environmental ideologies & concerns. Accordingly, UNESCO's post-2015 agenda framework fuses Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 2 - "Universal access to Primary Education" with EFA goals and recommends a general aim– "*Ensure equitable, quality education and lifelong learning for ALL by 2030*" to achieve just, inclusive, peaceful and sustainable societies. Furthermore, UNESCO's all-encompassing goal is decoded into specific global *targets* to which countries would commit and could be held accountable, and for which corresponding *indicators* will be established. Specific significant areas identified are basic education; post-basic & tertiary education; youth & adult literacy; skills for work & life; quality & relevant teaching & learning; and financing education. As proposed, UNESCO holds that quality and relevant teaching and learning in terms of inputs, content, processes and learning environments support the holistic development of all children, youth and adults vis-à-vis teacher's role as *central* in post-2015 education agenda.

Quality must be emphasized and attained for good quality education to be considered as the most important enabling instrument which provides the only path towards a virtuous cycle of equal opportunity, fair competition and just rewards. Hence, there is a need for quality assurance in this field of knowledge. Church (1988) defined quality assurance as about specifying the standards or provisions against which to measure or to control quality. Quality assurance (QA) conveys that there are mechanisms, procedures and processes in place to ensure that the anticipated quality, however defined and measured, is delivered. In higher education, UNESCO Regional Report of Asia and the Pacific (2013) define quality assurance as the systematic management and assessment procedures to monitor performance of higher education institutions. Quality, considers all aspects of education—from teaching and academic study programs, research and scholarship, staffing, students, infrastructure and facilities, services to the community and the academic environment. QA is a participatory and a cooperative process across all levels with the involvement of staff, students and other stakeholders (AQAN

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2012). It embraces broad areas of quality in terms of pedagogy, curriculum, and assessment domains. Thus, collaborative efforts from varied education sectors are vital to achieve and enhance quality.

Philippine efforts to synchronize the country to the regional and global contour led to drafting the Philippine Qualification Framework (PQF, 2012). The objectives of this framework include 1) to adopt national standards and levels for outcomes of education; 2) to support the development and maintenance of pathways and equivalencies which provide access to qualifications and assist people to move easily and readily between the different education and training sectors and between these sectors and the labor market; and 3) to align the framework with international qualifications framework to support the national and international mobility of workers through increased recognition of the value and comparability of Philippine qualification. PQF guides all education sectors to make detailed descriptors for each qualification level based on learning standards in basic education, competency standards of training regulations, and policies and standards of higher education academic programs. Additionally, PQF should facilitate progressive nature of learning and training, national and cross border recognition of qualifications, credit transfer and learner mobility, worker mobility, and lifelong learning.

As PQF dictates, quality education is targeted through the principles of quality teaching and learning processes (UNESCO 2014). Hence, in the field of education, teachers play significant roles to the success of educational reforms (Darling-Hammond & Berry, 1998). Trained and skilled teachers are agents of positive societal change and have multiplying effect by touching the lives and molding the hearts of the learners. Accordingly, teachers' qualifications, competence, commitment and motivation to deliver quality education are central in achieving the goals related to education. Culled from these goals is a vital component essential to attain teacher quality -- first-rate pre- and in-service training for teachers (UNESCO 2014). Therefore, the academe seeks for good quality teacher preparation and training to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes of in-service as well as pre-service teachers in order to prepare them to teach the twenty first century learners effectively. Shulman (1986) acknowledged that teaching combines artistic and scientific processes and skills. Knowing what to teach, how to teach it, and what methods to use with specific topics, certain kinds of students and in particular settings -- combine to form the knowledge and skills that define teaching expertise. Thus, effective mentoring and practice are vital in teacher preparation.

Teacher preparation and training consider teachers as adults that initiate the learning process in the classroom. Teachers need to become life-long learners so as to keep abreast with their students in the changing era and education perspective. As learning adults, teachers' learning process termed as *andragogy* is an adult education theory developed by Knowles also known as Knowles theory of andragogy. Accordingly, Knowles' theory (Knowles 1990) makes the following assumptions: 1) adults need to know why they need to learn something; 2) adults need to learn experientially; 3) adults approach learning as problem-solving and 4) adults learn best when the topic is of immediate value. In practical terms, andragogy means that teaching the adults needs to focus on the process and less on the concepts where strategies such as *reflections and self-evaluation* are most useful vis-à-vis development and monitoring processes embedded in the teaching-learning process and teacher preparation. Thus, more appropriate processes for teacher training and development are professional development programs that develop teachers to be professionals. These programs must cater to the needs of professional teachers to excel in their chosen career path and be able to fully help in creating a learned humanity.

The review features collaborative approaches to professionalization and professional development of teachers for quality teaching and learning. It seeks to find recurring themes, processes and frameworks of action research and participatory action research as guide to crafting teacher professional development through action-reflection. Varied definitions, origins, and comparisons of action research and participatory action research are cited and discussed leading to concrete schema of adult learning and teacher professional development.

PAR cum AR for Teacher Professional Development

In keeping with the improving standards of education, teachers need to undergo professional development processes. Developing teachers to be professionals and as professionals motivate teachers to excel in their chosen career path to help create a learned humanity. Teachers' professional growth has been described by many researchers. Fuller (1969, in Ginns et al., 2001) defined three major phases in teacher growth: 1) pre-teaching; 2) an early teaching phase characterized by concerns for self; and 3) late teaching phase characterized by concerns for students. In each of these phases, teaching process commence with planning, action (process), and reflection (monitoring and evaluation) parallel to what action research and participatory action research laid as foundations to reflective practice.

Defining Action Research and Participatory Action Research

Researchers provided several descriptions of action research (AR). Originally, Lewin (1948) framed action research as a paradigm of inquiry where researcher's primary purpose is to improve the capacity and subsequent practices of the researcher rather than to produce theoretical knowledge. Elliot (1991) accentuates that improving practice means that, together, the quality outcome of the process and the product are enhanced. Elliot even claimed that the researcher initiates changes based on sentiment that something needs to change to reach a better human situation. The researcher also provided direction towards realization and transformation of values through the process – which uniquely defines AR from theoretical research. McGinty and Water-Adams (2006) described action research as a practical approach to professional inquiry in any social situation. Both authors claim that the concept of action research did not arise from education, rather, Stenhouse (1975, p. 142) took action research to the field of development of teaching and advocated that 'curriculum research and development ought to belong to the teachers.' Besides, he quotes "it is not enough that teachers' work should be studied; they need to study it themselves."

Historically, AR originated in Europe and the USA in the first half of the twentieth century. It was first introduced by an immigrant to the USA in 1930's, a refugee fleeing from the Hilter fascism when he envisioned improving the social organization of groups and communities (Somekha & Zeichnerb, 2009). Lewin in 1946 was credited for providing the term 'action research' with a vision to set an alternative to the norms of decontextualized research, instead of focusing on surveys and statistical methods, AR's purpose was to improve social formations by involving participants in a cyclical process of fact finding, exploratory action and evaluation. A decade after, Corey (1953) promoted action research in education in the USA that featured extensive collaboration with school districts and teachers across the USA. The method was later named *cooperative action research*. Development of AR as a process was observed in the works of Carr and Kemmis (1986) that made important contributions by locating AR within the framework of critical theory. Deshler and Ewert (1995) claimed that organizations extremely use AR in the field of organizational behavior and organizational development in industry and business organizations by management embracing human resource theories. As claimed by these authors, AR's use in organization is especially beneficial to organization associated with the socio-technical system perspective that values the fit between technical and social system. The state of AR was later brought to another level by Noffke (1997) who characterized action research work as encompassing three dimensions: 1) the professional, 2) the personal, and 3) the political. Furthermore, developments in educational application of action research were instituted by Elliot (1991), McNiff (1993, 1997) and Somekh (2006) who viewed educational action research as having a distinctive form, differing from traditional approaches to research. Cain and Milovic (2010) further noted the differences of AR with traditional research. Accordingly, they consider traditional approaches to assume that the world can be known objectively, and that knowledge can be obtained empirically and logically by examining phenomena and their causes. They indicated that traditional research methods include randomized, controlled trials; generating quantitative data from representative samples, and data are analyzed by statistical methods to ensure validity and reliability of findings. Moreover, people who are essentially outside the phenomenon under study conduct traditional research, while people who are part of the phenomenon conduct action research. Early on, authors (Heron & Reason, 1997) have already articulated some philosophical underpinnings of this view which they call the *participatory paradigm*. As they quote, "to experience anything is to participate in it, and to participate in it is both to mold and to encounter it (p.3).

Different champions rose to defend action research in education (Reason & Bradbury, 2008). Accordingly, James, Slater, and Bucknam (2012) reported that AR is applied in different ways and called by different names. Hence, they conceived AR cousins as: action science (AS), participatory action research (PAR), community-based participatory research (CBPR), action learning (AL), appreciative inquiry (AI), living theory (LT), and participatory action leadership action research (PALAR). Several definitions of participatory action research (PAR) were provided by several researchers. However, definitions vary according to traditions and users as claimed by Brown (1993). Based on Whyte's (1991) definition, PAR includes participatory research, praxis, participatory inquiry, collaborative inquiry, action inquiry ad cooperative inquiry. It is an attribute of action research that the problem is defined by the people who believe and feel that the problem is really a problem in the local setting and the solution to the problem is within the same setting without intention of generalizing its results. One aim of PAR is to produce knowledge and action directly useful to a group of people through research, adult education or socio-political action. It is also to empower people to provide deep processing through knowledge construction and use.

Reason and Bradbury (2001) explains that PAR shows participatory and democratic process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes. This approach is grounded on a participatory world-view bringing together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others to pursue practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people, and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and communities. Furthermore, Chatterton, Fuller and Routledge (2007) claimed that PAR highlights collaborative knowledge production with others to craft critical interpretations and reading of the world, which are accessible, understandable to all those involved and actionable. Other researchers (Greenwood, Whyte, & Harkavy, 1993) described participatory action research as a form of action research in which professional social researchers operate full collaboration with members of organizations in studying and transforming those organizations. Furthermore, it is an ongoing organizational learning process, a research approach that emphasizes co-learning, participation and organizational transformation. Thus, PAR has key components: 1) a focus on change, 2) context-specific, 3) emphasis on collaboration, 4) a cyclical process, 5) liberatory, 6) PAR is not just another method, and 7) success is some personal or collective change.

Recently, many terms attribute to research processes that are in some way 'participatory.' Pain, Whitman and Milledge (2011) identified some of these research processes as participatory appraisal, participatory learning and action, and community-based participatory research. However, these researchers believed that PAR is distinct because: 1) it is driven by participants (a group of people who have a stake in the environmental issue being researched); 2) it offers a democratic model of who can produce, own and use knowledge; 3) it is collaborative at every stage, involving discussion, pooling skills and working together; and 4) it is intended to result to some action, change or improvement on the issue being researched. PAR, accordingly, is not a method, but an approach to research. As emphasized by the researchers, it is a set of principles and practices for originating, designing, conducting, analyzing and acting on a piece of research.

Generally, PAR, just like AR goes through the cycle – planning, action, reflection, and evaluation. Common underlying concept of AR and PAR are active participation, open-ended objectives and high-levels of commitment from the researcher and the participants to the research problem and active learning. As research approaches, individuals/employees and not only researchers/leadership from an organization are vital to PAR ad AR to collaboratively design and actively participate in the research process. Accordingly, Bell et al. (2004) construed that in AR, although the researchers are studying themselves in the context of working with an organization, it can also be collaborative when the entire group is supported by an action process. In PAR, involvement is centered to those most affected by a problem. It engages them in planning, carrying out, and applying the results of the research. Bell's group added that AR is directed at creating a capable individual equipped with the complexity of work issues; just like the goals of PAR while it creates new knowledge through the process of solving real organization problems. Finally, both AR and PAR as research models require high level of commitment and involvement from the organization, the individuals or employees and the researchers about the importance of the problem and to the learning that occurs in the process.

PAR cum AR: Crossing the Educational Paths through Reflective Practice

Considerable literature shows that for teachers to develop and improve their teaching, they need to reflect on what they do on a regular basis. Schön, in the mid-1980s, popularized 'reflective practitioner' by broadening Dewey's (1933) foundational ideas on reflection through observing practitioners thinking in action. Thus, Schön led to coining reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action as the two forms of reflective thinking in 1983. According to Schön, *reflection-in-action* recognizes the implied processes of thinking and doing, and which constantly interact with and modifies ongoing practice for learning to take place. Loughran (1996) proposed that, *reflection-in-action* should include problem reframing and on-spot improvising so that the experience will be perceived differently when one meets anticipated problem situations. On the other hand, *reflection-in-action* is observed in teachers' thoughtful consideration and retrospective analysis of their performance to gain knowledge from experience. Russell and Munby (1992) described this as the 'systematic and deliberate thinking back over one's actions.' Succeeding research centered on assessing if reflective practice exists, identifying conditions which affect its use, and determining the means by which it might be promoted to all levels of the teaching profession.

Literature (Falk & Blumenreich, 2005; Alber & Nelson, 2002; Mills, 2003) noted that classroom research is one way of improving reflectivity. They claimed that classroom research helps improve various aspects of learning in the classroom. Significant documentation also provides evidence that effective professional development of teachers heavily depended on reflective teaching (O'Sullivan, 2002). Cruickshank et al. (2006) suggested five

ways to developing one's reflective abilities: the use of dialogue journals, discussions, portfolios, on-campus laboratory experiences, and action research.

Research (Corey, 1953; Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Whitehead, 1989; Elliott, 1991; and Atkin, 1993) disclosed that change and improvement as goals of reflective practice are similar to the objectives of action research. The ways in which reflective inquiry processes within action research are framed and interpreted, relate to the groundwork epistemology of the action research model, whether the goal is for teachers to become more effective or efficient or empowered. Grundy (1982) provided a typology that graphically demonstrates the relationship between particular models of action research and types of reflective processes. This typology distinguishes between technical, practical, and emancipatory models of action research. Grundy (1982) defined technical action research as an approach to deliver more efficient and effective practice 'through the practical skill of the participants.' Reflection in this approach is likely to be related to solving immediate pressing problems of efficient and effective delivery of curricula (Altrichter & Posch, 1989). It is likely to be oriented towards the development of pedagogical strategies, skills and tactics. Accordingly, practical action research aims to improve practice through the application of practical judgement and the accumulated personal wisdom of the teacher.

Elliot (1978) presented reflective practice in practical research as focusing almost exclusively on the individual in the professional domain with self-awareness as a precondition for the practitioner's professional development. But, on the pessimistic side, writers such as Handal and Lauvas (1987) conveyed that since the model relies on *transactional* experience, it may not bring about opportunities to move teachers beyond practical reflection.' The third model as identified by Grundy (1982) is something that directs teachers to 'the liberation of participants in the action from the order of compulsions of tradition, precedent, habit, coercion as well as from self-deception.' It is outwardly directed to the social or educational system, as well as being centered upon individual practice. The works of Whitehead (1989, 1993) further focused on emancipatory action, which were also supported in the writings of Lomas (1986, 1994); McNiff (1992, 1995); and Dadds (1995). These studies led Whitehead (1989, 1993, & 1996) to develop a common sense concept of *living theory*. With emancipatory approach, Whitehead (1996) recommended that the approach initially focus on introspective processes and individuals, rather than collective social action. However, both models have similar goals and aims to challenge *deep structures* (Holly, 1987) and the difference remains in their respective starting points – the system and the individual.

Other authors advocate reflective practice in education. Marcosa, Migula, and Tillemab (2009) concretely described teacher reflective practice in two dimensions: teacher (action) research and teacher reflection. Accordingly, reflection is defined as a cyclical problem-solving process, carried out in a systematic and intentional (deliberate) way in which theory (envisaged as research-based concepts) is related to practice. These authors claim that this cognitive process encompasses other sub-processes of thought and action such as: planning, evaluation, observation, and collaboration. Furthermore, they noted that *teacher reflection (on action)* is focused on a different but related dominion. Consequently, these researchers regard reflection as a meta-cognitive process that implies an awareness of what an individual does and thinks (having a mental conception of it). Furthermore, reflection consists of exploring personal beliefs, thoughts and actions (internal analysis) in a deliberate, biographical, and critical (non-superficial and often narrative) way that often becomes part of the action-research cycle.

However, Bondy (2001) found that teachers are usually reluctant to participate in action research and yet it has major benefits as a tool to improve reflection on classroom teaching and student learning. Accordingly, Bondy continues that action research is also a necessity in teacher preparation. As noted, the following processes are easily and commonly fulfilled in teacher preparation programs: dialogue journals, discussions, portfolios, and on-campus laboratory experience. But, Falk and Blumenreich (2005) presented the processes in AR and PAR as different because they involve identifying a problem, gathering evidence, reflecting/analyzing the evidence and drawing conclusions or applying it to teaching. Furthermore, they reported that the teacher, as a researcher bridges the gap between theory and practice which make teachers fear getting involved in classroom research. In fact, Glanz (2003) supported that these teachers do not grasp how research can enhance their work because they lack the knowledge and training to see the connection. Thus, considerable several authors (Bondy, 2001; Glanz, 2003) reported various benefits of action research such as: improved teaching practice, enhanced collegiality, being brought closer after working on a group research project, and becoming more reflective for student performance improvement. Moreover, Calderhead (1988) identified reflective teaching benefits of AR and PAR such as: 1) enables self-directed growth as a professional; 2) facilitates the linking of both theory and practice; and 3) it helps to explicate the expertise of teachers and subject it to critical evaluation.

Certainly, all the aforementioned descriptions of action research geared towards defining the approach to suit a special context. In analysis, specific AR dimensions or characteristics define the context of the approach. Accordingly, Zeichner (2007, 2008) presented the framework for analyzing action research practices in local-within-global contexts with several attributes which included among others - *relationship of action research to other research*. There are varied ways of how action research relate to other research. Researchers in Boston, MA area (Boles et al., 1997) described three patterns that occurred when they inspected teachers' action research studies in a particular research community in the area. Elden (1981) noted that AR differs from other approaches such as PAR in terms of the immediate goal of the research. AR's goal is to develop change capacity for workers to solve their own problems and maintain the solving process (self-sustained learning). Action research emphasizes the idea that improving the process improves the organization. The vital aim of action research, according to Elliot (1991), is to improve practice rather than to produce knowledge. The production and utilization of knowledge is subordinate to, and conditioned by, thus, AR requires the most personal commitment and involvement among research methods. This method necessitates sustained practice and growth for a long-term commitment. As AR's cousin, participative research utilizes the implicit knowledge and experience of employees and leadership in the process; requires group level commitment as well as researcher commitment for *the term of the project* while the team addresses and solves a relevant problem. Elden (1981) believed that participative research requires the long term skills of the participants to "solve their own problems and keep solving them," which is an outcome that extends beyond the research project itself. This research approach emphasizes in participative research the inclusion of the participants and their organizations within the process and the practical outcome. The researcher is not a facilitator of the process as in action research, but a 'co-producer of learning.' In sum, Grundy's (1982) typology of action research approaches provides a way to observe the key role that different forms of reflection play. It also gives way to viewing which different goals influence the development of specific reflective processes in the participant(s). As witnessed, integrating specific tools for reflection - justified as aids to reflective processing and meta-cognition are increasingly being incorporated into action research methodologies from other disciplines and contexts.

PAR cum AR for Professional Teacher Development Highlighting Andragogy and Reflective Practice

As described by Pain, Whitman and Milledge (2011), PAR is a collaborative research, education, and action used to gather information for change on social or environmental issues. It also involves people who are concerned about or affected by an issue to take the lead role in producing and using knowledge about it. It is an approach to research with a set of principles and practices for originating, designing, conduction, analyzing, and acting on a piece of research. Kindon et al. (2007) reiterates that PAR involves recurrent stages of planning, action, and reflection followed by evaluation. In fact, Pain, Whitman and Milledge (2011) labelled PAR with seven central themes: 1) collaboration, 2) knowledge, 3) power, 4) ethics, 5) building theory, 6) action, and 7) emotion and well-being. Furthermore, these authors noted that reflective practice comes in each of this domain as the team goes through the research process. Thus, as a democratic model, PAR leads the team to produce, own and use knowledge through: 1) collaborative efforts at every stage, involving discussion; 2) pooling skills and working together to reach the intended action; 3) change and improve the issue being researched, produce and build theories; and 4) contribute to educational reforms.

Participatory Action Research heavily depended on reflective practice of the researchers in action. This reflective practice translates views of structural problems and their values about the systems under study in the process and leads to more creative 'wonders' and solutions. Thus, these processes result to opportunities for researchers and participants to connect enhanced capacity and wisdom from action research with the 'local theory' in participative research to initiate change. As described by Somekha and Zeichnerb (2009), this is the concept of university-led reform movement of many universities in different countries. It is working in partnership with schools and governments using the paradigm of action research as a strategy for educational reform. PAR or AR is a powerful form of professional development for teachers (Johnson & Button, 2000), which can be used to replace teacher in-service trainings. They further claimed that PAR and AR are the third way of training teachers for teacher quality aside from in-service training or workshops and undergraduate schooling. As reported by Tomlinson (1995), using action research as a form of teacher development increases the sense of professionalism in education while Hensen (1996) argued that PAR and AR permit teachers to become agents of change.

Recently, Johnson (2012) relates PAR and AR to teacher accountability consequently; trying to make teachers more accountable for the performance of their students is ineffectual unless they are also endowed to make the decisions that are best for them and their students. In using the factory model, teachers need to be given the

responsibility for the input if they are to be held responsible for the output. In this new model, schools and universities must begin to work together and think in new ways about graduate education, learning, and professional development and to recognize and grant credit for teacher action research projects with accompanying presentations. This creates learning that is more specific to each teacher's classroom situations, improves educational discourse, and serves to improve the professional status of teachers. This is not far from the trend set by Ginns et al. (2001), who used PAR to professionalize novice teachers. In their research, PAR was used to create collaboration between beginning teachers with university academic staff during the design and conduct of the study. The key component of their study was the formation of action research cells or teacher networks of participating teachers with each group focused on particular aspects of teaching, for example, assessment, catering for gifted and talented students, and inclusivity in the classroom teaching program. They found out that participatory action research is a good induction process of beginning teachers fostering their professional growth. Their research findings indicate that the beginning teachers underwent professional development and change through involvement in the study. Teachers also benefited greatly from the participatory, collaborative, social and reflective aspects of PAR. They also believed that beginning teachers working collaboratively with each other in small action research cells, and in a larger network, and with university staff, has been more empowering and enriching experience for them and more effective in addressing the concerns of the teachers themselves. With teachers acquiring confidence in their profession and developing some collaborative and reflective skills, it is possible to advance their action research into more emancipatory concerns towards becoming better professionals and quality teachers.

Conclusion and Future Directions

Attaining teacher quality that dictates the quality learning processes can be traced to teacher training programs. Teacher training can be in varied forms, but, the most common systems are pre-service and in-service trainings. Several studies, however, found that pre-service and in-service training are focused on theories or practice. Emphasis is given to either one of these domains of the teaching and learning process. In the study of Johnson and Button (2000), they found that PAR and AR are the third way of training teachers for teacher quality. Tomlinson (1995) also found that using action research as a form of teacher development also increases the sense of professionalism in education and PAR and AR permit teachers to become agents of change as recounted by Henson (1996).

Teachers becoming agents of change through action research or participatory action research is a combined influence of PAR and AR in terms of adult learning. Self-evaluation and reflection are emphasized in the conduct of PAR and AR which boost reflective practice of the teacher in the classroom. Moreover, the teachers' capability to merge theories and action come into play making teachers fully aware of how they decide to make their class more interactive, more learner-oriented, more productive, and more meaningful to the lives of their students. Teachers are also able to close the gap between research and action moving towards a teaching and learning era where action benefits from research and research is well disseminated and accepted as a practical means to practice and action. PAR and AR are ways to achieve educational reforms by changing the role of the teacher from mere implanter of administrators' diktat to designers of curricular reforms through the changes effected based on their own action research edicts. Thus, AR and PAR ignite the innate capability of teachers to accountability and responsibility to achieve educational reforms and teacher quality. With self-initiated inputs come significant outputs enhancing teacher accountability to education quality. With quality education, attainment of objectives and goals of the curriculum is not possible.

While AR has been noted to help professionalize teachers to improve; from being novice to a focus on the self to motivation on paying much attention to students through reflective practice, PAR comes in to provide support to teachers through collaborative conduct of action research. In this aspect and process, University researchers provide the much needed support through research cells and teacher networks for basic education teachers to complete action researches and be able to provide solutions to pressing classroom problems. Within the research cells, collaborative efforts of the action researchers guided by their University researchers will be able to frame new theories related to the classroom scenarios of each of the members. Thus, while putting research into action to solve classroom challenges, action is placed in research to produce new knowledge in the education field. In this scheme, teams achieve varied goals - contributing to educational reforms, knowledge creation, and sharing.

In the Philippines, the aforesaid schema of using PAR – where University researchers collaborate with basic education teachers to form research cells or teacher networks is foreseen to bring heaps of success in the conduct of action research. Not only will University researchers be able to create and share new knowledge in the field but also help the Department of Education (DepEd) attain the goal of molding basic education teacher-

researchers. Also, collaborative effort of Universities to reach out to basic education teachers and extend a helping hand in the design and implementation of action research brings better chances of teacher promotion. As stipulated in Deped Order no. 66, s. 2007, titled '*revised guidelines on the appointment and promotion of other teaching; related teaching and non-teaching positions,*' criteria in assessing teachers for promotion highly hinge on teacher education and meritorious accomplishment especially in research and development focused on the conduct of action research in varied levels. Hence, PAR can uplift Philippine teacher professionalization and teacher promotion for teacher quality and quality education.

Action research has been beneficial to in-service teacher professional development. Based on the aforementioned literature, AR worked best as a schema of teacher professionalization. Thus, several researchers propose its use to pre-service education. Baumann and Duffy (2001) recommend that pre-service teachers need support in various forms to conduct action research. This supports the premise that the use of action-research will "engage students in structuring their own perception of a situation, their actions or learning, or their engaged in altering or adjusting these structures" (De Jong & Korthagen, 1988 quoted in Wubbel & Korthagen, 1990) thus developing a reflective attitude. Wubbel and Korthagen's study of teachers from program designed to promote reflective teaching specify that such teachers had a grander capacity to improve; they also had a better teacher-student relationship, and a higher job satisfaction getting them ready to face the 21st century learners as quality teachers for quality learning for Philippine education system to achieve quality assurance.

Although PAR and AR are projected to be very effective as professional development framework to train teachers for quality teaching, its implementation in the Philippine setting may bring about certain issues and concerns. Looking into the demographics and profile of the Philippine basic education, PAR cannot solely be used as Professional Development Framework since most teachers in the field need to be capacitated in terms of ways and conduct of action research. This means that PAR may be combined with other best features of in-service frameworks to achieve better results. Time constraints and work load of teachers also pose great challenge to attaining teacher quality using PAR. As a foresight, education agencies in the Philippines may provide ways and means to 1) enable teachers to conduct action research and implement practioner-researcher role; 2) empower local Universities and basic education to promote and strengthen mentoring and partnership for more action in the field through research; and 3) model PAR to improve education quality through teacher quality.

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