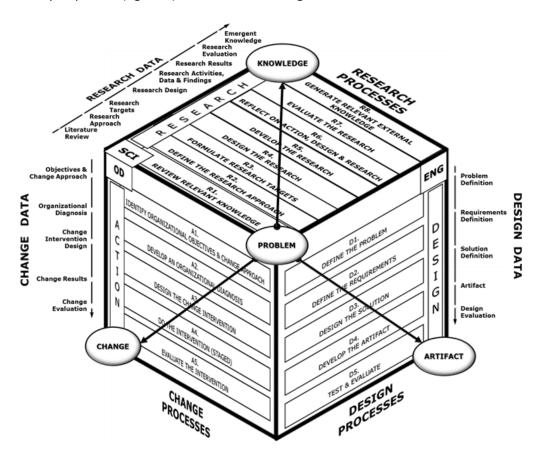# Repositório ISCTE-IUL

A Conceptual Model for Action and Design Research

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Organizational research has a pattern of special characteristics which make a clear distinction from other research paradigms. When using these approaches – based on Action and Design – the Interpretivist, Constructivist, and Participatory perspectives dominate. They have already proven to have strong foundations, which turn these paradigmatic approaches into effective ways for getting knowledge, doing things, and promoting change within organizational settings.

The objective of the current article is to present a top-level conceptual model, under the form a tridimensional perspective (figure 1), for Action and Design Research.

Fig. 1. ADR foundations: the Science, OD, and Engineering perspectives

It combines the traditional scientific, engineering, and organization development approaches, depicting how an organization can, simultaneously, solve multidimensional problems and produce actionable knowledge, effective change and useful artifacts.

It has been developed using a Design Science Research approach, tested in a major organizational change program (Henriques, 2015; Henriques & ONeill, 2014), and successfully used to teach research methods essentials to Master and DBA students.

A previous artifact – based on real empirical data, on an exhaustive literature review, and on specific feedback collected from didactical experience teaching Master and DBA students – has already been published (Henriques & ONeill, 2018), under the form of a Process Model for Organizational Action Research. Also, a similar model has been yet developed by the authors for Design Science Research.

So, the current tri-dimensional perspective corresponds to an upper level of abstraction based on those models, validated and enriched on the light of a wide literature review. This review has incorporated some main references from the research dimension (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009; Yin, 2009; Bryman, 2012; Erikson & Kovalainen, 2008, and Creswell, 1994), the action dimension (Coghlan & Branick, 2010; Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014; Zuber-Skerritt & Perry, 2002; Gummesson, 2000; Shani & Pasmore, 1982; Suaman & Evered, 1978; Kemmis & McTaggart, 1998, and McKay & Marshall, 2007), and the design dimension (Peffers et al., 2007; Van Aken, 2004; Hevner, 2007; Hevner & Chatterjee, 2010; Reeves, 2006 and Vaishinavi & Kuechler, 2015), being focused on its essential sub-processes and data.

As a didactical reference, the model does not exempted, the necessary readings concerning the relevant literature in the specific field of application and the use of complementary studies to support students' learning. However, it has revealed as a very useful instrument to facilitate their initial approach to applied research, providing a global overview, stimulating further individual study, and facilitating research proposal's elaboration.

Keywords: Action Research, Design Science Research, Conceptual model.

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