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WORKING SESSION 8

Theory and Practice of Participatory Action Research (PAR) in the Hawaiian Islands

PAR is research finalised to practical outcomes done in solidarity and in collaboration with indigenous communities, it attempts to incorporate indigenous values, cosmologies, epistemologies, and praxi. It responds to institutional challenges and demands by authorities and needs of communities. Its outcomes are research and planning products useful in engaging public and private stakeholders to move toward partnership approaches with indigenous groups. It also empowers indigenous organisations to articulate their need for community based economic development (CBED), to reclaim access to lands and to propose culturally compatible environmental co-management. PAR differs from conventional anthropological research, yet it uses some of its tools applied to a planning process.

Examples of university instructional research and outreach to Native Hawaiian homesteaders and to remote rural communities in Hawai’i are presented in this paper to highlight the approach, methodology, ethical issues, operational challenges, and pedagogic lessons for problem centred education of learning communities.

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