

## Participatory Action Research with social workers in Greenland

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## Problems of Professional Disempowerment: An Initial Study of Social Work Conditions in Greenland

This study explores social workers' experiences in a social service department in Greenland. The social workers described limiting factors, such as an absence of management and a dysfunctional interdisciplinary network. They described feelings of frustration and individualization, which are known stressors. We found that the social workers were in a disempowered position that hindered their management of key welfare services. Serious problems were found that could have consequences for professional social work with clients. By drawing upon the traditions behind critical social work in our discussion of the findings, we have furthered our understanding of the workers' conditions. We point to issues at local, interdisciplinary, and societal levels. One solution will be to work collaboratively with social workers by using empowerment strategies to strengthen a critical consciousness within the profession. The development of a critical capacity is essential if social workers are to organize anti-oppressive practices and interdisciplinary co-operation, and to engage proactively in the future development of the Greenlandic welfare system. This can be accomplished by working with educated social workers in a union and by introducing more critical understandings at the student level.

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## PAR as a way of organising a social workers labour union in Greenland

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## Social work and action research - in an arctic context

**Forfatter:** Steven Arnfjord    **Type:** Paper | Paper    **Årstal:** 2014    **Emner:** Social work; Greenland; Action research; Empowerment    **Navn på konference:** International Action Research Conference - Action Research for Democracy    **Konferenceby:** Roskilde    **Konferenceland:** Danmark

## Transforming a disempowered social worker profession using participatory action research in Greenland

The social worker profession in Greenland has to some extent been overlooked in Greenlandic social research the last 50 years. Perhaps it is because the professionals have not had a voice in the social political debate, or it may be due to the fact that the majority of social research conducted in Greenland has a traditional approach to research as an objectifying activity. To counter-act these hypotheses, this research project is inspired by the work of Paulo Freire, modern Marxism, and critical theory. An analysis of how current working conditions and structures disempower the possibility of doing what social workers in Greenland view as good social work is followed by a discussion of how we have designed this study as a participatory action research project. Participation is about inviting social workers to collaborate with us during the project - a process we believe will result in democratic sustainable research. Moving from problem identification via participatory collaboration and on to problem solving through the transformative methodologies of focus groups and workshops, the empirical findings will guide the next steps of the research process towards creating a better understanding of social workers' working conditions.

**Forfatter:** Steven Arnfjord; Lise Hounsgaard **Editor:** Kennet Pedersen; **Type:** Contribution to book/anthology | Bidrag til bog/antologi **Årstal:** 2013 **Emner:** Disempowerment; Empowerment; Social work; Greenland **Udgivelsessted:** Nuuk **Udgivelsesland:** Greenland **Værtpublikationens hoved- & undertitel:** Modernization and Heritage - How to combine the two in Inuit societies **Forlag:** Atuagkat **ISBN nummer:** 9788792554505

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## Empowerment evaluation and social work in Greenland

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## Empowering social work through critical participatory action research in Greenland

**Forfatter:** Steven Arnfjord **Type:** Paper | Paper **Årstal:** 2011 **Emner:** Participatory action research; Greenland; Social work; Participation **Navn på konference:** Power and Participation: The 25th Conference of the Nordic Sociological Association **Konferenceby:** Oslo **Konferenceland:** Norway