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REFLECTION ESSAY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Research is therefore a complex process whereby a number of phases come into play and play their part in the unfolding of the process. In this reflective essay, I shall adopt Gibbs' Reflective Cycle (1988) in an effort to analyse the activities I undertook in regards to the research process of the first assessment I conducted. This research focused on answering a particular research question which was to establish the differences between moderate and extensive use of Virtual and In-person interviews; for this purpose, I employed a mixed-method approach. During working on this research, I was to set the research question, to choose the right method of research and data collection, to compile the materials and data, to analyze it and at last make conclusion. Further, I will discuss how the feedback of my tutor and other students helped to formulate further steps in achieving the objectives of my research and how it helped me to evolve as a researcher.

1.1 Description

The research will mostly try to fill the lacuna in the literature related to the comparison of the effectiveness and experiences of interviews conducted virtually versus in-person. I developed the following research question: "Are Virtual Interviews better than In-person Interviews?" This research question framed my entire study and guided the subsequent steps of the research process.

The reason I decided on a mixed-method approach is that it will give me an expansive inquiry into the research problem. Data collection was done through interviews and surveys, representing both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. In that way, the interviews allowed looking closer at individual experiences, while the surveys gave a wide view over tendencies and opinions. After that, I did the processing and analysis of data and derived insights that would lead me to my conclusions. All along this process, there was feedback at every stage, which came from both my tutor and my peers in refining the research direction and methodology. I was allowed to present my findings to the class, after which further revisions were necessary based on the feedback.

1.2 Feelings

The feelings I had throughout the research process include stress, curiosity mixed with anticipation in the last few weeks of doing the research. When entering the working stage, I was under a fairly large amount of pressure when deciding on the topic of the research. At the same time, there was always the notion of trying to select more realistic and significant angle, which left me with some levels of concern in determining whether I would be able to find a research niche worth pursuing. But at the same time I guess I developed quite a lot of curiosity especially when I focused myself on the virtual and face-to-face interviews analysis. This subject was topical and it intrigued me to make sure that I get it.

In the data collection phase, I also experienced a slight semblance of stress, especially in the issues of choosing the right time to conduct the interviews and the time management wisely. The pressure of keeping everyone in check, guaranteeing that most of the data collected are right and facing the stresses of having to deal with all aspects of the research could be overwhelming at times. However, there was a flip side, but that was part anticipation of coming across new knowledge and the participants' actual stories.

At some point stand before my tutor and fellow students, I was quite skeptical about how my work was going to be accepted by my colleagues. I questioned myself if the kind of research that I have conducted was correct if the conclusion I had arrived at was correct and if I had taken the right methodological decisions. However, as soon as I received some feedback, I felt that I could improve and that boost was enough for me. This sense of accomplishment increased as I enhanced the research done and got over the weaknesses at in the beginning of the study.

1.3 Evaluation

Assessing the research process, it is possible to note that there were certain advantages and disadvantages. Concerning the advantages of my research, one of the main benefits was proper definition of the problem area that is relevant and important at the same time. The research question being formulated was very clear and it was formulated in a way that would enable the research to be conducted effectively.

That is why one of the advantages of the work was the choice of the mixed approach, as the use of qualitative and quantitative data in the analysis significantly complemented each other. Surveys helped to deep the generalizability of the results of the studies. It was also easier to make a comparison between virtual and in-person interviews since the use of the mixed method had an added advantage in this study.

However, there were some hurdles and few things which were supposed to be done better. The first key issue to note was the cumbersome time the research used in gathering the data as well as analyzing the same. At some point I realized that better planning could have facilitated the process of the interviews and the data collection and entering of the data being more streamline and accurate. This was true especially with some of the interview questions that could have been more provided to enable data that would be relevant to the study to be captured. In this regard, I should have dedicated more effort in the development of the survey questions to the extent that it would make them match the research objectives more closely. I realized that if I had been more careful while undertaking the initial processes the later difficulties could have been averted.

1.4 Analysis

In hindsight, the research process emphasized the need of defining a research question that is clear right from the beginning. This could be due to the fact that having a clear and focused research question helps in the elimination of the long unnecessary-side leads to enhance efficiency in research. Though, this confusion made me delay the selection of the proper research methodology that should have been avoided with more proper planning and investigation before carrying out the research. Hence the justification for the use of a mixed method approach what remained an issue was the time taken to arrive at the conclusion to adopt this strategy.

Out of the two main difficulties which I encountered while undertaking this study, incoherence in data gathering and assessment, enhanced planning could have helped avert them. For example, it would be more beneficial in the future to come up with a better schedule of the time period in which data is to be collected as this would ease the pressure I felt during this process. Also, a better plan of how to analyze the data could reduce some of the confusion I had when trying to understand the findings of the data analysis.

There were many informal feedbacks during the process of research and they were equally useful. For instance, one of the feedback provided was that I should have come up with other ways of presenting the two types of interviews. This was very helpful as it made me look at additional factors that may contribute to my rationale and thus enhance it. In addition, the received feedbacks improved my line of research and strengthened my conclusions.

1.5 Conclusion

There are certain aspects which I would do in a different way if I were to repeat the same research process in the future. First of all, I would invest more time on the planning of data collection. This would entail developing a daily planning schedule that would include more concrete time lines of the plan, possible bottle necks and conflicts that are expected to arise when implementing the plan and ways of overcoming them. This way, I would not get confused nor pressured by the fact that, there are many tasks piled up and they can be done all at once.

Further, I would look for feedback from others at a much earlier stage of the research process than I did. Instead of writing, I would seek help from my tutor and other students at some later stage of the work to make sure that I was going on the right track. It would be equally advantageous in return because it would carry less risk of making mistakes as well as provide a better chance of successive pondering.

In conclusion, I have learnt the advantages of being flexible and adaptable as well as the need to seek feedback in the process of research. I believe these lessons would prove helpful in future engagements because the next times around, a more formal methodology can be employed, and feedbacks can be mounted as a recurring means of improvement.

1.6 Action Plan

In my future research projects, some of the things that I have learnt I will help me to come up with competent research projects and exercises. In addition, one of the first steps that I'll make will be to ask for the feedback more than once at different stages of the research. This will enable me notice any difficulties I may be facing at initial stages in order to prevent them from escalating into big challenges. Furthermore, I will pay much attention to a more formal method of data gathering and evaluation. To avoid situations which may lead to confusion or delays in the course of the research process, it is advisable to pay more attention in planning for these stages.

As a result, I'll be able to use all skills I got through this experience in my future occupation, especially in analytical and problem-solving thinking and the study of research methods. With these skills in mind, I shall be able to advance towards resolving multifaceted business issues, and coming up with pragmatic practical real-world solutions. All in all, this experience enlarges not only my capability of research but also the improvement of myself for the future career.