

Online contribution 2

The basis for my first online contribution was to explore whether young people who are NEET (not in education, employment or training) are aware of employment opportunities within the life sciences and health innovation sector. The initial research paradigm that I had intended to use was that of a positivism perspective, however, on reflection, I have decided that this might not be the best research model to adopt. Due to the fact that my research will be qualitative and not quantitative, a more constructivist approach would most likely be the more suitable approach. Although positivism can be used within the remit of qualitative research, for my particular topic, this would unlikely yield the data necessary to answer the research question. This is due in part to the fact that young people who are not in education, employment or training might find themselves NEET for a variety of different reasons, and I cannot be sure of one particular answer to the social problem. Secondly, young people's perception of the label "NEET" might also be a very subjective issue, and it would be unfair and also rather ignorant to make assumptions regarding how they feel about this, and in particular, their personal aspirations with relation to employment opportunities.

The intention of my research will be to understand and explore a particular situation, and the data I collect will be from the information I gain from interviewing young people, during focus groups and also from questionnaires, and trying to find a solution to the social problem is the ultimate goal.

The main focus of a constructivist approach, according to Wilson (1996) are that prior knowledge affects not only future learning, but also experiences. That knowledge can be constructed rather than transmitted, and that building on knowledge requires a purposeful activity.

Hein (2007) also echoes some of Wilson's thoughts on the constructivist approach in that learning is not a passive activity, but rather requires the learner to engage with the world in a meaningful way. Motivation is also a large factor, and Hein even goes as far as to say that learning cannot happen without motivation. Given the fact that the young people participating in the research will be actively involved, it seemed only right to change the research model.

I have also reflected on the ethical considerations discussed in my previous contribution to the forum. The title of the research proposal would remain the same for now, as would the ethical considerations. Unless any unforeseen issues arise during the research project, the following would remain unchanged: informed consent of parents and guardians of the participant (where the participant is under eighteen), and also the consent of the participants themselves. This also includes the right of the participant to withdraw consent at any time, (BERA, 2011). It is essential that researchers work to minimise distress or discomfort to the participants where the research topic may be sensitive or may trigger negative emotions; articles three and twelve of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1990) clarify that children and young people have the right to be heard, and given an opportunity to express their views freely. In particular, article three relates to putting the best interests of the child or young person as being central to our work.

All that being said, there is always room for improvement.

References

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