

Professional Development Plan

Section 1: Starting Out

which evidences both personal development theory and examples of self-evaluations that you have undertaken.

Student Name:	Jessica Rowe	Student Number:	2108311
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Your Personal Tutor (N.B. You have the right to change your Personal Tutor)

Level (e.g. Level 4)	Name
Level 5	Ken Dicks

Your Programme of Study

Level (e.g. Level 4)	Programme / Pathway	Fully enrolled on My TSD? Y/N	Date of Change (if applicable)
Level 5	BA Sociology	Y	N/A

Your Plans for the Future

This is for you to record any thoughts you have about what you would like to do once you have finished your degree. These plans can change as you progress and gain experience.

Continuing to a master's degree in Equity and Diversity (UWTSD, 2023a) and then pursuing a career in social science research (Purdue University, 2023). With a focus on researching pressing social issues, such as inequality, poverty, discrimination, environmental sustainability, and healthcare disparities (Purdue University, 2023). Potentially shaping policy and practice (Omobowale, Akanle and Busari, 2023).

Critical Theory (Horkheimer, 1976) can provide a theoretical lens to analyse and understand the root causes of social problems (Horkheimer, 1976; Macdonald, 2017). In social science research, Critical

Theory can guide analysis and interpretation of data, allowing to uncover underlying power dynamics and social injustices (Horkheimer, 1976; Macdonald, 2017).

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Section 2: My Achievements

Knowledge and Expertise (Baylor University, 2023; Kaplan, 2019; Cardiff University, 2020)	Pursuing this degree has allowed me to gain in-depth knowledge and expertise in Sociology and Advocacy (Indiana University, 2023). I have acquired a comprehensive understanding, through assignments, lectures (Baylor University, 2023), research (Kaplan, 2019), and practical experiences (Cardiff University, 2020).
Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills (Cottrell, 2017; Hill <i>et al</i> , 2020; Nardi, 2017; Williams, 2002; Mead, 1934; Blumer, 1969)	In order to develop my critical thinking skills (Cottrell, 2017), I encouraged myself to question my preconceptions (Hill <i>et al</i> , 2020), developed analytic reasoning (Nardi, 2017), and enhancing my problem-solving skills (Williams, 2002). Symbolic Interactionism (Mead, 1934; Blumer, 1969) enables me to understand how social interactions and communication form my notions by challenging them (Mead, 1934; Blumer, 1969). It makes me consider how social interactions and shared meanings shape my beliefs (Mead, 1934; Blumer, 1969). By being conscious of these impacts, I can confront and critically assess my prejudices and grow personally and intellectually (Mead, 1934; Blumer, 1969).
Personal Growth and Development (Rix, <i>et al</i> 2010; Hines-Brigger, 2015; Mead, 1934; DeJaeghere and Murphy-Graham, 2021)	I have the opportunity to explore new ideas, engage with diverse perspectives (Rix, <i>et al</i> 2010), and expand my worldview (Hines-Brigger, 2015). The university has encouraged my self-discovery (Mead, 1934), independence, and development of critical life skills like teamwork and communication (DeJaeghere and Murphy-Graham, 2021).
Active Learning (Gowers and Garnham, 2023; Mead, 1934; Blumer, 1969)	Actively participate in class discussions, asking questions, and seeking clarification to deepen my understanding of my degree (Gowers and Garnham, 2023). Symbolic

	Interactionism (Mead, 1934; Blumer, 1969) provides a sociological framework for understanding my active participation in class discussions, asking questions, and seeking clarification. Participating in these discussions enables me to get a more thorough grasp of the topic at hand, gain valuable feedback and validation from others, and contribute to the debate and enhancing of meanings (Mead, 1934; Blumer, 1969).
Volunteering (Holdsworth and Quinn, 2010; Coleman, 1990; Bourdieu, 1979).	Volunteering in my academic area. My academic understanding and professional abilities have both been enhanced by my practical experience (Holdsworth and Quinn, 2010). Social Capital Theory illustrates how volunteering has improved my academic and professional skills (Coleman, 1990). The theory emphasizes the value of social connections, networks, and resources in facilitating individual development and success (Coleman, 1990; Bourdieu, 1979). By engaging in practical experiences, building relationships, and accessing social capital, I have deepened my academic understanding, expanded my professional abilities, and gained a supportive network within my academic studies (Coleman, 1990).

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Bourdieu, P. (1979). Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste. London: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2015.

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- Williams, S.W. (2002) Making better business decisions understanding and improving critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE.

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Section 3: Hopes and Concerns

	Your Thoughts	Please tick if you would like to discuss this
1) What do I hope to gain from my studies in the short term (e.g. this year?)	• Understanding the core concepts, theories, and principles that form the basis of Sociology and Advocacy (Giddens and Sutton, 2017). • More in-depth Skill Development - like critical thinking, problem-solving, communication (Cottrell, 2017). • As a student, I aim to achieve a good academic performance by excelling in my assignments (Tadese, Yeshaneh and Mulu, 2022). This entails me to understanding the material, engaging in active learning, and demonstrating my knowledge and skills through assessments (Egan, <i>et al</i>, 2022). • Seeking opportunities to apply my knowledge and skills in a real-world context (Dwyer, 2017). This involves more volunteering (Holdsworth and Quinn, 2010), Participating in practical experiences can facilitate the process of connecting theoretical knowledge with actual use (Smith, 2016), gain hands-on skills (Williams, 2002), and explore potential career paths (Purdue University, 2023). • To regularly reflect on my progress, strengths, and areas of improvement (Kornblith, 2012). To set short-term goals that align with my long-term aspirations. This process of self-reflection and goal setting will help me stay motivated and track my progress (University of Edinburgh, 2023). • The short-term goals includes expanding my intellectual curiosity (Kashdan and Silvia, 2009), broadening my perspectives (Rix, <i>et al</i>, 2010), and gaining a deeper	☐

	understanding of myself and the world around me (Hines-Brigger, 2015). Embracing new ideas (Rix, <i>et al</i> 2010), challenge my assumptions further (Clarke, 2010), and engage in critical thinking to foster personal development (Allen and Allen, 1999). By applying Symbolic Interactionism to my short-term goals, suggests that my intellectual curiosity, perspective broadening, and deeper understanding are influenced by the social interactions and meanings that I attach to ideas and experiences (Mead, 1934; Blumer, 1969).	
2) What do I hope to gain from my studies in the medium term (e.g. over the next 2-3 years?)	• Focus on enhancing my research and analytical skills (Nardi, 2017). Learn how to critically synthesis academic literature (Walden University, 2023), conduct independent research, and analyse data (McNeill and Chapman, 2005). Acquire proficiency in research methodologies (Creswell, no date; Creswell, 2013), including quantitative and qualitative approaches (Schoonenboom, 2023). • Collaboration and Networking was something that was highlighted by the employability and self-assessment report (Employability and Self-Assessment, 2023). I plan on building a strong connection with peers, professors, and professionals within my degree (Streeter, 2014). Engage in group projects, join the research teams, and participate in academic or professional events (Streeter, 2014). Collaborate with others to enhance my learning experience, exchange ideas, and build a network of like-minded individuals (NEA, 2018). • To invest time in my professional development (Zepeda, 2019). Attend conferences, workshops, and seminars related to sociology and advocacy (ESA, 2022). Stay updated on current research, trends, and advancements within sociology (ESA, 2022). Develop a strong	☐

	professional identity and continue building my CV (Burris, 2022).	
3) What do I hope to gain from my studies in the longer term (e.g. after graduation?)	- Through my studies, I aim to develop a high level of expertise and specialization within sociology (Purdue University, 2023; Indiana University, 2023). This includes a deep understanding of theories (Smith, 2016), methodologies (Creswell, [No Date, Creswell, 2013]), and empirical research within sociology. - I hope to be able to identify patterns, analyse data, and draw evidence-based conclusions (Purdue University, 2023; Nardi, 2017). These skills will be valuable for addressing complex social issues and help me to make informed decisions (Nardi, 2017). - I hope my academic degree helps me to refine my ability to articulate complex ideas (Abrahams, 2018) clearly and concisely, both in written and oral form. This includes presenting research findings (Purdue University, 2023; Kaplan, 2019), writing scholarly articles (California State University, 2020), and effectively communicating sociological concepts (Leydesdorff, 2001). - I hope to have adopted a mindset of adaptability and lifelong learning to stay updated with the latest research, theories, and methodologies in sociology (ESA, 2022). - I hope that my degree will help me with career opportunities (Purdue University, 2023), such as roles in research institutions, academia, government agencies or policy-making bodies (Purdue University, 2023).	☐
4) Your Wildest Dreams	- A successful journey in social research (Purdue University, 2023). - Engaging in ground-breaking research (Purdue University, 2023; Kaplan, 2019). Conflict Theory recognizes that social research has the potential to	☐

	challenge and disrupt existing power structures and social inequalities (Weber, 1922; Dixon and Dutts, 1956). By engaging in ground-breaking research, I have the opportunity to uncover and shed light on social conflicts, inequalities, and injustices (Weber, 1922; Dixon and Dutts, 1956). • Making a significant impact on a global scale through sociological research (Kaplan, 2019, Purdue University, 2023). This would involve influencing public policy (Omobowale and Akanle, Busari, 2023), promoting social justice, or advocating for marginalized communities (Omobowale and Akanle, Busari, 2023). The aim would be to contribute to positive social change and improve the lives of individuals and societies (Omobowale and Akanle, Busari, 2023). • Receiving recognition within the academic community for contributions to the field of sociology (Purdue University, 2023). Such as publishing influential papers in reputable journals (California State University, 2020).	
5) Your concerns (make a note of any concerns and then use the sections below to create a plan to address them).	• Balancing work, assignments, and other responsibilities can be demanding (UCAS, 2023). It can be challenging to manage my time effectively (Allen and Allen, 1999) and maintain a healthy work-life balance (Allen and Allen, 1999). Procrastination and feeling overwhelmed by deadlines (Duhigg, 2020) is a common concern that I need to address. • The pressure to perform well academically (Leavey, 2022) leads to stress and anxiety. Fear of failure, perfectionism, and self-doubt arise, impacting my confidence and overall well-being (Leavey, 2022). Social Constructionism recognizes that academic achievement is often highly valued in society (Berger and Luckmann, 1966). These expectations can create a sense of pressure	☐

	and the fear of falling short, leading to stress and anxiety (Berger and Luckmann, 1966). • Striking a balance between academic commitments and personal life can be challenging (UCAS, 2023). Finding time for hobbies, socializing, self-care, and maintaining relationships has proven to be difficult (UCAS, 2023).	
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Professional Development Plan Section 4: Assessment Planner

You can use this planner to help you to keep track of your Assessment deadlines.

Level		Level 5		Semester		Semester 2	
Submission Date (in date order)	Module	Tutor	Assignment Type (e.g. Essay etc.)	Weighting	Tutorial Date(s) (if booked)	When will I complete this by?	Uploaded to Moodle (in the FINAL submission section)
23/05/23	ECGE5002Q	Ken Dicks	Written Assessment 2000 words	50%	N/A	20/05/23	23/05/23
29/05/23	ECAY5004	Charlene Sadd Andrea Burson	Video Presentation -10 Minutes	30%	N/A	26/05/23	30/05/23
30/05/23	ECGE5002Q	Ken Dicks	PDP and Rationale 2000 Words	50%	N/A	27/05/23	30/05/23
05/06/23	ECAY5004	Charlene Sadd Andrea Burson	Written Assessment - 2800	70%	N/A	02/06/23	05/06/23

Support Offered

Student Services can offer support in the following areas;

- Counselling Services
- Financial Support
- Support for International Students
- Services for Disabled Students
- Mental Health Advisory Service
- Support for Students from Care
- Student Wellbeing

Wellbeing Support Planner

What do I need support with?	Who can help me?	Appointment Arranged For	Outcome
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

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Section 6: Study Skills (Student Services Team)

- Student Services can also provide you with support to develop your Academic Study Skills
- They offer one to one support, drop-in group support and distance learning support on a range of skills that you will need to become a successful student.
- They can be contacted in the following ways;
 - <https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/student-services/>
 - Tel: 01267 67683
 - Email: studentservices@uwtsd.ac.uk
- Academic writing for university
- IT Support including help with presentations
- Revision and exam strategies
- Resources and how to find them and how to reference them
- Grammar, spelling and punctuation
- Techniques for effective note taking
- An opportunity to talk through ideas
- Stress management
- Organisation and time management
- Effective use of feedback

	Skill	Current Ability	Target Ability	Development Opportunity	Evidence of Success	Time scale: Short/Mid/Long Team	Academic Evidence to to Underpin Task
Priority Example	<i>Team Working</i>	<i>Lack Confidence</i>	<i>Present F2F in a group</i>	<i>Use the video presentations for this degree to practice and developed skills and confidence for the future.</i>	<i>Delivery of a presentation F2F in-front of the lecturers and my peers</i>	<i>Mid-Term post Covid 19</i>	<i>Smith (2018) indicates that developing such skills takes time and practice. He also indicates that developing a clear logical argument along with reducing reliance on notes supports this process.</i>
Priority 1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Priority 2							
Priority 3							
Priority 4							
Priority 5							
Priority 6							
Priority 7							
Priority 8							

Reference List

Smith, P. (2018) *Developing Skills for PDP*, London: Sage.

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Section 7: Career Ideas (Student Services Team)

- Tel: 01267 67683
- Email: studentservices@uwtsd.ac.uk

- Work experience
- Course changes
- Further study options
- We also post information about local and national job vacancies, careers-related events and various career paths on our facebook page (University of Wales Trinity Saint David Careers Service) and on Twitter (@uwtsdcareers)
- You can also download the UWTSD Careers App to access career planning tools and support.

Careers Advice Support Planner

What do I need support with?	Who can help me?	Appointment Arranged For	Outcome
Interview Techniques (UWTSD, 2023d)	Student Services	12/06/23	N/A
Application Procedure with regards to MA studies (UWTSD, 2023d)	Student Services	11/12/23	N/A

University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD). (2023d) Student Services. Available at: <https://www.uwtسد.ac.uk/student-services/>

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Section 8: Professional Networking (For Level 5/6)

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- We provide support to academic and professional units in improving the student experience ranging from events for students to tailored survey analysis.
- More information can be found at;
<https://uowtsd.sharepoint.com/student-experience/SitePages/Home.aspx>

Introduction to LinkedIn

This practical session gives students an overview of LinkedIn as a useful tool and tips on how to use it effectively. It also gives students the opportunity to set up a LinkedIn profile, receive advice and even get a professional photo taken for their profile.

LinkedIn Professional Development Planner

How can I develop my professional profile?	What do I need to do?	When will I do this by?	How will I know I have succeeded?
Showcase my skills (Serdula, 2020; Bernstein, 2015; Breitbarth, 2019).	List my relevant skills that align with my professional goals (Bernstein, 2015; Breitbarth, 2019). Ask students, staff, and connections to endorse my skills to increase credibility (Serdula, 2020; Bernstein, 2015).	25/09/23	If my profile is attracting a significant number of profile views, it indicates that people are interested in learning more about my professional background (Serdula, 2020; Bernstein, 2015; Breitbarth, 2019).
Write a summary (Serdula, 2020; Bernstein, 2015; Breitbarth, 2019).	By using the summary section to provide a brief overview of my professional journey, highlight my key strengths and accomplishments, and	25/09/23	If I am receiving messages from recruiters, potential clients, or industry professionals who express interest in my skills or expertise, it demonstrates that my profile is

	express my career goals and aspirations (Serdula, 2020; Bernstein, 2015; Breitbarth, 2019).		making a positive impression (Serdula, 2020; Bernstein, 2015; Breitbarth, 2019).
Connecting and engaging (Serdula, 2020; Dodaro, 2014; Breitbarth, 2019).	Building my professional network by connecting with colleagues, classmates, industry professionals, and others in my field (Dodaro, 2014; Breitbarth, 2019). Engage with my connections by liking, commenting on, and sharing relevant content (Serdula, 2020); Breitbarth, 2019).	10/06/24	Receiving connection requests from relevant professionals, industry peers, or potential employers suggests that my profile is engaging and appealing to others (Serdula, 2020; Dodaro, 2014; Breitbarth, 2019). When colleagues, classmates, industry professionals and others voluntarily endorse my skills, it signifies that others recognize my professional abilities (Serdula, 2020; Dodaro, 2014; Breitbarth, 2019).
Participate in groups and discussions (Serdula, 2020; Dodaro, 2014; Breitbarth, 2019).	Join LinkedIn groups related to my areas of interest (Dodaro, 2014; Breitbarth, 2019). Contribute to discussions, ask questions, and share my expertise to expand my network (Serdula, 2020; Dodaro, 2014; Breitbarth, 2019).	10/06/24	When my LinkedIn posts, articles, or updates receive likes, comments, and shares, it indicates that my content is resonating with my network (Serdula, 2020; Breitbarth, 2019).

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Professional Development Plan

However, if you have questions or want advice relating to a specific Module or Assignment then you should contact the Module Lecturer via the Forum on the relevant Module page on Moodle.
The Forum is effectively a Frequently Asked Questions section which allows all students to see the questions and answers for that Module. Your Personal Tutor can show you how to do this initially but it is your responsibility to make contact via the appropriate Forum

Professional Development Plan

Volunteering in Wales:

- **Volunteering Wales** - Information on volunteering in Wales. Search for opportunities in your area
- **GwirVol** - Information for volunteers aged 14-25 in Wales
- **WCVA** - Wales Council for Voluntary Action. The official body for volunteering in Wales

Interests:

- Becoming a volunteer is rewarding. Volunteers often feel good 'giving something back to society' through helping others.
- Charities and community groups constantly need volunteers to help them to improve other people's lives

Volunteering Action Plan		
Volunteering Opportunity	Date(s)	What did I gain from the experience?
Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) Mentor (UWTSD, 2023b)	09/22 – 05/23	A sense of fulfilment and personal satisfaction (Arens and Hamilton, 2010), helping other students progress with their academic degree (Elena and Lavrent, 2016). I gained practical skills such as communication, teamwork and problem-solving (Tibingana-Ahimbisibwe, 2016; Williams, 2002). broadened my perspective (Rix, <i>et al</i> , 2010), by exposing myself to different experiences and perspectives (Hines-Brigger, 2015). It improved my communication and interpersonal skills (Cottrell, 2017), such as active listening, empathy, conflict resolution, and cultural sensitivity (Williams, 2002). Symbolic Interactionism recognizes that individuals shape their perspectives and understanding of the world through interactions with others (Mead, 1934; Blumer, 1969). Through these interactions, I have had the opportunity to learn from others, challenge my preconceptions, and broaden my worldview (Mead, 1934; Blumer, 1969).
Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) Mentor (UWTSD, 2023b)	09/23 – 05/24	N/A

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Professional Development Plan

Section 11: Work Placement (if applicable)

Mobile Contact:	N/A	Own Transport?	Yes	☐	No	☐
Preferred Client Group and/or Setting:						
1st Choice Placement:						
N/A						

Availability:						
	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
A.M.	N/A					
P.M.	N/A					
Evening	N/A					
Additional Notes:						

N/A

Rationale -

One of the primary reasons I am drawn to a career as a social science researcher (Purdue University, 2023) is my deep-seated passion for knowledge and understanding (Indiana University, 2023), I am inherently curious about the world around me (Blumer, 1969; Mead, 1934; Hines-Brigger, 2015). By applying symbolic interactionism, I can delve into the complexities of human behaviours, social interactions, and the factors that influence them (Blumer, 1969; Mead, 1934). This sociological perspective encourages me to explore the meanings individuals assign to their experiences and how these meanings shape their interactions with others (Blumer, 1969; Mead, 1934). It also invites me to examine the broader social context and the role of societal structures, norms, and cultural influences in understanding human behaviours (Blumer, 1969; Mead, 1934). Pursuing a career in social science research allows me to continually explore and gain insights into various aspects of society (Mead, 1934) as well as fostering intellectual growth and fulfilment (Arens, Z. and Hamilton, R. (2010). Social science research plays a vital role in advancing our understanding of the social world (Dwyer, 2017; Hines-Brigger, 2015). By engaging in rigorous research methodologies (Creswell, no date; Creswell, 2013), collecting and analysing data (Schoonenboom, 2023), and critically evaluating existing theories (Purdue University, 2023), My goal is to make a significant and helpful contribution to the rapidly developing area of research in the social sciences (Purdue, University, 2023; Omobowale, Akanle and Busari, 2023). Through my research endeavours I aspire to uncover new insights, challenge conventional wisdom, and generate evidence-based findings that can inform policies, practices, and social interventions (Creswell, 2013; Bryman, 2016). By looking at this

through a critical lens, I am therefore demonstrating a commitment to questioning existing knowledge, challenging power dynamics, and generating research findings that can contribute to social change (Freire, 1970; Foucault, 1977). Social science research has the power to address pressing social issues and promote positive change (Omobowale, Akanle, O and Busari, 2023; Dwyer, 2017). I am driven by a desire to contribute to society by investigating and shedding light on social inequalities (Equality Act, 2010; Heymann and McNeill, 2019), discrimination, poverty, healthcare disparities, and other significant challenges (Dixon and Dutts, 1956; Weber, 1922). By conducting research that uncovers the root causes, consequences, and potential solutions to these issues, I aspire to influence policies (Omobowale, Akanle and Busari, 2023), advocate for marginalized communities (Omobowale, Akanle and Busari, 2023), and contribute to the development of more equitable and inclusive societies (Equality Act, 2010; UNDP, 2020; Heymann and McNeill, 2019). In an era marked by misinformation and subjective narratives (Lewandowsky, Ecker and Cook, 2017; Pennycook and Rand, 2017), the importance of evidence-based decision making cannot be overstated (Pennycook and Rand, 2017). As a social science researcher, I aim to provide reliable and valid data-driven insights to inform decision makers, policymakers, and practitioners (Creswell, 2013; Groves, 2009). By conducting robust research and disseminating findings in a clear and accessible manner, I can contribute to evidence-based practices and policies that address societal challenges effectively (Nutley, Walter and Davies, 2007). Critical Theory emphasizes the importance of promoting positive social change and challenging existing power structures that perpetuate inequality and injustices' (Horkheimer, 1976; Macdonald, 2017; Freire, 2000; Bourdieu, 1990). A career as a social science researcher offers a lifelong journey of learning and intellectual stimulation (Bryman, 2016; Charmaz, 2014). Based on the results of my self-assessment of learning styles, I have identified opportunities to enhance my strengths by exploring alternative learning styles (UWTSD, 2023c). I intend to utilise my preferred learning style while also challenging myself to incorporate less favoured styles into my learning approach (Kolb, 2014). Social science research provides opportunities to engage with cutting-edge research, collaborate with experts in the field, and attend conferences and seminars that foster intellectual growth (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). The ever-evolving nature of social sciences ensures that there is always more to explore, discover, and contribute to, allowing for a dynamic and fulfilling career path (Nowotny, Scott and Gibbons, 2001). Through the lens of Personal Development Theory, I am able to place my professional objectives into a context that highlights the need of self-awareness, continuous learning, goal setting, purpose, adaptability, and resilience (Bandura, 1997; Super, 1990). I am committed to personal development, fostering growth, and pursuing a

fulfilling and purpose-driven professional journey (Dweck, 2006; Covey, 2004). A career in social science research is in line with theories of personal development because it gives people chances to follow their passions and feel fulfilled, to keep learning and grow intellectually, to set and reach meaningful goals, to encourage self-reflection and self-improvement, and to have a positive effect on society (Deci and Ryan, 2000). By integrating personal development principles into my career path, I can enhance my professional growth, satisfaction, and overall well-being as a social science researcher (Boud, Keogh and Walker, 2013).

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