

Reflection changemakers

Introduction

The purpose of this essay is to reflect on my experiences during the module and draw and highlight the parts that I feel went well and the areas that I could improve on. I will conclude on my experiences on each topic and discuss an action plan for the future.

Gibbs Reflective Cycle

I used the Gibbs reflective cycle (The University of Edinburgh, 2020) to help me reflect on how I found the module as the framework gives structure to my learning experiences. I will draw on my positive and negative experiences through the following six stages:

- **Description** - of my experience
- **Feelings** - my thoughts about the experience
- **Evaluation** - good and bad evaluation of my experience
- **Analysis** - make sense of the situation
- **Conclusion** - on what I learnt and what I could do differently
- **Action plan** - on how I could deal with similar situations in the future or make changes that are more suited.

Question Process

I formulated the question regarding how people felt about Covid and working from home. The problem I identified as a result of my own experiences during the pandemic was to highlight and educate myself and peers on how others felt about working from home and how much support was offered from management and work colleagues.

On evaluation of the process, I went through with setting up the question by initially completing the units on Moodle to help me correctly formulate a question. The lecturer suggested to cut down the question I proposed and make it more specific. To make sense of the situation I did research around the topic online until I chose a question I felt was appropriate. A vital step in theory development is the formulation of good research question. Construction and formulation of a research question is a critical aspect of all types of research and by doing so will develop knowledge about a subject. Good research is deemed as valuable and encourages reflective activity (Alvesson and Sandberg,

2013). I did find the setting up the question a little stressful as I was worried about negative feedback and the question being too ambiguous.

In conclusion from my research for the question, while utilising information from textbooks and websites I would also watch videos on Youtube and television documentaries as it will give me further insight and statements from people with real life experiences from covid and working from home.

Documentaries can be educational and insightful. They are also a powerful way to communicate a message to the world effectively on global issues (Quinnen, 2023). Similarly, Jenkins (2022) states that documentaries engage audiences placing focus on real life events by giving the audience an intimate look into the people involved or a situation taking place. This can develop an understanding and avoid misconceptions of a preconceived opinion.

Collecting Data and Analysing Data

Primary Research

I applied the quantitative research method when creating a questionnaire for my primary research (Qualtrics, 2023) as I felt the data produced will be supported by numbers which will confirm my assumptions on the effects of the pandemic. The benefits of using quantitative data are that it is numbers led and measurable. The data can tell us how much, how many and how often through calculations (Fullstory, 2021). On evaluation I did make the right choice as statistical data is more appealing to me in understanding results. I did share the questionnaire with peers to complete and share feedback on design and value creation.

The questions on the questionnaire were designed as closed ended questions with 'yes' and 'no' as answers (McLeod, 2023). On analysis this context that I chose was a simple reflection on the assumptions that I was trying to convey into investigation. I was worried about peers responding to my questionnaire on time as I needed the results for my e-portfolio assessment. To make sense of the situation I asked my lecturer to check the link I sent. A problem I encountered was that the questionnaire was created on Google Forms which needed respondents to sign in to complete. This would provide difficult to those who do not have a Google account so, I decided to use MS forms on the university hub which I had previously used which was more straightforward as

there were less issues with the privacy settings, and it was viewable for everyone.

On analysis, I did get more indication of how my peers felt about remote working and how they felt mentally and emotionally and the sort of support they received from work mentors and colleagues and external support from family members and friends whether it was via teams, zoom or phone calls.

In conclusion I did eventually get response on my questionnaire, and I used the quantitative data to complete the assessment. I realised MS forms is more user friendly for university students as it creates graphs and gives people access to fill out the questionnaire. In the future I would make a test questionnaire and ensure it works before conducting a full questionnaire saving me time and uncertainty of it working for others.

Secondary Research

I used books and internet content for my secondary research to reference my work and validate and authenticate my statements. Referencing work signifies the quality of information and it also removes any doubt of plagiarism. Every academic manuscript submitted is scrutinised before acceptance for publication (National Library of Medicine, 2018).

I chose to use a combination of techniques which are deductive and inductive approaches. The two approaches were chosen as deductive and inductive methods go hand in hand (Sybing, 2023). Deductive reasoning research starts with a theory or a generalisation and then tests it through data collection and observations. To make sense of the situation I started with a general idea I had in mind and tested it through the information I sought to confirm my hypothesis (Question Pro, 2023). Inductive research is an investigation that starts with observations to an issue and develop and test theories on the subject. Inductive research starts with collected data and develops a hypothesis on what led to this data (Indeed, 2022).

In conclusion, applying deductive and inductive reasoning helped me find the relevant and current information to collect data. I was able to understand trends and pattern that affected people during the pandemic. Going forward I would like to look at more government and NHS reports to underpin my findings as I feel this information will be useful and specific to my research.

Elevator pitch

I made an elevator pitch video to pitch an idea to combat the effects of loneliness and isolation that were felt by remote workers. The video was 3-minute long via teams and a PowerPoint slide to highlight my findings and possible solutions for people's wellbeing. I posted the video on teams to get responses and feedback from peers to complete my reflection essay and to get an indication of my performance and were my recommendations appropriate. Peer to peer communication skills include potential to give and receive feedback. Feedback can act as an improvement report to whether a person has performed to expectations. Feedback can also aid in improving current and future activities and result in better decision making (LinkedIn, 2019).

Unfortunately, no one responded which was very disappointing and made me feel extremely low and anxious as I felt it must have been an awful pitch as no one made comments to help me complete my essay. I have struggled to complete the reflection part of my essays as no one responded.

On analysis, I did find out why no one responded as peers expressed that they simply did not have time to respond to everyone's videos that were put on teams as we had 4 deadlines for assignments simultaneously, so it was difficult for people to review the videos. It was difficult for my peers including me to review the elevator pitches due to the overload of work at this time of year. Oakwood Solicitors (2023) state that excessive workload can cause symptoms of stress, poor work life balance, less productivity, negative impact on health and burn out.

In conclusion, on watching and reviewing through my 3-minute elevator pitch and checking that my recommendations were correct and relevant to the covid pandemic, I felt that I met the targets that I wanted to achieve by answering the brief appropriately. Analysing oneself can prove difficult. Self-evaluation requires one to highlight own accomplishments and emphasise the impact the achievement has had and the value to the overall task (Freedman, 2023). I do realise that self-assessment is not all about triumphs, but I did not want to criticise myself too harshly as that would affect my morale. Moving forward with

my action plan I would like to do more research on how to engage and catch the eye of my peers. I Could use tips and templates that are available online. I need to practice my pitch and be more confident in my idea (Frost, 2023). I will also share my pitch link on several platforms, send messages on teams, student emails and message on the WhatsApp group and ensure feedback is given by a few peers so I could reflect and evaluate my pitch.

Conference Poster

I made a conference poster to highlight my findings based on my primary research via collecting data from the questionnaire on the impact of covid and working from home. The lecturer had briefed us to have no more than 500 words on the poster. A good poster word count should be between 300-800 words, contain important information and have a consistent clear layout (NYU Libraries, 2023). On the poster I published results, graphs and key conclusions and ensured the poster was aesthetically pleasing without bombarding the audience with too much information. Rossi (2018) states that only carefully selected visuals and information should be on a poster. The question should be asked, is this part necessary. The primary function of a poster is not to communicate everything from the research but to attract the audience's attention and start a dialogue.

On evaluation I wanted a poster that demonstrated my results, but I could not get all the information to fit so needed a lot of editing to make sure it was presented well.

On analysis I decided to split the poster in to three sections with subheadings. Each column was to discuss a topic. It is important to create a story, so the research needs a beginning, a middle and an ending. The introduction should contain necessary background information about the research such as the main characteristics of the story. The middle should contain what were found from the research question and the end should contain what the consequences of the journey were and what it means (Scientifica, 2023).

In conclusion I tried to show my findings in the poster that most people felt alone and hard to cope without support in place. I would like to watch video tutorials to ensure my poster is successful (Adcock, 2018: Stapleton, 2022).

If I were to change my approach in the future I would go to more small businesses and ask them how they coped with covid and employee's wellbeing and what sort of support they would put in place. This could support my

primary research further. Face to face interviews is a big advantage as it captures verbal and non-verbal cues, there is flexibility to probe deeper and helps keeps respondents focused (Smart Survey, 2023).

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