

RESEARCH PROCESS REFLECTION

Kolb's Learning Cycle

This learning cycle involves a continuous cycle of experience, conceptualisation and experimentation as opposed to linear progression (Wijnen-Meijer, 2022). I have used this learning cycle to reflect on the research process.

Concrete Experience

During the research, I first focused on identifying a suitable industry, which helped me improve my research skills. Greenhalgh and Manzano (2022) state that understanding research contexts is essential for deriving value from it regarding academic contributions. As such, I integrated my existing knowledge regarding how inclusive leadership helps in improving staff motivation. Concerning this prospect, I was also able to leverage my critical thinking skills to underpin a suitable research problem which requires addressing.

Reflective Observation

During the research process, I came across new experiences such as examining suitable research methods and constructing valid findings and results. However, due to the huge volume of research required, I was not able to effectively manage my time while covering new chapters. Time management is a core skill which is required for researchers to ensure multiple requirements are met within a specific timeframe effectively (van Sluijs and Matzat, 2024). As such, my deficit in time management skills limited my ability to focus on some areas of the research more, which would have yielded stronger results.

On another note, I also understood how DEI initiatives in the workplace give rise to staff motivation levels. This further complemented my problem-solving skills when, during the research, I was able to provide evidence-based suggestions. They were tailored for enhancing industry-wide practices regarding the UK automotive industry to improve staff motivation levels.

Abstract Conceptualisation

I got significant insights into the UK automotive industry and how different leaders within it use inclusivity to impact staff motivation levels. McNulty and Politis (2023) reflect on emotional intelligence as an essential skill for demonstrating empathy and managing stress levels. As a result, it helped me to understand limitations of my emotional intelligence skills as I struggled while managing research delays, which led to higher levels of stress. The research process also helped me in understanding how to systematically address multiple variables in a study while effectively addressing research objectives and questions.

Active Experimentation

I have identified three areas of weakness regarding my personal development skills. As such, I have constructed an action plan complemented by SMART objectives below for improving my skills for future research studies:

Objectives	Specific	Measurable	Achievable	Relevant	Time-bound
Improving emotional intelligence skills	Keeping daily logs of frustration triggers	Tracking emotional state in my journal	Improving self-awareness while interacting with others	It will enhance my data collection quality and academic resilience	2 months
Improving adaptability skills	Learning to use new digital tools	Completing certification courses and measuring progress	Adapting to the shifting research and data collection tools	It will allow me to embrace uncertainty during research and support continuous learning endeavours	4 months
Improving time management skills	Prioritising tasks based on deadlines	Keeping track of task completion across multiple areas digitally for viewing real-time progression	I can transition from task-lists which are open-ended to a more structured workflow for task prioritisation	Highly relevant in helping me to meet strict deadlines and minimise distractions	7 months

Table 1: Action Plan

(Source: Self-developed)

The application of the above action plan targets positive outcomes in terms of improving my skills in three distinct areas to enhance future research outputs.