**Reflective Piece on Research Methods and Professional Practice (**[**RMPP\_PCOM7E March 2023**](https://www.my-course.co.uk/course/view.php?id=9736&section=0)**)**

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<https://nkosanamlambo.github.io/e-Portfolio/Module8.html>

This module comprised collaborative discussions amongst my peers on key topics relating to ethical conduct in real-world scenarios, module activities, lecture casts, seminars, and summative assignments that prepared us in formulating a quality research paper.

This was a valuable module and at the start of the module, I was not well-prepared in terms of time as I had other engagements. The reading material was of much help, although time-consuming, it provided a lot of insight into concepts of deductive and inductive methods of reasoning, the essence of research, and the importance of ethics. This was an empowering module as it set the foundation and the tone for the capstone project of the course and depicted the importance of ethics in research writing, how they all fit in together, and why ethics should be part of every aspect of the research journey. Another interesting aspect I feel would have been beneficial was introducing the concepts of positivism and post-positivism, which (Adam, 2013) Defines as the epistemological and methodological frame of reference that defines the attitude and relation of the researcher to the production of data and the selection of research tools and methods.

This module also epitomised the idea of gathering my thoughts around my research, formulating the right topic, asking the right questions, and planning the literature review and research proposal. I had some anxiety in this module and had a difficult time choosing a topic as I believed this was also important as I can choose a topic that I’m knowledgeable about, which I think can be risky as it can be difficult to be objective and have biased outcomes, and a topic with little knowledge about which can provide a benefit of attaining knowledge from.

The reading material (Dawson, 2015) was of assistance in terms of creating a blueprint and drafting ideas for the final literature review and research proposals. The drawback I experienced which can hamper my performance is catching up with the reading and activities as I had other work and family commitments, whilst simultaneously enrolled in another module pertaining to digital forensics and cyber law.

This module also covered the research methods and data collection methods in research. I realized in this module that there are a lot of components that build up a good and quality research paper. I struggled to grasp some of the techniques, and which methods to use based on the research topic and objectives, this could be because I was behind with reading material and had to set some time aside to go through the material and doing further independent reading to gain an understanding on approaching a research design and methods.

After spending some time on a weekend reading, the focus was on the data collection methods, specifically, case studies, focus groups, and observations. I was surprised that I found the part of the module quite easy to comprehend, and I believe this is the extensive reading that I have undergone.

I found it also important to understand when to use the data collection methods and to begin with the end in mind on visualizing the type of data you would like to get from using each of the methods. One interesting aspect was that of a case study, as I learned that there are more uses of a case study beyond the research (Crowe et al., 2011) and I really believe it’s a pertinent tool to use in real-life experiences, and to gain an understanding of different situations, and to test theories and hypotheses.

This will be of value in my personal and professional development as I will use a case study in many situations to solve complex problems and make sound decisions and judgments.

Another important aspect was that of interviews, surveys, and questionnaires. I learned that there is so much more involved when it comes to these data collection techniques. My initial ideas for these data collection methods were that you decide on the information that you require, create the questionnaire, and collect and report on the findings.

This is not the case and is not as simple as the average person will think. Much is involved in creating questionnaires and surveys, and some important aspects need to be taken into consideration. I realized that it’s important that surveys and questionnaires need to be ethically conducted, they should not contain any bias in them as this could negatively impact the outcome of the results. Surveys also need to protect the respondents and not cause any harm, protect, and anonymize personal information, be transparent, and obtain consent from the respondents (Barrow et al., 2022) (Kaiser, 2009) (Fisher, 2020).

I also had a research proposal presentation submission in the form of an audio-visual. I was quite nervous about this assessment as I have always struggled with public speaking and conducting oral presentations. What was important about this assessment is that it evaluated not only my ability to write a quality research proposal, but also to articulate it, communicate, and present it. This also focused on presentation skills.

Muthusamy (2019) states that:  
 “Learning to put together a simple and well-organized presentation will give students confidence and help them be more successful in the future. Therefore, students must realize the importance of presentation skills before stepping into industrial training or a full-time job.**”**

Another important component was statistical worksheets on summary measures, charts, and hypothesis testing. I did not struggle much with the worksheets as I have done similar exercises in my undergraduate studies, the only difference here is that I had to use an Excel spreadsheet which proved to be valuable and simplistic. I’m glad the worksheets provided examples and a comprehensive guideline and explanation on each of them, and these would prove to be of value in the future when conducting statistical analysis of this sort.

In essence, this module has been a valuable aid towards the capstone project module as I believe it has provided me with the required foundation in producing the

The tutor’s developmental feedback from the assessments and the learning activities in this module has been valuable in improving my writing and presentation skills. I’m happy that I have been able to identify my weaknesses, and areas of improvement. I am excited to move forward with this journey and I now plan to manage my time more effectively, plan my capstone project well in advance, engage in more reading, and a self-study to take on my capstone project. Time management enhances job performance, academic achievement, and well-being (Aeon et al.,2021).

**References**

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