# Reflections

At the start of the academic year, I expected statistical analysis to be very difficult and something which I should not concentrate on as I thought I could avoid it by carrying out qualitative analysis of data. Moreover, I already had significantly less knowledge and skills of statistical analysis as I did not learn about it in my prior academic years, compared to my peers who demonstrated in live seminar sessions that they already have statistical analysis skills.

However, by thinking that something is difficult and trying to avoid doing its not a good approach, as studies suggest Individuals with a growth mindset realize that their capabilities are not fixed, even if they feel that they are struggling with specific tasks. They believe that through hard work, their skills would develop with time (Rhew, et al., 2018).

So therefore, by understanding and reading essential journals I developed skills and knowledge and I realised that Statistical analysis using Quantitative data is important too as much as qualitative data analysis for in depth and accurate results. To improve my achievement, I perhaps can also try to attend more seminars which would aid in my knowledge. In the future I can apply these skills to my final research project and aim to have a growth mindset.

Additionally in the Research Methods module there was a mandatory worksheet for Statistical analysis we had to complete which I was not confident about having no prior skills as compared to my peers who stated that the worksheets were easy when I asked them. Studies suggest well-designed worksheets have had positive impacts on students’ learning achievement (Sasmaz-Oren & Ormanci, 2012). And McDowell and Waddling (1985) proposed that worksheets enhancing students' learning of information and skills.

Therefore, as a result although I did find the worksheets challenging, I gained a significant amount of skills in statistical analysis which I did not have before, but as the module only included two worksheets, to improve my skills further I could perhaps attempt more worksheets by independently finding them. In the future (for the next batch of students) I would probably suggest that the course includes an increased number of worksheets for students to attempt.

As for the research methods process, every process holds a significant importance, if one of them is missing then the project will be unsatisfactory the way I learnt this was by undergoing the research methods module, I gained knowledge and was able to identity all processes. But did not quite understand the importance of making sure each of the process is clearly defined in the project. After submitting my research proposal presentation for the module my tutor explained in the feedback that I did not clearly explain the research problem and significance of it but rather briefly included it inside my literature review section thereafter I realised and learnt that each of the research method processes need to have a dedicated section that clearly explains the process.

Therefore, it’s important to remember that the importance and the value of what is learnt is far more important than just memorising, because there is merely no benefit in memorising something if you don’t understand and are unaware of the reasons of why you have memorised it. Ultimately This skill will be useful for me throughout my life, academically and in my professional workplace.

The impact to professional and personal experience can be discussed in reference to the Professional skills matrix and associated Action Plan document which was completed at the start of the course (The links to the documents are given below).

As for communication skills I previously rated my skill level as trained. I now believe my skill level is proficient/expert I believe I have enough in-depth knowledge to enable me to express information to both technical and non-technical audiences by the aid of reports, diagrams, charts etc with little to no supervision required. In the future I aim to carry on practising my communication skills by conducting the final research project. As well as professionally applying my skills to the workplace

Additionally, I was not confident about my level of skills regarding policies of IT, and code of conduct at the beginning of the module as I have never been employed in a professional IT career as compared to my peers where majority of them are employed in one for several years.

So, in a professional workspace when dealing with personal data every individual is responsible for following the data protection principles (Data protection, 2022) This is relevant to me as in the future I will be employed in an IT career which most likely deals with personal data. Therefore I found this aspect very important and paid close attention to it and after completing several modules of the course I now feel proficient-expert in policies and code of conduct.

As a result, even though adhering to policies and principles can be a huge responsibility I feel confident enough to be able to apply my knowledge in the workplace in the future in a professional setting and to improve and keep a reminder of this I can perhaps take quizzes to test my knowledge.

Discussion forums were an aspect of this distance learning course which was new to me so when I was first introduced to it, I felt and assumed that it was unnecessary. Studies show it allows for peers and tutors to conveniently interact with each other and is the core of online training since learners from various places may easily engage and learn from one another (Wilson and Fairchild, 2010). Eventually towards the end of the course, I improved in participating in discussion forums by delivering quality posts and collaborating efficiently with peers.

But in some discussion forums most peers’ responses were very similar to each other which I felt like was not effective. This could be because we were given specific bullet points to mention about in our answer which took away the chance for us to explore wider reading and stuck to only answering those specific ones.

In the future to improve this process possibly there could be an open opportunity for people to answer and possibly more discussion forums so we have a choice which one we would like to participate in. I would probably suggest the former suggestion as the latter one may result in a single student participating in a specific discussion forum whilst the rest of the peers are participating in others.

References

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