Experimental Design Reflective Statement

In our first meeting, we discussed our ideas and came to the conclusion that we all preferred bioinformatics, and had a particular interest in viruses. We each researched a different common virus and later shared our findings. Many members of the group found Coronaviruses most interesting (understandable considering the pandemic), however, I did feel that it was a slightly poor choice due to lack of information on it. Although we did discuss this, I feel that people's interest in the virus overcame this concern. This issue became particularly prevalent when researching the percentage of O-type blood for countries; it was difficult to find resources, and many got information from seemingly unreliable sources. At this point, I should have again stressed the lack of sources and suggested we chose to study another virus. I think I avoided this as I felt my efforts would prove futile – I can't imagine anyone would be happy about changing topics after collecting information for 62 countries. However, I should have still mentioned this, as others may have agreed.

The most key part of the project was carrying out the statistical tests in R. My skills in R are poor, and so are my understanding of the statistical tests (Pearson's Parametric Correlation, and Linear Regression), so I couldn't provide much help. I volunteered to write the methods section, but I needed a lot of assistance to ensure it was thorough. Therefore, I should take the time over the winter break to go over the R and statistics workshops to reinforce my understanding, and ask for explanations from other group members.

Towards the end of our project, my main role was gathering information and making up the poster. I have an art background and enjoy creating graphics, so this task was quite enjoyable. For the purposes of sharing the poster with everyone, it was put together on Google Slides. I was a little uneasy at first, as Google Suite has limited formatting options (compared to Microsoft), but after working on it I found ways to work around this. I now feel very confident producing posters this way - it especially makes things simpler as others can see the poster and make suggestions.

Overall, I found this to be my most positive experience of group work. Our work was well divided, and communication was mostly excellent. I think that online working really helped me personally with this. In future, I will try to have the faith to communicate any concerns with others and will try to access support for my social anxieties. I will be sure to let my group members know what my strengths are so that I can focus efforts on these – York Strengths identified that I am a 'problem solver', and I enjoy design work. By working to my strengths I will get tasks done more efficiently. I will also make the effort to attempt things that I am not confident with to improve my skill (such as R).