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Sociology 345

Reflection

My process for doing academic research has changed since the beginning of the semester because I have been able to further my research on these activities in different forums. My project at Madeline's House has made me more interested in continuing research. I have taken a few classes about doing research, but I was never able to conduct my own. I feel as though this semester let me truly understand the advantages and difficulties that come with researching and data collection. I am grateful for this experience because I was able to decide how I wanted everything to be done. I was able to go at my own pace and learn along the way.

My process for evaluating and selecting sources for my research has improved. I can decipher what sources are accurate and come from a reliable source, rather than articles that come from a simple google search. I found that the most reliable sources come from published journals and respectable databases. I did not change any of my sources for this assignment because I made sure to find them through published journals, databases such as PsychNet, and the NCFR conference. I felt as though all of these sources were the best data I could find for this specific project.

One challenge I encountered in this class was that participants may not always respond to surveys. I have learned that this can happen throughout research classes. My sample of participants was very small and I already had the chance of low response rate. I worked throughout the last two semesters on this project to get to this point of data collection. I encountered the challenge of only having one response. Thus, making my progress come to a

halt. I had to overcome this challenge by using proxy data that correlated with my research. I used the class data to see how a parent's current relationship with their child affected the amount of enjoyment they had during the stress ball balloon activity. This was the closest I could come to compare proxy data to what I would have gotten from Madeline's House.

I feel as though my confidence level has increased with doing research. I did not think that I would enjoy it as much as I did. I think feeling the accomplishment of creating a program and then developing assessment tools. I think this class made me feel more confident about what it means to do research and how to be successful at it.

I think it means to "think like a researcher" means to view something unbiasedly and use strategies that make for reliable data. Instead of having a closed mind about something, research makes you have an open mind. I liked looking at a problem or phenomenon that people have mixed views about and seeing what correlates and what does not.