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During my time in Social Research and Project Evaluation, I have learned many skills pertaining to academic research. I was always wary of performing research in previous classes, I used to not know how to determine if an article was credible and I would also often get confused in understanding and reading the information within credible sources. I also used to be unsure of how to conduct and or propose research ideas. However, this class left me with a wide range of knowledge to use moving forward in future research projects and or tasks. For example, I learned how to find reliable sources in an effective and efficient manner. In order to do so, I would make sure that articles were published and reviewed by credible sources, I would find if other articles agreed and or “backed” the findings. In fact, I used these skills in order to successfully complete my Literature Review.

One of the biggest challenges I faced in this class came from surveys and analyzing the data. My group did not receive enough surveys back to thoroughly analyze and interpret data. However, this only taught me that in order to conduct research, you may need to use more than one method for collecting data. I also had a hard time analyzing any data that I was given. This is simply because I am not the strongest with math, however after some time and practice, it became easier and it allowed me to fully understand the results of the project. I was able to do this through communication with other class peers and my professor. Usually, in classes, I am nervous to ask for help, however, this assignment encouraged me to ask for advice so that I could be able to correctly complete the assignment.

Over the course of the semester, I would say that my confidence level in conducting research has drastically increased. There are still areas that need improvement, however, as previously stated, this will come with time and practice. Although I may not entirely enjoy conducting or writing research, I am now more prepared to do so. This course has also taught me how to “think like a researcher.” I believe that I am much more observant and critical with my work and the interactions I experience. I am constantly asking questions and allowing my curiosity to lead me in finding answers.

Lastly, this class has taught me many skills in leadership. More specifically, the process of conducting a research project has allowed me to learn a significant amount of skills relating to group projects, research, and communication. This project has taught me how to step up and voice my opinion in order to bring a group together. Most importantly, this research project has taught me how to be a leader. In previous group work I am usually shy and quiet, allowing other people in my group to step up and take the role of being leader. For this assignment I was chosen to be the leader which forced me to step outside of my comfort zone. This project also allowed me to work on my communication and organizational skills. When working with a group, it can often be hard to communicate with various members and it may be hard to delegate and decide tasks. However, I feel that I was able to successfully help group members decide what steps to take and how to accomplish their tasks. I also learned many organizational skills through planning times to meet with group members and which tasks were to be accomplished.