Kayla Blevins

12/12/2024

SOCL345

**Reflection**

Throughout the course of the semester, and even throughout my academic career, my research methods have been fairly unorganized. In the past, I had often looked past the importance of high quality sources and instead focused on simply finding sources that validated my main thesis. However, during this course, I found that including sources that state different or unknown perspectives on my personal thesis helps to build a stronger foundation. When looking for a quality source, I focused primarily on peer-reviewed articles from the past 10 years that offered multiple perspectives to my thesis. If an article had everything I was looking for but did not meet those requirements, I did not include it in my bibliography. When working on the final assignment, I kept most of the same original articles from the bibliography, but I added a few additional ones that I found later throughout the course of my research.

Due to the specificity of my research topic, it was particularly challenging to find recent and quality sources that backed up my thesis. In order to find more sources, I had to broaden my search by making it less specific. Originally, my search was focused on the impacts that being specifically in a single-mother household had on kids and early education. Instead, I broadened my search by looking at single-parents and childhood education. By doing so, I found more quality articles that may not have had exactly what I was looking for originally, but there were enough points that supported my thesis that I could include.

Overall, my attitudes and perceptions have changed about research because I now see the importance of having multiple different kinds of perspectives in the articles I include in my bibliography. While writing past papers, I always overlooked having different opinions because I thought that including them would hurt my overall thesis. However, I can see now that having those opinions actually helps to support my thesis. As a result, my confidence level when conducting research has greatly increased, mostly because I found it incredibly fulfilling to see my personal research be proven by our survey. Therefore, I believe that “thinking like a researcher” means approaching a topic by having an open mind, considering multiple different perspectives, and always wanting to find more evidence to make sure that your thesis is well-supported.