**Reflection: Research Development**

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Being able to work with Longwood University’s Sociology Department to evaluate Family Fun Time Activities, their influence on family involvement, and the activities relation to socio-economic status (SES) allowed me to gain valuable skills and experience. The research conducted was mixed method, collecting both qualitative and quantitative data. The use of both forms of data collection allowed my skills in data analysis to develop. When examining qualitative responses, one must be able to find common themes in open answers left by participants, taking in their suggestions and what they felt and learned throughout the experience; which I was able to obtain. I was able to acquire the skill of coding quantitative data to interpret the results and what they suggest.

To achieve this, I had to work with my fellow researchers and collaborate with others to assess the family activities and create surveys which had to appropriately measure our independent and dependent variables. Creating the surveys required knowledge of critical analysis, planning, scheduling, and understanding the best way of wording questions for participates to understand and want to answer. When analyzing survey questions as a researcher I had to examine whether these questions were of good quality. This included considering whether they were double barreled, leading questions, overbearing, unbiased, and achieved the goal of the research. The completion of the survey had to be done in a timely manner. I had to work on a strict time schedule and had to work accordingly to the necessities of my peers and the head researchers. Due to this, I learned conducting research may not go as planned. However, I learned it was important to ensure the quality was efficient even if there was a lack in time left due to a delay in survey responses.

I was able to work under pressure and assist with developing a survey to conduct research to evaluate program effectiveness, while considering the comfortability of the information asked from the participants. After conducting the research, myself and others were able to format and communicate our data, themes, and information found from the results in a presentation. I was able to strengthen my ability to communicate ideas and data to audiences who do not specialize in research.

The process included many obstacles which involved working independently and problem-solving outside of the research facility, devoting my whole self to the research. These situations involved a delay in receiving surveys, uploading and coding the data, and ensuring the results and information were successfully prepared for presentation submission. These obstacles may have been challenging, but I was able to work through them and have a successful study to present.

Moreover, as a researcher I had to pay close attention to detail to ensure what was being reported was appropriate and accurate. Goals had to be set and objectives had to be put in place to be sure what was needed for the research was to be done, skills that have become strengths from this process. I also was able to be open-minded and take what comes with the research including a lack in responses and participants pulling from the research. My experience with technology also advanced with coding, entering data, creating tables, and running formulas.

As a researcher I was able to gather and analyze information. I was able to build my knowledge and understanding in conducting research and program analysis. The opportunity made it possible for me to interact with those of different backgrounds and experiences. I was even able to examine their personal responses and apply it to real world circumstances and how to influence their overall quality of family involvement. With the assistance of my peers, head researchers, and participants, I was able to grow academically and understand the world beyond my personal perception.