**Heather Harris post to week 4 discussion 1**

**Identify an aspect of this topic you feel should be studied using qualitative methods.**

While much research has been done into various aspects of dysthymia, and this research has shown that there are a large amount of people suffering from persistent depressive disorder, there is still much to be learned.  It has been discovered that the two main factors for depression are chemical imbalances in the brain, and prior histories that cause this issue.

It has yet to be determined what time the catalysts that cause an onset of depression occur.  It is believed that most depressive onset occurs at night as this is the time when the brain is beginning to relax and unwanted memories have the opportunity to resurface causing anxiety and depression.

**Apply the scientific method to this research issue and develop a specific research question.**

Step 1- Question. – Is there a specific time frame during the day when depressive episodes become more apparent?

Step 2-Research. – Is there a way to identify and record depressive episodes in real time to be able to gain the most information from each incident?

Step 3-Hypothesis. – Through the introduction of real time recording of depressive episodes, researchers can isolate the catalysts that cause depression in some individuals helping the patient possibly avoid them in the future.  Null hypothesis – Recording devices will not aid in the identification of catalysts as research subjects will not utilize them as needed and the information gathered will be irrelevant.

Step 4-Experiment. – Using a pretest/posttest method to gauge depression levels and previously identified catalysts, research subjects will be given voice recording devices to use in the event they feel a depressive state approaching.  They will also be given a list of questions to answer regarding activities prior to depressive state, and individuals around them at the time they first notice the problem. As well as symptoms and emotions at the time they are recording as well as all memory of these things before the onset of the depressed state.

Step 5-Observations. –  At the end of each day, digital recordings will be obtained of the daily log (regardless of whether an episode occurred or not). All data will be analyzed to find similarities.  At the end of the experiment, the devices will be collected, and a posttest will be administered to further uncover the thoughts and feelings of the participants.  Additional questions will include the volunteer’s personal thoughts on the experiment and how they viewed the information collected.

Step 6-Results/Conclusion. – At the conclusion, we should be able to help clients identify catalysts that impact their mental well-being and cause depressive states which would then help them potentially avoid them in the future.

Step 7- Communicate. Present/share your results. Replicate

**Compare the characteristics and appropriate uses of various qualitative research designs and choose an appropriate qualitative  design for this research question.**

Frost (2011) describes grounded theory approaches as being focused on causal events.  Since many psychological issues (including depression) have a foundation in causal events this method could be used to identify the events leading up to the depressive state.  However, depression is often associated with chemical issues as well, and to treat both forms of depression in the same manner could cause detrimental problems for the patient.

**Create a feasible research design that includes plans for the sample selection, data collection, and data analysis.**

I would like to use a Solomon Four-Group research method.  This method will allow for any discrepancies that may occur in using the pretest method while at the same time give us insight into the mental processes of addicted individuals.  Using online support groups and snowballing methods to obtain volunteers to participate in this experiment will be the best methods to use to collect data as people in these areas are already working into the mindset, they want help with their addiction and may want to help. Data collection will entail using recording devices that will allow for the daily upload of digital data so analysis can begin immediately.  This will also, keep the volunteers connected to the experiment and give them the feeling of participation as they give us daily updates of their progress throughout the experiment.

**Apply ethical principles to your design by explaining how this type of qualitative design may affect the participants in your study and how you will deal with sociocultural issues.**

Many ethical issues can be avoided by being open about the purpose of this experiment.  Since the primary focus of this experiment is to identify catalysts that cause onsets of depressive states, it is imperative to be open about the purpose of the experiment.  Collection of immediate data pertaining to what happened previously to the episodes will allow for accurate data collection.  Personal identifiable markers will be removed from all data collected to protect the subjects from anyone outside the research team.  The collection of this data is intended to be used to benefit those suffering from depression and nothing collected can be used to cause harm.  According to the American Psychological Association (2017) states the ethical principles as being beneficence and non-maleficence, fidelity and responsibility, integrity, justice and respect for people’s rights and dignity, since these principles have been identified and addressed in this experiment, we have reduced the risk to research subjects.

References

American Psychological Association. (2017). [Ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct: Including 2010 and 2016 amendments (Links to an external site.)](http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx). Retrieved from http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx

Frost, N. (2011). [*Qualitative research methods in psychology*](https://ashford.instructure.com/courses/77436/external_tools/retrieve?display=borderless&url=https%3A%2F%2Flibrary.ashford.edu%2FAccount%2FLtiLogin.aspx%3Fcustom_redirectresource%3Dhttps%3A%2F%2Flibrary.ashford.edu%2Fezproxy.aspx%3Furl%3Dhttp%253A%2F%2Fsite.ebrary.com%2Flib%2Fashford%2Freader.action%3FdocID%3D10491760). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.