**An Examination of the Relationship between Mental Health and Social Contact**

**Methodology**

The main purpose of the methodology section in a research paper is to provide imperative information to the readers as well as the future researchers about the manner in which the investigation was carried forth. It can also be stated that the methods that the researchers have used in the present study for solving the research problem. The methods that have been used for answering the research questions of the study can also be outlined in this section. Moreover, it must also contain adequate information, which can help other researchers to conduct a similar type of reports. It must further highlight the subjects and instruments used along with data analysis techniques (Brink, Van der Walt & Van Rensburg, 2006). Considering the type of research, which is being conducted in this study, the research objectives can be successfully met by using qualitative methods rather than quantitative the approaches. This is due to the fact that these approaches behavioural patterns within the healthcare organizations/clinical settings can be effectively examined (McNulty & Ferlie, 2002). Hence, understanding this aspect, qualitative methods have been chosen for conducting the present research study.

**Research Paradigm Justification**

According to Vogel, Guo, Linger, Barry, Lang & Schneider (2016), the framework, which t is to examine this research must reflect all the methodological components i.e. paradigm, theory, method, and analysis. It was observed that there are mainly three research paradigms, which have been practiced by nursing professionals in their researches. This includes being naturalistic, positivist/empirical and phenomenological approaches. Contextually, the naturalistic approach is a type of study, which is done in a natural setting. For example, going out in the community and working with them for the completion of the study. On the contrary, the positivist approach refers to the scientific study, which uses quantitative methods such as a testing theory. For instance, measuring scores and outcome before and after the intervention can be termed as a positivist study. Even though naturalistic paradigm has been associated with positivism, the main aim is to study a particular phenomenon in its natural setting in order to gather producing related theories (McIntosh-Scott, Mason, Mason-Whitehead & Coyle, 2013). Among all these approaches and research paradigms, the most feasible one for the present study is a naturalistic paradigm using qualitative methods such as phenomenology.

In consideration of the research that is conducted in this study, positivistic and scientific approaches could also be selected, as it uses quantitative methods such as experimental design, surveys, content, and interaction analysis. Methods using varied types of qualitative approaches could also be selected such as ethnography, case studies, and in-depth interviews. Additionally, different theoretical understanding can also be gathered in the study using methods such as hermeneutics or narrative enquiries, life histories and, stories (Jackson, 2012). However, the paradigm chosen for this research is naturalistic because due to the nature of the study. In this research, the relationship between social contact as well as mental health must be examined. Hence, in order to study this phenomenon, research must be conducted in a natural setting. Therefore, the information related to the connection between mental health and social contact can be collected from nursing professionals from different healthcare settings. This study can be better conducted using phenomenology. This is because as per McIntosh-Scott et al. (2013), phenomenology can be used for understanding the experiences as well as the thoughts of varied groups of people within their natural settings. Hence, effective utilisation of this approach can efficiently consider the experiences of the nurses. This can further have the potential in understanding the opinions of the nurses on the relationship between social contact and mental health patients. Moreover, the nurse professionals can also provide imperative suggestions for improving social contact among the mental health patients. This is mainly to enhance their health condition. This shows that both the naturalistic paradigm and phenomenological approach are the most feasible methods for this research study.

**Emerges from Research Question**

In order to perform a successful research, the methodology must emerge from a research question so that the required outcomes can be obtained after it is conducted within a natural setting. Hence, the question has been addressed in the study to meet the aim and objective. The research question is as follows;

How mental health of people is related to social contacts?

**Methodology Used to Reflect the Paradigm**

According to McNulty & Ferlie (2002), the methodological stance must reflect the paradigms for meeting the objectives and aim of the study. Therefore, in order to address this requirement, phenomenology has been used to effectively to reflect the naturalistic paradigm in the present study. In this context, in-depth interviews with the nursing professionals can be conducted comprising open-ended questions related to the relationship between social contact and mental health, which can be examined by developing specific themes. According to Pope & Mays (2013), a qualitative research must be conducted by maintaining ethical considerations such as anonymity, confidentiality, privacy, and informed consent of the participants. The same ethical aspects have been taken into high consideration in this study.

**References**

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