Scholarly Essay of Engaging with Research in Educational Leadership. Assignment (100%): a 4000-word scholarly, critical analysis and reflection as follows: Part 1: Literature Review A critical literature review in relation to an aspect of educational leadership. As well as providing a substantive review of the literature it should include an explanation of how sources were chosen and why: for example, what parameters were set; what search terms used and why. Critical reflections on lessons learnt about carrying out a literature review should be included within the assignment. Choose a topic, ideally one which might be of interest for your dissertation. Write a thematic literature review on this topic. You should: • Compare and contrast the findings about this topic from previous research (i.e.do NOT just summarise the publications). • Critically evaluate the body of research throughout your comparison. • Come to a conclusion about the strengths and weaknesses of current research on the topic. • Outline if there are any research gaps on this topic (i.e. areas that have been under-researched and are in need of more attention in future research). Important note: You will NOT be able to use this assignment directly as a chapter in your dissertation. Therefore, choose a topic that is related to your dissertation interests or broader than your particular dissertation idea, so that you can still use the information you learn (but not the exact words you write). Your literature review should deal with the character and nature of the work you are reviewing. If it is a research focussed source then you need to provide details of how the data was collected and analysed, so some information with regard to methodology. If it is a theoretical source, you should identify this and provide an insights as to how the theory was generated, or what theory was applied. Ultimately, this is in order for you to be able to give an authoritative view on how reliable, and relevant the research is to your review, your narrative and your argument. Page | 2 If you do not engage with the character of the literature in this way, then you will not be addressing the learning outcomes as developed, throughout this Unit ‘Engaging with Research in Educational Leadership’. For example, do not write a descriptive and discursive ‘essay’ which involves the literature to back up the points you are making, instead of getting into the details of the research. Requirements: • A clear topic in the form of a title or question which is related to the field of education • Minimum 10-12 academic sources (you can use more) • Only academic sources used (books, journal articles, reliable research reports) • Most sources should be research-based This assignment is worth 75% of your overall module mark. Word count: 3,000 words (+/- 10%). Part 2: Critical Reflection A reflective account of your learning on the course unit and the influence this had had on your professional practice. You should show how your thinking has developed since the beginning of the course. For those who can, you may draw on the discussions you had during the opening conference. Alternatively, you can refer to your first postings and portfolio contributions from the early themes or unit one. This is intended to show the ‘baseline’ understanding they established to think about how your knowledge is developing as a result of this course unit and how this has, or can influence your professional practice. Word count: 1,000 words (+/- 10%). Please note there is the opportunity to submit a draft reflection for your tutor to give feedback on. Submit your draft by the beginning of Week 8 (please see Key Dates for exact deadline), via your PebblePad portfolio. Page | 3 Suggested structure Part 1: Literature Review Introduction: explain the topic and context, why the topic is important (using evidence!), and give any necessary definitions (250-300 words) Approach: explain how you found your sources, what databases you used, what keywords you used, and what selection or exclusion criteria you applied and why (200-300 words) Main body: organise your paragraphs according to themes or issues which appear in the research. Choose themes that appear in several sources to let you compare. Critically evaluate throughout. You could divide this into 2-3 sections with subheadings. (1800-2100 words) Conclusion: reach an overall evaluation of what is known, the strengths and weaknesses of current research in the area, and what research gap(s) exist (i.e. what future research still needs to find out) (250-300 words) Part 2: The Critical Reflection The critical literature review requires some preparation and guidance. It will encompass 25% of the marks, so you should apportion 1000 words +/- 10%. to this task. For this reflective account you should use Gibbs (1988) reflective cycle. Description: Identify two learning points relevant to this unit and consider how you may apply (or have applied) these factors to your professional practice. Include perceived consequences. Feeling: How did you feel upon discovering this? What did you find unexpected from the event? Why did those involved act the way they did? Evaluate: What have you learned? Has the event changed your way of thinking? Analysis: What alternative actions could have been taken and what would be the predicted consequences? How does the wider context apply to your situation as a future leader? Page | 4 Action point: What will you do to incorporate these learning points into your own leadership development? How will you use this in the future? Consider setting a SMART target. Formatting and submitting your work Format: Times New Roman, Calibri or Arial font, size 12, line spacing 1.5. Use subheadings in bold to organise your essay. Secondary subheadings should be in italics. References: You must use a minimum of 10-12 sources in this assignment. This is only a minimum, however, and your topic may require more. Use ONLY academic sources (books, journals, reliable research reports). You may use any citation style of your choosing, so long as it is used consistently throughout your assignment. Harvard or APA are common citation styles in education research, so we recommend using one of those. Please do not use a citation style that uses numbered in-text citations (ex: [1]) rather than full in-text citations (ex: Smith et al., 2012). Resources for how to reference and cite are included in the Blackboard Assignment 1 folder. Do NOT Use websites, Wikipedia, or other non-academic sources. Summarise each source one by one. Focus on the work of a single researcher or author.