# Article Critique

## Explain the importance of valid and reliable research in professional practice

A valid research abides by the principles of research by taking validity as a profound consideration. In essence, a valid research in a professional practice implies that the study has measured what it was intended to uncover (Raina, 2015). In this case, valid research is vital in professional practice since it provides the empirically tested evidence for proving the relationship among the construct being measured (independent and dependent variables), more so for internal validity (Zohrabi, 2013). Bandura and Jourden (1991) measured the relationship between social comparison and overall organizational performance by identifying how it impacts critical thinking, self-efficacy and motivation towards self-improvement. A valid research also contributes to the professional practice by providing the opportunity for generalizing the findings thus implying that the research has some usefulness and meaningfulness hence capable of being used in the particular professional practice to generalize the findings or the inferences to a target population. The research can be generalized on organizations, especially those with social comparison incentives.

Within the professional practice, reliability refers to the extent of consistency of the results, especially when the study is replicated and the same results are gotten under the same conditions (Zohrabi, 2013). Replicating the results implies the authenticity of the study and as such, indicates that the research or study can be used in making assumptions and inferences within the particular professional practice (Raina, 2015). For the article, the same results will be gotten when performed on the same population because it ensured gender representativeness in selecting the sample size.

## The Appropriateness of the Study Design and Methodology

The approach employed in this study was an experimental observational study design focused an introducing the study participants to simulated organizations. To answer the study design, the sampling method used was effective for the case, especially a representation of 40 males and 20 females, all graduates of business studies (Bandura and Jourden, 1991). Random assigning of the simulated tasks aligned with the hypothesis being tested and also improved the research’s validity as well as its validity by balancing gender, to the major four experimental conditions. The experimental design for observing how the respondents reacted to different organizational contexts aligned with the research hypothesis that various social comparison patterns influence performance attainment as they mediate self-regulatory mechanisms.

The experiment befitted the study as it sought to ascertain that progressive mastery enhances perceived self-efficacy, improves analytical thinking, enhances goal setting, aids in affective self-reaction as well as improves organizational performance. The comparison with the prearranged comparative feedback from the experimental observation design also allowed for the confirmation that relative decline undermines the self-regulatory factors and reduces organizational performance. In reality, an experimental comparison of both the prearranged and participants exposed to decision making in a simulated organization fitted this study because through path analysis, the study indicated that personal goal setting, perceived self-efficacy, effective self-reflections and analytical quality thinking determine performance attainment of managers as decision makers in the organization. Hence, Vance, Talley, Azuero, Pearce and Christian (2013) would define the study as having used appropriate design that made it possible to test the hypothesis.

## Multiple Perspectives in the Article

Whereas the study sought to affirm the benefits of social comparison, it equally highlights some of the detrimental effects of having social comparisons within the organization. One of the major impediments as a perspective of social comparison in the article is that with structured systems for social comparison, there is forced comparison that the situation leads to demoralizing effects or implications of unfavorable comparison. Hence, despite identifying the benefits of social comparison through improved analytical thinking or self-efficacy, the article provides a different perspective that structured comparison systems may lead to serious effects on by demoralizing the employees thereby impacting negatively on the overall performance of the organization (Bandura & Jourden, 1991). On the other hand, the article perceives that ability is an acquirable attribute which can help managers in sustaining their sense of self-efficacy, positive self-evaluation, motivating self-development especially when individuals are faced with failure and major setbacks. Besides, the study implied that focusing on self-comparative standards and personal improvement reduces the detrimental effects of social comparison.

## Credibility and Authority of the Author

Within the professional practice, research influences and contributes to knowledge development only if it has sound authority and credibility (Vance et al., 2013). The authors, Albert Bandura and Forest J. Jourden, both have excellent experience in psychology and organizational behavior. In this case, the article or study was done by experienced individuals in the field. Besides, both are affiliated with Stanford University, also a reputable learning institution with an active learning community that adds to the sound authority and credibility of the article or study. For instance, Bandura is currently a social science professor at the Stanford University but also has a rich knowledge and experience in psychology as a former president of American Psychological Association in 1974, a member of various editorial boards of journals in psychology (Bandura, 2017). The experience and knowledge imply that the article or study was done by a professional with a commanding authority in the field. Hence, the experience in social science and psychology renders the report credible as the study was done by a professional with vast knowledge and expertise in the field.

## Credibility and Authority of the Article

A primary consideration in determining the credibility of research is the specific question or problem being explored (Zohrabi, 2013). In the article, it centers on social comparison and the implications on manager's performance as well as the overall performance of the organization. A source's credibility also depends on the background information consulted as forming the basis for making inferences, identification of study gap and conclusions (Vance et al., 2013). A literature review is outlined in the article which forms the foundation of the research. Also, the article is supported by grounded information or references at the end of the report to show that relevant and previous research was consulted to inform the subsequent study. Moreover, the researchers have explained the implications of their research, especially outlining how social comparisons can be advantageous and detrimental at the same time. Conversely, the references used are all peer-reviewed thereby adding to the credibility of the article. The credibility and authority are improved by the article being part of American Psychological Association, a reputation journal database that has evidence-based and empirically supported studies that have passed through various peer-reviewed and ascertained to be relevant to the particular area of study.

## Recommendation for Professional Practice

The quality of the article also stems from its contribution to organizational behavior as an area of research. It states that for the organization, social comparison is necessary for improving analytical thinking skills, self-efficacy, the drive towards self or personal development, and motivation towards improvement. However, the article suggests how future research should be done or considered to identify how the detrimental effects of negative or unfavorable social comparison can have on the overall organizational performance. In my view, this is an excellent piece of research that outlines and identifies social comparison and how the construct can be implemented to improve organizational performance by enhancing self-efficacy, analytical thinking, and the drive towards self-development or improvement. Blettner, He, Hu and Bettis (2015) also confirmed the recommendations by the article by indicating that if well implemented, social comparisons can improve overall organizational performance.

## References

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