External, Internal and Construct Validity

**Introduction** In research, validity refers to the degree to which findings are applicable in real-life situations. Essentially, if the findings are strongly valid, it implies that they have an excellent degree of applicability. In contrast, low validity implies that the survey is not applicable in real-life situations. The specific approach used during research has strong influence on validity. Weak research mechanisms have the capacity to undermine the validity of research.

Validity can be classified into different categories including external, internal and construct validities. All these validities have different attributes. For this assignment, the specific attributes of these validities shall be described. Importantly, the concepts of validity shall be examined based the dissertation topic. This assignment will therefore serve as an excellent platform for research.

**Construct Validity** Construct validity refers to a scenario in which the findings presented in research present the actual situation in real-world. Essentially, construct validity transforms conceptual frameworks into practical applications. Construct validity is a critical element of research since it forms an important basis for analyzing issues. Construct validity also contributes a lot towards the quality of any given study. In order to investigate conflict resolution at a community college, construct validity will be a critical aspect. (Trochim, 2006)

An excellent example pertains to the evaluation of public perceptions on conflicts in community colleges. Different people have different opinions or perceptions towards conflicts in community colleges. This issue will be examined based on construct validity. Another example pertains to the applicability of conflict resolution mechanisms in community colleges. Some conflict resolution mechanisms are easily applicable whereas others cannot be applied in real life situations. These perspectives shall be examined based on construct validity. (Creswell, 2009)

**External Validity** As opposed to construct validity, external validity presents the degree to which findings from research may be generalized. This pertains to the application of research results to other contexts that are different from the survey. When external validity of research is high, it implies that findings from the research may be easily applied in other contexts. In contrast, if a survey is characterized by low external validity, it is difficult to generalize the results in other contexts. In most cases, external validity is strengthened through the use of adequate samples. (Cozby, 2012) For instance, a proportional sample size enhances external validity. Small samples are characterized by low external validities. This is because of high levels of bias. In the context of the dissertation topic for this assignment, external validity can be applied in different ways. (Creswell, 2009)

To start with, based on findings made from the research, it would be easier to formulate conflict resolution mechanisms for other community colleges. Based on external validity of research, it would also be possible to formulate conflict resolution mechanisms for community colleges in other parts of the world. Consequently, the research would have excellent impacts in terms of educational policies. Policy formulators would have an excellent platform on which to develop effective regulations for averting conflicts in community colleges. (Trochim, 2006)
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**Internal Validity**  Internal validity is the third type of validity. This perspective is unique in that it provides the basis for evaluating specific connections or associations between causes and effects. Most quantitative and qualitative research surveys are based on cause-effect analysis. Such an analysis examines the potential causes of specific issues. Based on this approach, the dissertation topic may be examined in different ways. Firstly, it is important to examine the major causes of violence in different community colleges. From a hypothetical perspective, potential causes include multiculturalism, poor management and political influence among other issues. (Creswell, 2009)

Additionally, the research may be aimed at investigating the causes of ineffective conflict resolution mechanisms in community colleges. All these factors would affect internal validity of research. Furthermore, this research shall also seek to examine the effectiveness of conflict resolution methods in community colleges. Based on findings, it would be easier for policy formulators to establish stronger frameworks for conflict resolution. In most cases, conflict resolution mechanisms are characterized by one or more flaws. Based on internal validity of the research, such flaws would be minimized. (Cozby, 2012)

**Threats to External and Construct Validity**  Both external and construct validity might be characterized by different types of threats. The quality of research would be strongly compromised if these types of threats are not mitigated. Bias is one of the most notable threats for both construct and external validities. Bias occurs when the researcher fails to uphold impartiality in his or her study. External validity is hampered by bias because findings cannot be generalized to other areas. Similarly, bias undermines construct validity because conceptual frameworks cannot be justified. Apart from bias, another major threat to external and construct validity pertains to the sample size. As already mentioned, a small sample size can easily undermine validity of research. This is because results are only obtained from a small percentage of the population. (Creswell, 2009)

For instance, the levels of validity would be lowered if data collection is limited to a small number of students. Similarly, validity would be lowered if data is collected from a few community representatives. Prior to the actual research, it would be important to deal with these types of threats in order to enhance validity. Even though validity applies to both qualitative and quantitative types of research, its effect is more sensitive in the latter. This is because it encompasses the verification of data or information. (Trochim, 2006)

**Conclusion**  The specific approach used during research has strong influence on validity. Weak research mechanisms have the capacity to undermine the validity of research. Validity can be classified into different categories including external, internal and construct validities. Construct validity is a critical element of research since it forms an important basis for analyzing issues. Construct validity also contributes a lot towards the quality of any given study. In order to investigate conflict resolution at a community college, construct validity will be a critical aspect. An excellent example pertains to the evaluation of public perceptions on conflicts in community colleges.

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