

REPLY TO GONZÁLEZ-BLANCH (2006B): REPLY TO PROFESSOR BUELA-CASAL: RESEARCH BELONGS TO EVERYBODY

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The article is a reply to Gonzalez-Blanch's comments published in the present issue. Once again, the author has trouble following the scientific publication norms and as a result, the text is difficult to understand. The present article shows that the objections González-Blanch raises are mainly due to his lack of knowledge of some of the basic principles of research in psychology.

Key words: *Opinion studies on Psychology, Psychology as a health profession.*

En este artículo se da réplica a la respuesta de González-Blanch (2006), publicada en este mismo número. Una vez más este autor tiene dificultades para seguir las normas de publicación de artículos, lo cual dificulta la comprensión del texto. Se demuestra como la mayor parte de las objeciones que plantea se deben a su desconocimiento de varios principios básicos de la investigación en Psicología.

Palabras clave: *Estudios de opinión sobre Psicología, Psicología como profesión sanitaria.*

It seems necessary to begin by clarifying something that a priori should not take up space in a scientific publication and it is that the publication rules are compulsory for any kind of article published in a scientific journal. And the title of González-Blanch's (2006b) article is a poor example insofar as it neither corresponds with the content nor with the article to which it attempts to respond. Therefore, I once again advise him to study the texts already mentioned in Buela-Casal (2006) because he continues to prove that he is not familiar with the publication rules.

Reflection is essential in research and in the writing up of scientific articles, and when reflection is scarce or nonexistent, people write things that, when you read them, may even turn out to be funny. This is the case of González-Blanch (2006b) when he writes that "It is everyone's responsibility of to change this," in reference to the appropriateness that the 45.000 readers of *Papeles del Psicólogo* should participate by sending their criticisms of the published works. Suppose that only one out of every hundred follow this advice: that would mean that, for each issue published, the journal would receive 450 letters. If the letters had a maximum space of one page, that would be 450 pages. For the good of the journal, let us hope that not one out of every thousand will follow his advice, because even then, there would be 45 pages per issue.

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González-Blanch (2006b), in reference to his observations about the samples, says, "...to doubt their representativeness does not mean one has to cancel the investigation ...," in effect, this is true, but not because of what this author believes; it is true because of a simple question of logic: to doubt its representativeness does not imply that a sample is not representative, because the error may lie in the "doubt," as we consider may be the case here. It is part of the basic training in the Licentiate of Psychology to know what conditions must be fulfilled so that a sample is representative and, among them, one of them has to do with the size of the population and the level of confidence the investigator wishes to reach. In any basic book of Mathematical Psychology, one can consult the formula to calculate the size of the sample as a function of the population and for each level of confidence. Therefore, we think that González-Blanch (2006b) would do well to apply the formula to the studies whose methodology he is criticizing (Buela-Casal, Bretón-López et al., 2005; Sierra et al., 2005), arriving at the surprising and absurd conclusion, if he maintains his argument, that a sample of one million Spaniards is not representative with regard to the number of the population of Spaniards. In short, in order to calculate the representativeness of a sample in research, a formula was used and not mere opinion criteria like those proposed by González-Blanch (2006a, 2006b).

On the other hand, González-Blanch (2006b) says: "I still do not understand which part of the procedure [...] is



not applicable to the students in the associate centres of the Open University (UNED)." The attentive reading of a basic handbook of designs in Psychology research will allow him to understand it. This author seems to be mixing up our studies, and even the studies of other authors because he refers to procedures like "the instructions given by the teachers," where one does not know what he is talking about, because we used nothing of the sort. But I insist, if he reads a basic research handbook, I think this author will understand why the procedure used in the study of Sierra et al., (2005) is not applicable to the students from the Open University [UNED].

It is important to know that González-Blanch (2006b) realizes that it is not the same to ask about people's opinions as to ask about their knowledge, but one should not forget that he wrote that several hundred Psychology professors may not be familiar with the Psychology specialities, as can be seen in González-Blanch (2006a). And insofar as a considerable affinity is established between the disciplines, this becomes clear if one examines the scores of the studies of Buela-Casal, Bretón-López, et al. (2005); Buela-Casal, Gil Roales-Nieto, et al. (2005); Sierra et al. (2005), and these are not mere cacophonous affinities. And, by the way, perhaps it could also be interpreted that the members of the University Coordination council have approved, on the basis of cacophonous affinities, that Psychology should change from the group of Health and Juridical Sciences to the group of Experimental and Health Sciences, which is in accordance with Buela-Casal's (2005) reflections.

Lastly, with regard to González-Blanch's (2006b) interpretations of the responses of the sample from the general population (Buela-Casal, Teva, et al., 2005), they are already explained in Buela-Casal (2006), and such interpretations are no more than his own personal opinion with no other basis, and therefore, further argumentation is pointless.

I would not like to conclude without emphasising that at least Buela-Casal's (2006) reply was useful so that González-Blanch (2006b) could reconsider some of his "erroneous arguments, incorrect interpretations, and some logical contradictions," which is patent in several of his expressions: "I regret that misunderstanding if I caused it..." "I considered, perhaps mistakenly, that this observation was pertinent," "I consider the professor's distinction between knowledge and opinions fair," "It was not my intention to be 'insolent'" "I didn't know and I asked....," "If [...] I may have given the impression that the professor and his collaborators' studies attempt to address this issue, I herewith rectify." Well, at least that's something.

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