



Report 2013

of the

Board of Scientific Affairs

By Remo Job (Convenor)

**EFPA General Assembly in Stockholm on
July 13-14, 2013**

Report 2013

Executive summary

The activity of the Board of Scientific Affairs has dealt with several issues related to scientific research in psychology. In particular, the Board has finalized two documents, one on minimal standards for PhD programmes in Europe and one on research ethics, already conceived and discussed in the former Committee for Scientific Affairs; has written an accompanying document for the Levelt Report on fraudulent research practices of social psychologist Diederik Staple to be posted on the EFPA website; has organized a Symposium on "What makes for successful transfer from research to practice?" for the ECP 2013. The Board has also monitored progress of *European Psychologist* as well as ECP 2013.

Introduction

The Board of Scientific Affairs has had four meetings since the July 2011 Report (details below). Each meeting consisted of a pre-agenda meeting and meal, followed by a meeting throughout the following day. There has also been an intense exchange by e-mail in order to reduce costs but assure activity. The meetings have been productive and the members of the Board have contributed by working individually and/or in small groups in addition to taking part in the discussion during the meeting. Most of the issues of the Work Plan have been addressed, and for several outcomes in terms of documents and/or actions have been produced.

Activities

1. Collection of information, analyses, and proposals about best practises and successful cases of transfer of research into practice.
 - 1.1. Activity: Discussion on how to stimulate the adoption and use of recent scientific findings by professional psychologists.
 - Discussion about criteria for inclusion and examples;
 - Preparation of up to three cases of successful or potentially successful transfer by each member;
 - Organization of a ECP2013 Symposium
 - 1.2. Achievements:
 - a. Report of cases by members of the Board at the Brussels meeting;
 - b. Symposium on "What makes for successful transfer from research to practice?"
Introduction: Remo Job, Convener BSA; Discussant: Anders Skuterud, Norwegian Psychological Association, Norway
Presenters: Ulrike Ehlert, University of Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland; Odd Havik, University of Bergen, Norway; Jose M. Prieto and Carolina Marin, Complutense University, Madrid, Spain; Matthias Ziegler, Humboldt-University Berlin, Germany
2. Ethical approval for research.

- 2.1. Activity: Collecting comments from members, from a member of the Ethical Board, and by the German MA and taking decisions about the document.
 - The comments were analyzed and discussed;
 - Three alternatives were considered:
 - (a) to maintain the structure of the document amending specific points of disagreement;
 - (b) to change the document in a meta-code about ethics of research in psychology;
 - (c) as in (b) but enumerating possible exceptions.Alternative (a) was finally chosen.
 - The document has been modified and approved by the Board in its final version. As per policy of the Board the document will amended when needed to.
- 2.2. Deliverable: Document on the EFPA website
3. Activity in support of European Psychologist and its development.
 - 3.1. Activity: Meetings with Professor Alexander Grob, Editor-in-Chief and with Kristen Lavalley, Ph.D., NCSP, Managing Editor. Discussion of the Reports.
 - 3.2. Deliverable: Feed-backs to the Editor
4. Activity in support of the ECPs.
 - 4.1. Activity: A meeting with Dr. Tummino about Milan ECP 2015 and exchange of e-mails with the Chair of the Scientific Committee of the Stockholm ECP 2013.
 - 4.2. Deliverable: Feed-backs to the ECPs organisms.
5. Statement about the Levelt Report on “Flawed science: The fraudulent research practices of social psychologist Diederik Stapel”
 - 5.1. Activity: Analyses of the report and other sources about data fabrication and finalization of the statement.
 - The Report was analyzed and discussed;
 - The statement was written focusing on:
 - the reliability of the Report;
 - the useful recommendations provided, especially those regarding Doctoral students;
 - the implication about individual responsibility but also the need for the system to assure transparency in the processes dealing with science;
 - the incumbent responsibility of psychologists and other scientists to prevent and secure identification of unethical practices.
 - 5.2. Deliverable: Document to function as an introduction to the Levelt Report on the EFPA website
6. Meetings
 - 6.1. February 17/18, 2012, Rome. The Board had a meeting with members of the Italian MA.

- 6.2. June 14/15, 2012, Brussels. The Board had a meeting with the EFPA EC.
- 6.3. December 14/15, 2012, Prague. The Board had a meeting with the President of the Czech MA.
- 6.4. Planned: July 11, 2013, Stockholm.

7. Information & recommendations for GA & Member Associations

The General Assembly is asked to take notice of the following:

- 7.1 EFPA Statement about Scientific Fraud in Research (see Appendix 1)

Members of the Board:

Active Members:

Austria: Professor Barbara Juen, Developmental/clinical psychology

Croatia: Vladimir Takšić, Cognitive psychology/psychometrics

Czech Republic: Professor Marek Blatny, Individual differences

Denmark: Professor Knud-Erik Sabroe, Work and organizational psychology

France: Jean-Yves Baudouin, Cognitive neuropsychology

Germany: Prof. Dr. Matthias Ziegler, Individual differences/psychometrics

Italy: Remo Job, COGNITIVE SCIENCE - Convenor

The Netherlands: Iris Engelhard, Clinical/cognitive psychology

Norway: Professor Odd E. Havik, Clinical psychology

Slovakia: Ivan Sarmany Schuller

Spain: José M. Prieto, Work and organizational psychology/psychometrics

Sweden: Torun Lindholm, Social/developmental psychology

Switzerland: Ulrike Ehlert, Clinical psychology/psychotherapy

Turkey: Nebi Sumer, Social/traffic psychology

United Kingdom: Daryl O'Connor, Health psychology/biological psychology

EFPSA (Croatia): Vedran Lešić, Experimental psychology

Corresponding Members:

Belgium: Sandy Schumann, Social psychology/research methods

Cyprus: Georgia Panayiotouhynninen@uef.fi

Finland: Tuula Hynninen Health psychology/crisis interventions

Norway: Aina Holmen

EC Liaison Officer:

Christoph Steinebach, Developmental/counselling psychology

Appendix 1

EFPA Statement about Scientific Fraud in Research

In recent times, there have been several reports about scientific fraud in science, including the area of psychology. Scientific fraud takes many forms, from data fabrication to “domesticate” analyses, omission of non-confirmatory findings, and so on.

Scientific research contributes not only to the development of knowledge but also to the application of such knowledge for intervening on, and improving, the life of individuals and society. Thus, scientific fraud has profoundly negative effects for both the psychological community and the society at large.

For these reasons, EFPA

- condemns scientific fraud;
- expresses concerns about fraud that has remained unnoticed;
- calls for sanctions against researchers engaging in fraud;
- calls for better education of researchers in methods and ethics.

Therefore, EFPA makes the following statement:

1. Scientific fraud is loathsome on ethical grounds, and incompatible with basic principles of science. For psychology, these principles constitute the grounding values of the EFPA Metacode of Ethics, i.e. Respect for a Person’s Rights and Dignity, Competence, Responsibility, and Integrity (<http://efpa.eu/ethics/ethical-codes>).
2. Scientific fraud undermines public confidence in psychologists and the trustworthiness of psychologists applying scientific knowledge; it is an infringement of trust within the community; it lessens the credibility and the respectability of the community;
3. Scientific fraud is educationally negative as it offers examples of unacceptable practices and misleading behaviors to students and scientists entering the research arena (see point 5 of the EFPA document on Doctoral degrees - <http://science.efpa.eu/information-/proposed-minimum-standards-for-the-doctorate-degree-in-psychology-in-europe/>).
4. Scientific fraud erodes the effectiveness of procedures and applications in the professional practice and thereby harms the wellbeing of psychologists’ clients. This consequence is particularly loathsome as it lessens the credibility and the respectability of the community in outsiders’ eyes and may invalidate intervention with negative effects on people’s health.
5. Measures are needed to prevent and counteract fraud and neutralize its effects. There are several measures that can be taken, all of which should be known to researchers by being part of their education curricula and training. Apt statistical analyses and replication of studies, among other means, are needed (see, e.g. Nobel Laureate Daniel Kahneman proposal - <http://www.nature.com/news/nobel-laureate-challenges-psychologists-to-clean-up-their-act-1.11535>). However, all

these measures will prove effective if the researchers operate in a framework that stress science development rather than individual rewards.

As a consequence, EFPA calls for:

- improved institutional control over scientific research, as to prevent, discover, and reveal fraud (incl. separation of responsibility for data collection and analysis);
- requirements for replications studies by research institutes and scientific journals;
- changes in the reward system as to end excessive benefits for extra-ordinary performance of individual researchers;
- mechanisms to revoke publications as to neutralize the harmful effects of fraud;
- protection of (junior) researchers against the effects of other (senior) researchers engaging in fraud.

May 21, 2013