

## About methods and instruments in behavior research

### *Sobre métodos e instrumentos em pesquisa do comportamento*

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Mr. Editor,

Behavioral studies have been developed with reasonable biostatistical reasoning in our field. However, the methodological construction does not always contribute to a better understanding of the pain problem as a behavioral response since it presents biases, mainly because, very often, low-qualified researchers venture into the area. Behavioral research requires correct biostatistical analysis after an appropriate choice of method.

The sciences have become demanding regarding the empirical evidence based on the execution of careful observations and experiments with the purpose of collecting and producing systematic and objective data, and the same occurring in the behavioral sphere – Psychology. The use of research methods must develop according to postulates recommended for its purpose and, therefore, it must be established by standards, including the familiarization of the responsible researcher with the behavioral context intended to research, under the risk of a mistaken result, which in no way contributes to scientific knowledge.

A typical example is the adoption of inventories, whose objective is the study of behavioral variables often used in articles in which authors and reviewers do not always pay attention to the important and fundamental “detail” – the research method.

The Beck Scales, for example, are composed by the Depression Inventory (BDI), Anxiety Inventory (BAI), Hopelessness Scale (BHS) and Suicidal Ideation Scale (BSI) that were designed to measure the intensity of symptoms and are not diagnostic instruments, so they do not ascertain the presence of psychopathological conditions and should be applied to individuals aged 17 to 80 years<sup>1</sup>.

In Brazil, it is an instrument for the restricted use of psychologists - mandatory professional registration for its acquisition and application - as it requires specialized technical training. According to the legislation of the Psychological Tests Evaluation System (SATEPSI) of the Federal Council of Psychology (CFP), since April 2018, it is considered as an instrument not adequately validated to Brazilian standards. To date, there is no version to replace it and, therefore, should not be used<sup>2</sup>.

It is worth mentioning that the use of behavioral research methods are distinguished from others, because they use methodologies that allow deciphering and decoding the behaviors under certain stimuli, according to their characteristics, as long as the attributes of the studied stimulus and behavior in question are respected. And with that, a researcher wishing to ascertain behavioral conditions must, at least, be qualified to do so.

Confident of contributing to the growth of the subject, I hope to have cleared up some mistakes.

Yours sincerely,

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## REFERENCES

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