The Organization of Personality

H. J. EYSENCK

Department of Psychology, Institute of Psychiatry
(Maudsley Hospital), University of London

SCIENCE, as ordinarily understood, attempts to discover general rules or laws under which individual events can be subsumed. It attempts to describe the multiform world of experience through the formulation of abstract laws and the creation of abstract categories. This process of abstraction is absolutely fundamental to science, without abstraction there can be nothing but observation of particular occurrences. But "science is not interested in the unique event, the unique belongs to history, not to science." As Whitehead puts it,

the paradox is now fully established that the utmost abstractions are the true weapon with which to control our thought of concrete fact. To be abstract is to transcend particular concrete occasions of actual happenings. The construction with which the scientist ends has the neatness and orderliness that is quite unlike the varied and multiform world of common sense, yet, since science grows out of and returns to the world of common sense, there must be a precise connection between the neat, trim, tidy, exact world, which is the goal of science, and the untidy, fragmentary world of common sense.

If, then, we would construct a science of personality, we must seek for abstract models, concepts, mathematical functions, or what have you, which will adequately represent our knowledge—meager though it be—of existing facts, and which at the same time will point forward to new facts which can verify, modify, or refute our theoretical model. What are the main facts regarding personality which must be incorporated in such a model? I believe that a rough and ready answer at least can be given to these two questions, and that this answer must be phrased in terms of factorial analysis.

We find most of the main elements which our model must contain in Allport's well-known definition of personality as the "dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his unique adjustment to his environment."
been done by Cattell (3) into possible lines of progress. But re-
gardless of the actual number of independent dimensions which
our picture of personality may require, it is clear that categorical
diagnoses of the "either-or" kind are not warranted by the experi-
mental findings, what is required is a separate assessment and
measurement of each dimension in turn. It is not claimed that more
than a beginning has been made in this complex, time-consuming,
and difficult proceeding, it is believed, however, that results to date
are fully in agreement with the general model of personality on
which our procedures have been predicted.

Summary

A hierarchical model of personality organization has been pre-
sented which is believed capable of representing the majority of
experimentally determined facts regarding personality structure.
The method of factorial analysis, with particular stress on the
method of "criterion analysis," has been suggested to be best suited
to help in the solution of the problems which arise in relating ex-
perimental facts to this model. A number of criticisms of the fac-
torial method have been discussed, and its relation to concepts like
"uniqueness" and "wholeness" has been clarified. Lastly, an ex-
ample has been given of the application of the theoretical concepts
and practical methods advocated here to the problem of psychiatric
diagnosis.

References

THE ORGANIZATION OF PERSONALITY

10 Eysenck, H J Criterion analysis—an application of the hypothetico-deductive method to factor analysis *Psychol Rev*, 1950, 57, 38-65
12 Eysenck, H J *The scientific study of personality* London Routledge, 1952
13 Eysenck, H J Cyclothymia-schizothymia as a dimension of personality I Historical *J Personal*, 1950, 19, 123-153
14 Eysenck, H J Cyclothymia-schizothymia as a dimension of personality II Experimental *J Personal* To appear
16 Eysenck, H J Primary social attitudes as related to social class and political party *J Sociol*, 1951, 2, 198-209
17 Eysenck, H J, and Crown, S An experimental study in opinion-attitude methodology *Int J opin & att Res*, 1949, 3, 47-86
18 Guilford, J P Unitary traits of personality and factor theory *Amer J Psychol*, 1936, 48, 673-680
19* Lubin, A Some contributions to the testing of psychological hypotheses by means of statistical multivariate analysis PhD diss Univ London, 1951
20 Petrie, A A preliminary report of changes after prefrontal leucotomy *J ment Sci*, 1949, 95, 449-455
22 Petrie, A Clinical aspects of leucotomy *Proceed roy Soc Med*, 1950, 42, 39
23 Porter, A W *The method of dimensions* London Methuen, 1933
24 Scott-Blair, G W *Measurements of mind and matter* London Dennis Dobson, 1950
25 Vernon, P E *The structure of human abilities* London Methuen, 1950