

**Personality Measurement
in Children:
A Dimensional Approach¹**
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Phrases like “exceptional children” and “special education,” when used in the psychological and educational literature, are usually applied to children scoring especially high or low on some scale which measures cognitive “ability” variables; temperament and character are usually passed by—possibly because of the well-known difficulties of measurement in this area. Another reason has probably been the psychiatric and medical overtones of “abnormality” in these areas; there is a deep-seated belief that an extreme placement in regard to some of the dimensions along which personality can be measured denotes some kind of “disease,” and it goes against the grain to suggest the presence of mental disorders in young children—unless, as in the case of autistic children, there is no gainsaying such abnormality. In this paper, we shall be reviewing some recent efforts to study the personality of the child in its non-cognitive aspects, and to test the applicability to children of some theories originally developed in relation to the adult personality.

The main notion underlying our approach has been that of the personality continuum or dimension (Eysenck, 1947). Psychiatrists diagnose patients as though they were dealing with categorical concepts or disease entities; this is probably a relic of long-established medical ways of thinking not necessarily applicable to psychological variables and concepts. Malaria, scarlet fever, syphilis, and broken bones are rightly considered “categorical” disease entities, with special causes, specific sets of symptoms, and particular types of treatment. It is equally clear that anxiety state, hysteria, and schizophrenia are not “categorical” disease entities in this sense;

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hence the very low reliability with which they are diagnosed (Eysenck, 1968), and the lack of correspondence between diagnosis and type of treatment chosen (Bannister, Salman & Licherman, 1964). The evidence regarding this contention is now quite voluminous, and has been reviewed by Eysenck (1970a); the conclusion is clearly unfavorable to the old medical hypothesis, and in favor of the alternative "dimensional" hypothesis.

The "dimensional" hypothesis deals with a continuum ranging from normality to so-called abnormality; there is no clear break between the two extremes, and all sorts and varieties of intermediate states can be found and recognized. The problems remain, of course, of defining and measuring the major dimensions involved; furthermore, it seems likely that psychiatric patients, regardless of their diagnostic labels, will fit into a dimensional framework with some degree of precision, and it remains to demonstrate any correspondence between diagnosis and dimension that might exist. This task has been attempted with some degree of success (Eysenck, 1952, 1957), and there is now a considerable body of evidence to show that a large amount of interpersonal variance can be accounted for in terms of three main dimensions of personality (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1969). The first of these is extraversion-introversion (E); while the label recalls Jung (1959), it should be noted that modern views of this dimension are based on objective, experimental evidence and bear little relation to Jung's mystical notions (Eysenck, 1967). The second dimension has been variously labeled neuroticism (N), emotionality, and anxiety; it is characterized by emotional lability predisposing a person to neurotic

breakdown. The third dimension has been called psychoticism (P); it attempts to measure certain underlying personality traits which are usually found in psychotics of all kinds (Eysenck, 1952; Eysenck & Eysenck, 1968). Note that the terms have psychiatric overtones, but that the concepts are applied to the vast range of non-pathological adults and children encountered outside the mental hospital; subjects with high scores on N or P are certainly more likely to succumb to stress, but they are not necessarily "abnormal," except in the purely statistical sense of having exceptionally high scores. Note also that these three dimensions are conceived of as being independent; thus, a high score on N does not imply a high score on P. This goes counter to the Freudian belief that there is a continuum stretching from normality through neuroticism to psychotic disorders; while our theory agrees with Freud's in that we also postulate a continuum from normal to abnormal, we postulate two orthogonal (unrelated) continua where he postulates only one. The evidence is now conclusive that more than one continuum is needed (Eysenck, 1970a) to understand psychopathology. Studies using multiple discriminant function analysis, factor analysis, and other statistical methods of great power have put the issue beyond doubt.

There are fairly clear-cut relations between our dimensional system and the orthodox psychiatric diagnostic method of classification. Thus, as Jung has already suggested, anxiety states and other dysthymic groups ("psychasthenics" in his nomenclature) are high N, low E scorers, while hysterics, and more anti-social psychopaths, are high N, high E scorers. Psychotics, of course, score high on P, but not on N;

criminals also score high on P, (Eysenck, 1970b). One might conceive of the "typical" psychiatric patient as occupying a particular locus in the multidimensional framework created by our three dimensions; patients located further and further away from a particular locus become more and more atypical (and hence more and more difficult to diagnose) until they approach some other diagnostic locus. Such a framework would be very useful in translating statements from one dimension into another.

Questionnaires like Cattell's 16 PF scales (Cattell & Eber, 1949-69), Guilford's personality inventories (e.g., Guilford, 1934; Guilford & Holley, 1953-63), or our M.P.I. (Eysenck, 1962) and E.P.I. (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1963-68) have long existed to measure E and N in adult subjects; it is interesting that such independently developed inventories measure these dimensions with almost complete agreement (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1969). Measurement of P in the adult realm has only recently been accomplished (S. B. G. Eysenck & H. J. Eysenck, 1968, 1969a). A children's inventory measuring E and N has been published (Eysenck, 1965), and an extension of this scale to take in P appeared last year (S. B. G. Eysenck & H. J. Eysenck, 1969b). The present paper presents a further development of these studies; previous scale items have been improved and new ones added, in an attempt to make the scale better. Furthermore, a 12-item Lie Scale formed part of the original PEN inventory for children (S. B. G. Eysenck & H. J. Eysenck, 1969b); this was considered too short to be sufficiently reliable, and accordingly the scale was expanded to take in 22 items in its present form. (A detailed presentation of research into

the Lie Scale and its interpretation in children is given by Eysenck, Nias & Eysenck, 1971.) The new scale, entitled Junior Personality Inventory (J.P.I.), is given in the Appendix; it consists of 80 items, 18 of which measure P, 20 measure E, 20 measure N, and 22 measure L. A scoring key is given with the scale in the Appendix. The scales have been used with children as young as seven, but it is probably advisable to restrict its use to children of eight or over.

The scales were applied to over 3,000 children during school hours; 1,876 of these were boys and 1,557 were girls. The ages of the children involved and the number of each age and sex group are shown in Table 1. Also given in that table are the main results of the study, i.e., the reliabilities (alpha coefficients) of the four scales used, the means and standard deviations of the children's scores on these scales, and the inter-correlations between the scales.

A brief discussion of the results may be of some interest. Let us first consider the reliabilities. The L scale is clearly the most satisfactory at all ages; its reliability exceeds .8 even at the seven-year-old level, and never sinks much below it. E and N do not reach a satisfactory level until the nine- or 10-year-old level, with E somewhat unsatisfactory for the girls even up to the 12-year level, and N rather more satisfactory for the girls almost from the beginning. These differences may be due to the fact that the L scale has more items than the other scales, making it more reliable, and to the fact that girls, as we have always found in our work, are less extraverted and more emotional than boys. The P scale is clearly somewhat less satisfactory than the other scales, with reliabilities

Table 1

AGE	Reliability coefficients					Means and Standard Deviations										Inter correlations between scales									
	n	P	E	N	L	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	PE	PN	PL	EN	EL	NL		
7	134	.521	.526	.698	.826	7.996	2.654	14.056	2.804	10.840	3.746	14.728	4.600	-.065	0.057	-.542	-.383	.302	-.312						
8	195	.559	.513	.664	.793	7.710	2.666	14.503	2.694	11.320	3.529	13.577	4.413	.006	-.065	-.326	-.064	.185	-.240						
9	203	.634	.580	.766	.797	8.027	2.892	14.441	2.888	11.170	4.187	11.310	4.489	.196	-.088	-.243	-.168	-.004	-.311						
10	154	.535	.759	.757	.808	7.438	2.600	14.692	3.572	12.546	3.969	9.484	4.382	.464	-.264	-.197	-.402	.022	-.207						
11	181	.610	.614	.782	.851	8.019	2.880	14.536	2.954	11.914	4.193	9.044	4.931	.271	-.091	-.331	-.254	-.015	-.269						
12	253	.597	.720	.788	.778	8.233	2.816	15.026	3.293	10.844	4.334	8.213	4.083	.264	-.095	-.467	-.299	-.096	-.098						
13	308	.622	.768	.794	.778	7.893	2.903	15.046	3.525	11.719	4.272	7.911	4.038	.320	-.132	-.386	-.158	-.169	-.056						
14	285	.591	.763	.799	.784	8.242	2.818	15.277	3.471	10.135	4.350	7.130	4.020	.219	-.069	-.326	-.134	-.128	-.197						
15	163	.570	.771	.785	.745	8.347	2.765	15.426	3.439	10.472	4.172	6.696	3.627	.396	-.010	-.313	-.223	-.150	-.249						
	1876																								
	7	150	.460	.495	.738	.796	4.483	2.209	13.750	2.668	10.153	3.865	17.710	3.656	.024	-.000	-.313	-.124	-.011	-.241					
	8	182	.463	.584	.776	.843	4.376	2.192	13.846	2.909	12.558	4.090	15.404	4.520	.092	.132	-.389	-.126	.178	-.473					
	9	177	.495	.584	.742	.786	4.986	2.277	14.531	2.824	12.444	3.897	14.404	4.040	.313	-.030	-.149	-.208	.113	-.342					
	10	132	.555	.650	.800	.821	5.231	2.422	15.072	2.906	12.561	4.312	11.508	4.357	.261	-.210	-.022	-.264	.050	-.074					
	11	215	.503	.611	.783	.819	4.691	2.292	14.679	2.789	11.909	4.195	11.774	4.417	.264	-.086	-.319	-.279	-.047	-.319					
	12	223	.575	.682	.810	.806	5.195	2.498	14.899	3.014	12.516	4.344	9.926	4.263	.279	-.123	-.309	-.234	-.030	-.226					
	13	218	.573	.755	.810	.788	5.998	2.560	15.156	3.337	12.764	4.252	9.858	4.045	.289	.067	-.476	-.222	-.111	-.253					
	14	177	.566	.750	.792	.722	5.853	2.559	15.288	3.308	13.133	4.045	9.782	3.569	.329	.056	-.239	-.072	-.182	-.405					
	15	83	.585	.852	.832	.820	5.550	2.614	14.843	4.211	12.964	4.342	8.940	4.279	.352	-.131	-.329	-.208	.021	-.248					
		1557																							

seldom exceeding .6; reliabilities seem more satisfactory for the boys than for the girls, perhaps because of the higher scores for the boys. The reliabilities of the scales are, of course, a mirror of inter-item similarity; they should not be taken to throw any light on the validity of the scales. Cattell & Tsujioka (1964) have discussed the problems involved in this relation, and have concluded that a two-item scale could have zero reliability and yet be perfectly valid, i.e., correlate unity with a particular criterion. Nevertheless, it would seem desirable in future revisions to lengthen and improve the reliability of the P scale, and possibly the E scale, insofar as the younger age groups are concerned. Even as they stand, however, we believe that the scales could be used with advantage for experimental work with groups of children; individual testing for clinical purposes appears to be premature.

The means, as already mentioned, show that boys have much higher scores on P than do girls; this agrees with similar findings in relation to adults, where men score more highly than women (S. B. G. Eysenck & H. J. Eysenck, 1969a). E and N also fall in line with previous work, with boys more extraverted and less emotional (S. B. G. Eysenck, 1965). On the L scale, the girls have higher scores; this was already found to be so in the original work of Hartshorne & May (1930), who left it open whether girls were more prone to lying, or actually were better behaved! In regard to age, P scores tend to rise, as do E scores. N scores do not seem to vary with age. The results are in line with previous work (S. B. G. Eysenck, 1965).

The inter-scale correlations show that P and N, the two "pathological" scales, are virtually uncorrelated; this

adds support to the two-dimensional view expressed above, as opposed to the Freudian uni-dimensional hypothesis. E, however, is not entirely uncorrelated with P and N; it correlates positively with P, at a level that is not far short of .3, and negatively with N, at a rather low level. These correlations are somewhat higher than might be desirable, but they indicate that the overlap between scales amounts to less than 10 percent of the variance; nevertheless, efforts should be made, by suitable item selection, to reduce this overlap to zero. The L scale shows the usual and expected negative correlation between the two "pathological" scores. Children who score high on the Lie Scale tend to have lower scores on the P scale ($-.3$) and on the N scale ($-.2$). This would seem to justify the use of the L scale either to exclude high L scorers (on the grounds that they are falsifying their scores), or to correct, by regression formula, the obtained P and N scores. Doing so would, of course, imply an acceptance of the hypothesis that high L scale scores are evidence of lying, and are produced by a conscious desire to "put on a good face"; Michaelis & Eysenck (in press) have shown that an alternative hypothesis can be supported by empirical data, viz., that high L scale scores may be the product of lack of self-knowledge, and may constitute a separate personality variable. They suggest, in fact, that both factors play a part in the genesis of L scale scores; clearly, the interpretation of these scores is not as simple as it was thought to be. Much further work will be required to sort out the divergent influences which determine high and low scores.

The nature of E and N are, of course, quite well understood by now

(Eysenck, 1967; Eysenck & Eysenck, 1969); the nature of P is much less clear. On the basis of their original work with children, S. B. G. Eysenck & H. J. Eysenck (1969b) listed the following characteristics as typical of high P scorers: (1) solitary, not caring for people; (2) troublesome; not fitting in; (3) cruel, inhumane; (4) lack of feeling, insensitive; (5) sensation-seeking, "arousal jags"; (6) hostile to others, aggressive; (7) liking for odd, unusual things; (8) disregard for danger, foolhardy; (9) making fools of other people, upsetting them.

What emerges from these admittedly subjective interpretations of questionnaire responses is a fairly congruent picture of an odd, isolated, troublesome child; glacial and lacking in human feelings for his fellow-beings and for animals; aggressive and hostile, even to near-and-dear ones; trying to make up for lack of feeling by indulging in sensation-seeking "arousal jags" without thinking of the dangers involved. Whether such children are in fact predisposed to the later development of psychotic symptoms, or even whether they retain this type of personality, are questions which cannot at the moment be answered; follow-up studies are clearly required in order to clarify these issues (S. B. G. Eysenck & H. J. Eysenck, 1969b, p. 31).

The items included in the P scale on the questionnaire reproduced in the Appendix certainly support these interpretations; the reader may glance at the items scored for P to reassure himself on this point. Such a perusal may also pin-point the reason for the correlation between P and E; it is possible that sensation-seeking is more an E trait than a P one, and its inclusion in the measurement of P may have caused the observed correlation. Future research on these scales will, of course, explore this, as well as other possibilities suggested by a close study of the statistical results of

this investigation.

The major interest of these scales centers, of course, on the possibilities they open up for the study of "exceptional children," i.e., children who have unusually high or low scores on any of these scales. We already know that E and N are implicated in school success (Eysenck & Cookson, 1969), and it seems highly unlikely that P does not also play an important part in the child's adjustment there. A clear-cut research strategy would seem to be to choose matched groups of high- and low-scoring children on any (or all) of these major dimensions of personality and to study their school work, school adjustment, interpersonal relations, and other spheres of activity; quite high correlations have been reported, for instance, between E and success at various sports. Clearly, the existence of considerable personality differences along these dimensions implies special educational needs, and it is sad to report that research into special education adapted to the needs of these children has been lacking; some discussion of these issues has been given elsewhere (Eysenck, 1971). Such research must focus on personality differences along the dimensions discussed above, and it is hoped that the provision of scales for carrying out measurement and for identifying extreme individuals on P, E, and N will encourage such research.

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APPENDIX

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|---|--|-----|----|
| E | 1. Do you like plenty of excitement going on around you? | YES | NO |
| L | 2. Have you ever taken the credit for something you knew someone else had really done? | YES | NO |
| N | 3. Do you often need kind friends to cheer you up? | YES | NO |
| P | 4. Do you enjoy hurting people you like? | YES | NO |
| L | 5. Were you ever greedy by helping yourself to more than your share of anything? | YES | NO |
| E | 6. Do you nearly always have a quick answer when people talk to you? | YES | NO |
| P | 7. Are other children's feelings much more easily hurt than yours? | YES | NO |
| N | 8. Do ideas run through your head so that you cannot sleep? | YES | NO |
| L | 9. Do you always do as you are told at once? | YES | NO |
| E | 10. Would you rather be alone instead of meeting other children? | YES | NO |
| P | 11. Do you like practical jokes? | YES | NO |
| N | 12. Do you ever feel 'just miserable' for no good reason? | YES | NO |
| L | 13. Have you ever broken any rules at school? | YES | NO |
| E | 14. Are you rather lively? | YES | NO |
| P | 15. Do you always seem to be in trouble at home? | YES | NO |
| N | 16. Do lots of things annoy you? | YES | NO |
| L | 17. Did you ever take anything (even a pin or button) that belonged to someone else? | YES | NO |
| E | 18. Do you like doing things where you have to act quickly? | YES | NO |
| P | 19. Do you sometimes like teasing animals? | YES | NO |
| L | 20. Did you ever pretend that you did not hear when someone was calling you? | YES | NO |
| E | 21. Can you get a party going? | YES | NO |
| N | 22. Do you worry about awful things that might happen? | YES | NO |
| P | 23. Would it upset you a lot to see a dog that has just been run over? | YES | NO |
| L | 24. Do you always finish your homework before you play? | YES | NO |
| E | 25. When you make new friends do you usually make the first move? | YES | NO |
| N | 26. Do you get thumping in your heart? | YES | NO |

P 27. Are you easily hurt when people find fault with you or the work you do?	YES	NO
L 28. Do you generally pick up papers and rubbish others throw on the classroom floor?	YES	NO
E 29. Do you like telling jokes or funny stories to your friends?	YES	NO
N 30. Do you often feel tired for no good reason?	YES	NO
P 31. Even if it were very dangerous, would you still like to go to the moon in a rocket?	YES	NO
L 32. When you hear children using bad language, do you try to stop them? . . .	YES	NO
E 33. Are you usually happy and cheerful?	YES	NO
N 34. Are you touchy about some things?	YES	NO
P 35. Are you in more trouble at school than most children?	YES	NO
L 36. Do you always say you are sorry when you have been rude?	YES	NO
E 37. Do you like mixing with other children?	YES	NO
N 38. Do you have 'dizzy turns'?	YES	NO
P 39. Would you do dangerous things for a dare?	YES	NO
L 40. Are you always quiet when older people are talking?	YES	NO
E 41. Do you often make up your mind to do things suddenly?	YES	NO
N 42. Do you often feel fed-up?	YES	NO
P 43. Are your feelings rather easily hurt?	YES	NO
L 44. Have you ever said anything bad or nasty about anyone?	YES	NO
E 45. Can you usually let yourself go and enjoy yourself at a gay party?	YES	NO
N 46. Do you sometimes get so restless that you cannot sit in a chair long?	YES	NO
P 47. Would it bother you if you knew your home front door was unlocked at night?	YES	NO
L 48. Are you always quiet in class, even when the teacher is out of the room? . .	YES	NO
E 49. Would you call yourself happy-go-lucky?	YES	NO
N 50. Do you have many frightening dreams?	YES	NO
P 51. Do you often like a rough and tumble game?	YES	NO
L 52. Do you throw waste paper on the floor when there is no waste paper basket handy?	YES	NO
E 53. Do you like going out a lot?	YES	NO
N 54. Do you worry for a long while if you feel you have made a fool of yourself? .	YES	NO
P 55. Would you like to go to the moon on your own?	YES	NO
L 56. At prayers or assembly, do you always sing when the others are singing? . .	YES	NO
E 57. Do other people think of you as being very lively?	YES	NO
N 58. Do you sometimes feel life is just not worth living?	YES	NO
P 59. Would you feel very sorry for an animal caught in a trap?	YES	NO
E 60. Are you mostly quiet when you are with others?	YES	NO
N 61. Does your mind often wander off when you are doing a job?	YES	NO
P 62. Do you like strong tasting medicines?	YES	NO
E 63. Would you rather sit and watch than play at parties?	YES	NO
N 64. Do you find it hard to get to sleep at nights because you are worrying about things?	YES	NO
L 65. Do you always eat everything you are given at meals?	YES	NO
E 66. Do you usually feel fairly sure you can do the things you have to?	YES	NO
L 67. Did you ever write your name in a school or library book?	YES	NO
P 68. Do you like wandering off on your own, without telling anyone?	YES	NO
N 69. Do you often make up your mind when it is too late?	YES	NO
L 70. Have you ever been cheeky to your parents?	YES	NO
E 71. Are you shy of speaking first when you meet new people?	YES	NO
L 72. Are you always specially careful with other people's things?	YES	NO
P 73. Do you like doing things that are a bit frightening?	YES	NO
N 74. Do you often feel lonely?	YES	NO
L 75. Do you always share all the sweets you have	YES	NO
E 76. Do you find it hard to really enjoy yourself at a lively party?	YES	NO
N 77. Do you sometimes feel especially cheerful and at other times sad without any good reason?	YES	NO
L 78. Do you always wash before a meal?	YES	NO
N 79. Do you often get into trouble because you do things without thinking first? .	YES	NO
L 80. Have you ever cheated at a game?	YES	NO