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Masculinity-Femininity, Personality and Sexual Attitudes

HANS J. EYSENCK*

The hypothesis that masculinity-femininity constitutes a personality dimension or factor which can be discerned within as well as between the two sexes has been supported by two rather different lines of research. One line, pioneered by Terman and Miles (1936), made use of questionnaires made up of items on which there were marked differences in the answers given by matched male and female groups; it was found that questionnaires so constituted produced scores within each sex group which had reasonably high variances, and that external criteria (such as homosexuality) could be predicted on the basis of the scores. A second line, pioneered by Guilford and Guilford (1936), made use of the factor analytic study of personality inventory item intercorrelations; this repeatedly gave rise to a "masculinity" factor (M). The authors describe it thus: "There is an element of aggressiveness in some of the items; this might be the oft-mentioned trait of dominance or of ascendance-submission." Later on, Guilford and Zimmerman (1956) carried out further analyses which added other characteristics: "Has masculine interests, vocational and avocational; not emotionally excitable or expressive; not easily aroused to fear or disgust; somewhat lacking in sympathy." Taking these two lines of evidence together, there is now a good body of evidence to suggest that the popular stereotype of masculinity is not entirely mistaken, and that males are indeed more aggressive, hostile, impersonal, unemotional, and less easily aroused to fear, disgust, or sympathy. It seems likely that these personality traits are linked with specific hormonal secretions, and are to a large extent genetically determined. There is some evidence that they are especially pronounced in the XYY karyotype (Kessler and Moos, 1970), suggesting that the genetic determination is at least partly located on the sex chromosomes.

It is interesting that a recently constructed inventory intended to measure the personality dimensions of psychoticism (P), and vali-

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dated against psychotic-normal differences (H. J. Eysenck & S. B. G. Eysenck, 1968), possesses considerable similarities to the characteristics of male as opposed to female subjects, and that men have much higher scores on this inventory than women (S. B. G. Eysenck & H. J. Eysenck, 1968, 1969). In addition, criminals have been found to have much higher P scores than normals, rivaling the P scores of psychotics; this is relevant because of the wellknown linkage between criminality and masculinity—there are more than 10 male criminals for every female one (Eysenck, 1970a). Under the circumstances, it seemed useful to investigate the relationship of the psychoticism dimension to masculinity-femininity with respect to an area in which marked sex differences are believed to exist, namely attitudes to sexual behaviour. The writer has described in detail several studies in this area (Eysenck, 1971a, 1971b, 1971c) which seem to lend support to the view that with respect both to sexual behaviour and to sexual attitudes, men differ considerably from women. The present study is concerned with the comparison of masculinity-femininity scores derived from the Maudsley Sex Inventory, and P+ vs. P— differences on the same inventory. In other words, our purpose is to return to the methodology of Terman and his associates and ask: are the differences on this inventory between men and women similar in kind to those observed within a given sex between men (or women) scoring high and low on P respectively?

The subjects were 423 male and 379 unmarried female students who were administered the Maudsley Sex Inventory, of which 94 items were used for the purpose of this study. (The remaining items were not of the Yes-No type, and could not be used for this purpose). The subjects were also administered the PEN Inventory, which contains scales for the measurement of P (psychoticism), E (extraversion), and N (neuroticism). The scale itself is as yet unpublished, but the P items have been published (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1968), and the E and N items are closely similar to those of the EPI (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1964). Subjects ranged in age from 18 to 24, with the majority between 19 and 21; only a few older subjects were included. For reasons given elsewhere, it is believed that responses, which were anonymous, were on the whole truthful, and that the sample was representative (Eysenck, 1971a).

For the purpose of analysis, the percentage of “yes” answers on each question was established for men and women separately, and that

for women subtracted from that for men; this difference score will be called the M — F score. Next, product-moment correlations were established, separately for the two sexes, between each personality dimension (P, E and N) and between each of the 94 items in the inventory. There are thus six sets of correlations, three dimensions two sexes. These six sets of correlations were in turn correlated with the M — F score, our expectation being that M — F score would correlate positively and highly with the P factor correlations, for both men and women. In view of the fact that masculinity-femininity has been observed to load positively on extraversion (Eysenck, 1970b), it also seemed likely that positive correlations would be found between the M — F score and E. No predictions were made for N. Table I gives the actual intercorrelations between our seven variables. Interest centers on the last column which gives the correlations of the M — F score and the six personality—sex inventory correlation scores.

As expected, the correlations of the M — F score are very high and positive with P, for both sexes. They are considerably lower, although still significant at the $p < .01$ level, for E. For N, the correlations are for all practical purposes negligible, although both are positive, and that for females is significant at the $p < .05$ level. It is clear that our hypothesis receives strong support from these data; male attitudes to sex, as compared to female ones, are similar to those of high P scoring males (or females) as compared to low scoring males (or females). These correlations, in fact, are of the same order as the correlations

TABLE I

Correlations between M—F score differences and sets of personality inventory score—sex inventory item correlations. Underlined values significant at $< .01$, doubly underlined values significant at $< .001$ levels of P.

	2	3	4	5	6	7
P M 1	<u>.70</u>	<u>.31</u>	.23	.23	<u>.33</u>	<u>.54</u>
F 2		<u>.34</u>	<u>.38</u>	.14	<u>.38</u>	<u>.74</u>
E M 3			<u>.81</u>	<u>-.56</u>	<u>-.34</u>	<u>.31</u>
F 4				<u>-.45</u>	<u>-.24</u>	<u>.30</u>
N M 5					<u>.77</u>	.10
F 6						<u>.21</u>
M — F 7						

TABLE 2
Percentage differences in endorsements of 27 items on the sex inventory
between men and women

	M—F Differences
If you were invited to take part in an orgy, would you: (a) Accept it (b) Refuse	37
I like to look at pictures of nudes.	53
I like to look at sexy pictures.	53
The thought of a sex orgy is disgusting to me.	-47
If you were invited to see a "blue" film, would you: (a) Accept (b) Refuse.	43
It is all right to seduce a person who is old enough to know what they are doing.	38
I believe in taking my pleasures where I find them.	37
If you were offered a highly pronographic book, would you: (a) Accept it (b) Refuse it.	36
It doesn't take much to get me excited sexually.	35
Buttocks excite me.	34
I get excited sexually very easily.	33
I think about sex almost every day.	32
Seeing a person nude does not interest me.	-32
Sex without love ("impersonal sex") is highly unsatisfactory.	-31
I do not need to respect a woman, or love her, in order to enjoy petting and/or intercourse with her.	31
Prostitution should be legally permitted.	30
If you had a chance to see people making love, without being seen, would you take it?	29
Pornographic writings should be freely allowed to be published.	27
It is better not to have sexual relations until you are married.	-25
Sometimes the woman should be sexually aggressive.	24
I get pleasant feelings from touching my sexual parts.	24
Something is lacking in my sex life.	24
There should be no censorship, on sexual grounds, of plays and films.	34
Conditions have to be just right to get me excited sexually.	-22
I find the thought of a coloured sex partner particularly exciting.	21
The opposite sex will respect you more if you are not too familiar with them.	-21
All in all I am satisfied with my sex life.	-20

between males and females on the psychocism scale. To give the reader an idea of the kind of items characteristic of men (and high P scorers) as opposed to women (and low P scorers), items having the highest M — F scores (either positive or negative) have been put together in Table 2.

These items bear out the stereotyped view of male and female

sexuality, with men more impersonal, aggressive, more easily aroused, more excitable, more hedonistic, and less influenced by traditional concepts of love and faithfulness. What is interesting in this study, of course, is that precisely the same attitudes are manifested, within each sex, by high P scorers, with low P scorers manifesting the opposite (female) attitudes. It should be noted in this that there are no questions pertaining to sex in the P scale; thus, the observed relationship could not logically be derived from the content of the two scales.

One further item of interest may support our view. Eysenck (1971c) found that high P scorers, as compared with low P scorers, had indulged significantly more frequently in minor perversions (fellatio, cunnilingus, "69"). So had men as compared with women, when only respondents having had intercourse were included in the tabulation. However, taking part in an activity is not identical with enjoying it, and it seems likely on our hypothesis that of those who had actually indulged in these perversions, men would have enjoyed them more than women. Some evidence is furnished on this point in a study by Kolaszynska-Carr (unpublished) in which male and female Ss who had indulged in these activities (between 40 and 50 of each sex, depending on the activity in question) reported on their enjoyment of their experiences. Taking fellatio as typical of this category of conduct, 39 out of 41 male subjects reported enjoyment, but only 24 out of 42 females. Even for such items as manual genital manipulation, male by female, the percentages are quite different (94% and 64%); for mutual manual genital manipulation they are 96% and 68%. It would seem that for even slightly unusual practices women are much less likely to report enjoyment; no such sex differences were found for petting behaviour of a more innocent kind (fondling of the female breast, kissing of nipples, etc.). This whole area of enjoyment of sexual activity deserves to be studied in much greater detail.

It is of some interest to note that in some unpublished research imprisoned sex offenders scored very significantly higher on the P scale than did other prisoners (who in turn of course scored very significantly higher on the P scale than did matched non-prison controls). The mean P value for the sex offenders was 11.07, as compared with a prisoner mean of 6.25; $p < .01$. The offenses in question included rape, indecent assault, and buggery.

Sexuality thus seems to constitute a continuum which is largely

colinear with P and with masculinity; it would seem important to investigate possible hormonal and other biochemical correlates of P in suitably chosen samples. But even without such obvious biological assays, it may be said that our data furnish important support for the view that the P scale appears to be closely related with the masculinity-femininity dimension.

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