

A reply to Fine

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In the preceding note, Fine (1983) doubts the writer's statement that Extraversion is related to Field-dependence, and provides a table listing all studies in which the relationship between the two variables has been examined. In reply it may be worthwhile to emphasize the following points.

(1) Fine is quite wrong in thinking that he has summarized all the available evidence. Among obvious omissions are an early paper by Franks (1956), the more recent work of Goggin, Flemenbaum and Anderson (1979) and, perhaps most important, a paper by Bone and Eysenck (1972) which is one of the few studies to employ sufficiently large samples of males and females, used a laboratory measure of Field-dependence (the rod-and-frame test) and also used external laboratory criteria in a factor-analytic design. This study resulted in a factor which had loadings on Extraversion (0.54), Field-dependence (0.58) and various scores on the Stroop Test anticipated to be experimental measures of Extraversion. These were the results for males; for women the results were along the same lines, but much less clear. Other studies, such as Carter and Loo (1979), have also found clearer evidence for males than for females.

(2) The second point to be considered is the measurement of Field dependence. Some studies have used the rod-and-frame test, others the embedded figures test; as Fine and Danforth (1975) themselves argue, it cannot be assumed that these two tests actually measure the same underlying personality dimensions, a point which also comes out in Brody's (1972) critique. It is not justifiable, therefore, to throw together the findings using these different types of criteria.

(3) As Loo and Townsend (1977) make clear, and as has emerged in several subsequent studies, there is a likelihood that it is the Impulsivity part of the E scale, rather than the Sociability part, which mediates correlations with Field-dependence. When these two different traits are not looked at in separation, it is possible to come to erroneous conclusions.

(4) In his table, Fine reports correlations in a way that may give the wrong impression. Thus a positive correlation, as in the work of Evans (1967) indicates that extraverts show higher Field-dependence. Fine gives a negative correlation (-0.35) for the study by Loo (1976), thus suggesting that Loo found a relationship in the opposite direction. As Loo (1976) makes clear:

"A significant Pearson correlation was obtained between scores of the group test and Eysenck's extraversion scale, indicating that field-dependent persons are more extraverted than field-independent persons." (p. 614)

Thus readers of the table may be misled into believing that Loo found a correlation in the direction opposite to that posited by Eysenck.

I would conclude that Fine's table is incomplete and in parts incorrect, and that on the whole the data do bear out the existence of a moderate correlation between Extraversion (or possibly the Impulsivity component of Extraversion) and Field-dependence (particularly perhaps when measured by the rod-and-frame test).

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