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# Personality and Individual Differences

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## Richard Lynn's contributions to personality and intelligence

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### ABSTRACT

An evaluation is presented of Lynn's work on national differences in personality, race differences in intelligence, national IQs & economic development, correlates of national IQs, the Flynn effect, sex differences, eugenics and dysgenics, race differences in psychopathic personality, and intelligence of the Jews.

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### 1. National differences in personality

Lynn's early work on Eysenck's personality theory showed that extraverts have greater tolerance of pain than introverts. He went on to measure national differences in demographic and epidemiological phenomena such as the prevalence rates of psychosis, suicide, alcoholism, crime, road accident deaths, etc. He analysed these factors and showed the presence of two factors of neuroticism and extraversion in the population (Lynn, 1971). This work was recognised as "a breakthrough in the study of national cultures" (Hofstede & McCrae, 2004). Eysenck had an impact on Lynn's approach to psychology, providing a model of a fearless investigator, willing to propose large scale theories and to adopt unpopular positions if the data seemed to support them. In Lynn's view Eysenck remains the most influential British psychologist.

### 2. Race differences in intelligence

Lynn's major contribution to the issue of race differences in intelligence is the assembly of world wide data for the intelligence of 10 races (Lynn, 2006). Hitherto, the work of Jensen (1998), Eysenck (1971) and others had been largely confined to the black-white difference in the United States. Many explanations have been advanced for this, including minority status, deprivation, discrimination and prejudice by the white majority. Eysenck

(1971) speculated that the low average intelligence of American blacks could be attributed to the less intelligent being caught in Africa and transported as slaves, while the sub-Saharan Africans who remained in Africa would have had higher IQs. Lynn's compilation of studies showing that the IQ of blacks sub-Saharan Africans in Africa is significantly lower than that of blacks in the United States disconfirms this theory.

In 1977 Lynn published two papers on the intelligence of the North East Asians. He estimated Japanese IQ at 106.6 (Lynn, 1977a) and Chinese IQ in Singapore at 110 (Lynn, 1977b). These papers were significant because many people had claimed that the higher IQs obtained by Europeans were attributable to European ethnocentric prejudice and test bias. Lynn's results showed that these explanations did not hold.

Lynn published his first compilation of world wide racial IQs in 1991 and concluded that North East Asians have an IQ of 106, Europeans 100, South East Asians 90, New Zealand Maoris 91, Native American Indians 89, South Asians 86, Australian Aborigines 80, and sub-Saharan Africans 70 (Lynn, 1991). In his most recent compilation of over 500 studies, these estimates remain about the same, except that he has revised the IQ of Australian Aborigines down to 62, and the IQ of sub-Saharan Africans down to 67, and added the Arctic peoples with an IQ of 91 and the Bushmen with an IQ of 54 (Lynn, 2006). Wicherts, Dolan, Carlson, and van der Maas (2010) challenged the sub-Saharan African estimate, calculating it to be 78 in relation to a British mean of 100 on the Progressive Matrices tests and 81 on other tests. Lynn replied that unreasonable exclusion of low results and inappropriate selection

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of high results had led to inflated estimates (Lynn, 2010; Lynn & Meisenberg, 2010a). It is hard to adjudicate between these alternative interpretations. Lynn's most recent study estimates the IQ of sub-Saharan Africans in Darfur at 72.5 (Khaleefa, Lynn, Abulgasim, Dosa, & Abdulradi, 2010), about midway between his previous estimate and that of Wicherts and his colleagues. Perhaps this is the best compromise figure to adopt, but the broad picture stated by Wicherts, Dolan, and van der Maas (2010, p. 17) is that "there can be little doubt that Africans average lower IQs than do westerners". If the two estimates of Wicherts are averaged to 79.5, Lynn's position is not significantly affected. Sub-Saharan Africans remain in the same position in Lynn's ten race IQ hierarchy, and have an average IQ significantly lower than that of African Americans in the United States, as Lynn predicts from their admixture of European genes and environmental advantages.

Criticism of Lynn's compilation centred on the small sample sizes of many of the studies, and reservations about their representativeness. However, in those cases where larger, epidemiologically sound methodologies have been employed, the results have often been close to those obtained in the original smaller samples. The use of neighbouring countries as a proxy for those countries without suitable data also attracted criticism, yet the addition of further studies improved the picture, though many countries lack reliable data. A useful but less remarked aspect of Lynn's compilation of results are the intelligence test results of national groups tested when they have emigrated to other countries, revealing that they are little different from the results obtained in their countries of origin. In brief, Chinese, European and other emigrants seem to preserve their IQ's when they travel. The capacity of British people to retain their original level of intellect over three or four generations in the very different climates of Canada and Australia seems unremarkable, but this invariance requires as much explanation as the difference between different genetic groups. If there is any acclimatization of intellect, it is a slow process, as genetic theory would predict.

Lynn's second major contribution is his theory that race difference in intelligence evolved when early humans migrated out of Africa into temperate and then into cold environments. These new environments were more cognitively demanding, and so the peoples who settled in North Africa and South Asia, and even more the Europeans and the North East Asians, evolved higher IQs to survive. This is a standard Darwinian explanation of an adaptation for optimum survival in a new environment. This theory has become widely accepted by those working on this question and is supported by studies showing high correlations of 0.89 between skin colour and IQ across 58 nations reported by Meisenberg (2004) and replicated across 113 nations with a correlation of 0.92 using a different measure of skin colour by Rushton and Templer (2009). Light skin colour is another adaptation to temperate and cold environments because light skin allows the absorption of vitamin D from sunlight and reduces the risk of rickets. Light skin colour therefore provides a measure of the coldness of the climates inhabited by the ancestors of contemporary populations. Of course, we cannot directly test the cognitive demands of these ancient environments, but we can infer that new environments present a survival challenge, and harsh environments particularly so.

### 3. National IQs & economic development

In *IQ and the Wealth of Nations* (Lynn & Vanhanen, 2002) collected measured IQs for 81 nations and estimated IQs for 104 nations using the IQs of similar neighbouring countries. They reported that for the 81 nations the correlation between national IQs and per capita income (real GDP) in 1998 was 0.73, and for 185 nations 0.63. They concluded that national IQs explain 53

per cent of the variance in per capita income (.73 squared = 0.53). Thus, they argued that national IQs are the single most important variable in the determination of national per capita income, and that the remaining 47 per cent can be largely explained by the degree to which nations have free market economies and natural resources.

This book had a mixed reception. The national IQs were described as "meaningless" by Hunt and Sternberg (2006). However, Hunt changed his mind about the national IQs because he reported that the national IQs were highly correlated with scores in math and science, and concluded that "Lynn & Vanhanen's (2006) empirical conclusion was correct" (Hunt & Wittmann, 2008, p. 1). Lynn and Meisenberg (2010b) integrated all the international studies of reading comprehension, math and science understanding and showed that they are perfectly correlated with national IQs. This strongly suggests that the national IQs are valid.

### 4. Correlates of national IQs

Numerous studies have validated national IQs by showing that they are correlated with and explain a wide range of social and economic phenomena, including the incidence of HIV (Rindermann & Meisenberg, 2009), fertility (Meisenberg, 2009), infant mortality (Kanazawa, 2006), crime (Rushton & Templer, 2009) and religious belief (Kanazawa, 2009). Rindermann and Ceci (2009) have described the calculation of national IQs as "a new development in the study of cognitive ability. The goal is to use cognitive differences to understand and predict national differences in a variety of outcomes: societal development, rate of democratization, population health, productivity, gross domestic product (GDP), and wage inequality". Economists have used national IQs to explain economic phenomena, e.g. Jones and Schneider (2010) have shown that a country's average IQ score is a predictor of the wages that immigrants from that country earn in the United States, and that national IQs are useful for predicting cross-country productivity differences, and cross-country growth rates.

### 5. The Global Bell Curve

Lynn's (2006) next book on race differences in intelligence was *The Global Bell Curve*. This examined race differences worldwide and showed that there are consistent racial hierarchies in which Europeans and North East Asians have the highest IQ, educational attainment, earnings and socio-economic status. In southeast Asia, i.e. in Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia and Thailand, it is invariably the Chinese who have higher IQs than the indigenous peoples and outperform them in education, earnings, wealth and socio-economic status. Typically mixed race peoples such as Mulattos and Mestizos in Latin America and Hispanics in the United States come in the middle of these hierarchies, and indigenous peoples (Australian Aborigines, New Zealand Maoris and Native American Indians) and sub-Saharan Africans do least well.

Sociologists and anthropologists have coined the term *pigmentocracy* to describe these IQ and socio-economic hierarchies. A pigmentocracy is a society in which wealth and social status are determined by skin colour. Lynn's contribution has been to document that intelligence differences provide the best explanation for the racial hierarchies that are consistently present in all multi-racial societies. Lynn's book has been criticised by Johnson (2009) who writes that "Lynn's data are essentially correct and do reflect the general state of the world", but she warns "read this book if you want a glimpse into the intellectual process of rationalizing pre-existing ideas through data collection". However, science always depends on data collection to confirm or disconfirm a hypothesis.

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