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Eysenck S B G & Eysenck H J. The measurement of psychoticism: a study of factor stability and reliability. *Brit. J. Soc. Clin. Psychol.* 7:286-94, 1968.
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An investigation is reported into the measurement of the personality dimension P (psychoticism), which has emerged from factorial and other empirical studies as a third dimension in addition to E (extraversion) and N (neuroticism). Large groups of adult men and women and of male and female students were administered an inventory containing 106 potential P, E, and N items, and the results were factor-analysed. [The *Social Sciences Citation Index*® (SSCI)® indicates that this paper has been cited in over 110 publications.]

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This study was the outcome of collaboration with my husband, H.J. Eysenck, which has characterised our work for the past 30 years. We have demonstrated along clinical and experimental lines that, in addition to extraversion (E) and neuroticism (N), there was a third major dimension of personality that we provisionally called psychoticism (P) and conceived of as a set of correlated behaviour variables indicative of predisposition to psychotic breakdown, demonstrable as a continuous variable in the normal population and independent of E and N. We disagreed on one point. I thought that it should be possible to measure this variable in questionnaire form, whereas my husband felt that the concept presented special difficulties. The events proved us both to be right.

It did prove possible to measure P as a personality variable by means of questionnaires, but the psychometric properties of the resulting scale left much to be desired, both in the way of low reliability and also by way of a very skewed distribution. This paper used

the results of some preliminary work we had done to factor-analyse correlations between items hopefully measuring the dimensions of P, E, and N on 500 adult males, 500 adult females, and 1,400 male and female students. The outcome clearly indicated the existence of three relatively independent factors corresponding to the hypothetical personality dimensions of P, E, and N. Reliability of the P scale, consisting of 20 items, ranged from 0.66 to 0.81 for the various samples tested.

This paper probably has been cited so frequently because it was the first to establish P as an independent psychometric variable descriptive of an important dimension of personality; since then, of course, an enormous amount of work has been done on this concept.¹ Much of this work has been concerned with experimental, hormonal, and physiological studies investigating the nature and correlates of the psychoticism dimension, and, in addition, there has been much work to discover special populations (criminals, smokers, etc.) who, according to theory, should have high P scores and those who, in accordance with the empirical evidence, do have such P scores. Of particular interest has been the finding that when a given test (psychological, biochemical, or physiological) discriminates between normals and psychotics, it also discriminates in the same direction between high and low P scorers within the normal and/or the psychotic population.²

It is unusual for a paper published in a British journal to receive so much attention, but the novelty of the concepts probably ensured that it would not pass unnoticed. P is still our favorite baby, and the personality structure of P, E, and N has since been found invariant in 25 different countries.³ The P, E, and N scales, plus a Lie (L) scale, are now available commercially in the form of the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ), a widely used inventory for personality research.⁴ A detailed review of recent work with the EPQ is available.⁵

1. Eysenck H J & Eysenck S B G. *Psychoticism as a dimension of personality*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1976. 232 p. (Cited 195 times.)
2. Eysenck H J & Eysenck M W. *Personality and individual differences: a natural science approach*. New York: Plenum Press, 1985. 424 p.
3. Barrett P & Eysenck S B G. The assessment of personality factors across 25 countries. *Perz. Indiv. Differ.* 5:615-32, 1984.
4. Eysenck H J & Eysenck S B G. *Manual of the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1975.
5. Claridge G. The Eysenck psychoticism scale. (Butcher J N & Spielberger C D, eds.) *Advances in personality assessment*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1983. Vol. 2. p. 71-114.