



Race and gender in methodologically flawed work of Richard Lynn

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Abstract

Background: The pseudoscientific nature of the “IQ maps of the world” prepared by Richard Lynn becomes more obvious if Lynn’s substandard methodology and his misrepresentation of scientific work of other authors is reviewed, including in some of his older pseudoscientific studies.

Method: The present study focuses on Lynn’s methods in his 1993 article, in which Lynn used external head measurements from outdated sources to support his dogma of intellectual inferiority of women compared to men and of blacks compared to whites.

Results: Noteworthy in Lynn's 1993 article are his misinterpretation of very low correlations of head size measures to IQs, his blatantly selective reporting only of confirmatory data, and his factual misrepresentations of statistical conclusions reported by other authors. Similar methodological concerns about Lynn's other racial studies were also raised by Leon Kamin and by various other scientists.

Conclusions: Lynn’s 1993 article is replete with methodological errors and misrepresentations of data and of statistical conclusions presented by other authors.

Keywords: IQ, racial differences, gender differences, head size

1. Introduction

Richard Lynn is celebrated in Neo-Nazi circles for compiling the “IQ maps of the world” that promote the racist belief that certain nations such as those within South Asia and the Middle East as well as American Hispanics are genetically inferior with respect to intelligence. Lynn’s work has been intensively promoted in North America in lengthy YouTube lectures by J.P. Rushton, including in those on Lynn’s IQ maps. Asian readers may not be aware that Rushton’s YouTube lectures also presented his misguided and racist belief in genetic inferiority of the people of India. Rushton never met standards of adequate and credible scientific methodology already in initial stages of his racial studies [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7].

The pseudoscientific nature of Lynn’s work becomes obvious when his substandard methodology and his cavalier misrepresentation of scientific data and of findings published by other authors are closely scrutinized, including in some of Lynn’s older studies.

2. Method

The present study focuses on Lynn’s methods in his 1993 article [8] in which Lynn used external head measurements from outdated sources to support his dogma of intellectual inferiority of women compared to men and of blacks compared to whites. Particular attention is paid here to discrepancies between Lynn’s presentation of data and of findings of other authors and the actual data and findings of those other authors.

3. Results

In his 1993 study [8], Lynn concluded from his MANOVA on an old set of data from Krogman's 1970 study [9] of Philadelphia school children as well as from Rushton's reviews of findings based on even less adequate data sets

(e.g., Rushton [10]) that cranial capacity is larger in whites than blacks and in men than in women. He hypothesized that, given the positive association between brain size and intelligence, there should be corresponding race and sex differences in intelligence.

There are numerous methodological flaws, misconceptions, and factual errors in Lynn's article [8]. Already in the introductory section of his article, Lynn [8] uncritically relied on Morton's prescientific and obsolete skull collection to “document” inferiority of blacks with respect to skull size. These skulls were actually collected by George Glidden, a layman with explicitly racist leanings. The race may have been only “estimated” from the skull size, see Weizmann, Wiener, Wiesenthal, and Ziegler [5].

Noteworthy is Lynn's pseudoscientific recourse to external measures of head size as estimates of intelligence. The correlations of external head measurements to scores on intelligence tests are too low to utilize the former as an indicator of intelligence: the correlation coefficients are usually below .20, see a discussion in Cernovsky [2].

In his political zeal, Lynn [8] arbitrarily shifted between the use of absolute brain size and relative brain size (brain size corrected for body size), conveniently using the latter to “correct” his findings only when, in Krogman's data [9], the absolute cranial capacity in black girls was higher than in white girls. Lynn's interpretation of the relative brain size index (the brain/body size ratio) is inappropriate, at best. Some lower animals, e.g., squirrel monkeys or house mice have a considerably higher brain/body size ratio than humans without demonstrating the hypothesized intellectual superiority in their lifestyle, see Cain & Vanderwolf [1].

Lynn [8] also misrepresented Krogman's sample [9] of black children as being from the middle and upper-middle socioeconomic class. In a striking contrast to Lynn's allegedly direct quotes from Krogman [9], page 4, Krogman

in fact described, on that same page, the black children as being from the lower-middle and middle-middle class and the white children as from the middle and upper-middle class.

Lynn^[8] also flagrantly misled his readers to assume that the results of an extensive cranial size investigation by Beals, Smith, and Dodd^[11] support his thesis of blacks' inferiority, perhaps presuming that his readers will not peruse the article by Beals *et al.* to independently examine or question the integrity of the racial conclusion.

Lynn's^[8] work is not original. It closely follows Rushton's^[10, 12] creed of female and black inferiority and reproduces Rushton's methodologically substandard procedures and errors, see criticisms of Rushton's "theory" in Cernovsky^[2, 6, 7].

4. Discussion

A quarter of century ago, Lynn's and Rushton's flawed work on racial differences was promoted by Richard J. Herrnstein and Charles Murray^[13] and was cited as scientific evidence in their book "The Bell Curve"^[13]. Subsequently, the methodological shortcomings and flaws in Lynn's work were pointed out in the *Scientific American* by Leon Kamin^[4] in 1995: Kamin drew the attention of his readers to Lynn's various "distortions and misrepresentation of the data" and to his "scandalous disregard for scientific objectivity."

There has been an increasing number of criticisms of Lynn's and Rushton's pseudo-psychological and pseudo-genetic work by various psychologists and biologists with advanced training in methodology and statistics: the Ulster University at which Richard Lynn used to be listed as "professor emeritus" has revoked Lynn's academic title in 2018.

Shoddy methodology, major factual errors, and pseudoscientific political theories of such psychology professors have been exposed, criticised, and rejected by scientists with advanced expertise in statistics and methodology.

The onus is on young generations of psychologists, methodologists, biologists, and statisticians to review the data and facts in a scientifically adequate manner.

5. Conclusion

Lynn's 1993 article^[8] is replete with methodological errors and misrepresentations of data and of statistical conclusions presented by other authors. It serves as example of pseudoscientific work on racial and gender differences in intelligence.

6. References

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