

## **Heritability and Genetic Correlation: Standard Errors of Estimates and Sample Size**

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*Standard errors of heritability as estimated by four different methodologies (regression of offspring on midparent values, regression of offspring on single-parent values, intraclass correlation of full sibs, and intraclass correlation of half sibs) are tabulated. Standard errors of the genetic correlation (correlation between additive genetic values for two characters on the same individuals in a population) as estimated by analogous methods are also presented. These tables suggest that quantitative genetic analyses, including studies of the genetic correlation among characters, should not be undertaken unless resources are available which would allow the testing of at least 400 families of four members each.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The resurgent interest in genetic analysis of behavioral traits which has taken place within the last 20 years has prompted numerous reconsiderations of methods for the investigation of quantitative characters in human populations. Historically, the primary intent of such investigations has been the estimation of heritability for a trait. However, the expense of locating appropriate subjects for this research has led to an increase in the number of multivariate experiments being conducted. Such an approach offers, in addition to the estimation of the heritability of each phenotype, the opportunity to study the genetic correlation among the traits involved for the suggestion of common genetic causality.

While the various twin methodologies have been the most favored for human research, methods for the analysis of family data have long been avail-

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able. Choice of methodology ultimately rests on the investigator's willingness to accept the underlying assumptions of the method. However, common to all methods is the problem of determination of the sample size required to meet the aim of the specific research. With reference to previous work in the field of human behavioral genetics, failure to give adequate attention to considerations of sample size and statistical significance has led to the reporting of heritabilities without their associated standard errors and the failure of otherwise well-conceived and well-executed research to contribute significantly to our knowledge of behavioral determinants.

The scope of any research is limited by the resources available to the investigator, whether the limiting factor be funds, facilities, or time. While all possible impediments to the success of a research project cannot be anticipated, careful scrutiny of the methodology employed, before data collection begins, can prevent many needless failures. In the estimation of population parameters such as heritability and genetic correlation, a major consideration must be that of the statistical significance of possible results. Unless the resulting estimates can be demonstrated to be statistically significant, the question of practical or scientific significance cannot be raised.

The purpose of this communication is the presentation of a number of tables of standard errors for heritability and genetic correlation estimated from regression of offspring on midparent values ( $b_{OP}$ ), regression of offspring on single-parent values ( $b_{OP}$ ), full-sib correlation ( $t_{FS}$ ), and half-sib correlation ( $t_{HS}$ ). These tables provide a quick reference for the prospective investigator who might wish to employ one of these experimental designs for determining whether resources available, or those proposed, are sufficient to answer the critical questions in his study.

## METHOD

Heritability may be estimated directly by the regression of offspring on midparent values, while regression of offspring on single-parent values estimates one-half heritability. The derivation of these estimates and their requisite assumptions are presented by Falconer (1960, Chaps. 9 and 10). Thus the derived estimates may be tested for statistical significance through the use of the standard error of the regression coefficient:

$$\sigma_b = \left\{ [1/(N-2)] [(\sigma_O^2/\sigma_P^2) - b^2] \right\}^{1/2}$$

where  $N$  is the number of families,  $\sigma_O^2$  the variance of offspring values, and  $\sigma_P^2$  the variance of parental values (Falconer, 1960, p. 179). Random mating is assumed, so that  $\sigma_P^2 = \sigma_F^2/2$  for regression of offspring on midparent values.  $\sigma_O^2$

Table I. Standard Error of Heritability ( $h^2$ ) as Estimated by Regression of Offspring on Midparent Values ( $b_{OP}$ ), Regression of Offspring on Single-Parent Values ( $b_{SP}$ ), Intraclass Correlation of Full Sibs ( $t_{FS}$ ), and Intraclass Correlation of Half Sibs ( $t_{HS}$ ), as a Function of Sample Size

$N^a$	$n^b$	$h^2(b_{OP})$						$h^2(t_{FS})$						$h^2(t_{HS})$					
		0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8		
100	1	0.141	0.137	0.129	0.118	0.201	0.198	0.193	0.185	2	0.199	0.193	0.183	0.169	0.401	0.398	0.393	0.386	
	2	0.104	0.103	0.098	0.088	0.148	0.151	0.148	3	0.125	0.130	0.130	0.125	0.243	0.251	0.256	0.260		
	3	0.088	0.089	0.085	0.076	0.126	0.132	0.135	0.134	4	0.096	0.105	0.109	0.108	0.179	0.192	0.202	0.210	
200	1	0.099	0.096	0.091	0.083	0.141	0.139	0.136	0.130	2	0.140	0.136	0.129	0.119	0.282	0.281	0.277	0.272	
	2	0.073	0.072	0.069	0.062	0.104	0.106	0.106	0.104	3	0.088	0.092	0.092	0.088	0.171	0.177	0.181	0.183	
	3	0.062	0.062	0.060	0.053	0.089	0.093	0.095	0.094	4	0.068	0.074	0.077	0.076	0.126	0.135	0.143	0.148	
400	1	0.070	0.068	0.064	0.058	0.100	0.098	0.096	0.092	2	0.099	0.096	0.091	0.084	0.200	0.198	0.196	0.192	
	2	0.052	0.051	0.049	0.044	0.074	0.075	0.075	0.074	3	0.062	0.065	0.065	0.062	0.121	0.125	0.128	0.129	
	3	0.044	0.044	0.042	0.038	0.063	0.065	0.067	0.066	4	0.048	0.052	0.054	0.054	0.089	0.096	0.101	0.105	
800	1	0.050	0.048	0.045	0.041	0.070	0.069	0.068	0.065	2	0.070	0.068	0.064	0.059	0.141	0.140	0.138	0.136	
	2	0.036	0.036	0.034	0.031	0.052	0.053	0.053	0.052	3	0.044	0.046	0.046	0.044	0.085	0.088	0.090	0.092	
	3	0.031	0.031	0.030	0.026	0.044	0.046	0.047	0.047	4	0.034	0.037	0.038	0.038	0.060	0.068	0.071	0.074	
1600	1	0.035	0.034	0.032	0.029	0.050	0.049	0.048	0.046	2	0.050	0.048	0.046	0.042	0.100	0.099	0.098	0.096	
	2	0.026	0.026	0.024	0.022	0.037	0.037	0.037	0.037	3	0.031	0.032	0.032	0.031	0.060	0.062	0.064	0.065	
	3	0.022	0.022	0.021	0.019	0.031	0.033	0.033	0.033	4	0.024	0.026	0.027	0.027	0.045	0.048	0.050	0.052	
3200	1	0.025	0.024	0.023	0.021	0.035	0.035	0.034	0.032	2	0.035	0.034	0.032	0.030	0.071	0.070	0.069	0.068	
	2	0.018	0.018	0.017	0.015	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	3	0.022	0.023	0.023	0.022	0.043	0.044	0.045	0.046	
	3	0.015	0.016	0.015	0.013	0.022	0.023	0.024	0.023	4	0.017	0.018	0.019	0.019	0.032	0.034	0.036	0.037	

$a$   $N$  = number of families.  
 $b$   $n$  = number of offspring per family.

Table II.A. Standard Error of Genetic Correlation ( $r_A$ ) as Estimated from Comparison of Offspring and Midparent Values as a Function of Heritability ( $h^2$ ) and Sample Size (Upper Triangle)

$h^2$	$N^a$	$n^b$	$h^2$																				
			0.2				0.4				0.6				0.8								
			$r_A$ : 0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8					
0.2	100	1	0.68	0.60	0.46	0.26	0.48	0.37	0.18	0.33	0.22	0.27	0.12	0.26	0.23	0.18	0.10	0.22	0.19	0.15	0.08	0.06	
		2	0.50	0.44	0.34	0.19	0.35	0.29	0.13	0.25	0.22	0.17	0.09	0.17	0.17	0.13	0.07	0.10	0.12	0.14	0.11	0.06	0.05
		3	0.43	0.38	0.28	0.16	0.30	0.26	0.11	0.21	0.19	0.14	0.08	0.17	0.15	0.11	0.06	0.14	0.14	0.12	0.09	0.05	0.05
	200	1	0.48	0.42	0.32	0.18	0.34	0.30	0.22	0.13	0.24	0.21	0.16	0.09	0.19	0.16	0.12	0.09	0.15	0.14	0.10	0.06	0.04
		2	0.36	0.31	0.24	0.13	0.25	0.22	0.17	0.09	0.18	0.15	0.12	0.07	0.14	0.12	0.09	0.05	0.11	0.10	0.08	0.04	0.04
		3	0.30	0.26	0.20	0.11	0.21	0.18	0.14	0.08	0.15	0.13	0.10	0.06	0.12	0.10	0.08	0.04	0.10	0.08	0.06	0.04	0.04
	400	1	0.34	0.30	0.23	0.13	0.24	0.21	0.16	0.09	0.17	0.14	0.11	0.08	0.13	0.12	0.09	0.05	0.11	0.10	0.08	0.07	0.04
		2	0.25	0.22	0.17	0.09	0.18	0.15	0.12	0.07	0.12	0.11	0.08	0.05	0.10	0.09	0.06	0.04	0.08	0.07	0.05	0.03	0.03
		3	0.21	0.19	0.14	0.08	0.15	0.13	0.10	0.06	0.10	0.09	0.07	0.04	0.08	0.07	0.06	0.04	0.07	0.06	0.05	0.03	0.03
0.4	100	1	0.48	0.42	0.32	0.18	0.34	0.29	0.22	0.13	0.23	0.20	0.16	0.09	0.18	0.16	0.12	0.07	0.15	0.13	0.10	0.06	0.06
		2	0.36	0.32	0.24	0.14	0.26	0.22	0.17	0.10	0.18	0.15	0.12	0.07	0.14	0.12	0.09	0.05	0.11	0.10	0.08	0.04	0.04
		3	0.31	0.27	0.21	0.12	0.22	0.20	0.15	0.08	0.15	0.13	0.10	0.06	0.12	0.10	0.08	0.04	0.10	0.09	0.07	0.04	0.04
	200	1	0.34	0.30	0.22	0.13	0.24	0.21	0.16	0.09	0.16	0.14	0.11	0.06	0.13	0.11	0.09	0.05	0.11	0.09	0.07	0.04	0.04
		2	0.25	0.22	0.17	0.10	0.18	0.16	0.12	0.07	0.12	0.11	0.08	0.05	0.10	0.09	0.06	0.04	0.08	0.07	0.05	0.03	0.03
		3	0.22	0.19	0.14	0.08	0.16	0.14	0.10	0.06	0.11	0.09	0.07	0.04	0.08	0.07	0.06	0.03	0.07	0.06	0.05	0.03	0.03
	400	1	0.24	0.21	0.16	0.09	0.17	0.15	0.11	0.06	0.12	0.10	0.08	0.04	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.03	0.08	0.07	0.05	0.03	0.03
		2	0.18	0.16	0.12	0.07	0.13	0.11	0.08	0.05	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.03	0.07	0.06	0.05	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.02
		3	0.15	0.13	0.10	0.06	0.11	0.10	0.07	0.04	0.08	0.06	0.05	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.05	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.02
0.6	100	1	0.39	0.34	0.26	0.14	0.27	0.24	0.18	0.10	0.22	0.19	0.14	0.08	0.15	0.13	0.10	0.06	0.12	0.11	0.08	0.04	0.04
		2	0.29	0.26	0.20	0.11	0.21	0.18	0.14	0.08	0.17	0.15	0.11	0.06	0.11	0.10	0.07	0.04	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.03	0.03
		3	0.26	0.22	0.17	0.10	0.18	0.16	0.12	0.07	0.15	0.13	0.10	0.06	0.10	0.08	0.06	0.04	0.08	0.07	0.05	0.03	0.03
	200	1	0.27	0.24	0.18	0.10	0.19	0.17	0.13	0.07	0.15	0.13	0.10	0.06	0.10	0.09	0.07	0.04	0.08	0.07	0.06	0.03	0.03
		2	0.21	0.18	0.14	0.08	0.15	0.13	0.10	0.06	0.12	0.10	0.08	0.04	0.08	0.07	0.05	0.03	0.06	0.06	0.04	0.02	0.02
		3	0.18	0.16	0.12	0.07	0.13	0.11	0.09	0.05	0.11	0.09	0.07	0.04	0.07	0.06	0.04	0.02	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.02
	400	1	0.19	0.17	0.13	0.07	0.13	0.12	0.09	0.05	0.11	0.10	0.07	0.04	0.07	0.06	0.05	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.02
		2	0.15	0.13	0.10	0.06	0.10	0.09	0.07	0.04	0.08	0.07	0.06	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.02
		3	0.13	0.11	0.08	0.03	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.03	0.08	0.07	0.05	0.03	0.05	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.02
0.8	100	1	0.33	0.29	0.22	0.12	0.23	0.20	0.15	0.09	0.18	0.16	0.12	0.07	0.16	0.14	0.10	0.06	0.10	0.09	0.07	0.04	0.04
		2	0.25	0.22	0.17	0.09	0.18	0.16	0.12	0.07	0.15	0.13	0.10	0.06	0.13	0.11	0.08	0.05	0.08	0.06	0.06	0.04	0.02
		3	0.22	0.19	0.15	0.08	0.16	0.14	0.11	0.06	0.13	0.12	0.09	0.05	0.11	0.10	0.08	0.04	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.02
	200	1	0.23	0.20	0.15	0.09	0.16	0.14	0.11	0.06	0.13	0.11	0.09	0.05	0.11	0.10	0.07	0.04	0.07	0.06	0.05	0.03	0.03
		2	0.18	0.16	0.12	0.07	0.13	0.11	0.08	0.05	0.10	0.09	0.07	0.04	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.03	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.03	0.02
		3	0.16	0.14	0.10	0.06	0.11	0.10	0.08	0.04	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.04	0.08	0.07	0.05	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.02
	400	1	0.16	0.14	0.11	0.06	0.11	0.10	0.08	0.04	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.03	0.08	0.07	0.05	0.03	0.05	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.02
		2	0.12	0.11	0.08	0.05	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.03	0.07	0.06	0.05	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.02
		3	0.11	0.10	0.07	0.04	0.08	0.07	0.05	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.05	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.02

Standard Error of Genetic Correlation as Estimated from Comparison of Offspring and Single-Parent Values (Lower Triangle)

<sup>a</sup>  $N$  = number of families.  
<sup>b</sup>  $n$  = number of offspring per family.

Table III. Standard Error of Genetic Correlation ( $r_A$ ) as Estimated from Comparison of Offspring and Midparent Values as a Function of Heritability ( $h^2$ ) and Sample Size (Upper Triangle)

$h^2$	$N^a$	$n^b$	$h^2$																		
			0.2			0.4			0.6			0.8									
$r_A$			0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8			
0.2	800	1	0.24	0.21	0.16	0.09	0.17	0.15	0.11	0.06	0.04	0.08	0.04	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.04	0.04			
		2	0.18	0.16	0.12	0.07	0.12	0.11	0.08	0.05	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.03	0.07	0.06	0.05	0.03			
		3	0.15	0.13	0.10	0.06	0.10	0.09	0.07	0.04	0.07	0.06	0.05	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.02			
0.2	1600	1	0.17	0.15	0.11	0.06	0.12	0.10	0.08	0.04	0.08	0.07	0.06	0.03	0.07	0.06	0.04	0.02			
		2	0.12	0.11	0.08	0.05	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.01			
		3	0.11	0.09	0.07	0.04	0.07	0.06	0.05	0.03	0.05	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.01		
0.4	3200	1	0.12	0.10	0.08	0.04	0.08	0.07	0.06	0.03	0.06	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.02			
		2	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.01			
		3	0.08	0.07	0.05	0.03	0.05	0.04	0.04	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.01			
0.6	800	1	0.17	0.15	0.11	0.06	0.12	0.10	0.08	0.04	0.08	0.07	0.05	0.03	0.06	0.04	0.02	0.01			
		2	0.13	0.11	0.08	0.05	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.01			
		3	0.11	0.10	0.07	0.04	0.08	0.07	0.05	0.03	0.05	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.01		
0.6	1600	1	0.12	0.10	0.08	0.04	0.08	0.07	0.06	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.01			
		2	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.03	0.06	0.06	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.01			
		3	0.08	0.07	0.05	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.01			
0.8	3200	1	0.08	0.07	0.06	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.01			
		2	0.06	0.06	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01			
		3	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01			
0.8	800	1	0.14	0.12	0.09	0.05	0.10	0.08	0.06	0.04	0.08	0.07	0.05	0.03	0.06	0.04	0.02	0.01			
		2	0.10	0.09	0.07	0.04	0.07	0.06	0.05	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.01			
		3	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.03	0.06	0.06	0.04	0.02	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.01			
0.8	1600	1	0.10	0.08	0.06	0.04	0.07	0.06	0.04	0.02	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.01			
		2	0.07	0.06	0.05	0.03	0.05	0.04	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.01			
		3	0.06	0.06	0.04	0.02	0.05	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01			
0.8	3200	1	0.07	0.06	0.04	0.02	0.05	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.01			
		2	0.05	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01			
		3	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01			
0.8	800	1	0.12	0.10	0.08	0.04	0.08	0.07	0.05	0.03	0.06	0.06	0.04	0.02	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.02			
		2	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.03	0.06	0.06	0.04	0.02	0.05	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.02			
		3	0.08	0.07	0.05	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.05	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.02			
0.8	1600	1	0.08	0.07	0.05	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.05	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.01			
		2	0.06	0.06	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.01			
		3	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.01			
0.8	3200	1	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.01			
		2	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01			
		3	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.01	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01			
$h^2$	$N^a$	$n^b$	0.2			0.4			0.6			0.8			0.6			0.8			
			$r_A$			0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8
			$h^2$			0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8

Standard Error of Genetic Correlation Estimated from Comparison of Offspring and Single Parent Values (Lower Triangle)

$N$  = number of families.  
 $n$  = number of offspring per family.

Table IIIA. Standard Error of Genetic Correlation ( $r_A$ ) as Estimated from Full-Sib Comparison as a Function of Heritability ( $h^2$ ) and Sample Size (Upper Triangle)

$h^2$	$N^a$	$n^b$	$h^2_X$																			
			0.2			0.4			0.6			0.8										
			$r_A$	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8							
0.2	100	2	1.4	0.91	0.51	0.68	0.59	0.45	0.25	0.47	0.41	0.31	0.18	0.37	0.33	0.25	0.14	0.31	0.27	0.21	0.14	0.08
		3	0.82	0.72	0.55	0.42	0.37	0.28	0.16	0.31	0.27	0.20	0.12	0.25	0.22	0.17	0.09	0.21	0.19	0.14	0.08	0.08
		4	0.61	0.53	0.41	0.33	0.28	0.22	0.12	0.24	0.21	0.16	0.09	0.20	0.18	0.13	0.08	0.17	0.15	0.12	0.06	0.06
		200	2	0.96	0.84	0.64	0.48	0.42	0.32	0.18	0.33	0.29	0.22	0.12	0.26	0.23	0.18	0.10	0.22	0.19	0.15	0.08
0.4		3	0.58	0.51	0.39	0.22	0.30	0.26	0.11	0.22	0.19	0.14	0.08	0.18	0.15	0.12	0.07	0.15	0.13	0.10	0.06	
		4	0.43	0.38	0.29	0.16	0.23	0.20	0.15	0.09	0.17	0.15	0.11	0.06	0.14	0.12	0.09	0.05	0.12	0.11	0.08	
		200	2	0.68	0.59	0.45	0.25	0.34	0.29	0.13	0.23	0.20	0.16	0.09	0.19	0.16	0.12	0.07	0.16	0.14	0.10	0.06
		4	0.41	0.36	0.27	0.15	0.21	0.18	0.14	0.08	0.15	0.13	0.10	0.06	0.12	0.11	0.08	0.05	0.11	0.10	0.07	
0.6		2	0.48	0.42	0.32	0.18	0.34	0.29	0.22	0.13	0.16	0.14	0.11	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.03	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.03	
		3	0.30	0.26	0.20	0.11	0.21	0.16	0.14	0.08	0.11	0.10	0.07	0.04	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.03	0.08	0.07	0.05	
		4	0.22	0.19	0.15	0.08	0.16	0.14	0.11	0.06	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.03	0.07	0.06	0.05	0.03	0.06	0.06	0.04	
		200	2	0.78	0.68	0.52	0.29	0.55	0.48	0.36	0.20	0.44	0.39	0.30	0.17	0.21	0.18	0.14	0.08	0.17	0.15	
0.8		3	0.49	0.43	0.33	0.18	0.35	0.31	0.23	0.13	0.29	0.25	0.19	0.11	0.15	0.13	0.10	0.06	0.12	0.11	0.08	
		4	0.37	0.33	0.25	0.14	0.27	0.24	0.18	0.10	0.23	0.20	0.15	0.09	0.12	0.11	0.08	0.05	0.11	0.09	0.07	
		200	2	0.55	0.48	0.37	0.21	0.39	0.34	0.26	0.14	0.31	0.27	0.21	0.12	0.15	0.13	0.10	0.06	0.12	0.11	
		4	0.26	0.23	0.18	0.10	0.19	0.17	0.13	0.07	0.16	0.14	0.11	0.06	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.03	0.08	0.07	0.05	
0.8		2	0.39	0.34	0.26	0.14	0.27	0.24	0.18	0.10	0.22	0.19	0.15	0.08	0.10	0.09	0.07	0.04	0.09	0.08	0.06	
		3	0.24	0.21	0.16	0.09	0.18	0.15	0.12	0.07	0.14	0.13	0.10	0.05	0.07	0.06	0.05	0.03	0.06	0.06	0.04	
		4	0.19	0.16	0.12	0.07	0.14	0.12	0.09	0.05	0.11	0.10	0.08	0.04	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.05	0.05	0.04	
		200	2	0.67	0.58	0.44	0.25	0.47	0.41	0.31	0.18	0.38	0.33	0.25	0.14	0.33	0.29	0.22	0.12	0.14	0.12	
0.8		3	0.43	0.37	0.28	0.16	0.31	0.27	0.20	0.12	0.25	0.22	0.17	0.10	0.22	0.19	0.15	0.08	0.11	0.09	0.07	
		4	0.33	0.29	0.22	0.12	0.24	0.21	0.16	0.09	0.20	0.18	0.14	0.08	0.18	0.16	0.12	0.07	0.09	0.08	0.06	
		200	2	0.47	0.41	0.31	0.18	0.33	0.29	0.22	0.12	0.27	0.24	0.18	0.10	0.23	0.20	0.15	0.09	0.10	0.09	
		4	0.23	0.20	0.16	0.09	0.17	0.15	0.14	0.08	0.14	0.12	0.10	0.05	0.13	0.11	0.08	0.05	0.06	0.06	0.04	
0.8		2	0.33	0.29	0.22	0.12	0.23	0.20	0.16	0.09	0.19	0.17	0.13	0.07	0.16	0.14	0.11	0.06	0.07	0.06	0.05	
		3	0.21	0.19	0.14	0.08	0.15	0.13	0.10	0.06	0.13	0.11	0.08	0.05	0.11	0.10	0.07	0.04	0.05	0.05	0.04	
		4	0.16	0.14	0.11	0.06	0.12	0.10	0.08	0.04	0.10	0.09	0.07	0.04	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.03	0.05	0.04	0.03	
		200	2	0.47	0.41	0.31	0.18	0.33	0.29	0.22	0.12	0.27	0.24	0.18	0.10	0.23	0.20	0.15	0.09	0.10	0.09	

Standard Error of Genetic Correlation as Estimated from Half-Sib Comparison (Lower Triangle)

$a N$  = number of families.  
 $b n$  = number of sibs per family.



was calculated according to the following formula:

$$\sigma_O^2 = \left\{ [1 + (n-1)t]/n \right\} V_P$$

where  $V_P$  is phenotypic variance (assumed equal to  $\sigma_P^2$ ),  $n$  is the number of offspring per family, and  $t$  is the intraclass correlation of full sibs (assumed to equal  $\frac{1}{2}h^2$ ). The standard error of the heritability is then equal to the standard error of the regression coefficient for regression of offspring on midparent values and equal to twice the standard error of the regression coefficient for regression of offspring on single-parent values.

Since the full-sib correlation estimates the upper limit of one-half heritability and the intraclass correlation of half sibs estimates one-fourth heritability, their standard errors are two and four times the standard error of the intraclass correlation coefficient (Falconer, 1960, p. 181):

$$\sigma_t = \left\{ 2[1 + (n-1)t]^2 (1-t)^2 / n(n-1)(N-1) \right\}^{1/2}$$

where  $n$  is again the number of offspring per family and  $N$  is the number of families. Assumptions include:  $t = \frac{1}{2}h^2$  for heritability estimated from the full-sib correlation, and  $t = \frac{1}{4}h^2$  for heritability estimated from the intraclass correlation of half sibs. Standard errors derived from these formulations are presented in Table I.

The standard errors of genetic correlations obtained by analogous methods (Falconer, 1960, p. 318) may be estimated by the following approximate formula:

$$\sigma(r_A) = [(0.71)(1 - r_A^2)](\sigma_{(h_X^2)}\sigma_{(h_Y^2)}/h_X^2 h_Y^2)^{1/2}$$

where  $r_A$  is the genetic correlation,  $\sigma_{(h^2)}$  is the standard error of the heritability, and  $X$  and  $Y$  represent the scores on the correlated traits. Standard errors for genetic correlations as estimated by parent-offspring and sib comparisons are presented in Tables IIA, B and IIIA, B, respectively.

## DISCUSSION

In order to generate the tables presented here, two assumptions were made which deserve additional comment. First, it was assumed that the number of offspring per family was constant, an assumption unlikely to be realized in an actual experiment. In a design where the number of offspring per family varies from  $n_1$  to  $n_2$ , the standard error associated with  $n_1$  provides an estimate of the upper limit of the standard error for the total sample while that associated with



$n_2$  yields the lower limit; thus a range of possible standard errors may be obtained from the tabulated values under these conditions. However, when data have actually been collected and varying numbers of offspring per family are found to occur, more appropriate standard errors should be estimated by weighting procedures such as those outlined by Falconer (1963). The second assumption was that of random mating. Vandenberg (1972) has presented considerable evidence that, for a variety of behavioral traits, random mating is definitely not the rule in human populations. However, Reeve (1961) has shown that assortative mating introduces no bias in heritability estimates obtained through the regression of offspring on midparent values. In fact, the increase in the variance of the midparent values under positive assortative mating results in a decrease in the standard error of the heritability estimate. In addition, when the genetic correlation of parents is known, estimates of heritability obtained from sib correlations and from the regression of offspring on single-parent values may be corrected for effects introduced by assortative mating (Reeve, 1953).

In using these tables to compare the efficiency of the four designs considered, it must be remembered that the standard errors associated with each sample size are presented with primary consideration given to the number of families required, rather than the total number of individuals in the sample. For example, the standard error associated with a heritability of 0.20 obtained from regression of offspring on midparent values with 200 families, two offspring each, is 0.073. For two offspring per family using full-sib correlation, that value is 0.140. However, the number of individuals measured in the latter case is only one-half that of the former. Thus, when the total number of subjects measured is the limiting condition, the intraclass correlation of full sibs may sometimes provide a slightly more efficient estimate of heritability. (However, see Falconer, 1960, for a discussion of the validity of heritability estimates obtained from full-sib correlations.)

The demonstration that a heritability of 0.20 or greater differs significantly from zero can be accomplished with relatively small samples. For regression of offspring on midparent values, 100 families with two progeny tested is sufficient to establish significance ( $t = 1.92$ ,  $df = 98$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , one-tailed test). However, where the aim of the research is the accurate estimation of a specific value of  $h^2$ , the required sample size increases rapidly. For the specification of a heritability of  $0.20 \pm 0.10$ , within the 95% confidence limits, a sample of 400 families with two offspring per family tested is required, using regression of offspring on midparent values.

A brief perusal of the tables suggests that considerably larger sample sizes are required to obtain reliable estimates for genetic correlation than for heritability. For example, when offspring and midparent values are compared, a sample of 400 families (two offspring per family) is required to allow the specification of a genetic correlation of  $0.40 \pm 0.30$  for two traits whose heritabilities

are both 0.20. Thus a sample of 400 families may be considered to be a minimum for research designed to investigate the genetic correlation among traits. These examples have dealt only with the regression of offspring on midparent values. Estimates calculated from sib comparisons require the sampling of even larger numbers of families.

The tables presented here should facilitate the selection of an optimal sample for estimation of heritability and genetic correlation, based on considerations of the  $\alpha$  level employed. Eaves (1972) has recently discussed sample requirements for the detection of additive and dominance genetic components and between- and within-pair environmental components of variance, for what he considers to be qualitatively "minimal sets of data" for sib analysis in human psychogenetics. Tables are presented which take into account the statistical power of estimates. In addition, Eaves and Jinks (1972) have considered statistical power for the estimation of heritability from twin data where direct zygosity determination is not feasible. A manuscript dealing with the relationship of sample size to the statistical power of estimates obtained by the methods outlined in the present communication and ability to detect population differences in heritability is currently in preparation.

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