



**IDEATIONAL FLEXIBILITY AMONG ALCOHOL  
DEPENDENT AND NORMAL MALES USING RORSCHACH  
MOVEMENT RESPONSES**

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## ABSTRACT

COVID – 19 Pandemic is the global challenge we are facing now with the most severe hit on almost all life facets that we had ever seen. Even though we won't be able to envisage all domains of the post COVID World, the mental hygiene of individuals should be addressed at mostly. Escalated complications as well as worries, will be a highlighted feature of post COVID world. Immature coping strategy like substance abuse, can be adapted by huge population to deal with these types of escalations. In India a high prevalence of alcohol dependency has been previously reported by enormous studies. At this juncture, this research was designed to study the ideational flexibility among normal males and males diagnosed with alcohol dependency syndrome as per ICD-10 diagnostic criteria. Flexibility of an individual to alter the attitudes or values which have been conceptualized from information or inputs can be termed as Ideational flexibility. In this cross-sectional study, Purposive Sampling Method was used to collect data from 30 male out patients diagnosed with alcohol dependency syndrome as per ICD-10 diagnostic criteria and 30 males as control group, aged between 35 and 50 years. Rorschach Ink Blot test was administrated for the purpose. This projective test was individually administrated to patients and the control group. Exner Comprehensive System was utilized for interpretation and scoring of Rorschach protocols. Chi-Square test has been used for data analyses using SPSS 17. Results revealed that ideational sets and values of alcohol dependent males are well fixed and relatively inflexible than normal groups. Propositions of findings for an integrated psychotherapy to address this less flexible cognitive ideation among substance abusers were also discussed.

**Key Words:** Ideational Flexibility, Alcohol Dependent males, Rorschach Ink Blot test.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Presently, World after COVID-19 is the most focused issue around the world. The post pandemic impact over mental hygiene of individual must be addressed with special concern. Environmental stress comprising health and finance will intensify the scenario. Immature coping strategy like substance abuse, can be adapted by huge population to deal with these types of escalations. In India the prevalence of alcohol consumption has already increased by 55% in past 20 years and among them 30% reported high alcohol consumption pattern with alcohol dependency (Pillai et al., 2013; Mehta et al., 2015). Various cognitive distortions are being attributed to alcohol dependency (Sullivan & Pfefferhaum, 2005). Cognitive triad consists of three stages which includes, Information Process or the input, Mediation or the mental operations of the input and Ideation or conceptualisation of the inputs (Exner, 2003). The ideational flexibility is included in the third stage of cognitive triad and is defined as the flexibility of an individual to alter the attitudes or values which have been conceptualized from information or inputs can be termed as Ideational flexibility (Exner, 2003). Ideational flexibility is the crude factor which determines the willingness of an individual to alter one's conceptualised attitudes or values. When ideational flexibility is less and are well fixed, the range of concepts or options a person may be willing to consider in a problematic situation will tend to become narrow.

Even though numerous researches concluded various relationships between alcohol dependency, cognitive functions and therapeutic outcomes, there exist a significant gap pertaining alcohol dependency and cognitive ideation. This study is an attempt made focusing this existing research gap.

## II. OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the research was to study the association between alcohol dependency syndrome and ideational flexibility among males.

## III. HYPOTHESES

*H<sub>0</sub> 1:* There is no significant difference between alcohol dependent males and normal males associated with ideational flexibility.

#### IV. METHODOLOGY

##### Variables

###### Independent Variable:

Independent variable studied were normal male population and males with Alcohol Dependency Syndrome as per ICD-10 criteria.

###### Dependent Variable:

Ideational flexibility: The flexibility of an individual to alter the attitudes or values which have been conceptualized from information or inputs (Exner, 2003). Calculated by measuring active and passive movement responses in Rorschach protocols of the sample.

##### Sample

In this cross-sectional study, as males with alcohol dependency syndrome were targeted, Purposive Sampling method was used to collect data from a total sample size (N=60) consisting of 30 male out patients diagnosed with alcohol dependency syndrome as per ICD-10 diagnostic criteria and 30 males as Control group, between 35 and 50 years with secondary education at least up to 10th standard. All females as well as the male individuals who possessed knowledge about the Rorschach Inkblot Test (RIT) or other types of Inkblot Tests were excluded.

##### Tools

**Rorschach Inkblot Test (RIT): (Rorschach,1942):** The test was developed by Hermann Rorschach in 1921 as a Psychodiagnostic. Rorschach test consists of 10 cards, on each of which is one bisymmetrical inkblot. Five are achromatic cards, three cards are chromatic and two cards are semi-chromatic with various shades. The cards were presented to the subject one at a time and in prescribed sequence, responses and enquiry part were noted in verbatim for further analysis. **The Rorschach – A Comprehensive System: (Exner, 2003):** was utilized for interpretation and scoring. Reliability of Exner Scoring System is reported between 0.85 to 0.94 (Mattlar, 2004) along with a high validity (Weiner, 1966 & 2001). The criteria for Rorschach Inkblot Test record selection was fulfilling the basic requirements for validity on Rorschach (Responses  $R > 14$ ,  $\Lambda < 1$ , absence of card rejection). In RIT

Exner comprehensive method Human, animal and inanimate movement responses are divided into active and passive, denoted by  $a$  and  $p$ . Mainly under ideational cluster, there are three kinds of limited ideational flexibility that can be elicited by the total active / passive movement responses ratio ( $a : p$ ) of RIT protocol of a person. The data for this ratio are interpretable only if the sum of values ( $a + p$ ) is four or greater as per the following interpretations:

Interpretation 1: Sum of the values in the ratio is four & one value is zero: The thinking and values of the individual tend to be less flexible and more well fixed than is ordinarily the case for most people.

Interpretation 2: Sum of the values in the ratio exceeds four & the value on one side is more than two times greater than the value on the other side: The ideational sets and values of the person are reasonably well fixed and would be somewhat difficult to alter.

Interpretation 3: Sum of the values in the ratio exceeds four & the value on one side is more than three times greater than the value on the other side: The ideational sets and values of the individual are well fixed and relatively inflexible.

### Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics viz: frequency, percentage and inferential statics viz: Chi-Square test have been used for analyzing data and hypothesis testing. Hypothesis testing conducted in two-tailed at a significant level ( $\alpha = .05$ ). The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS), version 17.0 was used for the analysis of the data.

## V. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Table 1, reveals the chi-square values of frequencies of ideational flexibility categories among both groups. Four categories were divided as per the conditions based on active and passive movement ratio difference, viz[BC1] : **1.** Sum of the values in the ratio is four and one side is not more than two times than the value on the other side = Normal, **2.** Sum of the values in the ratio is four & one value is zero = Less flexible, **3.** Sum of the values in the ratio exceeds four & the value on one side is more than two times greater than the value on the other side = Relatively well fixed and difficult to alter, **4.** Sum of the values in the ratio exceeds four & the value on one side is more than three times greater than the value on the

other side = Well fixed and relatively inflexible. Significant difference in frequency and percentage was elicited among the groups associated with ideational flexibility ( $\chi^2(2) = 9.333, p < .0$ ). Hence, the null hypothesis  $H_0 I$  is rejected. There significant difference between alcohol dependent males and normal males associated with ideational flexibility.

Table 1: Ideational Flexibility among normal and alcohol dependent male groups

Ideational Flexibility	Groups				Chi-square	Sig
	Normal males N=30		Substance induced psychotic males (N=30)			
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage		
Normal	17	56.66	7	23.33		
Less flexible	0	0	4	13.33		
Relatively well fixed and difficult to alter	5	16.66	8	26.66	9.333	.025*
Well fixed and relatively inflexible	8	26.66	11	36.66		

\*sig at  $p < .05$  (two-tailed)

## VI. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The study was aimed on the ideational flexibility among normal and alcohol dependent male group and the result divulged that ideational sets and values of alcohol dependent males are well fixed and relatively inflexible.

Enormous postulates have been outlined pertaining the negative effect of alcohol dependency on behaviours of individuals. Physiological alterations in structural plasticity of brain as well as neuro anatomy due to alcohol dependency ominously contributes to these deficit behaviours among patients (Cui et al., 2015). Higher brain functions like cognitive abilities are highly attributed to medial Prefrontal Cortex, and the organisation of neural networks in this area undergoes significant disruptions following prolonged alcohol dependency, there by disquieting the cognitive functions of abusers (Sullivan & Pfefferhaum, 2005).

The current study findings are also concurrent with the existing research findings, alcohol like substance abuse can alter ideational flexibility like cognitive abilities. Individuals with alcohol dependency syndrome with limited ideational flexibility are psychologically unwilling, or possibly unable, to consider a range of conceptual possibilities or alternative solutions when encounters with daily issues. Moreover, evasiveness and guardedness are the obvious mood among substance dependent patients. This bias and prejudice which are the usual outcomes of inflexible thinking, often become an obstacle in the therapeutic relationship between the substance abusing patients and therapists. It will be difficult to suggest alternative views or solutions regarding the source of a problem or situation. This fixed patterns in conceptual framing among substance abusers, can break by formulating integrated therapies including supportive, motivational enhanced, cognitive and behavioural like psychotherapies.

In post COVID-19 world, it is vital to formulate integrated psychotherapy to address this less flexible cognitive ideation among substance abusers for a better therapeutic prognosis.





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[BC1]To change