

Effects of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy in Alcohol Use Disorder: A Pilot Study Interpreted through Cloninger's Type I Framework

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Abstract:

Background: Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD) is a multifaceted disorder with clinical presentation and response to treatment varying across subtypes and stages of illness. Type I (milieu-limited) alcoholism, as defined by C. Robert Cloninger's typology, is characterized by a later onset, increased harm avoidance, stress-related drinking, and a greater impact of psychosocial factors. Individuals with this profile have an external locus of control and emotional dysregulation, which can hinder treatment compliance and raise the risk of relapse, especially during the maintenance phase when pharmacological stability alone might not be enough.

Aim: To examine the effectiveness of individual Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), delivered as an adjunct to pharmacological treatment; in improving Emotional Intelligence and Locus of Control among individuals with Alcohol Use Disorder whose clinical profile is consistent with Type I alcoholism.

Methods: This pilot pre-post intervention study included 40 male patients diagnosed with AUD and receiving ongoing pharmacological management at a tertiary care multispecialty hospital in North India. All participants were clinically stable and in the maintenance phase of treatment. They received eight weekly individual CBT sessions focused on cognitive restructuring, emotional regulation, relapse prevention and enhancement of control. Emotional Intelligence was assessed using the Emotional Intelligence Inventory and Locus of Control was measured using Rotter's Locus of Control Scale at baseline, post-intervention and at three-month follow-up.

Results: Post-intervention analysis revealed statistically significant improvements in Emotional Intelligence, indicating enhanced emotional awareness, regulation and interpersonal functioning. A significant shift toward a more internal Locus of Control was also observed, reflecting increased perceived responsibility and self-efficacy in managing alcohol-related behavior. These psychological