

## Cognitive and Affective Empathy in Men with Alcohol Dependence

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### Author Note

This paper is being submitted to Prof. Shanna Cullen-Carroll in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Intro to Psychology, PSYC-101-1079, on 29 March 2022.

### Summary of the Article

The purpose of the article was to measure cognitive and affective empathy in alcohol-dependent men compared to those who weren't alcoholic. The study also measured different levels of motivation compared to the levels of dependency on alcohol between the groups. The article was written to help develop more ways to counter alcohol dependency as well as management techniques to deal with the aforementioned. The groups used in the experiment were 60 men who were alcohol dependent and 60 men who were not. In the experiment, it was found that cognitive empathy was the type of empathy that was lowered the most due to alcohol dependency in men in that respective group. When it came to affective empathy and both affective and cognitive empathy in total, men who were in the abstinent group had higher levels of them overall compared to the control group of the men who were alcohol dependent. Another thing that was discovered during the study was that those men who recover remit while doing so, which is an important find. There was also a correlation between relapses and people with naturally lower empathy levels, however, having a higher level of empathy usually means a lesser chance of a relapse in the men tested. The conclusion of the experiment was that within the total group of 120 men, those who were alcohol dependent had lower levels of affective and cognitive empathy while the other 60 had higher levels of empathy in general. Abstinence was also linked to higher empathy levels and motivation increases as abstinence is prolonged. The study was very successful and a lot of information was gathered during the experiments. This information will prove to be useful in leading to more studies being conducted in regards to the

topic of alcoholism and empathy. Much of this information will be used to help treat those affected by alcoholism and more techniques on how to combat it will be considered.

## **Critiquing the Article**

While the article did provide a great amount of data with a fair enough sample size, in my opinion, a bigger one would have been more beneficial as 120 feels a bit too small a sample size. What would have made the sample size a little bit better as well would be a more diverse sample size of men in the same age group. A more diverse group of men would have been better because there are races with generally different levels of alcohol tolerance. Another thing that was not considered was baseline empathy for the subjects as there is no basis to see if the drop in empathy was affected more by their personality or by the alcoholism instead. In terms of how the article was written and presented, the findings and the wording were straightforward and clear. There was a clear beginning and end for the study in a very organized matter. Overall, this article was very informative and well-written with showing many factors playing into the affect alcoholism has on total, cognitive and affective empathy on men and the correlation amongst those factors.

## **Impact of the Article on the Field of Psychology**

The impact of this article, in my opinion, on the field of Psychology is a big one. Alcoholism is a very common problem that a lot of people have, especially men. The research in this study will be used, and is hopefully being used, for the treatment of people with this specific type of problem. Another thing that this may lead to are other studies of similar quality looking into the

the results as a basis for treatment in the future. The discoveries that can be obtained from the data of these experiments may be able to tackle a serious and very underestimated problem that affects many others.

## References

Nachane, H. B., Nadadgalli, G. V., & Umate, M. S. (2021). Cognitive and affective empathy in men with alcohol dependence: Relation with clinical profile, abstinence, and motivation. *Indian Journal of Psychiatry*, 63(5), 418–423.

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