Rorschach Test Scoring System: A New Prospective

Kumar P*

Indian Institute of Toxicology Research, India

*Corresponding author: Pramod Kumar, Formally worked with or ex of Indian Institute of Toxicology Research, Lucknow, India, Tel: 9335248543; Email: pramoditrc@gmail.com

Abstract

Psychology is the study of behaviour which governs by the brain functions, the criteria to assess the brain activities are very ambiguous. The subject's personalities are very important variables to assess in psychological guidance and counseling. The projective technique is the best solution to assess it, because it's culture free and can measure easily of internal attitudes, traits, and behaviour patterns upon the external stimuli. Projective tests are also used, less frequently, to study learning processes. The different techniques are in use to give their subjective response or opinions and beliefs only on questionnaires, two, three or five options. The respondent's real feelings are then inferred from what he says about himself. Whereas Projective techniques normally reveal their values at subconscious also and individuality. Rorschach test is the best projective method of psychological testing in which a person is asked to describe what he or she sees in 10 inkblots, of which some are black or gray and others have patches of colour. From response scores, the psychologist attempts to describe the subject's personality and other traits.
Interpretation of a subject's responses is not highly standardized, however, despite the introduction of the Exner scoring system are popular and he also addresses weaknesses in the Rorschach test. The proposed theories of calculation of Rorschach are simple methods which are applicable to all Psychologists to be considered for easy ways to make scoring. This method was applicable to assess neurobehavioral studies in neurotoxins. The variables assessed by this scoring methodologies are, Adaptability, Emotionality, Spontaneity Vs Inhibition, Rational Self- control and Originality of the perception. In addition, the following variables are used that are based on the content analysis of the answers developed by De Vos. The proposed model of scoring is best for screening purposes for any type of personality disorder.

Keywords: Projective Techniques; Rorschach; Neurobehavioural; Psychological Assessment; Personality; Mental Health

Abbreviations

RCS: Rorschach Comprehensive System; OPD: Out Patient Department.

Introduction

The Rorschach Inkblot Test was developed in 1921, by the Swiss psychologist named Hermann Rorschach and finely published in 1927 by the publisher [1]. The test is based on projective technique by which subjects inner perceptions on inkblots are recorded. The total ten cards are used and then analyzed by using psychological interpretation of personality [2]. Some psychologists use this test to examine a person's emotional functioning. The test is also performed to detect emotional disturbance along with thought disorder [3]. The test is based on the projective technique in which we may assess the ability especially in cases where patients are not

open enough to describe their thought processes openly [4]. The test was invented by the Swiss psychologist Hermann Rorschach and the nomenclature was also based on their personal vision as his name. The Rorschach is based on thought of as a psychometric examination of the perception of the things in a constructive manner. The pattern of any ambulatory object may be perceived in a constructive or distractive manner. The pattern of perceiving objects, shapes, or scenery as meaningful things by the observer's experience and inner emotional disturbance [5].

The most common features of every card is registered the deviations in faces or other pattern of forms that are not commonly present are well recorded. In 1927, the Rorschach was used as a projective test and often approached in the culture free and revealed the person's unconscious thoughts, motives, emotion and desires [6]. Hermann Rorschach's childhood game was inkblot and makes a story on that. His interest in inkblots continued up to adulthood and Leeds towards a big award. While working in a psychiatric hospital, Rorschach noticed that patients with schizophrenia responded to the blots differently from patients with other diagnoses. He began wondering and got the clue to an idea for this great diagnostic test. He was also inspired by this projective technique and his studies, and developed it a significant psychological test [7]. At the parallel the work of Sigmund Freud's dream analysis and psychoanalysis also inspired Rorschach to develop a scientific and systematic approach to using inkblots as an assessment tool. The mind works hard to search the meaning of the image and the entire sense of the pictures as an object generated solely by the mind. Therefore the person describes what they see in the inkblot, they genuinely tell about themselves and how they project meaning in it [1].

Methodology

The Rorschach Inkblot Test is a projective technique based psychological assessment with 10 inkblots on cards, designed to the unconscious mind of responses. The individual's social behavior, thoughts, and emotions, unveiling deeper, unconscious aspects of their psyche [8]. The Rorschach test employs a series of ten bilaterally symmetrical inkblot cards, of which some are black or gray, and others are contacting applications of color.

The psychologist asked the subject to provide their perceptions or perspectives on the presented ambiguous inkblot images. This test was designed to look for patterns of thought disorders and also has evolved to include other areas, like personality, emotional disorders, and intelligence. The test has been standardized by using the system which is effective in measuring depression, psychosis, anxiety and schizophrenia [9]. Rorschach used to refine and enhance his inkblots so that carefully placed and suggested to objects for presentation in a similar and a systematic manner for all cards images to subjects. Each card has specific perceptual observations that contribute to what people saw in the content and responded in the form of their judgments [10]. The objective of this paper is to establish a standard grading scoring system which is based on the answers given by the client in all the cards. The responses are categorised by the positive and negative thoughts and score as the (+) and (-) forms. The total number of positive answers represents a positive attitude towards life and achievements but negative thoughts represent the negative attitude towards life and distrust the personality.

Instructions

The main part and critical value depends on how exactly to interpret the psychologists for the results of the Rorschach test. The more critical task is when the psychologist observes and analyzes the client responses on the inkblots cards. On average, it takes about 1.5 hours to administer and score the test. The Psychologist is advised to prepare himself for conducting a systematic manner the test and follow the instructions step by step. Take a suitable and comfortable place for performance the test, cubical maybe suitable for the testing.

Step 1: I will show one by one card, it was made by ink droplets by folding the paper. You will see all the cards and tell me what you are seeing. You may see the card and take your own time and you can also rotate the card also. When you decide yourself that there is nothing in it, please return to me but if you see any type of things please tell me for sure.

Step 2: The card will be given to the client one by one in serial order after the establishment of a good rapport. The time of exposure is noted down with the help of a stop watch. The responses given by the client are properly recorded and all turning of cards are well recorded in a systematic manner like, side, upward and downward.

Step 3: All response time is well recorded and if the client is silent in two minutes, then you may ask please see more and give a response, and may instruct, that others are seeing many things. If after that he took more than five minutes, take the card patiently and give him the next card with instructions see in this card you will see something in this card.

Step 4: The subject when started to give the response then only records the response. If the subject repeats the response or gives very much responses then take back the card and may say okay, and give the next card.

Step 5: The performer should be vigilant to write down all responses well in writing. The time gaps of first responses are also noted down as when the first response comes out for each card. Total time for each card is recorded properly and when he takes more time in between two responses then the gap in time is also noted properly.

Step 6: All the rejected cards will be tried again after the completion of testing, but this response will not be considered commonly for calculation. The all responses are recorded after completing all the cards then it will be confirmed by the repetition of the card in reverse order to confirm the same response. If any major deviations are taking place it will be also recorded in the side of the paper for further analysis of the results.

Step 7: The response is given by the client in which the place of cards is also recorded properly with blot or inside the mark completely. The Psychologist should confirm all factors, like, shape, colour, motion and shade are well enquired and recorded (FC). If you need some clarification then you may confirm in a simple way in an innocent manner.

Step 8: The responses are recorded maybe clearly with subject matter to decide the object of responses, mainly to decide the living or non-living context. Rejection will be confirmed by giving the same card again and if he rejected again then noted and taken into consideration.

Step 9: The responses of the whole as an image of the card will be recorded, if not given any answer on full card view, then you may repeat the card number Five and ask what you see in whole images in a single card (W). If yes then you may repeat the card number, one, four and six.

Step 10: The Psychologist may try to confirm the FC, response if the subject is not given any response on it, then may use the card number, three and ask him in the centre of the card to confirm D, the response seems to be very important by the observer.

Step 11: The response on motion is also important to establish the diagnosis, so on card number three maybe repeated and ask the questions, see this you may see some specific features. Not digging out more regarding this aspect.

Step 12: The responses recorded after the completion of the test or on repeated cards are not taken into normal consideration but if you have any specific features in the clint behaviour then these responses are undertaken to make a specific diagnosis. After completing the test the psychologist should be thanks for cooperation and motivate the client for their cooperation.

Scoring

The actual scoring only depends on the answers given by the client on the card and all factors are taken under consideration. The following factors are taken under consideration for assessments and gradings.

Content

The content refers to the name or class of objects used in the patient's responses. Some standard contents include,
Nature: (N) Anything related to sky or nature related things like, sun, planets, water, rainbows considered as (+)and calamities as (-)
Animal details: (A) The animal features, like the claw of a crab, cat's head, bat wings, and bird beaks and (H) a complete human figure.(+)
Human Feature: (Hd) an incomplete human form or features. Including legs, heads, or a body with a specific part, like a person without a head and blood as (-)
Fictional/Mythical Human Detail: The incomplete human figure with fictional character taken as (-) and mythical images, including the wings of an angel or aura and centaur. (+)
Sex: (Sx) The thing involving any angle of sexual nature, sex organs, breast or sexual action including sexual activity. (-) Whereas Ideal sex descriptions like married women or hairs are under (+) gradings.

Determinant

Determinants are very important but more complex aspects of scoring in the Rorschach test and help the Psychologist to determine their response and analyse properly. There are five broad categories to be considered of each card of determinants that the patient could be responding to, the special attention is very important to decide the following observations,

- Form, (+)
- Movement (+)
- Color and Shading (+)
- Reflections or shadows (-).
- The locations in the cards responded by the client response is another element of scoring in the Rorschach test. The place or Location refers to how much of the inkblot the client used to depict and ignore an image (-).

The following determinants are taken under consideration in scoring.
W: means the whole inkblot was used to depict an image (+).
D: Commonly described part of the blot was used to form the object. The scoring depends on the type of images, common (+), Rare or deflected as (-)
Dd: means an uncommonly described or unusual detail was used (-).
S: means the white space of the background was used as perceived as an object (+).
M: The human movement answers (+).

Human movement responses (M) have been traditionally known as an external reality and interaction within the subject's mind. It implicit awareness, psychological functioning, and social cognition. The evidence suggests the close relationship among M, psychological functions, and brain mechanisms. The meta-analytical evidence supports

the close association between M and higher level cognitive functioning or empathy. The conclusions can be drawn, that M is related to the effective use of the mental functions and higher neuro functional investigations and understanding.

The different methods are available in the literature for the scoring but not a single method was recommended for universal for all. The need of time to explore a systematic and scientific manner for scoring. The grading systems are well popular in all educational sectors as well as in questionnaires also.

Some common answers for each card are given by the different psychologists from time to time and all common answers were scored as possible (+) score.

Card I: Bat, butterfly or like, human figure, maps.

Card II: two human figures, two animals.

Card III: two human figures, fish, butterfly, two trees.

Card IV: animal, part of animals and snakes.

Card V: bat, butterfly, flying animal.

Card VI: leather of an animal.

Card VII: human head, elephant head in reverse.

Card VIII: animals, skeleton of body.

Card IX: human head, deer head.

Card X: octopus, spider, crabs, rabbit and deer, rabbit, lion, dog and rabbit head.

The simple method was revealed in the assessment of neurobehavioural studies to establish the diagnosis of neurotoxins. The proposed model for scoring for all Psychologists which are reliable and valid. The following factors are easily determined and applicable to assess the important factors of human beings [11]. For scoring all answers are taken under consideration, the all (+) answers are counted for all the cards. The (-) answers are also counted of all the cards. The ratio of positive and negative answers is classified under the proposed traits of personality. The traits are given below.

The objective to investigate the following five traits has been taken under consideration.

Adaptability: The factors to be considered are, whole answers, human movement answers, form colour and shading responses, and all popular answers are taken as (+) into account. For the popular answers see the reference [12].

Emotionality: The factors are colour form and shading from answers, as well as pure colour answers and all nature and plant answers, are counted positively (+). The animals and form answers counted as negative (-).

Spontaneity verses Inhibition: Animal movement answers are counted positively (+) whereas reaction time, anatomical answers, and human and animal details are counted negatively (-).

Rational, Self Control: (The manifested in accurate and detailed perception of the blots) The form answers, the area graded as (+) for all detailed answers. The space and shadow answers are counted (-) into account.

Originality of Perception: The sum of original answers, all combined answers and space answers are counted to establish the diagnosis of this variable.

For the calculation of all these variables, the all standardized answers are counted as (+) and accordingly the results are established. In addition, the following variables are used that are based on the content of positive and negative ratio the analysis of Hostility, Anxiety as all (-) scores and all positive scores are represented as sound perception towards life. The all black cards, gray and black and colour cards scores also reveal the personality factors as black and grey cards represent stress, anxiety and sadness, whereas colour cards scores represent the adjustment and emotional balanced personality [22,13].

Reliability and Validity of the Test

The answers are scored blindly by the two independent psychologists according to the scoring system developed by Klopfer B [14]. The new scoring system is also taken and scores obtained on all cards are well correlated with a third opinion taken by the independent psychologist. Rorschach system, there has long been controversy surrounding the reliability and validity of the test's scores. Recently some work has been done to review and summarize the scoring system. Some literature reviews, and following Exner's methodology but recently there is also a new, Rorschach Performance Assessment System evolve that attempts to address criticisms and increase its reliable and valid use.

Result and Discussion

The objective of using this projective technique is to only variable the person's individuality and their emotions and feelings are represented in blank erena. The test uses ambiguous design to assess and interpret the individual's personality. The interpretation of inkblots was started with a game, The Rorschach story building however, the projective technique was the first systematic approach of this kind [15]. The research study was published on 300 mental patients and hundreds of controls subjects, by Hermann Rorschach and all details were published in his book title Psychodiagnostik. That was to form his research conducted on the mental health clinic and make the diagnosis on the basis of the inkblot test. After experimenting with several hundred inkblots which he drew himself and he selected a set of ten cards for their diagnostic value [16].

The psychological experiments where inkblots were utilized multiplied, with aims such as studying imagination and

consciousness and also useful in mental health problems in the psychiatrist clinic [17]. The responses on projective techniques in psychology literature are always with big questions but still it is effective due to the quality of a nonverbal test. The study also conducted in OPD of mental health hospital in Ranchi also reveals the list of common answers in patients [12]. Rorschach's, original test scoring system was improved by different researchers from time to time but not a single method was introduced so it was easy to get the place of priorities in psychological research. Some psychologists had worked on lots of scoring methodologies and found some solutions and tried a more effective methodology for ease in scoring systems.

The cases were also studied in OPD of Institutes of mental health, Agra for evaluation of Rorschach cards and established a scoring method [18]. John E. Exner summarized some of these later developments in the comprehensive system, at the same time trying to make the scoring more statistically rigorous. Some systems are based on the psychoanalytic concept of object relations. The Exner system remains very popular in the United States, while in Europe other methods sometimes dominate. The Exner scoring system, also known as the Rorschach Comprehensive System (RCS), is the standard method for interpreting the Rorschach test. It was developed in the 1960s by John E. Exner, as a more rigorous system of analysis. It has been extensively validated and shows high inter-rater reliability [19]. Rorschach never intended the inkblots to be used as a general personality test, but developed them as a tool for the diagnosis of schizophrenia. But after some time the test was used as a projective test of personality [20]. The need of time to explore a simple and systematic test scoring system to be evolved. The proposed model of scoring is very simple to assess the personality. More research is needed to establish as standard testing procedures.

Subjects preferred dark colours (brown, grey, black) and had more prominent traits of social introversion, poor sociability and neuroticism/anxiety with prominent traits of aggression and activity. Whereas subjects who preferred bright colours (red and yellow) had more prominent traits of aggressive activity and less prominent traits of introversion and neuroticism/anxiety [13]. The (M) motions in human beings are also a good factor to consider in the scoring as literature supports [21].

Conclusion

The scoring system of Rorschach is always in big controversies, but still many researchers are working on it. Our proposed theory of the scoring system is based on grading systems of each answer. The responses are categorised into positive and negative values of each answer and give wattage according to the situation and plots of each card answer.

Recommendations

- The Rorschach inkblot test may be used in different approaches to diagnose, personality and mental health disorders.
- Hermann Rorschach held a strong support of continuing testing and published the inkblot test but it was popular and introduced in the United States nine years later.
- The Rorschach inkblot test may be one of the most widely known psychological nonverbal assessments, but it is an imperfect test and criticisms due to variation in scoring systems. The need of time to explore a simple scoring system.
- The Rorschach testing is used as a key to open the secrets of the human mind and it works as an X-ray of mind. More multifactor collaborative studies to be conducted.
- The test is used to experience a higher emotional stress during the Rorschach test that may have greater creative strength. The responses maybe differentiated according to the colour of cards responded.
- The computer system of performance is not so reliable but the scoring system may be reliable enough on its own so both the standard testing and computer-assisted scoring methods may be applicable.
- The future plan of study will be to compare the numbers of responses, in black, black and grey and with the colour cards, to see the effect of colours of their choices and personality [22].

Limitation of the Study

Rorschach's test was performed since 1927, but its objectives were not defined properly. It was used by Rorschach himself in diagnostic criteria for schizophrenia cases but after a long time it was used as a personality test [10]. Our objective is limited only to assess the personality factors in human beings instead of using for psychiatrist assessment. The scoring system also needs a longer population studies to standardize it.

Acknowledgement

References

1. Dana RH (2000) Handbook of Cross-Cultural and Multicultural Personality Assessment. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

2. DeVos G (1952) Quantitative Approach to Affective Symbolism in Rorschach Response. J Proj Tech 16(2): 133-150.

3. Fine C (2006) A Mind of its Own: How Your Brain Distorts and Deceives. Thriplow: Icon books, UK.

4. Hardman D (2009) Judgment and Decision Making: Psychological Perspectives. Blackwell Publishing, British Psychological Society.

5. Plous S (1993) The Psychology of Judgment and Decision Making. McGraw-Hill Book Company.

6. Rorschach H (1927) Rorschach Test- Psychodiagnostic Test Plates. Hogrefe Publishing Corp Press, Cambridge.

7. Goldman HH (2000) Review of General Psychiatry 5th (Edn.). Lange Medical Books, New York.

8. Gacano CB, Meloy JR (1994) The Rorschach Assessment of Aggressive and Psychopathic Personalities. Routledge, New York, pp: 418.

9. Rorschach H (1998) Psychodiagnostics: A Diagnostic Test Based on Perception. Hogrefe Publishing Corp, Cambridge.

10. Wellington A, Wellington J (2022) Hermann Rorschach (c.1884-1922): Pioneer of Inkblot Personality Tests. Brit J Psychiatry 220(5): 302.

11. Groth-Marnat G (2003) Handbook of Psychological Assessment. 4th (Edn.), John Wiley & Sons.

12. Kumar P (1962) Popular Responses in the Rorschach Test. Psychologia 5: 161-169.

13. Kunce JT, Tamkin AS (1981) Rorschach Movement and Color Responses and MMPI Social Extraversion and Thinking Introversion Personality Types. Journal of Personality Assessment 45(10): 5-10.

14. Klopfer B (1962) The Rorschach Technique: An Introductory Manual. Harcourt Brace & World, New York, pp: 245.

15. Hertz MR (1938) The Popular Response Factor in the Rorschach Scoring. J Psychol 6: 3-31.

16. Weiner IB (2003) Principles of Rorschach Interpretation. Routledge, New York, pp: 448.

17. Molish HB (1938) Popular Responses in Rorschach Records of Normals, Neurotics and Applied to Normal and Schizophrenic Patients. Brit J Med Psychol 17: 227-257.

18. Kumar R (2005) An Extended Scoring System of SIS-I. Journal of Projective Psychology and Mental Health 12(2): 123-128.

19. Exner JE (1995) The Rorschach: A Compressive System. Wiley, New York.

20. Weiner IB, Greene RL (2007) Handbook of Personality Assessment. John Wiley & Sons.

21. Porcelli P, Kleiger JH (2015) The "Feeling of Movement": Notes on the Rorschach Human Movement Response. Journal of Personality Assessment 98(2): 124-134.

22. Lange R, Rentfrow J (2007) Color and Personality: Strong's Interest Inventory and Cattell's 16PF. North American Journal of Psychology 9(3): 423-438.