

Mental function as determined by MMSE is associated with the physical function as indicated by Barthel's ADL score.

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Background: The changes occurs during ageing are accompanied by impairment of Cognitive Function which causes limitation in functional performance (Activities of Daily Living) of elderly people which consequently affect their quality of life. The current study was conducted in a retrospective manner to see if there is any correlation between the functional performance and the mental functionality of older patients attending geriatric clinic.

Methods: We retrospectively assessed Barthel index of ADL in a cross-sectional design among the older subjects attending the Geriatric Clinic at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences between May 2002 and March 2008.

Results: Of 1006 subjects who attended Geriatric services at the hospital, 106 were excluded due to incompleteness of records. We found a significant correlation between MMSE and ADL scores ($r=0.336$; $p=0.000$). It is found that there is a correlation between MMSE with grooming ($r=.363$; $p=0.000$), toilet use ($r=.280$; $p=0.000$), feeding ($r=.190$; $p=0.000$), dressing ($r=.379$; $p=0.000$), transfer ($r=.261$; $p=0.000$), mobility ($r=.232$; $p=0.000$), stairs ($r=.255$; $p=0.000$), and bathing ($r=.204$; $p=0.000$). It is also found that there is no correlation between MMSE with bowel ($r=.116$; $p=.001$) and bladder ($r=.065$; $p=.053$) function.

Conclusion: The results of this study are important for the health sector targeting the elderly. Functional performance is decreased by impairment in mental function of elderly whereas bowel and bladder are not affected by decline in mental function. We need to urgently focus not only to manage older subjects with functional disability but also to design programs to encourage early recognition and management of cognitive decline so as to decrease the need of dependency.