

Development and Validation of Geriatric Assessment Tools: A Preliminary Report from Indian Population

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Abstract

With the explosion in the number of older adults in India, it becomes more and more important to study alterations in their function. Although many assessment tools are available, most of them lack both sensitivity and reliability in Indian settings. ADL, IADL and modified POMA were developed and administered on the older adults living in community. Validity of the three assessment tools was suggested by their low correlation with age ($r = -0.255, -0.485$ and -0.436) and moderate to high correlation with frequency of falls ($r = -0.496, -0.628$ and -0.496) in Indian Geriatric population. Activities of Daily Living (ADL), Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADL) and Modified performance Oriented Mobility Assessment (Modified POMA) tools were developed which appears to have acceptable validity with reference to Indian geriatric population.

Key words: Elderly, Fall, ADL, IADL, Modified POMA

Introduction:

In the 20th century the elderly population has represented the fastest growing segment of total world population. However, these demographic changes were high-flying in developed countries. For example, in United Kingdom the population of people over 65 years has increased from 5 % to 16 % in this period. Population projections suggest that this trend will be continuing in 21st century and elderly will represent 10.8 % of total world population by 2025. Nevertheless these demographic changes will be more prominent in underdeveloped and rapidly developing countries than developed countries where these changes are slowing down. For example, in India over 82 million now, it will cross 177 million by 2025 and 324 million by 2050 which shows almost a two-fold increase in the proportion of elderly people. This is in contrast to

America where currently 13 % of elderly population will approach 22 % by 2030.

The startling fact is that the aged population in India is currently the second largest in the world. This was highlighted by Prof J.J. Kattakayam, Director, Centre of Gerontological Studies, University of Kerala, Trivandrum, in his key-note address in the inaugural function of a two-day seminar on "Aging: issues and emerging trends, with special reference to women's problems" held at MCM DAV College for Women, Chandigarh, from October 21-22, 2005.

The changing scenario of the demography of elderly has a major impact on the health and social services. Life expectancy today is 74 years for men and 80 years for women, a remarkable rise in longevity from 100 years ago, when men lived an average of 48 years and women an average of 51 years (*Landefeld et al, 2004*). While a gain in average life expectancy is the indicator of nation's