

PRELIMINARY RESULTS OF USING THE GERIATRIC DEPRESSION SCALE IN SERBIAN ELDERLY POPULATION

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Introduction: Late life depression is still not well recognized. As depression increased risk for mortality and morbidity in elderly, it is necessary to have efficient instrument for detecting and measuring depression in this population. The Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS-15) is a screening test for depression in late life but it is not used in Serbian elderly population.

Objectives: To show preliminary results of using the Short Form Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS-15) in Serbian elderly population.

Aims: We wanted to estimate whether this scale correlates with Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) which has been validated in Serbia.

Methods: We studied 248 participants (40,3% were male, 59,7% female) age 65 and older. Mean age for the whole sample was $70,87 \pm 5,79$. Hamilton depression scale, BDI and GDS-15 were used for assessing depressive symptomatology and two psychiatrists confirmed diagnosis of depression. According to inclusion criteria, 102 participants met criteria for depression (experimental group) and 146 were in control group.

Results: We found statistically significant difference in mean GDS-15 score between experimental ($4,83 \pm 4,93$) and control group ($1,51 \pm 1,42$) and no gender differences were found according to GDS-15 mean score. Significant difference ($p \leq 0,05$) was found on GDS item 11 (Do you think it is wonderful to be alive now?), where women scored higher in control group. Strong positive correlation was found between BDI and GDS-15 mean scores ($r = 0,863$; $p < 0,001$).

Conclusions: The preliminary results confirm that GDS may be accepted as useful tool for measurement of depression in Serbian elderly population. This may facilitate recognition and treatment of depression in elderly.