

Abstract

The applicability of the Mattis Dementia Rating Scale (DRS) in Chinese elderly population was investigated by comparing the DRS performance between elderly in Hong Kong and San Diego. The age and level of education of the elderly from both groups were found to have significant impact on their DRS scores. There was a large variation between the individual performance in the DRS for the Chinese that had no formal education, suggesting that the DRS may be less suitable to apply for illiterate elderly. Cultural difference was found in the performance of the Construction, Initiation / Perseveration & Memory subscales. These results seem to suggest that the sensitivity of some of the individual items and subscales in the DRS for detecting dementia was different between the Chinese and American elderly. Certain adjustment of the cut-off scores and establishment of norms for Chinese elderly may be necessary before the DRS could be applied in the Chinese population in Hong Kong.