
Abstract

Background. Although memory deficit has been widely studied in Alzheimer's disease (AD), the study of awareness of memory deficits is disproportionately lacking. There is no locally validated assessment tool for Chinese elderly. This dissertation describes the development and validation of a new assessment tool, the Memory Inventory for Chinese (MIC), with an aim to provide a reliable, valid, objective instrument useful for measuring the degree of awareness of memory deficits in the Chinese population.

Methods. A combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches was adopted. The MIC was developed with focus group discussion, pilot testing and reviewed by local experts. A consecutive series of 79 new out-patients with the National Institute of Neurological and Communicative Disorders and Stroke and the Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorder Association (NINCDS-ADRDA) criteria of probable and possible AD and 20 non-demented elderly subjects were recruited.

Results. The MIC has a *patient version* and a *caregiver version*. A high internal consistency was found, with Cronbach alpha of .89 for the *patient version* and .90 for the *caregiver version*. The inter-rater and test-retest reliabilities were satisfactory. For validity assessment, the *caregiver score* of the MIC correlated significantly with cognitive score of the subject as assessed by the Mini-Mental State Examination ($r_p = -.37$; $p < .01$). The *Memory Deficit Awareness Score*, calculated by subtracting the *patient*

score from the *caregiver score*, correlated significantly with clinician ratings of awareness of memory impairment ($r_s = -.67$; $p < .01$).

Conclusions. The MIC appears to be a culturally appropriate, reliable, and valid instrument for the measurement of awareness of memory deficits in patients with AD in the local population. The preliminary findings suggest that potential applications of the MIC should be further explored in other subtypes of dementia and in large-scale longitudinal studies.