

Name of Measure: Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS)-Japanese Americans (Brink, Yesavage, Lum, Heersma, Adey, et al., 1982)

Purpose of Measure: To predict depression among elders aged 60 years or older.

Author(s) of Abstract:

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Reference: Shibusawa, T. manuscript under review

Description of measure: The GDS (Geriatric Depression Scale) is a 30-item inventory using a yes/no format and takes 10 to 15 minutes to administer. The GDS has excellent reliability and validity (test-retest reliability = .85; internal consistency = .94). The GDS has been validated against Research Diagnostic Criteria (Spitzer, Endicott, & Robins, 1978) and is able to discriminate among normal and mildly and severely depressed adults. It performs as well as the DSM-III-R symptoms checklist in predicting clinical diagnoses.

The GDS measures depression, with scores ranging from 0 to 30 representing the total number of depressive symptoms. According to Brink and his colleagues (1982), those who report 10 or fewer symptoms are considered normal, those who report 11 to 20 symptoms are considered mildly depressed, and those who report 21 to or more symptoms are considered moderately to severely depressed.

Description of Asian population: The sample consists of 131 elderly Japanese Americans (53 male, 78 female) living in a major U.S. metropolitan area who volunteered to participate in the study. Respondents were recruited through senior citizen centers and community service centers in the Japanese American Community. They were included in the study when a social worker judged them to be mentally competent to participate. Respondents were given the option of being interviewed in English or in Japanese. Data were collected on sociodemographic characteristics, monthly income, social support, health and mental health status, life stressors, help-seeking attitudes, and knowledge and utilization of formal services. A Japanese version of the GDS, which has been widely used in Japan (Matsubayashi, et. al, 1994) was used with the Japanese-speaking respondents.

Norms: GDS long form scores for the Japanese American elders ranged from 0 to 25 with a mean of 6.44 (SD = 5.29). The median was 4, and skewness was 1.33. Almost twenty percent of the sample scored at 11 or above, indicating possible depressive symptomology.

Reliability: The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the GDS long form was .86 and the split-half reliability coefficients was .78, indicating good internal consistency and acceptable reliability of this scale.

Validity: N/A

Original reference to instrument: Brink, T. L., Yesavage, J. A., Lum, B., Heersma, P., Adey, M., et al. (1982). Depressive symptoms and depressive diagnoses in a community population. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 45, 1078-1084.

Spitzer, R. L., Endicott, J., & Robins, E. (1978). Research diagnostic criteria: Rationale and reliability. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 35(6), 773-782.

Other references:

Niino, N., Imaizumi, T., & Kawakami, N. (1991). A Japanese Translation of the Geriatric Depression Scale. *Clinical Gerontologist*, 10 (3), 85-87.

Matsubayashi, K., Wada, T., Okumiya, K., Fujisawa, M., Taoka, H., Kimura, S. & Doi, Y. (1994). Comparative study of quality of life in the elderly between in Kahoku and in Yaku. *Nippon Ronen Igakkai Zasshi* (Japanese Journal of Geriatrics), 31 (10), 790-799.

How to obtain a copy of measure: Contact Dr. Shibusawa