

งานประชุมวิชาการสมาคมพฒณาวิทยาและเวชศาสตร์ผู้สูงอายุไทย ประจำปี พ.ศ. 2563
เรื่อง Intrgrated Health and Social core for Longevity

Received: 2 February 2020
Revised: 23 March 2020
Accepted: 24 March 2020

Relationship between physical and cognitive performance among community-dwelling urban older adults

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Introduction: Cognitive deterioration is part of normal physiological aging, but not everyone goes through a cognitive impairment. Few studies showed that physical performance correlated with cognitive impairment.

Objective: This study aimed to investigate the relationship between cognitive functions and physical performance in the elderly population of urban Bangkok, Thailand.

Methods: A total of 290 older adults aged 60 years and above, residing in metropolitan Bangkok, Thailand, participated in this study. Cognitive performance was measured using the Modified Mini-Mental State (MMMS, or 3MS). Physical performance was assessed using the short physical performance battery (SPPB) test for an overall physical function comprised of a balance test, gait speed, and chair stand test.

Results: There was a positive and statistically significant correlation between 3MS and SPPB ($r=0.407$), balance test ($r=0.253$), gait speed ($r=0.273$), and chair stand test ($r=0.380$).

Conclusion: The results suggested that the lower extremity function and mobility may predict cognitive performance. The benefit of using physical performance tests to identify an overall cognitive impairment among community-dwelling older adults was to promote cognitively challenging activities and exercises among older adults for proper, or better physical and cognitive function.

Keywords: Physical performance, Short physical performance battery, Cognitive performance, Modified mini-mental state