OPEN PEER REVIEW

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As a new feature for progressing towards transparency, we decided to open a new window for all of our editors as well as authors titled "**Open Peer Review**". We hope by this new facility, our reviewers will be more motivated and authors will be more satisfied with the review process. We believe that publishing our peer review reports could make a transparent and clear environment for all our efforts within a journal, but not all reviewers tend to publish their comments.

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An "Open Peer Review" process is making the details of all review process (including reviewers, associate editors, and EICs comments) as "Public" as it is agreed by EIC, Authors, and reviewers.

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You can find out more at:
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IJ Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences
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Peer Review Report for "Prediction of Cognitive Decline by Behavioral Symptoms in Neuropsychiatric Disorders"

Author(s): Majid Barekatain, Sona Sadeghpour, Fatemeh Rajabi, Mohammad Reza Maracy

Review Timeline:

Submit Date: 19 Apr 2022
Revised Date: 8 Oct 2022
Accepted Date: 19 Nov 2022

Revision (0)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

REFEREE: Reviewer | **Revision** (0)

26 Jul 2022

Dear AE,

There are some comments which should be addressed by the author:
Thanks for your submission to this journal.
A good subject has been studied in this manuscript, however, some points should be considered, as follows:
1- In the "Abstract," it has not been mentioned who completed the questionnaires; also, please provide more details about how the study was carried out.
2- In the "Methods" section of the main text, how have the "behavioral and motor symptoms" been assessed in semi-structured interviews? Did you use a specific questionnaire/ checklist?
3- How was the sample size calculated? Is this small sample size enough to generalize the findings?
4- Table 1 presents both demographic, behavioral, and motor symptoms in a single table, which can confuse readers.
5- Some variables in the tables have not been presented clearly; for example, the level of education (years of education).

6- The conclusion should be structured better. It should begin with the most important research results and then compare the findings with similar and opposite previous studies.

Kind Regards,

¬ **Sussan Moudi**: Associate Editor | **Revision (**0**)** 26 Jul 2022

Dear EIC,
The manuscript has been studied, and some comments should be addressed by the author. According to the comments, the document needs major revision.
Kind regards,
AE

¬ **Mehran Zarghami**: EIC | **Revision (**0**)** 28 Jul 2022

Dear Authors,

Thank you for submitting your manuscript for consideration for publication in the Iranian Journal of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences. External peer reviewers have evaluated your paper. Please revise it according to their comments. I would appreciate it if you could do the revisions as soon as possible.

After revision, authors are obliged to upload reviewers' comments in a Word file in which they reply to each comment individually. Please note that the full manuscript file must be highlighted to indicate revised texts.

Besides, please pay attention to the word count limitation:
Word count limits are declared in this link: https://brieflands.com/journals/ij-psychiatry-and-behavioral-sciences/knowledgebase/category/tree#word_count_limits

We look forward to receiving your revised manuscript. Thank you for sending your work to the Iranian Journal of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences.

Kind Regards,
EIC

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Revision (1)

Reply to Reviewers

Ideally, the reviewing process can significantly improve the submitted manuscripts by allowing the authors to take into account the advice of reviewers. Author(s) must reply to all reviewers' comments in a separate Word file, point by point. A "**Reply to Reviewers**" document is submitted along with revised manuscript during submission of revised files, summarizing the changes that the authors made in response to the reviewers' comments. The responses to reviewers' comments specifies how the authors addressed each comment the reviewers made.

You can read the authors' responses to the reviewers' comments in the next page.

Manuscript ID: 126596

Dear editor,

The manuscript is revised and highlighted according to reviwer's comments.

	Question	Reply
1	*In "Abstract" it has not been mentioned that who completed the questionnaires; also, please describe more details about how the study was carried out.*	*Abstract was revised according to the respected reviewer's comment.*
2	*In "Methods" section of the main text, how the "behavioral and motor symptoms" have been assessed in semi-structured interview? Did you use a specific questionnaire / checklist?*	*History was obtained and documented through a semi-structured interview; clinical neuropsychiatric evaluation was also performed .No checklist or questionnaire was used. However uniform neuropsychological evaluation via NUCog was performed for all patients.*
3	*How was the sample size calculated? Is this small sample size enough to generalize the findings?*	*No sample size was calculated because all eligible patients were included.*
4	*Table 1, presenting both demographic and behavioral and motor symptoms in a single table can confuse the readers.*	*Table 1 is edited.The information in table 1 was distributed in two tables.*
5	*Some variables in the tables have not been presented clearly; for example, the level of education (years of education).*	*In all tables,level of education was changed to years of education. Other variables were also revised.*
6	*Conclusion" should be written in a better structure. It should be initiated with the most important results of the research; subsequently, the findings should be compared with similar and opposite previous studies.*	*Probably the respected reviewer means the "discussion" and not the conclusion. The discussion is written exactly in the way that the respected reviewer has mentioned.*

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Revision (1)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

¬ **REFEREE**: Reviewer | **Revision (1)** 21 Aug 2022

Dear AE,

This article has studied an important subject: neuropsychiatric disorders and their consequences. Both medical and psychiatry teams should be more informed about this subject.
Some points should be revised by the authors in this manuscript.
Abstract : # 1b
Additional content about the important points of the research is needed (page 1).
Accurate mention of the research details about :
1-Where was it done? (page 1 / lines 11-12) .
2-Accurate mention of the age range of patients.
Did this study have an age limit? (page 1 / Line 11-12).
3-Mention more details about the method acting in the study. (page 1 / Line 12 – 15) .
Methods:
#6a Accurate mention of inclusion criteria for the selection of participants (page 3 / line 103-105).
#8 Can you accurately mention how symptoms are assessed with a semi-structured interview? (page 3 /line112-114)
#8 Accurate mention of validity and reliability of the NUCOg assessment tool obtained in the Iranian population based on previous studies (page 4 / line123).
Discussion :
18 The structure of the discussion should be revised.
It is expected that each finding of this manuscript (key results) be compared with similar and opposite previous studies (pages 5-8).
21 Discuss the generalizability and mention the novelty and priority of this manuscript in comparison with previous evidence (pages 5-8).
#22 Mentions the source of funding and the role of the funders.

Kind Regards

¬ **REFEREE**: Reviewer | **Revision (1)** 19 Sep 2022

Dear AE,

There are some comments which should be addressed by the authors:
For example:
1- In the "Abstract" section, some sentences are not fluent; for example, the word "non-significant correlation of agitation with other research variables" is recommended instead of the word "anticorrelated."
2- The authors' reason for not using the sample size formula is not acceptable.
3- The "Discussion" should be improved; all important research findings should be compared with similar and opposite studies.

Kind Regards

Sussan Moudi: Associate Editor | **Revision (1)** 19 Sep 2022

Dear EIC
The reviewer(s) have recommended publication but also suggested some minor revisions to the manuscript. Therefore, I invite the author to respond to the reviewer(s)' comments and revise his manuscript.
Kind regards,
AE

Mehran Zarghami: EIC | **Revision (1)** 24 Sep 2022

Dear Authors,

Thank you for your recent revisions.
Your paper has now been evaluated again. According to the reviewers' and associate editor's comments, it needs some more revisions. Please do your revisions according to these comments. I would appreciate it if you could do the revisions as soon as possible. The full manuscript file must be highlighted to indicate revised texts.

Kind Regards,
EIC

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Revision (2)

Reply to Reviewers

Ideally, the reviewing process can significantly improve the submitted manuscripts by allowing the authors to take into account the advice of reviewers. Author(s) must reply to all reviewers' comments in a separate Word file, point by point. A "**Reply to Reviewers**" document is submitted along with revised manuscript during submission of revised files, summarizing the changes that the authors made in response to the reviewers' comments. The responses to reviewers' comments specifies how the authors addressed each comment the reviewers made.

You can read the authors' responses to the reviewers' comments in the next page.

Manuscript ID: 126596

Dear editor,

The manuscript is revised and highlighted according to respected reviwer's comments.

	Question	Reply
1	1- In "Abstract" section, some sentences are not fluent; such as "non- significant correlation of agitation with other research variables" is recommended instead of the word "anticorrelated".	*In this study, agitation had a negative relationship with the largest number of cognitive parameters. The mentioned sentence was edited and the word (anticorrelation) was deleted.*
2	2- The authors' reason for not using the sample size formula is not acceptable.	*Due to the stablishment of neuropsychiatric department of Ayatollah Kashani Hospital in the last three years, we had a limited number of samples, all of which were included in the present study.*
3	"Discussion" should be improved; all important findings of the research should be compared with similar and opposite studies.	*"Discussion" was revised according to the respected reviwer's comment,but due to the innovation of this study in examining a wider range of behavioral symptoms and cognitive subscales,as well as the use of the generalized linear model that enables us to predict the cognitive level,a more accurate comparison with previous studies is not possible.*
4	Abstract :	*Abstract was revised*

	1-Where was it done ? 2- Accurate mention the age range of patients? Did this study have age limit ? 3-Mention more details about method acting of the study ?	*according to the comment.*
5	Methods : 1-Accurate mention inclusion criteria of selection of participants . 2-Accurate mention how symptoms assessed with semi-structured interview ? 3-Accurate mention about validity and reliability of NUCOg assessment tool that obtained in Iranian population based on previous studies .	***1**-Total sampling was performed and all 220 hospitalized patients were included in the screening.* *Patients with diagnosis of malingering and individuals who were unable to perform neuropsychological test were excluded from the study.* ***2**- In this study, the Semi-Structured Clinical Interview (SCID) template was used based on the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Psychiatric Disorders, Fourth Edition (DSM-IV) of the American Psychiatric Association. The presence of all studied behavioral symptoms, including irritability, depression, anxiety, sleep problems, etc., in each patient was checked using semi-structured clinical interview format questions and clinical evaluation.* ***3**-The NUCog is a valid and reliable tool for diagnosis of dementia. NUCog is used as a quick bed-side tool, which can be used by various specialists. The*

		NUCog can identify patients with dementia at early stages when other tests such as MMSE are not sensitive enough to make the distinction. At a cut-off score of 80/100, sensitivity of the NUCog for distinguishing of patients with dementia is 0.84 and specificity 0.86. The Persian language version of NUCog reliably differentiates healthy group from patients with mild neurocognitive disorders (at 86.5/100, sensitivity of 83.3% and specificity of 87.5%) and patients with Alzheimer dementia from healthy group (at 75/100, sensitivity and specificity of 100%) .
6	Discussion : 1-The structure of discussion should be revised . It is expected that each finding of this manuscript (key results) be compared with similar and opposite previous studies. 2-Discuss the generalizability and mention the novelty and priority of this manuscript in comparison with previous evidence 3-mention the source of funding and the role of the funders .	*1 and 2-Discussion was revised, but due to the novelty of this research ,there is no similar article for a more accurate comparison:* *Unlike the previous studies that only examined the general level of cognition,current study investigated the relationship between behavioral symptoms and cognitive subscales along with the general level of cognition.* *Unlike previous studies,in this article ,a*

		large number of behavioral symptoms were investigated using a comprehensive psychiatric interview. Another strength of this study is the use of the generalized linear model in method section, which provides the possibility of predicting the cognitive level based on behavioral symptoms and does not emphasize only the association of variables. *3-This study is partially supported by the financial resource of isfahan university of medical science.(Thesis number:340075)*

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Revision (2)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

¬ **REFEREE**: Reviewer | **Revision** (2) 22 Oct 2022

Dear AE,

This article has studied an important subject: neuropsychiatric disorders and their consequences. Both medical and psychiatry teams should be more informed about this subject. To improve, some points should be revised in this manuscript by the authors as mentioned below:

Abstract :# 1b
It is recommended to change the sentence about the association between agitation and cognitive subscale (for raising ambiguity, it's better to mention the positive relationship between agitation and lower score in memory, attention, visuoconstruction, executive function, and total score of NUCog) (page 7, line 24-26).

Methods :
#5 The age range of participants and its potential for bias should be mentioned clearly in a method (page 9, lines 98-103) and mention how you appraise overlapping of age-related cognitive decline.
#7 Please mention why DSM-IV is used instead of DSM-5, and why didn't you mention the name of the semi-structural clinical interview on (page 9, lines 114-115)? Only in reply to comments did you mention the name of DSM-IV (in the method, it should be mentioned clearly) on page 9, line 114, in describing behavioral assessment.
#9 How did you take care of the overlapping symptoms of depression and apathy? Overlapping the presentation of their symptoms has the potential of bias. (page 10, lines 118 and 120).

Discussion :
19 In limitation, it is expected to discuss the potential bias of overlapping symptoms that could alter the result of this study and the bias of age and age-related cognitive decline that could alter the result of your research.

Kind Regards,

¬ **Sussan Moudi**: Associate Editor | **Revision** (2) 15 Nov 2022

Dear EIC
Based on the authors' answers to the reviewers' comments, the reviewer(s) have recommended publication.
Kind regards.
AE

Mehran Zarghami: EIC | **Revision (2)** 19 Nov 2022

Dear Author,
We have completed our review of your manuscript and are pleased to inform you that it is being considered for publication in the IJPBS. Note that the publication of your article will only be finalized upon your cooperation with the editorial processing.
Thank you for your fine contribution, and we look forward to your continued contributions to the Journal.
Kind Regards,
EIC