VALID AND RELIABLE FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS IN CEREBRAL PALSY

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Cerebral palsy is the leading cause of physical disability in childhood, causing severe limitations in all aspects of a child's functioning. The inability of the traditional empirical threefold classification system "mild-moderate-severe limitation" to classify objectively, clearly, validly and reliably the functional ability of children with cerebral palsy, as well as the need to improve communication between clinicians and family, have in recent years led to the development of functional classification systems. **Purpose**: The aim of this review was to search, describe and examine the validity and reliability of all functional classification systems of cerebral palsy that have been developed to date. **Method**: The search was conducted in December 2020, in databases as PubMed and Google Scholar, with keywords, "cerebral palsy", "classification systems"and" function". **Results**: Nine functional classification systems for cerebral palsy were found: (1)Gross Motor Function Classification System (GMFCS), (2) Functional Mobility Scale (FMS), (3) (Mini-)Manual Ability Classification System (MACS), (4) Bimanual Fine Motor Function (BFMF), (5) Communication Function Classification System (CFCS), (6) Functional Communication Classification System (FCCS), (7) Viking Speech Scale (VSS), (8) Eating and Drinking Ability Classification System (EDACS), and (9) Visual Function Classification System (VFCS). All the functional classification systems were valid, reliable and some of them were translated and validated in Greek.**Conclusion**: The functional classification systems of cerebral palsy provide, with validity and reliability a common language of communication between clinicians and family, as well as a clearly defined and manageable framework for describing the heterogeneous and complex functional condition of cerebral palsy, thus developing a clearer and more understandable clinical picture of the child with cerebral palsy.

Keywords: Cerebral Palsy, Classification, Function