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Background and Aims

Subjective age (felt-age, FA) has been found to have complex interactions with quality of life, cognitive, and emotional functioning in the healthy older population. Working on this knowledge the study aims at investigating the interaction between FA and a number of clinical, cognitive, psychological factors and coping mechanisms in a chronic condition such as Parkinson's Disease (PD).

Methods

A total of 46 people with Parkinson's disease (PwPD) were recruited from the Parkinson and Movement Disorder Unit, Padua University Hospital. All participants completed a Level II neuropsychological assessment, which included a comprehensive battery of cognitive tests and questionnaires evaluating psychological well-being (BDI-II, STAI-Y1/Y2, BIS-11, AS). Following the assessment, participants took part in a telephone interview designed to collect additional information on their subjective age (FA questionnaire), attitudes and perceptions toward aging (CCC10, ATOA), cognitive reserve (Cognitive Reserve Index), and quality of life (WHOQOL).

Table 1 Summary of main clinical and behavioural characteristics of PD sample

	Mean	St. Dev
N = 46		
Age	67.26	8.61
DD	6.61	4.95
Education	12.65	3.19
BDI-II	10.13	7.22
BIS	58.06	8.66
AS	12.19	5.29
STAI-Y1	38.66	10.28
STAI-Y2	39.15	9.99
QOL	5.96	1.67
Overall-FA	0.04	0.21
Mental-FA	0.11	0.22
Physical-FA	-0.01	0.19
ATOA	11.98	2.44
AARC-Gains	17.43	3.54
AARC-Losses	13.20	4.32

Results

Linear regression analyses showed that positive attitudes toward ageing (ATOA) were significantly associated with better psychological well-being, except for impulsivity ($p > 0.05$) (Figure 1a-d). In contrast, perceived age-related losses (AARC-Losses) were negatively related to well-being, again excluding impulsivity (Figure 2a-d). Regarding quality of life (QoL), higher ATOA scores were linked to better QoL (Figure 3a), while Physical-FA and AARC-Losses showed negative associations (Figures 3b-c). Overall, these results indicate that more positive views of ageing are related to better well-being and life quality, whereas perceived losses and an older subjective age predict poorer outcomes.

Figure 1. Significant positive associations between Attitudes Toward Ageing (ATOA) and measures of psychological well-being in individuals with Parkinson's disease.

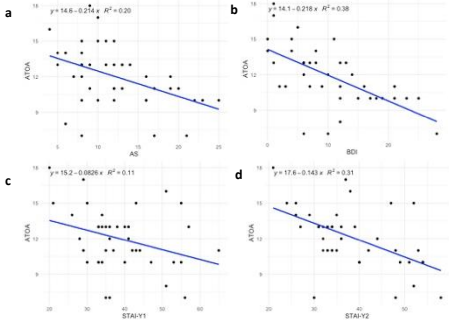


Figure 2. Significant negative associations between AARC-Losses and measures of psychological well-being in individuals with Parkinson's disease.

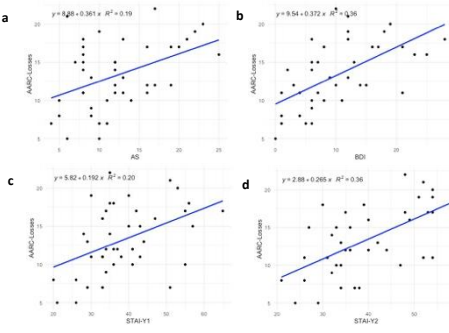
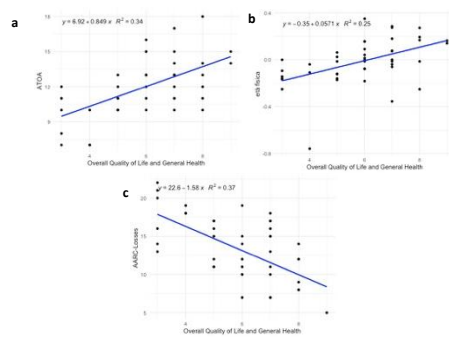


Figure 3. Significant associations between subjective age (FA), attitudes toward ageing (ATOA), and AARC-Losses with quality of life (QoL) perception in individuals with Parkinson's disease.



Conclusions

The results indicate that more positive attitudes toward ageing and a reduced perception of age-related losses are associated with lower levels of depression, anxiety, and apathy, as measured by self-report questionnaires. A similar pattern was observed for a quality of life (QoL), which was additionally influenced by individuals' subjective perception of their physical age. These findings suggest that, even among patients with chronic conditions such as Parkinson's Disease, personal perceptions of ageing and age-related changes play a significant role in psychological wellbeing.



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