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The impact of a structured balance training program on older adults

Chris King

Graceland University, USA

Introduction: Falls in the elderly are one of the leading causes of death and morbidity in the elderly. Those who have health issues, prior fall history, as well as other pertinent medical issues or physical impairments pose an even greater risk of falls. The greater the degree of fall risk increases potential of experiencing a fall or multiple falls, which poses a safety at risk. A literature review and an experiment conducted for this research topic provides insight into fall prevention in the elderly. The experiment for this research explores the impact of a structured balance training program with the elderly.

Methods: Randomly selected individuals were identified to participate in the study, half of which were randomly selected to participate in a structured balance and strength training program. Individuals participated in a variety of pre- and post-assessments on their fall risk. Results of the study data were analyzed using a one-way ANOVA to determine its success and validity.

Results: It was found that a structured balance training program in the experimental group affected the balance performance in the elderly and lowered their fall-risk in comparison to those who were in the control group. Subjects in the experimental group reported feeling more confident and strong with increased ability to perform more complex tasks for a longer duration. Participants in the control group did not demonstrate measureable or significant increases in performance.

Conclusion: The results of this study suggest that intervention focused on increasing subject balance ability, lowering fall-risk and influencing feelings of confidence could improve quality-of-life and may reduce falls in the elderly. This topic should be researched further with larger experimental and control groups to gain more insight into the effects of fall prevention intervention programs in the elderly.

Biography

Chris King has expertise in health and fitness with a passion for improving health, knowledge and well-being for all. His education includes his MS in Health, Physical Education and Recreation from Emporia State University, BS in Education from Northwest Missouri State University and various coursework from the University of Iowa, Southwestern Community College and Iowa Western Community College. He works as an instructor of health and movement sciences at Graceland University, adjunct-instructor at Southwestern Community College, certified personal training for Catholic Health Initiatives and a licensed emergency medical technician. His knowledge and research is based upon his expertise in this wide set of technical fields. Application of this knowledge and skill enables him to educate and empower whomever he comes into contact, with a goal of improving their overall quality of life.

cking1@graceland.edu

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