Relationship between Postural Balance and Falls in Elderly People in Two Selected Elders' Homes in Colombo District

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Aging is a natural process that results from the impact of the accumulation of various molecular and cellular changes over time at the biological level. This process leads to a gradual reduction in physical health. Falls are considered as one of the geriatric giants experienced by older adults at least once in their elderly stage. Falls occur in the elderly as a result of one or more than one intrinsic risk factor experienced by the elders. Postural balance plays an important role among intrinsic risk factors of falls in the elderly. This study's aim was to identify the association between postural balance and falls among the elderly in Salina Alwis Elders' home and Sahana Udaya Elders' home. A cross-sectional study was conducted under a non-probability convenient sampling method, including 60 elderly people aged 65 years and above who dwelt in the Salina Alwis Elders' home and the Sahana Udaya Elders' home. Postural balance was measured using the Mini Balance Evaluation System Test (Mini- BEST). Falls history was obtained through an interview administrated assessment. Elders who experienced one or more than one fall within the past 6 months were included in the fallers' category. The mean age of the participants was 76.67±6.23 years. The mean and standard deviation of postural balance were 20.88±2.70. The mean values of postural balance among falls and non - fall groups of elderly were 18.17 and 22.57 respectively. Independent sample t-test showed a significant difference in postural balance (p= 0.031) among the falling group of elderly people. The study revealed that deprivation of postural balance affects falls in elderly people.

Keywords: *postural balance, institutionalized elderly, mini-balance evaluation system test*