

P66: Comparing the effects of two different intervention programs on the level of anxiety and depression in elderly individuals

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Introduction: Throughout the process of aging, there are several changes that can cause postural instability or balance disability, increasing the number of falls in elderly. Falls may lead to different consequences, such as high levels of depression and anxiety.

Objectives: This study aims to compare an Occupational Therapy (OT) balance intervention program and an intervention program exclusively consisting of balance training with the Biodex Balance System (BBS), regarding their effect on the level of anxiety and depression.

Materials and Methods: A randomized comparative trial was performed using a probabilistic sample of 22 community-dwelling individuals, aged 60 years or older. The participants were divided into two groups: Group 1 - balance training using the BBS (6 sessions); Group 2 - Balance training through OT sessions (6 sessions). The groups were assessed in two moments: pre and post intervention. Hospital anxiety and depression scale (HADS) was used to assess levels of anxiety and depression. Statistical analysis consisted of a two factors repeated measures ANOVA, after having checked all the assumptions of this.

Results and Discussion: The average age of the control group was 76,4 years (± 7.2), and in the experimental group it was 74 years (± 6.8). In this study significant results were observed for the HADS score, between pre and post intervention ($p < 0.05$). It was also observed that the averages in HADS score decreased after intervention, when compared with the results obtained in pre intervention. These results highlight the importance of defining effective therapeutic interventions programs in order to improve mobility and balance related skills, and in consequence reduce anxiety and depression in older individuals.

Conclusion: Both interventions had a positive effect on the participants' levels of anxiety and depression. The effect was similar for both interventions. Future studies should assess the effects of longer intervention programs and in larger samples.

References

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