

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

1. Conclusion

This study compared the ability of balance control, fall and consequences of fall, and quality of life among insufficiently active, lifestyle active and exercise older adults, aged 65 to 80 years within Khon Kaen municipality. The findings showed that exercise subjects had the best balance control, followed by lifestyle active and insufficiently active subjects, respectively. The time to complete the TUGT of insufficiently active subjects was longer than 12 seconds which indicated the need for further evaluation regarding balance impairment. The insufficiently active subjects also experienced falls about 2 times greater than those of lifestyle active and exercise subjects during the past 6 months. However, there were no significant differences in QOL of older adults among the groups. The findings of this study confirmed that participation in regular exercise at a sufficient level was the best for balance control and fall. However, routine physical activity also benefited for those parameters. Thus the program for balance improvement and fall prevention for older adults should emphasize on regular exercise or physical activity at a sufficient level in terms of frequency, duration and intensity. In addition, the type of activity should be related to the targeted ability.

2. The limitations and suggestions for further study

2.1 The information to assign subjects into 3 groups was self-reported/subjective that may not truly warrant daily physical activity of subjects. To affirm this information, the researcher needs to observe subjects' daily activities for a period of time prior to arrange them into the groups.

2.2 With the attempt to minimize bias of age and gender differences among the groups, the study analyzed results from the number of subjects less than that shown from sample size calculation. Thus further studies should embrace these criteria prior to recruit subjects into the study.

2.3 The findings of QOL were not found to be relating to balance ability and fall. This may be due to the questionnaire details not only physical but also psychological, social relationship and environmental aspects. In addition, minimal differences of balance performance with less consequence of fall may not be clearly perceived by the subjects. Thus further study related to QOL may need to find alternative methods to measure this information.

2.4 The data of falls were evaluated retrospectively. Thus, these may have some errors due to subjects forgotten. However, the study attempted to minimize this by asking the related information such time, places, and consequences of each fall. Further study should carefully screen levels of cognitive impairment of subjects by using a screening test such as Folstein Mini-Mental State Examination.