The Impact of Fall Efficacy on Occupational Performance in Community-Dwelling Older Adults

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The Impact of Fall Efficacy on Occupational Performance in Community-Dwelling Older Adults

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Background:
● Falls affect one-third of adults annually and are the leading cause of death for older adults (OA) (Ambrose, Paul, & Hausdorff, 2013 & He, Goodkind, & Kowal, 2016).
● Fall Efficacy (FE) is the confidence a person has in his/her ability to complete a task without falling (Tinetti & Powell, 1993).
● Low FE restricts OA’s participation in ADLs, IADLs, leisure activities, and social participation (Jung et al., 2015).
● Our literature revealed many fall prevention interventions focus on physical factors, however, learning more about the psychological components that contribute to falls may also improve outcomes.

Statement of Purpose:
To explore how low FE impacts participation in activities among community-dwelling OAs.

RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODS
● Semi-structured interviews guided by the Modified Fall Efficacy Scale (MFES) with 5 participants.
● Interviews were coded and themes were identified using triangulation and constant comparison method.
● Inclusion criteria:
  ○ ≤ 6 on MFES, 65 years of age or older, and cognitively intact.

MFES Areas of the Lowest Average Scores
Take a bath or shower 3.7
Get in/out of a chair 3.7
Reach into cabinets or closets 3.7
Using front or rear steps at home 2.7

RESULTS
Themes
● The fit between the environment and occupation was the most prominent theme related to occupational performance (environmental modifications to meet challenge of occupation).
● Some participants reported adapting occupations to compensate for low FE, while others simply withdrew from occupations.
● Occupational challenges identified on the MFES were associated with a small base of support and weight shifting within the environment.

Example of a poor “FIT” between P E O
Participant 1: MFES score 4.57
P: Foot drop and a decline in memory
E: Lack of environmental modifications in home and uneven surfaces in the community e.g. lack of grab bars, sidewalks
O: Reduced confidence and participation in community mobility and when completing activities in the home

DISCUSSION & IMPLICATIONS
● Psychological factors, such as FE contribute to decreased participation in occupations and therefore, should be addressed as a component in fall prevention interventions to increase participation.
● Environmental modifications, or the lack thereof, had the most impact on occupational performance.
● A higher level of occupational participation was present among those who used adaptive and compensatory strategies.

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REFERENCES