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

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## INTRODUCTION

### 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.

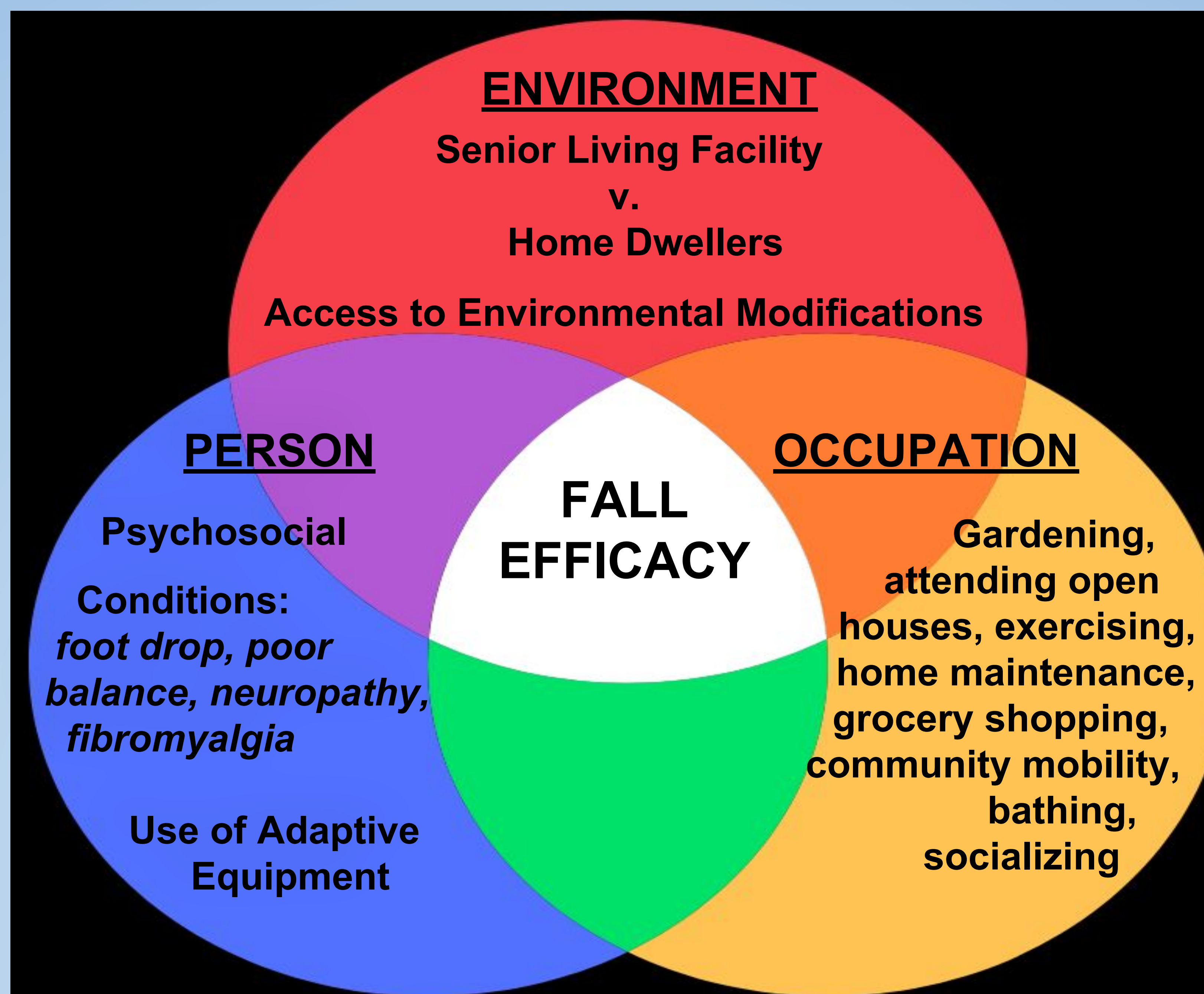
### Statement of Purpose:

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

## PARTICIPANT QUOTES

*"I try to walk on...ground level...I try never to walk where it is too steep...or where there are no rails...so like climbing or going down steep (stairs), you know I try to avoid..."*

*"What would you say frustrates you the most about being fearful about falling overall?" "It inhibits me socially and geographically..."*

*"Yeah, sometimes when trying to reach something, um, high up, I try to say, 'Should I bother? I might fall.'"*

## 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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