

Responding to Home Maintenance Challenge Scenarios

The Role of Selection, Optimization, and Compensation in Aging-in-Place

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Abstract

This study examined potential issues faced by older adults in managing their homes and their proposed solutions for overcoming hypothetical difficulties. Forty-four diverse, independently living older adults (66-85) participated in structured group interviews in which they discussed potential solutions to manage difficulties presented in four scenarios: perceptual, mobility, physical, and cognitive difficulties. The proposed solutions were classified using the Selection, Optimization, and Compensation (SOC) model. Participants indicated they would continue performing most tasks and reported a range of strategies to manage home maintenance challenges. Most participants reported that they would manage home maintenance challenges using compensation; the most frequently mentioned compensation strategy was using tools and technologies. There were also differences across the scenarios: Optimization was discussed most frequently with perceptual and cognitive difficulty scenarios. These results provide insights into supporting older adults' potential needs for aging-in-place and provide evidence of the value of the SOC model in applied research.