

Exploration of an assessment tool developed for community-based organizations to evaluate participation among persons aging with physical disability

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INTRODUCTION:

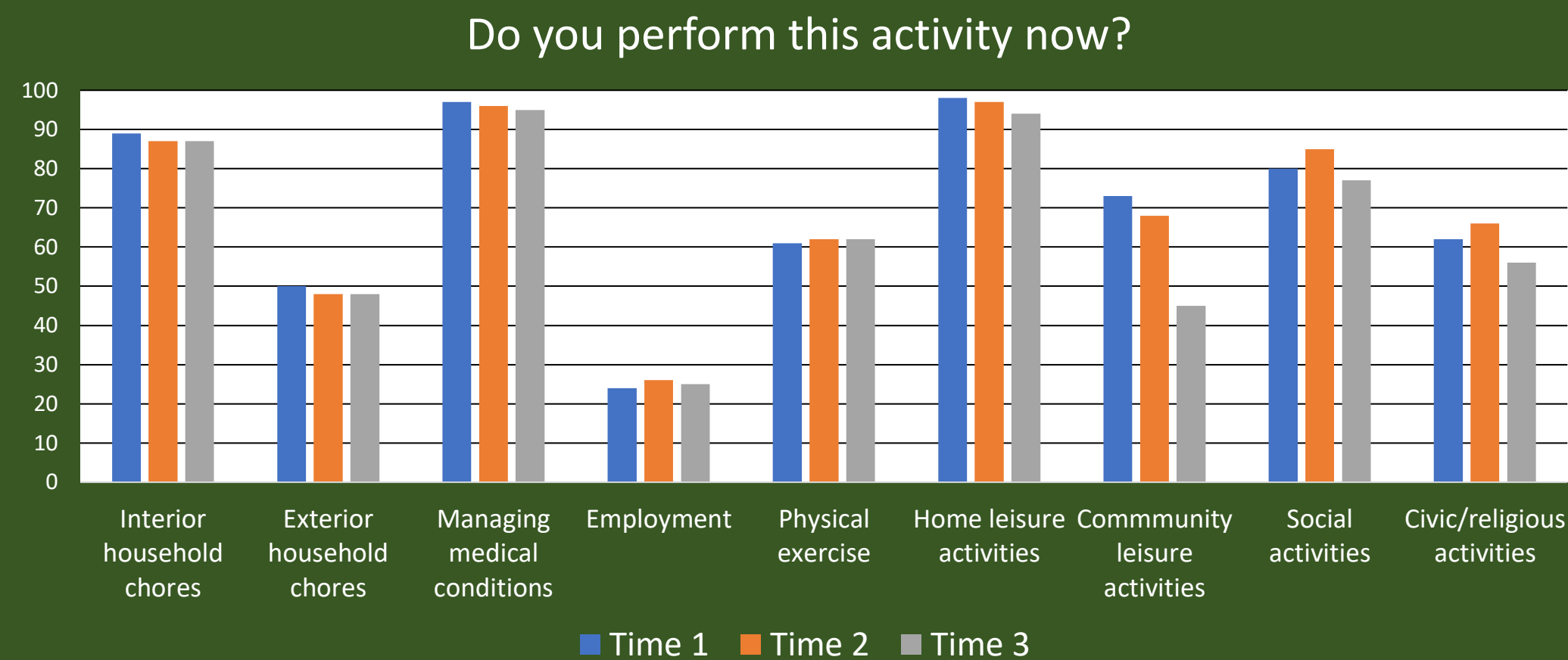
- Understanding participation in everyday life activities, including how it may change over time, for people aging with physical disability may help community-based organizations (CBOs) support their participation goals.
- Most measures of participation are designed for researchers, not CBOs.
- As part of a larger study, we developed a simple set of activity measures CBOs can use to quickly assess participation ability and satisfaction.

METHODS:

- Longitudinal study (2018-2022), 3 annual surveys, people age 45-65 who have had a disability for 5 years or more (N=323)
 - Female 68.7%, single 61.9%, non-White 34.3%
- We asked this set of questions about 9 domains of everyday activities:
- 1) *Do you perform this activity now?*
- 2) *Do you wish you spent more or less time doing this activity, or is this the right amount of time for you?*
- 3) *What type of help do you need to improve your satisfaction with this activity?*
- The third time participants took the survey, we asked them if their ability to participate in each of these 9 domains had increased or decreased, or stayed the same. If it had changed, we asked if it was due to the COVID-19 pandemic, to growing older, or to something else.

FINDINGS:

High levels of participation reported across activity domains



Many respondents said that they were unsatisfied with the amount of time they spent participating

They wanted to spend more time in:

- Exercise
- Employment
- Interior household chores
- Community leisure Social activities
- Civic & religious activities



They wanted to spend less time in:

- Managing medical conditions
- Interior household chores
- Home leisure



Things respondents said that would help improve their participation were: personal assistance, transportation, environmental modifications and improved health

Participation did not change much over 3 years

- Most change that did happen was reduction in participation. Areas of participation decline were in community-based leisure, civic & religious activities, and social activities
- Common reasons for reduced participation were aging/growing older and the COVID-19 pandemic

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9 Activity Domains:

1. Interior Household Chores: *Cleaning, laundry, cooking, errands*
2. Exterior Household Chores: *Yardwork, pet care, home maintenance*
3. Managing Medical Conditions: *Going to the doctor, managing medical bills*
4. Employment: *Full- and part-time work*
5. Physical Exercise: *Working out, playing sports, walking*
6. Home Leisure Activities: *Watching TV/movies, reading*
7. Community Leisure Activities: *Going to movies, concerts, restaurants*
8. Social Activities: *Visiting friends/family, helping others, taking on the phone*
9. Civic/Religious Activities: *Volunteering, attending community meetings, attending religious services, praying/meditating*

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS:

- The set of questions about participation in everyday activities that we developed was designed to be easy for CBOs to use for assessment of service needs for their clients who are aging with physical disability.
- CBOs can use this question set to help identify participation challenges, changes in participation over time, and how to improve satisfaction with participation for people aging with physical disability.

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