

Cognition and Mobility in Older Adults in India and China

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Cognitive and physical function are critical, interdependent components of health and quality of life in old age. However, most research on the cognitive-disability associations has been in high income countries; evidence is scant from low and middle income countries. We used cross-sectional data from Study of Ageing and Adult Health (SAGE) respondents aged 50+ to assess the relation of an episodic memory (EM), executive function (EF) and digit span (DS) measure with mobility (walking speed, normal paced 4-meter walk) in China and India (total n=17,946). Better cognitive status was positively associated with gait speed, with magnitudes similar to what is typically seen in the U.S. There were significant cross-country differences for DS (country-by-DS interaction $p < 0.05$), but not EF or EM. Further research and cross-national comparisons of cognition-mobility associations in developing countries are needed to assess the universality of patterns observed in developed settings.