dementia and their care partners. Previous research demonstrates that TimeSlips, a creative storytelling intervention, provides a "failure-free" environment and an opportunity for individuals to use their imagination. Because it does not involve memory, people living with dementia are encouraged to contribute and interact, thus creating an environment that focuses on dignity and strengths rather than deficits. This case study explores the student facilitators' experiences of running TimeSlips sessions in different levels of care. The two facilitators ran continuous sessions over six months – with an individual at home, group sessions in memory care, and group sessions in assisted living. The facilitators journaled about their experiences after each session and the same picture prompts were used across the different types of sessions. Each journal entry was coded by two independent researchers using grounded theory principles. Through the coding, it was clear that the facilitators needed to use different skills to engage participants in storytelling based on their level of care. Themes that emerged include joy of connection, playfulness, and engagement. In addition, specific skills are needed to accommodate some behaviors of people living with dementia (such as aggressive behavior toward others in the group) and how to distract from those behaviors to continue with the storytelling. The benefits and challenges of each modality and gaps that may need to be addressed for student facilitators will be discussed.

SESSION 2270 (SYMPOSIUM)

COGNITIVE AGING ACROSS NATIONAL CONTEXTS: EVIDENCE FROM THE HARMONIZED COGNITIVE ASSESSMENT PROTOCOLS

Chair: Lindsay Kobayashi Co-Chair: Alden Gross
Discussant: Kenneth Langa

The global burden of dementia is rapidly rising and shifting to low- and middle-income countries. The triangulation of evidence across country contexts is essential for unlocking the causes of dementia and reducing its global burden. The Harmonized Cognitive Assessment Protocol (HCAP) is a recent innovation administered in the US Health and Retirement Study and several of its International Partner Studies. For the very first time, these HCAPs provide high-quality data for cross-national comparisons of later-life cognitive function that are sensitive to linguistic, cultural, and educational differences across diverse country contexts. However, despite the common HCAP protocols, human cognitive function does not lend itself to direct comparison across diverse populations without careful consideration of necessary test adaptations. This symposium presents results from analyses of the HCAP data in the US, England, Mexico, South Africa, China, and India, highlighting cross-national differences in later-life cognition identified using the HCAP data, and presenting key methodological concerns for cross-national comparisons of cognitive aging. First, Zhang will present findings comparing education gradients in later-life cognitive function across countries. Next, Cho will present longitudinal data comparing the relationships between short-term changes in household wealth in later-life and subsequent cognitive function across countries. Third, Avila-Rieger will present findings comparing sex/gender disparities in later-life cognitive function in the US and India and how they differ by education. Finally, Nichols will conclude the session by discussing differences in the measurement of cognition for the assessment of dementia across countries and implications for data interpretation and the design of future instruments.

EDUCATION GRADIENTS IN LATER-LIFE COGNITIVE FUNCTION ACROSS LOW-, MIDDLE-, AND HIGH-INCOME COUNTRIES

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Education is positively related to cognitive function. However, educational gradients in cognitive function may vary across older populations with different educational compositions and physical and social environments. We conducted one of the first cross-national comparative studies on educational differences in later-life cognitive function using harmonized data. Multivariable linear regressions were employed to estimate the association between education according to International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) categories and cognitive function for adults ages 60+ from the United States, England, Mexico, South Africa, India, and China. Cross-country differences were tested using fully interacted models. Controlling for demographics and parental education, we found significant educational gradients in cognitive function in low- and middle-income countries; however, in high-income countries, only those with upper secondary education and above had a consistent cognitive advantage over those with primary education. This study suggests substantial country-level differences in cognitive benefits of educational attainment.

SHORT-TERM WEALTH CHANGES AND SUBSEQUENT COGNITIVE HEALTH AMONG OLDER ADULTS IN CHINA, ENGLAND, MEXICO, AND THE US

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Household wealth is positively associated with later-life cognitive health, but little is known about the effects of changes in wealth over time and whether they differ across populations. In this study, we evaluated the within- and between-country relationships between short-term changes in household wealth and subsequent cognitive function among adults aged ≥65 years in China, England, Mexico, and the US. We used sampling-weighted, multivariable-adjusted linear models to estimate the relationships between