

Health and Welfare Policy as a Means of Preventing Cognitive Decline: The Role of Personal and Social Factors in Memory among Retirees

Prof. Aviad Tur-Sinai
UOniversity of Haifa

Prof. Sara Carmel
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

Background

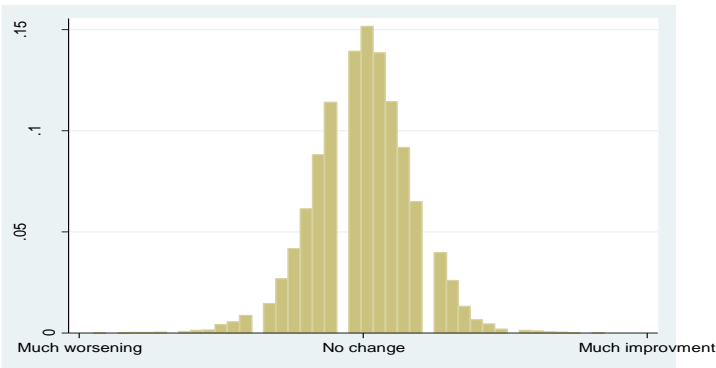
The increasing prevalence of cognitive decline (CD) in old age has become a global challenge. Our study aims to enhance understanding of this phenomenon by evaluating longitudinal effects of personal and national determinants on memory decline (MD) among European retirees.

Methods

- Two interviews collected in 12 European (EU) countries and in Israel by SHARE.
- 11,930 retirees aged 50+ who were interviewed at baseline (T1) and again **four years later** (T2).
- MD was evaluated by the change in the recalled number of words at T2 compared to those remembered at T1.
- Ten words were presented at each interview and participants were asked to repeat them, first immediately and again after a few minutes.

Results

Changes in memory between Time 1 and Time 2 among retirees



Hierarchical regression models explaining memory change (decline)

Age	↑	Education	↓	Self-perceived health	↑	Change in Self-perceived health	↑
ADL	↑	Change in ADL	↑	Depressive symptoms	↑	Change in Depressive symptoms	↑
Employment/Activities at T2	↓	Total words (T1)	↑	Early retirement	↑		
Eastern region	↑	Central region	↓	Northern region	↓		

Conclusions & Recommendations

- There is a need to promote **a national policies** to prolong years of education and participation in the workforce.
- We recommend introducing programs that encourage people **to postpone retirement**, and adjusting workplace conditions in order to enable older persons to continue contributing to the workforce.