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Layered Environmental Contexts, Physical Disabilities and Cognition among Older Chinese Adults

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"Age in place"-older adults staying in a familiar environment and residence to age-is an emerging concept in aging China as it addresses how their environment would optimize resources for a decline in health before they become dependent on institutional care. Age in place literature has addressed the importance of environmental contexts- neighborhood environment and home on older adults' wellbeing. This study aims to explore the relationships between older Chinese adults' resident environmental contexts and their health-physical disabilities and cognition. Derived from theories related to social disorganization theory and environment disorder, objective and subjective home conditions and neighborhood conditions are constructed to examine the effects. The data used for this study comes from the 2011 and 2015 China Health and Retirement Longitudinal Studies (CHARLS). The analytic sample consists of 8,662 older Chinese aged 55 and over. Two-level random-intercept multilevel models for continuous variables are employed. Preliminary results show that older Chinese who stay in a residence without a sufficient toilet facility and those who live in the neighborhood with waste managed locally have more physical disabilities at the Time-point 2 (T2). As for cognition, older adults who stay in a less clean and untidy residence and those who live in a neighborhood with waste managed locally have worse cognition at T2. Those who live in urban neighborhoods have better cognition at T2. To conclude, the study demonstrate the extent environmental context affects older adults' physical health and cognition over time. Moreover, improving home conditions are as important as upgrading neighborhood conditions.