



# Race, But Not Age, Contributes to Cognitive Difficulties

Eleanor Capuder

erc00016@mix.wvu.edu



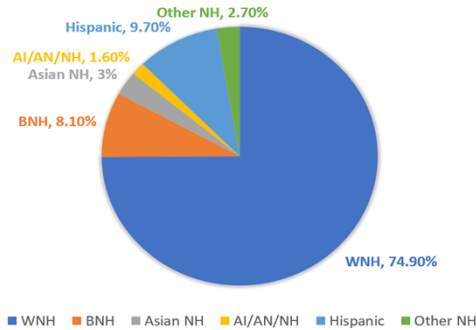
## Background/ Purpose:

Cognitive difficulties/ decline can include reduced performance of tasks utilizing quick processing, memory, and some movement (like balance) (Gupta, 2021). Racial disparities are defined as unequal treatment of racial groups, often pertaining to socioeconomic factors. As normal aging occurs cognitive decline is more likely. Acquired knowledge/skills and the ability to regulate emotion is usually maintained (Murman, 2015). Despite health care advancements and societal changes, racial health disparities persist. These disparities extend beyond physical health to cognitive wellbeing.

Does race alter the relation between age and cognitive difficulties/ decline?

We examined the relation among age, race, and cognitive difficulties/ decline in adults, mean age 65 years old.

## DEMOGRAPHICS: PERCENT IN EACH CATEGORY RACE/ETHNICITY



## Methods:

Responses from 61688 adults, across the United States, who completed the 2022 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System data from the Center for Disease and Control were analyzed.

A moderated regression analysis was conducted to test the interaction between age and race

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to test whether the mean for each race group affected cognitive difficulties/ decline differently from other groups

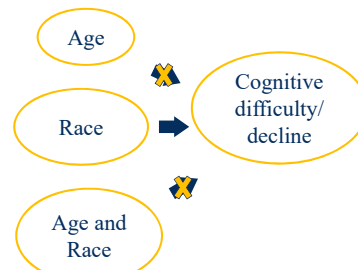
## Results:

The moderated regression analysis was significant:  $F(3, 61684) = 33.39, p < .001$ .

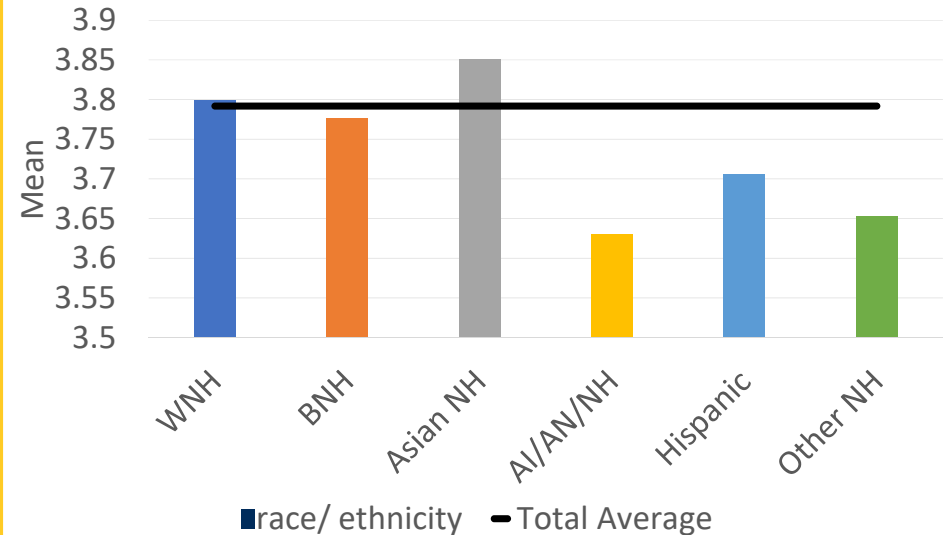
The ANOVA test was significant,  $F(5, 63541) = 40.48, p < .001$ .

Post hoc tests revealed WNH & BNH reported fewer cognitive difficulties/decline compared to AAPI, AI/AN/NH, and Hispanic adults.

Age does NOT relate directly  
 Race DOES exhibit a direct relation  
 There is NO interaction between age and race



## Cognition Scores by Race/ ethnicity



Those of Asian Pacific Islander (non- Hispanic), American Indian (non-Hispanic), Hispanic, and mixed/multi racial (non-Hispanic) backgrounds reported more cognitive difficulty/ decline.

## Discussion

- Results from this study have shown that racial disparities extend to cognitive difficulties/ decline.
- When each racial group is compared to the other groups (based on mean differences in post hoc tests), there is a difference.
- White (non-Hispanic) adults always had higher cognitive scores, while Hispanic adults often had lower cognitive scores.

## Next Steps:

- To reduce racial disparities in cognition, **additional attention to** factors that mediate those relations, such as **education, access to health care, and income**, is required (Gupta, 2021).
- Research that focuses on how education (including access, resources, quality) affects the socioeconomic status of people of a minority status later in life should be conducted.
- More research that focuses on how socioeconomic status can affect cognitive health should be conducted.
- More research on how to close the racial health care gap should be conducted.
- Since Black Americans are exhibiting advantages over other marginalized groups, work needs to be done to bolster the resources for non- black marginalized groups

