Does cognitive function after retirement differ across race and sex?

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A study published in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*

found that immediately after retirement, white adults tended to experience a significant decline in cognitive function, whereas Black adults experienced minimal cognitive decline. White men showed the steepest post-retirement cognitive decline across sex/race combinations, whereas Black women showed the least decline.

White women performed better cognitively at retirement than other race/sex subgroups, and after retirement, their cognitive functioning declined at a rate that was slightly less than the average for this study. Results were adjusted for sociodemographics and physical and mental health indicators.

Finally, the study—which included 2,226 US participants followed for up to 10 years—revealed greater post-retirement cognitive decline among individuals who attended college compared with those who did not.

"The results seem to point to the possibility that better job opportunities could lead to greater cognitive losses after retirement whereas exposure to lifelong structural inequalities may actually ease transition to retirement with respect to cognitive aging," said lead author Ross Andel, Ph.D., of Arizona State University's Edson College of Nursing and Health Innovation.

More information: Retirement and Cognitive Aging in a Racially Diverse Sample of Older Americans, *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* (2023). DOI: 10.1111/jgs.18475

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