

Do the relationships between anxiety and cognition differ by cognitive status among Hispanic/Latino adults?

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Background

- Anxiety is associated with higher risk of dementia and declines in cognition.^{1,2,3}
- Cognitive status (healthy vs. impaired) may impact these relationships.
- Few studies have examined these associations among Hispanic/Latino middle-aged and older adults.

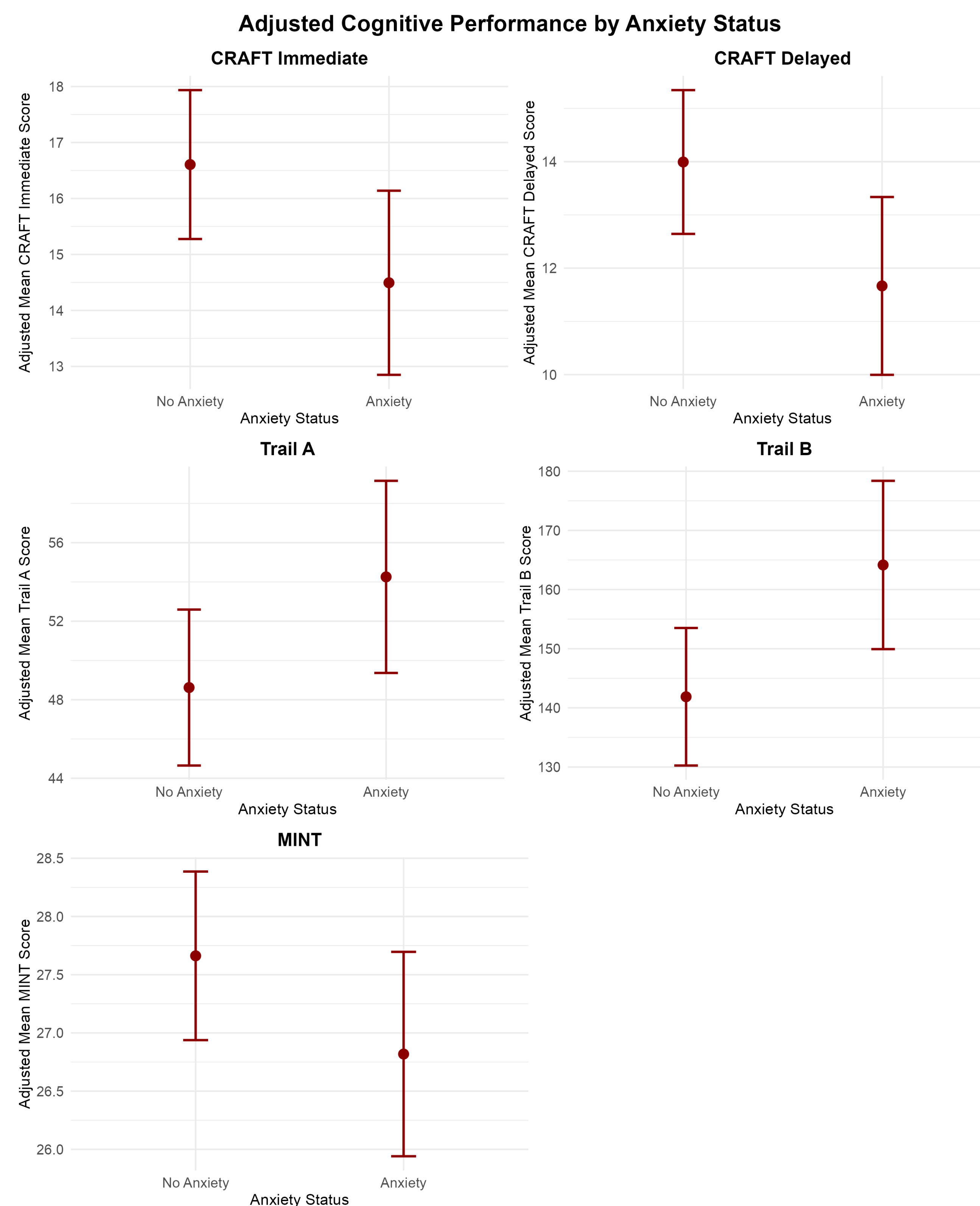
Study Aim

- To investigate the associations between history of anxiety and cognitive functioning among Hispanic/Latino adults
 - To evaluate if cognitive status moderates these associations

Methods

- Data: National Alzheimer's Coordinating Center (NACC; 35 sites)
- 420 participants (history of anxiety = 133)
- Self-reported history of anxiety was collected from 2005-2024; all other variables were derived from 2024.
- Cognitive outcome: semantic fluency (Animals), confrontation naming (Multilingual Naming Test, MINT), verbal memory (Craft Story 21 immediate and delayed recall), attention/working memory (number span forward and backward), processing speed (Trail A) and executive functioning (Trail B)
- Cognitive status: healthy vs. impaired
- Linear regression models
 - Unadjusted
 - Adjusted: controlling for age, sex, marital status, education, language, diabetes, hypertension, hypercholesterolemia, smoking, and alcohol use
 - Interaction: all covariates in addition to the anxiety*cognitive status interaction

Results



Mean MINT Score by Anxiety and Cognitive Status

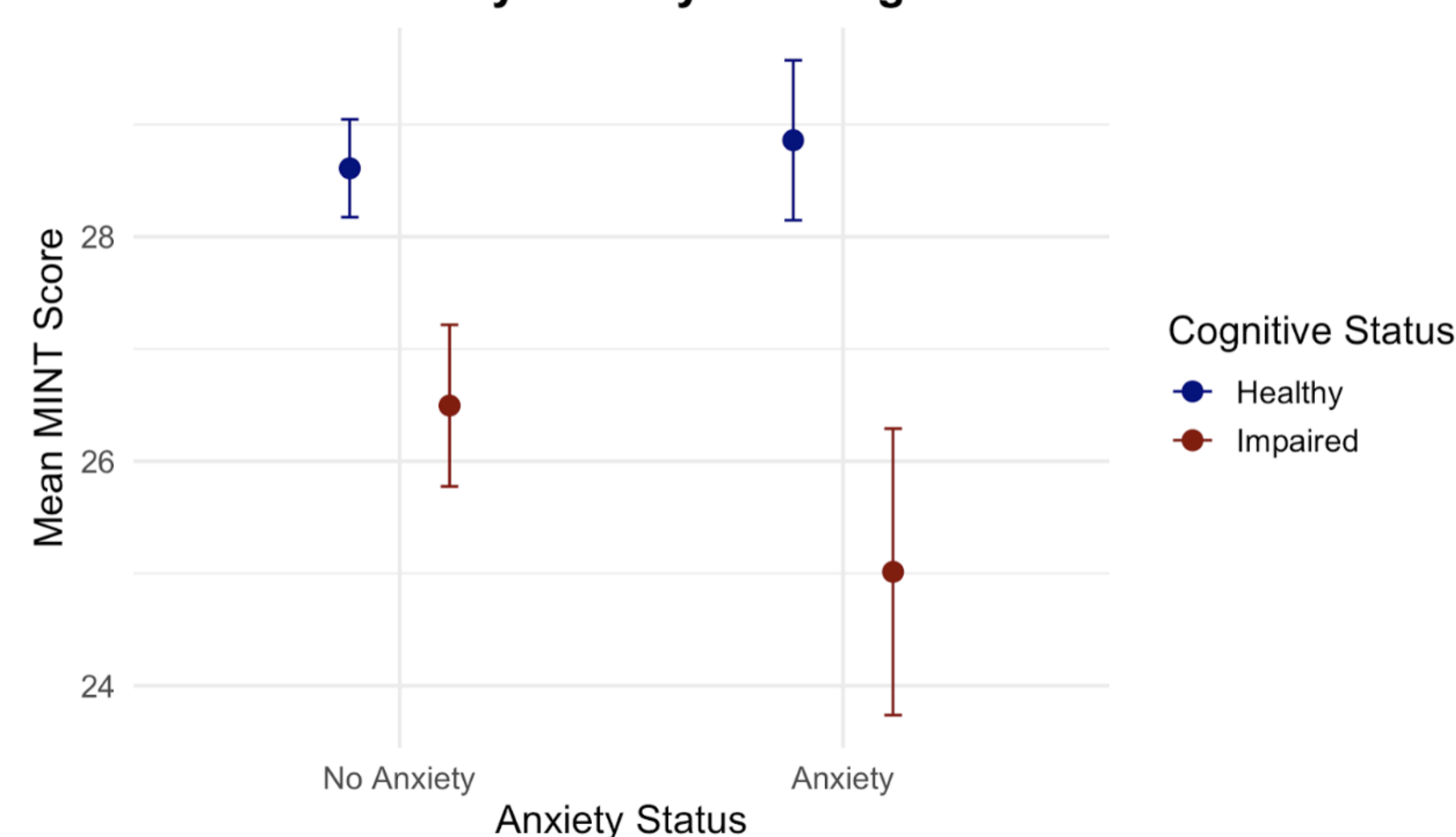


Table 1. Descriptive comparisons by anxiety status

	Overall	Anxiety	No Anxiety
Total, n	420	133	287
Age, mean (SD)*	68.51 (8.80)	66.98 (10.54)	69.22 (7.79)
Sex (female), n (%)	301 (72)	104 (78)	197 (69)
Years of Education, mean (SD)	13.53 (4.08)	13.33 (4.02)	13.63 (4.11)
Marital Status, n (%)			
Married	71 (17)	27 (20)	44 (15)
Not married	107 (25)	35 (26)	72 (25)
Widowed	242 (58)	71 (53)	171 (60)
Primary Language, n (%)			
English	228 (54)	66 (50)	162 (56)
Spanish	192 (46)	67 (50)	125 (44)
Ever Smoked (yes), n (%)	126 (30)	47 (35)	79 (28)
Ever Drink (yes), n (%)	218 (52)	56 (42)	162 (56)
Diabetes (yes), n (%)	123 (29)	41 (31)	82 (29)
Hypertension (yes), n (%)	341 (81)	110 (83)	231 (80)
Hypercholesterolemia (yes), n (%)	289 (69)	92 (69)	197 (69)
Cognitive Status, n (%)			
Healthy	221 (53)	58 (44)	163 (57)
Impaired	199 (47)	75 (56)	124 (43)

Note. * and ** indicate $p < 0.05$ and $p < 0.01$, respectively. SD = standard deviation; n = number.

Conclusion

- Anxiety was associated with worse cognitive performance among middle-aged and older Hispanic/Latino participants.
- Anxiety may exacerbate language-related difficulties among individuals with existing cognitive impairment.
- Language dominance and bilingualism may influence performance on verbal cognitive tasks, particularly among Hispanic/Latino adults.⁴
- To elucidate whether neurobiological pathways underlie these relationships, future research should examine structural brain differences in Hispanic/Latino adults with and without anxiety.

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References

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