https://doi.org/10.24839/2325-7342.JN26.4.408

Angry, Frustrated, and Silent: Women's Responses to Microaggressions Within the Discipline That Coined Microaggressions

Amanda L. Almond[1], Erin E. Ayala[2], Marisa M. Moore[3], and Mariya D. Mirzoyan[4]
[1]Department of Social Sciences, CUNY, New York City College of Technology
[2]Premier Sport Psychology
[3]Director of Counseling Services, Marist College
[4]Counseling Psychology, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota

ABSTRACT. The number of women entering the field of psychology has steadily increased to nearly 75% over the past decade (APA, 2019). During this time, the number of women in psychology who identify as racial and/or ethnic group member has also increased (APA, 2019). The discipline of psychology prides itself on inclusivity and has worked to increase the retention of members with varying cultural and gender identities (APA n.d.b., & APA, n.d.c.). Shifts in composition, however, have not been reflected among higher ranking professionals within the field (e.g., faculty, supervisors; Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation, 2015). This disparity warranted a qualitative investigation on the experiences, emotions, and reactions to microaggressions for women emerging in psychology (*n* = 264). Although psychology-related professionals aspire to be more inclusive and maintain an explicit orientation to social change, microaggressions have a large purview from which no field is excluded. Findings from women's narrative responses revealed 4 types of microaggressions, 11 elicited emotion themes, and 6 types of reactions to microaggressions. Results highlight how women manage their emotions and reactions to microaggressions in institutional environments while considering individual and collective stigma consciousness. Monitoring and documenting the social conditions of this field can increase support and allyship, which facilitates retention for women pursuing and earning doctoral degrees in psychology.

Keywords: microaggressions, women, psychology, graduate education, support for change

ABSTRACTO. El número de mujeres que ingresan al campo de la psicología ha aumentado de manera constante hasta casi un 75% durante la última década (APA, 2019). Durante este tiempo también ha aumentado el número de mujeres en el campo de la psicología que se identifican como miembros de un grupo racial y/o étnico (APA, 2019). La disciplina se enorgullece de la inclusión y ha trabajado para aumentar la retención de miembros con diferentes identidades culturales y de género (APA s.f.b., & APA, s.f.c.). Sin embargo, los cambios en los números y en la composición no se han reflejado entre los profesionales de mayor rango dentro del campo (por ejemplo, profesores y/o supervisores; Oficina de Consulta y Acreditación

*Faculty mentor

de Programas, 2015). Esta disparidad ameritó una investigación cualitativa sobre las experiencias, emociones, y reacciones a las microagresiones de las mujeres emergentes en el campo de la psicología ($n = 264$). Si bien la psicología aspira a ser más inclusiva y mantiene una orientación explícita al cambio social, las microagresiones tienen un ámbito amplio del que no se excluye ningún campo. Los hallazgos de las respuestas narrativas de las mujeres revelaron 4 tipos de microagresiones, 11 temas emocionales provocados por otros(as) y 6 tipos de reacciones a las microagresiones. Los resultados destacan cómo las mujeres manejan sus emociones y reacciones a las microagresiones en entornos institucionales, considerando la conciencia del estigma individual y colectivo. Monitorear y documentar las condiciones sociales de este campo puede aumentar el apoyo y la alianza, lo que facilita la retención de las mujeres que buscan y obtienen un doctorado en psicología.

Palabra clave: microagresiones, mujeres, psicología, educación de posgrado, apoyo al cambio

Women who historically pursued careers in psychology faced countless barriers, including restrictive gender roles, the denial of opportunities to advance within the field, as well as pressure to decide between one's career or one's family (Scarborough & Furumoto, 1987). Although women have made significant contributions to the field of psychology since the late 1800s, they have historically been overlooked and ignored in psychology's past (Scarborough & Furumoto, 1987). Sex-based discrimination and harassment are now prohibited by federal law (Civil Rights Act, 1964), and yet women in higher education and other work environments are still likely to experience various and subtler forms of discrimination and harassment, often referred to as microaggressions (Barthelemy et al., 2016).

Demonstrated throughout interactions, microaggressions reflect environmental, organizational, and individual notions about the abilities and behaviors of groups of people (Sue et al., 2007). Differences in power contribute to microaggressions and reveal information about the space in which a person is functioning (Almond, 2017). Often unintentional, yet packed with the ability to elicit disconnection, microaggressions come in the form of environmental cues, insults, assaults, and invalidations (Sue, 2010). Given the changing composition of emerging psychologists, the purpose of the present investigation was to identify the nature of microaggressions that women doctoral students and early career professionals experience in their school and work settings.

Conceptualizing Microaggressions

The term "microaggression" was first introduced by Harvard psychiatrist Chester Pierce (1970), who referred to it as subtle racial putdowns that degrade physical health over a lifetime. Pierce's work reflected how persistent and underresearched microaggressions were in the United States, until Sue et al. (2007) popularized the topic over three decades later. Although originally developed within the context of race, in recent years, microaggression research has extended to identities such as sexual orientation, age, and gender (Barthelemy et al., 2016). Harmful stereotypes, assumptions, and attitudes about women and those with other marginalized cultural identities continue to persist in society, making all women potential targets of ongoing microaggressions. The reach of microaggressions extends to many identities, and they are likely experienced by any woman, but especially those who may not be cisgender, heterosexual, White, and Christian.

Intersectional microaggressions more aptly apply to people's lived experiences. Scholars have noted that misinterpretations can occur when viewing microaggressions within a singular category (Lewis et al., 2013; Nadal et al., 2015). Crenshaw's (2018) work on intersectionality expanded our understanding of a person's experience beyond categorizations that are mutually exclusive. The individual experiencing the microaggression is impacted as a whole, rather than reduced to the aspect of their identity under scrutiny by a person or organization. An intentional comment or unintentional insult can amplify other identities and remind a person that power and privilege are unequally distributed for many reasons (i.e., gender, disability, occupational hierarchy). Suppose that one woman is assumed by another not to belong in her environment (e.g., a young Black woman is assumed to be a student, not faculty, when in her own office on campus by another faculty member). This microaggression incorporates gender, age, rank, and race. A whole person experiences frustration, not their unique identities (e.g., mother, Black, woman).

Sue described the phenomenon of microaggression as a taxonomy with four distinct types. Microinsults were defined as messages that insult, demean, snub, and/or convey rudeness. Microinvalidations represented experiences in which a person felt excluded or instances that negated a person's experience of reality. Microassaults were defined as attacks that hurt, such as avoidance or name-calling and were more likely to be conscious. Lastly, environmental microaggressions conveyed any of the aforementioned messages as the result of a system or structure, rather than carried out by an individual.

Microaggressions Among Postgraduate Students

Institutional settings, colleges, and universities consist of hierarchies that can work to reinforce microaggressions. Privilege, for example, is granted with a doctoral degree, and a lack of privilege relates to having a lesser or no degree (Young et al., 2015). An example of a hierarchical microaggression from the research of Young and colleagues (2015) was an individual being surprised about the intelligence of another with a lesser educational degree. These types of microaggressions impact the climate of an institution, as well as the experiences of the students in that setting.

The effects of microaggressions are cumulative, with many small events leading to a larger impact, for example, choosing to leave a specific discipline or field as a graduate student (Barthelemy et al., 2016). Women enrolled in physics and astronomy programs reported gender microaggressions and discrimination in the form of restricted access to equipment, sexual objectification, and the disregard of women's ideas. Despite astronomy having more women represented in the program than physics, microaggressions were equally pervasive (Barthelemy et al., 2016).

Proctor and Truscott (2012) reported that microaggressions from White peers and faculty were among the reasons African American students left their school psychology postgraduate programs. Proctor and colleagues (2017) later found that Black school psychology postgraduate students reported statistically more microaggressions than other multiethnic students, regardless of setting (i.e., academic vs. clinical).

A long-term implication of microaggressions for women in academia, particularly those of color, is exhaustion. Maintaining space within historically White institutions can equate to continuous efforts to destabilize stereotypes about their very essence: A Black woman with strength and resilience. The pressure to demonstrate strength and resilience in the face of microaggressions is paradoxical. Corbin et al. (2018) described this exhaustive dilemma as self-policing, where an effective response is associated with a cultural stereotype of Black women and leads to racial battle fatigue. A system in which women engage with the very image used to control them in order to be heard leaves little space for honest emotional expression (Corbin et al., 2018). Although Sue and colleagues (2019) identified microinterventions to achieve visibility (e.g., educate the microaggressor and utilize external resources), strategies for integrating emotions to initiate change remain long overdue.

Microaggressive experiences, the emotions that arise, and subsequent reactions need to be named to help generate solutions, rather than polarize those involved (Almond, 2017). Imposter syndrome, for example, describes the belief that one lacks the competence, regardless of merit, to occupy professional and prestigious spaces (Clance & Imes, 1978). On the Psychology Today website, Hendriksen (2017) listed ways to combat imposter syndrome, the first step being to normalize the associated feelings. Much like racial battle fatigue and self-policing, imposter syndrome can be self-perpetuating (e.g., women in medical school might soften their edges to not appear overly ambitious), but this equates to misperceptions about their competence (Mullangi & Jagsi, 2019). The disease is inequality and imposter syndrome, much like microaggressions, is a symptom; both require increased representation and systemic change (Mullangi & Jagsi, 2019).

The Changing Composition of Psychology

Actions to increase discourse and diversity in higher education persist in the United States. The American Psychological Association's Education Directorate reported in 2019 that the enrollment of women in psychology graduate programs has steadily increased to 73% in the last ten years. An update to the 1995 APA Task Force Report on the Changing Gender Composition of Psychology denoted the sociopolitical forces that contribute to an increase of women entering psychology (APA, Committee on Women in Psychology, 2017). These include legislation pertaining to workforce discrimination, disabilities, and medical leave as well as the nation's persistent need for mental health services in relation to war and violence. The rate of enrollment growth has been even more pronounced over the last 10 years for some students of color: Asian/Pacific Islander students by 19%, Hispanic students by 57%, and African American/Black students by 77% (APA, 2019). Although the overall 63% increase among ethnic and racial minorities earning a postgraduate degree seems promising, 69% of all doctoral degrees are awarded to White women, and this had decreased among Native American students by 42% (APA, 2019).

The composition of psychology professionals has diversified at the organizational level. From 2014–2019, five out of six APA presidents have been women and/or people of color (APA, n.d.a). Within APA, the Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs issues guidelines, policy statements, and resolutions on relevant topical issues, including the recruitment, retention, and training of students of color (APA, n.d.b). The APA's Committee on Women in Psychology also plays an advisory role, helping to create programming and resources (e.g., task force reports) to ensure that women and people of color thrive within the discipline (APA, n.d.c).

Although there has been growth in representation for psychology graduate students with diverse cultural identities (e.g., gender, class, sexual identity, race, ethnicity), and even some in terms of organizational leadership, there has been a lag in diverse growth and representation for faculty members and supervisors. Most faculty within health service psychology (i.e., clinical, counseling, school psychology) identify as White (79.3%), and nearly half identify as male (46.1%; Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation, 2015). Conversations around the changing composition of psychology ought to be mobilized through publicity and citations in peer-reviewed literature (APA, Committee on Women in Psychology, 2017). Studying the changing gender and racial composition of the discipline, as well as related intersected identities, is necessary to understanding how people, training, and education are impacted (APA, Committee on Women in Psychology, 2017).

The Present Study

Despite psychology becoming more inclusive and conscious of its changing composition, microaggressions have a large purview from which no field is excluded. Disparities in representation between graduate students, early career professionals, and their superiors makes the very discipline that coined microaggressions susceptible to their occurrence. Those who experience microaggressions may also perpetuate them (Almond, 2017), meaning women within psychology can perpetuate microaggressions among one another. Microaggressions reinforce feelings of inadequacy in educational settings (Young et al., 2015) and can occur on the premise of religion (Haque et al., 2018), race (Lewis et al., 2013), sexual orientation (McCabe et al., 2013), gender (Barthelemy et al., 2016), and multiracial identities (Nadal et al., 2011). Microaggressions wear away at cognitive resources and bear individual, as well as organizational effects over time.

Microaggression theory delineates a taxonomy of microaggressions, both interpersonal and environmental, with damaging mental and physical effects, capable of being captured with objective measures (Sue, 2010). Because microaggressions are a form of stress, the present study was informed by resource conservation theory, which acknowledges that responses to stress are equally shaped by environmental and individual factors (Hobfoll, 1989). Also grounded in social and feminist psychology, the present study asserted that social structures perpetuate uneven distribution of power and privilege by gender, race, and other intersecting identities (hooks, 2000). Finally, to integrate these theories into our analysis, we applied feminist research methods. Our line of inquiry was inductive and amplified the voices of women to balance the power dynamic between researcher and participant (Harnois, 2013). This qualitative investigation used a coding reliability approach to thematic analysis (Braun et al., 2018) to identify and describe the intersectional microaggressive experiences, emotions, and reactions of women across the United States who were (a) enrolled (full-time) in psychology PhD programs or (b) within 10 years of completing their PhD in psychology (i.e., early career professional).

Methods

Participants

Participants ($N = 264$) were self-identified women and completed the open-ended questions in the

TABLE 1

Participants Areas of Expertise

Frequency (*n*)	
Applied social and health psychology (ASHP)	3
Behavioral science (Experimental psychology)	2
Clinical neuropsychology	2
Clinical psychology (including 1PhD specified)	68
Clinical psychology (PsyD) including neuro and forensic	11
Clinical psychology with health emphasis	1
Clinical - school combined	1
Cognitive and brain sciences	3
Combined counseling and school psychology	2
Counseling psychology (unspecified degree)	21
Counseling psychology (PsyD specifically)	3
Developmental/lifespan	6
Educational psychology	3
Health psychology	3
International psychology	2
Media psychology	1
Neuropsychology	1
Industrial/organizational psychology (I/O)	6
Quantitative	1
School psychology	3
Social psychology	3
Total	146

TABLE 2

Participant Racial and Ethnic Background

Race/Ethnicity	Frequency (*n*)
African American	2
American Indian	1
Asian	4
Asian (specified: Chinese)	2
Biracial: Asian and White	2
Biracial: Caucasian and African American	1
Biracial: Caucasian and Asian	1
Biracial: Caucasian and Black	1
Biracial: Caucasian and Filipino	1
Biracial: Caucasian and Indian American	1
Biracial: Caucasian and Mexican	1
Biracial: Caucasian and Native American	3
Biracial: Hispanic and White	2
Black	5
Black American	2

Note. Table continues on next page.

survey. They represented 146 doctoral students (55.3%) and 118 early career women (44.7%) in 43 states and 19 disciplines within psychology (see Table 1). Most participants self-identified as White (*n* = 118; 44.7%; see Table 2 for full race/ethnicity demographics) or European American (*n* = 57; 21.6%), spoke English as a first/primary language (*n* = 248; 93.9%) and identified as heterosexual (*n* = 194; 73.5%). Of those in the LGBTQ+ community, 37% (*n* = 26) reported to be out in the workplace and/or at school and 47% (*n* = 33) reported to be out "for some people and in some situations." Respondents with children represented 16% of our sample (*n* = 43). Six respondents (2.3%) were international students, and 10 respondents (3.8%) were citizens of countries outside of the United States. Early career professionals identified their work environments as academic teaching (*n* = 21; 8.0%), academic research (*n* = 7; 2.7%), academic counseling (*n* = 14; 5.3%), clinical private (*n* = 13; 4.9%), clinical public (*n* = 28; 10.6%), and clinical government (*n* = 18; 6.8%) settings (see Table 3).

Procedure

To recruit participants, members of the research team identified primary contacts for all student and early career professional divisions of the American Psychological Association. After institutional review board approval (#2016-0918) was given, the team contacted student and early career professional representatives of these divisions between November 2016 and May 2017. Recipients were invited to share the survey information and hyperlink to colleagues in their social networks who may also be interested in participating. Prior to beginning participation, all recipients received informed consent information regarding risks and benefits, as well as the voluntary and anonymous nature of the survey. Consent was provided by proceeding and completing the survey.

The open-ended questions used in the current investigation were included in a larger survey regarding the workplace experiences of women doctoral students and early career professionals in psychology. Three open-ended questions were used for this study: experiences of microaggressions (i.e.: "Describe one situation [or more] where you may have been subtly discriminated against because of aspects of your identity [such as race, gender, sexual orientation, age, mother-status, disability, religion, and/or any combination of these]"), emotions associated with such microaggressions (i.e.: "How did you feel after the event?"), and reactions to the microaggressions (i.e.:"How did you react in this situation?"). All questions used a short essay format, in which participants could respond to their desired length.

Coding and Interpretation

Microaggression Experiences

The research team members created a coding sheet of predetermined codes (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) that included definitions of each microaggression type (i.e., microinsult, microinvalidation, microassault, and environmental) informed by Sue's (2010) literature (see Appendix). The coding sheet also included examples of microaggressions from previous research studies (Barthelemy et al., 2016; Haque et al., 2018; Lewis et al., 2013; McCabe et al., 2013; Nadal et al., 2011; Young et al., 2015). This sheet was used to code responses to the question: "Describe one situation (or more) where you may have been subtly discriminated against because of aspects of your identity (such as race, gender, sexual orientation, age, mother-status, disability, religion, and/or any combination of these)."

Achieving consensus is an evolving process and moves beyond relying on statistical calculations alone (Syed & Nelson, 2015). To increase reliability, the current research team independently familiarized themselves with the data and coded responses for the four microaggression types, using the predetermined coding system (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). They used debate-and-defer methods for inconsistencies to reach a consensus on the data. In other words, a primary coder, with expertise in microaggression research, finalized all coding for this variable on the entire data set. This process was preferred to reliability statistic calculations. Fliess' kappa can be suitable for data coded by four raters, but as the number of categories increases, the statistic drops significantly (Landis & Koch, 1977). Additionally, during the debate and defer process, the team agreed to code responses with more than one theme when appropriate (e.g., long responses), and this would not have emerged from an interrater reliability statistic. Furthermore, interrater agreement in previous qualitative microaggression research was found to be either fair to moderate (Young et al., 2015), or not calculated at all (Barthelemy et al., 2016; Lewis et al., 2013; Nadal et al., 2015).

Open Coding for Emotions and Reactions

After reading all qualitative responses to the question, "How did you feel after the event," each researcher independently identified themes for emotions that emerged from the data. That process was repeated a final time to identify themes for reactions (i.e., responses to "How did you react in this situation?"). The researchers conferred

TABLE 2, CONTINUED.

Participant Racial and Ethnic Background

Race/Ethnicity	Frequency (*n*)
Black European African	1
Black/African American	1
Black/Caribbean American	1
Caucasian	57
Chinese and Japanese	1
European American	2
Filipino	1
Hispanic	3
Hispanic, Caucasian	1
Hispanic/Latina	1
Hispanic/Mexican	1
Indian-American	1
Jewish	1
Korean	1
Latina	1
Latina (specified: Mexican)	5
Latina/Asian	1
Latino	1
Mexican American	1
Mexican American and White	1
Middle Eastern	1
Mixed race - European/South Asian	1
Native American/White	1
South Asian	3
South Asian (specified: Indian)	1
White	118
White (Non Hispanic)	9
White (Non Latino)	1
White American	2
White and Indian-Asian	1
White, American Indian	1
White/Ashkenazi Jewish	1
White/Caucasian	3
White/European American	5
White/Jewish	2
White/Middle Eastern	1
White/Norwegian+Euro-mix	1

to discuss their lists of themes for each variable. Original wording was retained and used to name each theme, which was integrated into two lists after arriving at a consensus. Using the coding sheet, comprised of the 11 categories of emotions, and another with the seven types of reactions, each researcher independently coded the responses for a second time. Following this method of coding, the team met again to confirm the suitability of the themes. Researchers agreed to allow responses to be coded across categories/types and primary coders, each with a background in counseling, finalized coding for the emotions and reaction variables.

Results

Microaggression Experiences

A total of 282 unique microaggressions were described by 261 participants (see Table 4). Of those, microinsults were the most prevalent type, described by 69.3% of women in the sample. Microinsults included responses such as, "[I] was told by my professor that he was 'injecting me with empowerment' after I expressed that I felt unsure of myself in a new role." Another participant described the following situation around her sexual orientation: "When planning on being authentically me at the office, there were some who wanted to have a committee meeting, without consulting me, to give their input about how I should come out and present myself in the office." Other such instances included identities such as motherhood: "A faculty mentor used my motherhood status as a scapegoat for unfinished work (e.g., papers were not written/submitted) when in fact they have been holding up projects for months." Another woman stated that others "made assumptions about future goals, such as having children/trying to get pregnant. For example, 'You must be thinking about having children soon.' " Examples about race included, "There are very few Asian American women in my place of work, and I have been mistaken for another person numerous times (even though she actually no longer works in the department)." Concerning gender, one woman stated, "I am not allowed to use my male client's first names or shake their hands while other male staff can."

TABLE 3

Participant Work Setting

Workplace setting	Frequency (*n*)
Academic—counseling	**14**
Academic—hybrid (four-year liberal arts college)	1
Academic—research and teaching	3
Academic—researcher	**7**
Academic—teacher, supervisor, administrator, researcher	1
Academic—teaching	**21**
Academic medical center/children's hospital	1
Clinical—academic medical center	2
Clinical—community agency	1
Clinical—government	**18**
Clinical—private	**13**
Clinical—public	**28**
College counseling and private practice	1
Government—clinical researcher	2
Not employed	1
Post-doc school of medicine	1
Post-doc with academic/research and clinical/medical school obligations	1
Researcher/psychometrician in testing department at textbook company	1

Note. Bold = choices, nonbold = other (specified) category

Microinvalidations were reported by 35.2% of women and included responses such as:

> A gay male colleague misunderstood my request not to be included in addressing female people as "ladies" as a feminist complaint about the use of the word ladies. Despite me correcting him, he continued to bring up that I "don't like the term ladies" rather than what I had explained that this just doesn't fit for me—I don't identify as a "lady".

One participant stated:

> I expressed that I was dealing with a personal stressor impacting my job of having car trouble, which has a very large impact on my life due to my socioeconomic status. My supervisor, who is of a higher SES, dismissed my problem as insignificant, stating something along the lines of, "Well that's nothing..."

Another participant described:

> I have chronic pain in my legs, and I will often shake them in order to reduce the discomfort. This is often interpreted as anxiety in my therapeutic work and pointed out as indicating something negative in my work or affect that I am not able to handle appropriately.

One participant reported:

> While in graduate school I told a professor I would have to miss a class twice in a semester due to a religious holiday. He basically told me that I had to make a decision between committing to the class or missing [class] based on my religion.

Microassaults were reported by 9.2% of participants in the sample. One woman described her experience by stating:

> I had a clinical supervisor find out that I identify as an atheist and he had a very strong, negative reaction...and would sometimes text my cell phone on random occasions. An example of this was a (seemingly) joking text around Easter: “Happy Easter, oh wait, you’re a heathen!”

Another participant shared:

> The next day after the 2016 Presidential Election, I had a coworker scream to my face “Trump 2016.” I am the only person of color in my office. Nobody asked if I was okay and nobody said anything to the White man who screamed that to my face.

One participant noted:

> One of my female professors in my academic program was openly hostile in her interactions with me, even during class discussions. This treatment was so evident, my classmates noticed, and it became an on-going “joke” among all of us in my cohort.

Environmental microaggressions were described by 6.9% of the participants in this sample. This included situations such as being, “excluded from the group/social activities that are planned at times or in venues that prevent me from attending (e.g., during religious holidays/Sabbath, revolving exclusively around alcohol) without any efforts to schedule at other mutually acceptable times.” Another participant shared, “Our department is made up of older, White men who are mentoring younger, ethnically diverse women. While attention to diversity is a stated goal of my program, I believe there are many unaddressed underlying assumptions and biases.” One participant simply stated there to be, “massive gender-based salary discrepancies.” Lastly, 3.4% of women reported not having any experiences of microaggression.

Emotions Related to Microaggressions

Eleven themes were identified among 257 women when asked how they felt following a

TABLE 4

Types of Microaggressions Reported

Type	*n* (% of women)	Definition	Participant Responses
Microinsult	206 (69.3)	Behaviors and/or statements conveying rudeness, insensitivity, or are demeaning to a person’s identity	“Faculty have asked if I need help with difficult students because I may be more likely to be taken advantage of as a small female instructor.” “Boss made a joke that implied I should not get pregnant while working for him.” “I was asked to attend a [presentation] in which women were told they needed to apply for more awards and this is why more men are getting awards in our graduate school.” “On my internship I was the only intern of color. It was assumed by the director of the clinic that I spoke Spanish despite the fact that I do not.” “[I was] told by a colleague he didn't understand why a gay pride flag was needed.”
Microinvalidation	85 (35.2)	Verbal comments and/or behaviors that exclude, negate, or nullify a person’s experiences or reality	“Not sure if this counts…[I] was talking about a time where someone tried to inappropriately touch me and was asked some pretty insensitive questions about it. Most of the topic was related to Trump's comments about ‘grabbing women by the pussy’ ...as someone who has had this happen to her, it's infuriating when these comments were made light of or brushed off as guy-talk.” “I have been asked if I got pregnant on purpose and why I would choose to get pregnant in graduate school by a peer…” “I am chair of a subcommittee with two senior male colleagues. They have repeatedly made decisions without me and failed to respond to my email communications.”
Microassault	67 (9.2)	Explicit verbal and/or nonverbal attacks that hurt, such as avoidance, name calling	“I was given a review after my first year and it leaned heavily negative. My children were identified as ‘liabilities,’ and I was accused of ‘barely passing,’ then told my humor is appreciated. At the end of the review, it stated that it was a pleasure to have me in the program.” “I used to have a boss who would give my male colleague credit for my work.” “When I first found out I was pregnant and had to tell our academic dean, he made some remark about how ‘most faculty plan ahead for pregnancy and bank classes.’”
Environmental microaggression	13 (6.9)	Any of the three types above, except manifested in systems or structures	“Expectations to have material and financial resources for dress codes, supplies, electronics, etc. Expectations to dress/look a certain way or have nicer clothing/handbags as a woman.” “Nothing overt, just generally seeing most major roles (e.g., chair) being held by men.” “Assuming everyone is available to participate in work-related activities in the evening.”

microaggressive experience. The emotions reported were labeled using direct quotes from participants, and alongside these themes are the responses coded by the research team as belonging to each said category. The most common theme pertained to "anger and frustration" (47%), which included descriptions of feeling "pissed," "irritated," "bothered," "annoyed," "agitated," and "disgruntled." "Disappointment and sadness" (42%) was the second theme; participants who endorsed this theme reported feeling "hurt," "discouraged," "disheartened," and "hopeless."

The next five themes were endorsed by approximately 1 in 10 participants. "Disrespected and excluded" (12%) included feelings of being "othered," "alienated," or "tokenized." "Discomfort or fear" were endorsed by 12% of participants, who used words ranging from "uncomfortable" and "weird" to "anxious" and "horrified." "Powerless" (11%) was the fifth theme, and included responses such as "invisible," "overlooked," "dismissed," and "silenced." Several respondents also endorsed feelings of "empowerment" (11%), which were typically associated with interactions following the microaggression. Such feelings included "vindication," "gratitude," "happiness," "validation," "support," and "determination." Feelings of "distrust and uncertainty" were reported by 10% of participants, who often noted feelings of "apprehension," "hesitant" to work with the microaggressors in the future, or changes in motivation. Less common themes included "indifference" (7%; "I am used to this feeling"), "embarrassment" (6%; "humiliated," "ashamed"), "shock" (4%; "stunned" and "surprised"), and "exhaustion" (2%; "tired" and "exasperated").

TABLE 5

Themes for Reactions to Microaggressions

Reaction Theme	*n* (% of women)	Examples	Participant Responses
Silenced	109 (42.9)	Ignored, remain silent, do nothing, brush it off, shut down, demoralized, swallowing pride	"I didn't say anything, although in hindsight, I wish I had." "After consultation with my woman supervisor, we decided the best thing for me to do was to get through the semester with the least amount of distress as possible. This meant keeping quiet about things that bothered me that I normally would bring up in supervision. And this is because speaking up did not prove to be an effective problem-solving strategy." "Not much that can be done as it is coming from leadership and I'd like to keep my job. They do not see that they are doing this or acknowledge it could be possible."
Addressed	91 (35.8)	Reported to supervisor or Human Resources	"Spoke with my disability director and replied professionally to the professor. I explained and reiterated in my responses that I am a responsible student who does not take advantage of the system, and makes efforts to communicate when I have issues." "I confidentially spoke with a Human Resources representative to ask how I might be able to protect myself should the comments turn to actions that imperiled my job contract." "I told the white man: 'I am not saying that you cannot say that, but I am going to ask you to not say it around me. It is very triggering for me.' The white man apologized and said 'it was a joke.' NO. I refuse to stay silent."
Emotions	63 (24.8)	Anger, hurt, ashamed, guilty	"I was hurt and felt ashamed of not only coming out, but also my sexual orientation in general." "I was devastated." "It made me extremely sad and angry on an emotional level."
Social support	33 (12.9)	Seek support from personal or professional network	"Although these events may have made me angry or discouraged, typically I would seek out other female doctoral students to vent." "As this is hard to effectively observe and describe without belittling a male colleague, I have not addressed this in professional settings, rather I have discussed this privately with other female professionals." "I stayed connected with my training director, who has been wonderfully supportive during this process, and she helped me navigate the office politics."
Conformed	27 (10.6)	Complied, smiled, changed behavior to meet demands	"I always just change my behavior so it fits the needs of the men." "Took out more loans to afford wardrobe." "I was forced to swallow my pride and apologize for the situation (even though I felt that I had done nothing wrong) and promise that I would never act that way in the future."
Passive response	24 (9.4)	Feigned appreciation, laughed it off, used humor, passive aggression	"I feigned appreciation that she had thought of my 'different needs.'" "I laughed because I don't like to make other people feel uncomfortable; however, internally my blood was boiling." "I usually respond passive-aggressively when these situations occur with supervisors. I often do not respond verbally, but do give facial expressions and other nonverbal cues to show my distaste."
Not Applicable	9 (3.5)		

Reactions to Microaggressions

A total of 254 women reported their reactions to the microaggressions (see Table 5). The most commonly identified reaction, or theme analyzed, to microaggressions was being "silenced," disclosed by 42.9% of participants, which included women who said they ignored the microaggression, brushed it off, or remained silent. More than one-third of participants (35.8%) reported that they "addressed" the microaggression, whether formally (e.g., Human Resources, HR) or with the microaggressor directly. The third theme pertained to "emotions," which were reported by 24.8% of participants. Such emotions included anger, hurt, shame, and guilt.

In addition to the themes noted above, 12.9% of participants processed the interaction with others to obtain "social support" from peers or supervisors. Some participants (10.6%) reported that they "conformed" their behavior to meet demands, whereas 9.4% indicated that they provided a "passive" response such as feigned appreciation, passive-aggression, or a humorous comment. Lastly, 3.5% of women noted "not applicable" reactions due to self-report of not having experienced microaggressions.

Discussion

The purpose of this investigation was to highlight the microaggressive experiences of women emerging in professional psychology, specifically doctoral students and early career professionals, and call for collective action from within the discipline. Women endorsed experiencing various types of microaggressions based on their gender identity, race, ethnicity, religion, motherhood status, sexual orientation, and ability status. More than two-thirds of participants described experiences of microinsults, typically appearing as rude and/or insensitive comments regarding cultural and/or gender identity. The high frequency of insults may speak to how stereotypes about some groups of people are embedded or normalized. For example, in previous research, LGBTQ+ based microaggressions were perceived far less frequently among school psychologists than among students, even when defined and operationalized identically in the same setting (McCabe et al., 2013). The ubiquity of heteronormative attitudes, as well as anti-Muslim attitudes and gender stereotypes among psychologists, has been documented. Haque and colleagues (2018) noted the pervasiveness of Muslim stereotypes; when clinicians interact with Muslim clients, they can assume monolithic experiences and come across as rude, insensitive, and invalidating. Like reports of women being ignored in other postgraduate programs and disciplines (Barthelemy et al., 2016), one-third of women in the present study described similar experiences of microinvalidation in the form of being overlooked.

Nearly half of the women (47%) in the study reported frustration, irritation, annoyance, and anger in the face of microaggressive experiences. As Gilligan (1982) noted, anger is both personal and political, and is an appropriate reaction with valid feelings in response to these situations. Anger is an adaptive response in which participants recognize the context of the situation. Feelings of disappointment, hurt, sadness, discouragement, and defeat were also frequently reported by participants. These emotions may signify disappointment in the organization and the environment; participants likely know things should be different (e.g., stigma consciousness) and expect more within the field that coined microaggressions.

When asked how women reacted to their experiences of microaggressions, 43% of women indicated that they remained silent. This response may be adaptive in situations with power differentials, particularly for women at the beginning of their professional development journey. Women in this study may have engaged in self-policing (Corbin et al., 2018), perhaps in part due to gender role expectations or in avoiding a negative stereotype regarding their cultural identity. Their silence in these situations may also reflect energy conservation for those in graduate school or early stages of their career, as one woman reported "after consultation with my woman supervisor, we decided the best thing for me to do was to get through the semester with the least amount of distress as possible." Silence may have also been unintentional and an automatic response to the power differentials at play, as some women expressed regret after remaining silent: "I didn't say anything, although in hindsight, I wish I had."

One-third of women spoke up, the majority of which (80.4%) directly confronted the microaggressor, while the remainder (19.6%) spoke to allies, such as a supervisor or an HR representative. Some women described nuanced behaviors dependent on the relationship that they had with the microaggressor. As one participant stated, "I usually respond passive-aggressively when these situations occur with supervisors…When similar situations occur with peers, I will often draw attention to the situation in the most respectful way possible." Many noted that they took steps to be "polite" or "gentle" while taking on the burden of educating supervisors, faculty, or peers, while others expressed not knowing how or not feeling safe enough to address it. Women also sought support from other women and peers (12.9%) who were able to understand or validate their experiences. This finding echoes the women from research by Lewis et al. (2013), who emphasized the importance of coping with social networks and having a life outside of school.

Strengths and Limitations

Strengths

Strengths and limitations should be taken into consideration before framing findings within the larger body of literature. The research team was comprised of four women: a doctoral student and three early career professionals, with expertise in health, social, counseling, and sport psychology, as well as representation within academic and practitioner work environments. Identities represented within the research team included: Black, woman, mother, LGBTQ+, immigrant, Latina, and White. This well-rounded representation allowed for considerations from numerous viewpoints to inform the research process.

The current study was conceptualized with an intersectional feminist lens and guided by the Feminist Code of Ethics (Rave & Larsen, 1995), APA Multicultural Guidelines (2017), and feminist qualitative methods. An active stance against oppression (Rave & Larsen, 1995) was combined with methods that contextualized experiences (APA, 2017) and kept marginalization at the center of analysis (hooks, 2000). The research team challenged the conditions of a discipline that values social justice and interpreted individual responses as sociopolitical revelations. The methods process was more dynamic than it was linear, which served as a strength to the study; rather than taking a subsample of the qualitative data, as some may suggest, all data was used in order to have all voices represented.

Another strength included the number of participants gathered and the representation across disciplines. This sample and our findings illuminate the regularity that microaggressions occur within a field that champions diversity and inclusion. The sample is also representative of the field, thus highlighting not only the generalizability of findings, but also a greater systemic issue regarding diversity within.

Limitations

Even our best attempts of recognizing intersectionality revealed our privileges and biases. We failed to invite participants to address their socioeconomic status; however, some participants did provide such examples within their responses. As Brim (2018) noted, the studies that formulate a particular theory are often from institutions with ample material and structural resources, but are inadequate in terms of serving underrepresented students. Although graduate students share the privilege of being in higher education, their variability in resources as well as institutional tier were not captured.

Implications for Change

A person's role within an organizational hierarchy contributes to their appraisal of a situation as microaggressive. It also shapes their response and allocation of resources required to cope and to thrive (Hobfoll, 1989; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Although cognitive capital is needed to convert emotions and responses into larger social change, its availability, or lack thereof, reflects the deficits of a system, rather than an individual. It is up to each person to determine which response is best for them at any given time. For example, it could be explained that women in our study sought validation from others because microaggressions work to invalidate an individual. It could also be explained that women were silent in the face of microaggressions in an environment lacking representation.

As researchers, it was paramount for the team to interpret the data within the context of empowerment. The research team thoughtfully consulted previous research to avoid reinforcing the narrative that legitimate emotions and dissonance are deficits. In keeping with this approach, data about women's reactions were interpreted as resilient and strategic resource conservation. By reframing what are often experienced as negative emotions, individuals can mitigate their distress and frustration within a work environment (Wolf et al., 2016). Attributes like passion, wanting to change the status-quo, and being socially conscious are all desirable, but are often accompanied by negative emotions.

Although representation of marginalized groups among faculty and supervisors within psychology graduate education has yet to reach parity, creating supportive and inclusive learning and working environments remains critical for assuring progress as a discipline. Lack of representation within a field, combined with stigma consciousness, reduces feelings of trust and belonging, particularly for Black women (Pietri et al., 2018); but increased representation and allyship help to resolve those issues. Stigma consciousness among students and faculty is a tool that can work to identify, address, and potentially decrease microaggressions. Although it remains unclear whether an organization's increased consciousness around discrimination is protective of microaggressions (Proctor et al., 2017), we do know that elements of academia produce its own type of hierarchical microaggressions (Lewis et al., 2013). We encourage researchers to use our findings to test social psychology theories pertaining to prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination to understand the nuances of microaggressions.

Transtheoretical model theorists (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1982) noted that, as a person or organization changes, self-efficacy increases. Much like stigma consciousness, self-efficacy is a tool for initiating change and was evident in our data, specifically within the reactions to microaggression. Many women confronted their microaggressor, while others reported it; both suggest an efficacious approach, especially given hierarchical and resource restraints presented to graduate students and early career professionals. Responses indicated processes of both self-evaluation and environmental re-evaluation, which relate to a readiness for change (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1982). As one participant stated:

> I do not believe that my colleagues have pursued the appropriate training to address matters of diversity in a thoughtful, articulate, or productive manner. I feel alone and unsupported in my advocacy efforts. I am in the process of searching for a new job.

Another expressed, “after processing this, I now feel more empowered to speak up and against people who want to invalidate my identity. I simply won’t put up with that anymore.” By connecting these responses to the transtheoretical model, researchers can articulate the adaptive nature of women’s responses as readiness for change.

Future Directions for Psychology

Much like the women in the research of Corbin and colleagues (2018), women in the present study engaged with the culturally constructed stereotype of a woman when reacting to a microaggression, one that has historically been used to control. For many women in our study, silence, politeness, and being gentle were reactions to microaggression. Anger and frustration arose but were not always expressed (i.e., self-policing). Many responses were affiliative, social, and demonstrated the pursuit of allyship, much like the women in the research of Lewis and colleagues (2013). Some women pursued justice using the resources available to them, as suggested in the microaggression literature (Sue, 2019); whereas others were regretful for their silence and maintenance of the very stereotypes they were trying to dismantle (Corbin et al., 2018).

Perhaps the ultimate service to our discipline is being performed by women of color serving as both role models and allies, without guidance or compensation. These women have created supportive networks using their most precious resource: themselves (Lewis et al., 2013). To ask that they also lead the charge on investigating “how to cope” is another instance that warrants anger within an organizational culture that discourages its expression. Inclusion and diversity dialogue needs to prevent racial battle fatigue and include those at the top of the hierarchy (i.e., faculty members, supervisors) as they are more underrepresented at their level than are graduate students. But when a structure maintains barriers for women and people of color, it is discouraging and its dismantlement is exhausting (Smith et al., 2006).

Organizational change must move beyond knowledge acquisition, and toward the incorporation of skills. Those in power need to give more than “lip service” as agents of social justice (Koch et al., 2018). Cultural humility incorporates a lifelong commitment to self-evaluation and critique and incorporates an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented, rather than self-focused (Hook et al., 2013; Tervalon & Murray-García, 1998). Ahmed (2012) expressed, “[there is a] gap between symbolic commitments to diversity and the experience of those who embody diversity” (p. 256). In other words, to embed equity within an institution, we must place it within the organizational flow. Individuals need to view their profession as welcoming and responsive to their needs (Proctor et al., 2017). The future of psychology calls for the cultural adoption and complete support of authentic emotional expression in the education and work settings of emerging psychologists.

Conclusion

Ultimately, this research affirms the microaggressive experiences of women emerging in psychology and brings to light their emotions and reactions: an area of research that has been underexplored yet is rich with possibility. Within the very profession that coined microaggressions, women are navigating organizational hierarchies and receive training that is uninformed by their personal experiences or adequate representation. Our research challenges organizational structures within psychology to closely examine whether graduate students and early career professionals feel embraced by the field. Psychology has lagged in the production of self-reflective research and dialogue, omitting the bidirectional nature of microaggressions that are experienced and perpetuated. These instances cannot be ignored, and solutions require organizational efforts that support the autonomy and emotional expression of its members. Humility needs to be continuously emphasized and practiced within the education, training, and work environments of psychologists.

References

Ahmed, S. (2012). *On being included: Racism and diversity in institutional life.* https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822395324

Almond, A. L. (2017). What are you? Understanding and coping with microaggression. In J. Chrisler & C. Golden (Eds.), *Lectures on the psychology of women* (5th ed.). Waveland Press.

American Psychological Association. (2017). *Multicultural guidelines: An ecological approach to context, identity, and intersectionality*. http://www.apa.org/about/policy/multicultural-guidelines.pdf

American Psychological Association. (2019). *Psychology master's and doctoral degrees awarded by broad field, subfield, institution type and state (2008–2017): Findings from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System.* https://www.apa.org/workforce/publications/2017-postsecondary-data

American Psychological Association. (n.d.a). Former APA presidents. *Governance.* https://www.apa.org/about/governance/president/former-presidents

American Psychological Association. (n.d.b). *Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs.* https://www.apa.org/pi/oema/about

American Psychological Association. (n.d.c). *Programs & projects.* Women's Programs Office. https://www.apa.org/pi/women/programs/index

American Psychological Association, Committee on Women in Psychology. (2017). *The changing gender composition of psychology: Update and expansion of the 1995 task force report*. http://www.apa.org/women/programs/gender-composition/index.aspx

Barthelemy, R., McCormick, M., & Henderson, C. (2016). Gender discrimination in physics and astronomy: Graduate student experiences of sexism and gender microaggressions. *Physical Review Physics Education Research*, *12*(2), 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1103/PhysRevPhysEducRes.12.020119

Braun, V., Victoria, C., Hayfield, N., & Terry, G. (2018). Thematic analysis. In P. Liamputtong (Ed.), *Handbook of research methods in health and social sciences* (pp. 843–860). Springer.

Brim, M. (2018). Poor queer studies: Class, race, and the field. *Journal of Homosexuality, 67*(3), 398–416. https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2018.1534410

Civil Rights Act of 1964 § 7, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq (1964).

Clance, P. R., & Imes, S. A. (1978). The imposter phenomenon in high achieving women: Dynamics and therapeutic intervention. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research & Practice*, *15*(3), 241–247. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0086006

Crenshaw, K. (2018). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black feminist critique of anti-discrimination doctrine, feminist theory and anti-racist politics. In K. Bartlett (Ed.), *Feminist legal theory: Readings in law and gender* (pp. 57–80). Taylor and Francis.

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches.* Sage.

Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development.* Harvard University Press.

Harnois, C. E. (2012). *Feminist measures in survey research*. Sage Publications.

Haque, A., Tubbs, C. Y., Kahumoku-Fessler, E. P., & Brown, M. D. (2018). Microaggressions and Islamophobia: Experiences of Muslims across the United States and clinical implications. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 45*(1), 76–91. https://doi.org/10.1111/jmft.12339.

Hendriksen, E. (2017). *How to build your resilience.* https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/how-be-yourself/201709/how-build-your-resilience

Hobfoll, S. E. (1989). Conservation of resources: A new attempt at conceptualizing stress. *American Psychologist, 44*(3), 513–524. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.44.3.513

Hook, J. N., Davis, D. E., Owen, J., Worthington, E. L., Jr., & Utsey, S. O. (2013). Cultural humility: Measuring openness to culturally diverse clients. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 60*(3), 353–366. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0032595

hooks, b. (2000). *Feminist theory: From margin to center*. Pluto Press.

Koch, J. M., Procopio, S. J., Knutson, D., Loche, R. W. III, Jayne, A., Jayne, C., & Loche, L. (2018). Counseling psychology students' perceptions of faculty multicultural competence. *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology, 4*(3), 140–150. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/stl0000116

Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, appraisal, and coping.* Springer.

Lewis, J. A., Mendenhall, R., Harwood, S. A., & Huntt, M. B. (2013). Coping with gendered racial microaggressions among Black women college students. *Journal of African American Studies*, *17*(1), 51–73. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12111-012-9219-0

McCabe, P., Dragowski, E., & Rubinson, F. (2013). What is homophobic bias anyway? Defining and recognizing microaggressions and harassment of LGBTQ youth. *Journal of School Violence, 12*(1), 7–26. https://doi.org/10.1080/15388220.2012.731664

Nadal, K. L., Davidoff, K. C., Davis, L. S., Wong, Y., Marshall, D., & McKenzie, V. (2015). A qualitative approach to intersectional microaggressions: Understanding influences of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and religion. *Qualitative Psychology, 2*(2), 147–163. https://doi.org/10.1037/qup0000026

Nadal, K. L., Wong, Y., Griffin, K., Sriken, J., Vargas, V., Wideman, M., & Kolawole, A. (2011). Microaggressions and the multiracial experience. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 1*(7), 36–44. http://www.ijhssnet.com/journal/index/192

Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation. (2015). *Commission on Accreditation 2015 annual report online summary data: Doctoral programs.* American Psychological Association. http://www.apa.org/ed/accreditation/about/research/2015-doctoral-summary.pdf

Pierce, C. (1970). Offensive mechanisms. In F. Barbour (Ed.), *The Black seventies* (pp. 265–282). Porter Sargent.

Pietri, E., Johnson, I., & Ozgumus, E. (2018). One size may not fit all: Exploring how the intersection of race and gender and stigma consciousness predict effective identity-safe cues for Black women. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 74*, 291–306. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2017.06.021

Prochaska, J. O., & DiClemente, C. C. (1982). Transtheoretical therapy: Toward a more integrative model of change. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research & Practice*, *19*(3), 276–288. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0088437

Proctor, S. L., & Truscott, S. D. (2012). Reasons for African American student attrition from school psychology programs. *Journal of School Psychology, 50,* 655–679. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2012.06.002

Proctor, S. L., Kyle, J., Fefer, K., & Lau, Q. C. (2017). Examining racial microaggressions, race/ ethnicity, gender, and bilingual status with school psychology students: The role of intersectionality. *Contemporary School Psychology, 22*(3), 355–368. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s40688-017-0156-8

Rave, E. J., & Larsen, C. C. (Eds.). (1995). Feminist therapy code of ethics. *Ethical decision making in therapy: Feminist perspectives.* (pp. 38–41). Guilford Press.

Scarborough, E., & Furumoto, L. (1987). *Untold lives: The first generation of American women psychologists.* Columbia University Press.

Sue, D. W. (2010). *Microaggressions in everyday life: Race, gender, and sexual orientation.* John Wiley & Sons.

Sue, D. W., Alsaidi, S., Awad, M. N., Glaeser, E., Calle, C. Z., & Mendez, N. (2019). Disarming racial microaggressions: Microintervention strategies for targets, White allies, and bystanders. *American Psychologist, 74*(1), 128–142. https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000296

Sue, D. W., Capodilupo, C. M., Torino, G. C., Bucceri, J. M., Holder, A. M. B., Nadal, K. L., & Esquilin, M. (2007). Racial microaggressions in everyday life: Implications for clinical practice. *American Psychologist, 62*(4), 271–286. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.62.4.271

Sue, D.W., & Sue, D. (2008). *Counseling the culturally diverse: Theory and practice* (5th ed.). John Wiley & Sons.

Tervalon, M., & Murray-García, J. (1998). Cultural humility versus cultural competence: A critical distinction in defining physician training outcomes in multicultural education. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved, 9*(2), 117–125. https://doi.org/10.1353/hpu.2010.0233

Wolf, E. B., Lee, J. J., Sah, S., & Brooks, A. W. (2016). Managing perceptions of distress at work: Reframing emotion as passion. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 137,* 1–12. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2016.07.003

Young, K., Anderson, M., & Stewart, S. (2015). Hierarchical microaggressions in higher education. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 8*(1), 61–71. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0038464

Author Note. Amanda L. Almond https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2928-3916

Erin E. Ayala https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6640-2131

Marisa M. Moore https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6940-4885

Mariya D. Mirzoyan https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9356-1322

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Amanda L. Almond, Department of Social Sciences, CUNY, New York City College of Technology, 300 Jay St., Namm 604, Brooklyn, NY, 11201. Email: AAlmond@citytech.cuny.edu

APPENDIX

Microinsults: *Behaviors and/or statements conveying rudeness, insensitivity, or demeaning to a person's identity. Represent subtle snubs, frequently unknown to the perpetrator, but clearly convey a hidden insulting message to the recipient.*

- "What are you?" "You speak well/Your English is good."
- "Older people can't use cell phones."
- "Doesn't your hijab bother you in the summer when it's hot?"
- Ignoring/refusing requests for pronoun use with transperson "He's a he not a she."
- Showing signs of discomfort by avoiding eye contact, handshakes, or warm/open body language for one group of people, but not for others. Being less receptive or dismissive to comments expressed by members of minority groups.

Microassaults: *Explicit verbal and/or non-verbal attacks that hurt, such as avoidance, name calling, or purposeful discriminatory actions. Most likely to be conscious and deliberate.*

- "Those people are all terrorists."
- Terms like "grumpy, old geezer, kiddo, or baby."
- Using phrases like "dyke or faggot."
- "Go back to your country."
- Excluding people from group functions or displaying clear preference for some people while ignoring/avoiding others (e.g., serving others first, responding to questions for one group but not for an other).

Microinvalidations: *Verbal comments and/or behaviors that exclude, negate, or nullify a person's experiences or reality.*

- Denial of personal biases (transphobia, sexism).
- "Racism is a thing of the past."
- "We are all human beings."
- "Don't be so oversensitive" or "Don't take it so personally."
- "Mothering/parenting doesn't have to take away from your career/work."
- "Police are just doing their jobs and people are being too sensitive about brutality."

Environmental Microaggressions: *Any of the three types above, except manifested in systems or structures.*

Ways in which an organization, college, institution, or workplace is set-up that allows communicates messages of difference. Think of microaggressions or complaints about processes and systems that impact different identity groups. (e.g., NOT having lactation room/designated area for nursing mothers.)

ADVERTISEMENT

ADVANCE YOUR CAREER WITH PSYCHOPHARMACOLOGY

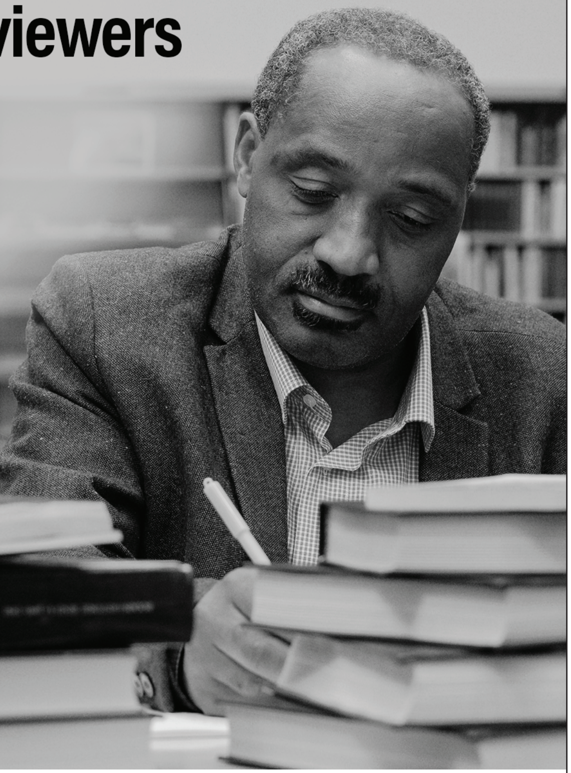
Expand Patient Care with Wise Use of Medications

Did you know that a degree in clinical psychopharmacology can expand your practice, give you more control over patient care, and increase your career options? Find out how this fully online program will prepare you to prescribe psychotropic medications safely and effectively by visiting us at:

info.alliant.edu/clinical-psychopharmacology

Alliant International University
California School
of Professional Psychology

**Prescriptive authority varies from state to state.*



Call for Doctoral-Level Reviewers

Psi Chi Journal is seeking reviewers interesting in providing constructive feedback on our authors' original empirical research. To increase the journal's scope and relevance, diverse people of varied racial, ethnic, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious, and social class backgrounds are welcomed. If you have a doctoral degree in psychology or a related field, please join us.

TO SUPPORT OUR EXCEPTIONAL REVIEWERS

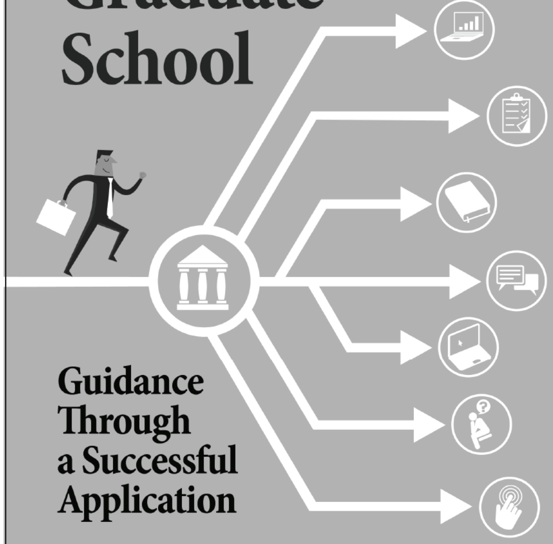
- Our online portal allows you to submit specific subject areas that you feel comfortable with reviewing.
- At any time, you can set unavailability dates so that we will know when not to contact you.
- With each request to review, you will receive basic instructions and a template review form, which you can use in order to save you time during your review.

TO BECOME A REVIEWER, EMAIL

steve.rouse@psichi.org

PSI CHI THE INTERNATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY IN PSYCHOLOGY

An Eye on Graduate School



Guidance Through a Successful Application

Kindle Edition Available Now!

Psi Chi's digital anthology brings together our very best advice about applying to graduate school—advice accumulated from 25+ experts in over 20+ years of *Eye on Psi Chi* magazine issues.

In nineteen chapters, this eBook will help you navigate the seven primary steps that are vital to your acceptance at the graduate program of your choice.

- Preparing for and Selecting a Graduate Program
- The Application Process
- Preparing for the GRE
- Soliciting Letters of Recommendation
- Writing the Personal Statement
- Interviewing
- Choosing a Program and Succeeding in Graduate School

Download Today at Store.PsiChi.org

Log in as a Psi Chi Member to recieve a discount!

PSI CHI THE INTERNATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY IN PSYCHOLOGY

Publish Your Research in *Psi Chi Journal*

Undergraduate, graduate, and faculty submissions are welcome year round. Only one author (either first author or coauthor) is required to be a Psi Chi member. All submissions are free. Reasons to submit include

- a unique, doctoral-level, peer-review process
- indexing in PsycINFO, EBSCO, and Crossref databases
- free access of all articles at psichi.org
- our efficient online submissions portal

View Submission Guidelines and submit your research at *www.psichi.org/?page=JN_Submissions*

Become a Journal Reviewer

Doctoral-level faculty in psychology and related fields who are passionate about educating others on conducting and reporting quality empirical research are invited become reviewers for *Psi Chi Journal*. Our editorial team is uniquely dedicated to mentorship and promoting professional development of our authors—Please join us!

To become a reviewer, visit *www.psichi.org/page/JN_BecomeAReviewer*

Resources for Student Research

Looking for solid examples of student manuscripts and educational editorials about conducting psychological research? Download as many free articles to share in your classrooms as you would like.

Search past issues, or articles by subject area or author at *www.psichi.org/journal_past*

Add Our Journal to Your Library

Ask your librarian to store *Psi Chi Journal* issues in a database at your local institution. Librarians may also email to request notifications when new issues are released.

Contact *PsiChiJournal@psichi.org* for more information.

Register an account:
http://pcj.msubmit.net/cgi-bin/main.plex

PSI Ψ CHI