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Exploring Ways to Address Microaggressions to Promote Inclusion

Virtual Workshop

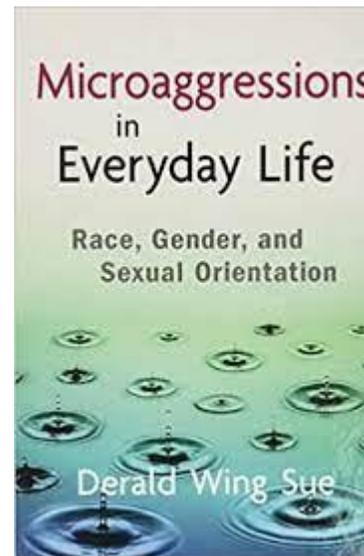
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Definition of Microaggressions

Racial microaggressions are subtle statements and behaviors that unconsciously communicate denigrating messages to people based on some aspect of their identity. (Nadal, 2011, Sue 2010).



Examples Microaggressions

Said to a Native American Nursing Student: “Why don’t you tell you classmates what the health issues are for Native Americans.”

Said to a Native American Nursing Student: “You want to be an ER nurse! No. I don’t think you are capable of that.”

Said to a Latino nursing student: “You are a credit to your race.”

Said to underrepresented Students: “You were only admitted to fulfill a diversity goal.”

Microaggressions and Nursing Students

1. UR nursing students would report higher frequency of microaggressions than White students.

➤ Yes, with Black students reporting highest rate.

2. We expected that higher frequency of microaggressions would be significantly associated with lesser satisfaction with nursing training.

➤ Yes, and UR students more so than White students.

3. Frequency of microaggressions would be significantly associated with higher scores on a depression screening.

➤ Yes, though no group differences.

Item	Microaggression	Associated hypotheses
Q1	People trivialize my ideas in the classroom	
Q2	People devalue my opinion on patient care	2, 3
Q3	My ideas in the classroom are met with hostility	
Q4*	People mistake me for someone else who shares an aspect of my identity	1
Q5	People imply that I was admitted to my nursing program for reasons other than academic merit	
Q6*	People are surprised by how well I speak English	1
Q7	In clinical settings or at my nursing program/school I am mistaken for auxiliary staff (custodian, interpreters, technicians, etc.)	
Q8*	People seem surprised by my intelligence	1, 3
Q9	I am made to feel unwelcome in a group	2
Q10*	People are cautious with their personal belongings around me	1, 3
Q11*	I am reluctant to ask questions because I fear I will be judged	1, 2, 3
Q12*	My ideas are ignored but other people are applauded when they say the same thing	1
Q13*	I feel socially isolated at my nursing program/school	1, 2, 3
Q14	Faculty discourage me from pursuing a nursing field I am interested in	2, 3
Q15	People assume I could be violent	3
Q16	I feel invisible in my nursing program/school	3

Second Theme: Impact of Microaggressions

Subtheme: Stress and Anxiety

“You’re performing and you’re always stressed, how are you going to learn? Yeah, that’s not the ideal way to learn. I’m a curious person. I enjoyed learning at one point, you know. But when you’re learning and you’re feeling like you’re already expected to fail that is not a good feeling.”

Second Theme: Impact of Microaggressions

Divesting in Discourse

Yes, it has had an impact on me academically. In the past if I had had questions, I would have just raised my hand. I wouldn't have thought twice about it and I would have sought out the answer. Now I think twice. In fact, every day before I go to school, I look at this thing I wrote for myself that says, "Please the teacher. Melt into the metal. Stay silent." I try to look at that and read that every day before I leave the house to remind myself to keep my head down and keep my mouth shut – not draw any attention to myself.

Learning Environment

The Microaggressions Triangle Model: A Humanistic Approach to Navigating Microaggressions in Health Professions Schools

Kupiri Ackerman-Barger, PhD, RN, and Negar Nicole Jacobs, PhD

Abstract

Microaggressions are types of interactions that create a cognitive load that can impede a health professions student's ability to perform well in their program. This paper discusses the Microaggressions Triangle Model, which is a framework for understanding

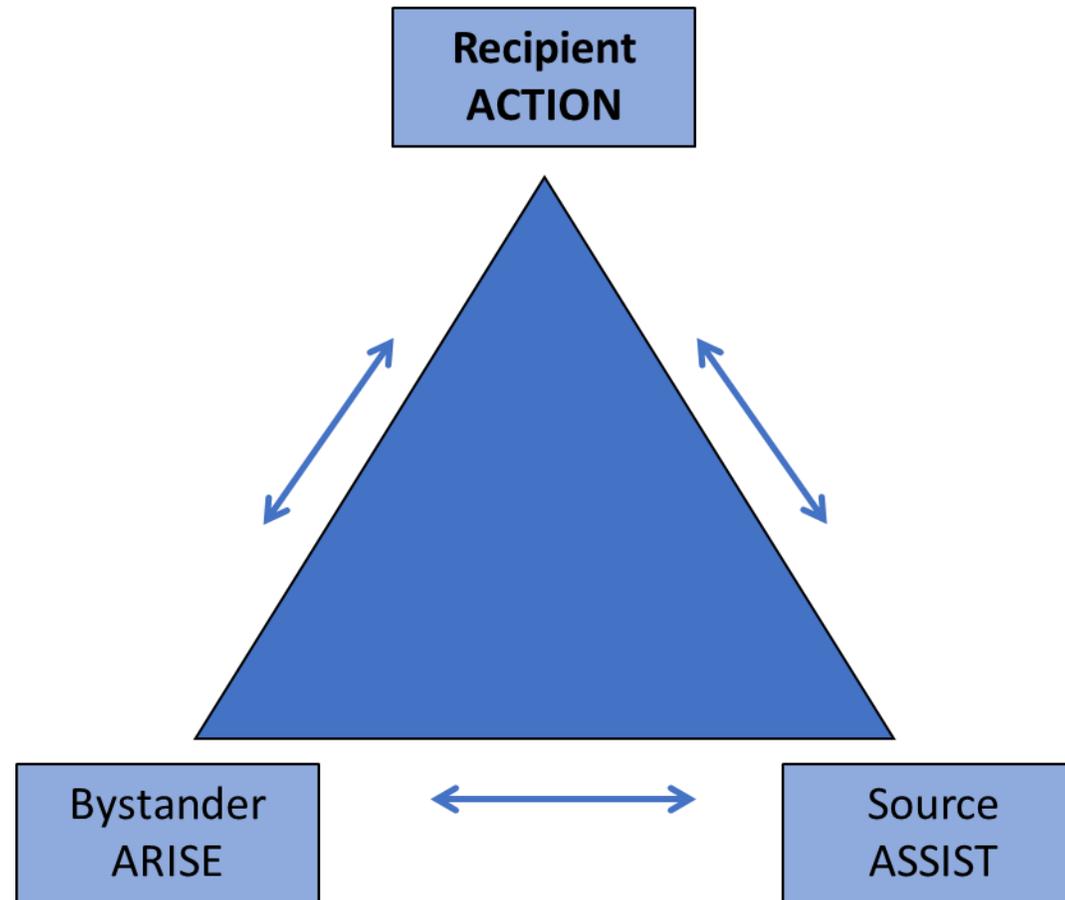
microaggressions from a human interaction standpoint. At each point in the model, the authors provide approaches designed to help recipients, sources, and bystanders construct responses that may allow for rebuilding. From a restorative justice standpoint,

rebuilding gives all people involved the opportunity to restore their reputations and repair relationships. Rebuilding is about individuals and communities acknowledging and learning from the interaction as a way to promote a climate of inclusion in their organization.

Downloaded from <http://jama.ama-assn.org/> on 01/11/2021

[Ackerman-Barger, K. & Jacobs, N.N. \(2020, Dec\). The microaggressions triangle model: A humanistic approach to navigating microaggression in health professions schools. *Academic Medicine \[Macy Foundation Supplement\]*.](#)

Microaggressions Triangle Model



[Ackerman-Barger, K. & Jacobs, N.N. \(2020, Dec\). The microaggressions triangle model: A humanistic approach to navigating microaggression in health professions schools. *Academic Medicine \[Macy Foundation Supplement\]*.](#)



Said to an underrepresented Student:

“I’ll bet it was easy for you to get admitted to the nursing program because of the diversity stuff. As a White student, I had to work hard to get here.”
were only admitted to fulfill a diversity goal.”

1. What was the microaggression and how might it impact the recipients?
2. What is the political, social and historical context of this microaggression?
3. What is behind this statement for the source. Why would they say that?

Bystanders-Responses **ARISE**

Awareness. A bystander could raise awareness of the situation “When you said, XXX, it seemed like you were saying YYY, is that what you meant to convey?”

Respond with empathy and avoidance of judgment. While it may be tempting to respond with the negative emotions that have been engendered by the interaction, approaching with empathy is critical because the goal is to rebuild community. Avoiding judgment means allowing others the grace to make mistakes, and to learn from their mistakes.

Inquiry. Approach the situation with curiosity and make inquiries. For example, “Can you explain your comment to me?” or “What did you mean by that?”

Statements that start with I. A bystander also can use “I” statements to talk about how the comment made them feel. For example: “I noticed...I felt...I have been thinking about.

Educate and engage. I know you didn’t intend to harm anyone, but I wanted to let you know...

Acknowledge your Bias. A way to avoid becoming the source of microaggressions is by familiarizing ourselves with and mitigating our unconscious bias.

Seek feedback. For example, “I noticed when we were talking about XXX and you became quiet. How was that interaction for you?”

Say you are sorry. Apologies can be difficult, because we often think of them as an admission of wrongdoing. An apology should be about recognizing someone else’s pain.

Impact, not intent. Whether your intention was to hurt another person or not, this is a great opportunity for you to learn about someone else’s experience. you could say: “Although it was not my intention to harm you, I see now how my ***[name the act]*** affected you and I am sorry.”

Say thank you. For example, “Thank you for the feedback. I appreciate you taking the time to help me grow as a person.”

Recipient- ACTION Approach

Ask a clarifying question. For example: “You seem surprised that...?”

Come from curiosity, not judgment. For example: “I want to better understand your surprise, can you explain it to me?”

Tell what you observed in a factual manner. For example: “I noticed that when you ...”

Impact exploration. Discuss the impact of the statement. For example: “Ouch. Your comment made me feel like...”

Own your thoughts and feelings about the subject. For example: “It’s difficult being the only underrepresented student in our cohort. People often think I am here only to fulfill a diversity goal. That’s hard because I have always done well in school.” (If the source has been able to hear what you have shared, consider the following, which may help rebuild the relationship.)

Next steps. For example: “Hey, let’s go to class now, but if you want to talk about this later, I would be happy to grab some coffee with you.”