

Intraracialized, Anti-Queer Microaggressions Towards Queer Black Men Research Prospectus

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Abstract

Microaggressions are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership (Sue et al., 2007). As intersectional microaggression research remains understudied (Sterzing et al., 2017), the purpose of this project is to extend the platform by documenting the experiences that Queer Black males experience from microaggressions intraracially in their communities. Through qualitative research and an intersectional framework, I plan to examine the impacts, experiences, and coping methods that Queer Black men encounter from intersectional microaggressions, and additionally code how anti-Queer language is presented within Black vernacular language. Intersectional microaggression research is of high importance because prior research fails to take notice of the microaggressions that intersecting identity individuals encounter (Sterzing et al., 2017). Although they might be invisible and subtle, microaggressions are truly damaging.

Keywords

Terms and Keywords:

- Microaggressions: Microaggressions are brief, every day, exchanges that send denigrating messages to certain individuals because of their group membership (Sue, 2010).
- Intersectionality: Intersectionality is known as the relationships among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relations and subject formations (McCall, 2005).
- Black Masculinity: Black Masculinity—as a subfield of Gender Studies—is tailored to study the typical behaviors of African American males (Milton, 2012).
- Black Vernacular: The distinctive, rule-governed form of language used by some Black/African Americans has a complex array of labels in linguistic and anthropological literature, including: African American language, African American English, Hip Hop Speech Style, Hip Hop Nation Language, Black English, Black Dialect, and the politically-driven ‘Ebonics’ (as cited in Brown and Casanova, 2014).
- Queer: Queer, in sexual politics, description of sexuality that rejects normative definitions of appropriate feminine and masculine sexual behavior. More contemporary meanings of queer have been picked up and used by activists and academics to mark movements within sexual identity politics and theoretical frameworks for understanding gender and sexuality (Barber et al., 2017.).

Literature Review

Themes across Microaggression Research:

- Predominately, research studies on single microaggressions are focused on racial, gender, sexual orientation microaggressions (Sterzing et al., 2017).
 - Within microaggression research there is an evident amount of studies focused on racial microaggressions. From the experiences of racial microaggressions there are themes that victims experience and encounter from microaggression perpetrators:
 - Assumed superiority of White cultural values/communication styles, Assumption of deviance, Assumed universality of the Black American experience, (Henfield, 2011):

Gaps within Microaggression Research:

- Within the sociological and psychological field there is a dearth in intersectional microaggression research (Sterzing et al., 2017). The dearth in microaggression research perpetrates the lack of regard towards those who have intersecting identities or are double minorities. The absence of research is needed to document the experiences, impacts, and coping methods of intersectional microaggressions. Having empirical studies on this topic will be beneficial towards widening the perception of microaggressions within professional fields, society, and communities.

Objectives

Through qualitative investigation the purpose of this study is to address the gaps in microaggression research and examine: (1) What are the intersectional microaggressions that Queer Black males experience intraracially? (2) What are the effects of intersectional microaggressions? (3) What coping methods are used from being victims of microaggressions?

Methods

Sampling Strategy: Snowball Sampling

➢ It is sometimes used as the main vehicle through which informants are accessed, or as an auxiliary mean, which assists researchers in enriching sampling clusters, and accessing new participants and social groups when other contact avenues have dried up. (Noy, 2008).

Data Collection Strategy: Key Informant Interviews

➢ Key informants’ world views are likely to affect how they define community and what they perceive as community strengths, weaknesses, needs, and potential (as cited in McKenna and Main, 2013).

Coding and Analytical Strategy:

➢ I will be adopting Derald Wing Sue’s taxonomy (Sue, 2010) on microaggression themes and applying it to my responses from the key informant interviews.

THEMES	MICROAGGRESSION	MESSAGE
Use of Sexist/Heterosexist Language: Terms that exclude or degrade women and LGBT persons.	Use of the pronoun “he” to refer to all people. Two options for relationship status: married or single.	Male experience is universal. Female experience is meaningless. LGB partnerships do not matter/are meaningless.
Denial of Individual Racism/Sexism/Heterosexism: A statement made when bias is denied.	“I’m not racist. I have several Black friends.” “As an employer, I always treat men and women equally.”	I am immune to racism because I have friends of color. I am incapable of sexism.
Second-Class Citizen: Occurs when a target group member receives differential treatment from the power group.	Person of color mistaken for a service worker.	People of color are servants to Whites. They couldn’t possibly occupy high status positions.
Assumption of Abnormality: Occurs when it is implied that there is something wrong with being LGBT.	Two men holding hands in public are stared at by strangers. Students use the term “gay” to describe a fellow student who is socially ostracized at school.	You should keep your displays of affection private because they are offensive. People who are weird and different are “gay”.

Figure 1. Sue, Wing Derald. 2010. Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Race, Gender, and Sexual Orientation. John Wiley & Sons Inc.

Future Directions

- ❑ In part of the analytical and coding process, after analyzing the responses from the key informant interviews, I will adopt Sue’s taxonomy and code how anti-Queer microaggressions presents itself within Black Vernacular Language.
- ❑ By studying intraracial anti-Queer microaggressions within Black communities, this research will aid in furthering intersectional discussion within microaggression research in the Sociological field, as well as extend or provide platforms of discussions on microaggressions and the various/complex masculine identities in Black communities.

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