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Racial Microaggressions Research: Intersectionality, Coping Strategies, and Groups Impacted

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RACIAL MICROAGGRESSIONS RESEARCH: INTERSECTIONALITY, COPING STRATEGIES, AND GROUPS IMPACTED

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ABSTRACT

Microaggressions, a term first coined to name everyday experiences with oppression five decades ago (Pierce et al., 1977), has evolved in the literature naming specific aggressions taking place in microsystems targeting minoritized groups (Sue et al., 2007). However, as this research area expands, a need for specificity about *who* is being impacted by racial microaggressions and *how* this impact takes place remains a gap in the literature that the research program of this dissertation aimed to address. Expanding from traditional racial microaggression approaches (Sue et al., 2019; Williams et al., 2021), this dissertation incorporates aspects of intersectionality, coping strategies, and novel forms of racial oppression in an effort to expand our understanding of the impact of microaggressions. Chapter 2 presents findings from a cross-sectional study applying intersectional methods to assess the experience of LGBTQ+ students of color and explore other axes of oppression, such as *cisness,* in connection with attitudes of persistence in school. Results showed that while all participants are impacted by intersectional microaggressions, gender expansive people reported the most concerning levels of impact. Chapter 4 presents findings from an online cross-sectional study assessing alcohol or substance use as a coping strategy for the psychological distress associated with racial microaggressions among people of color. Findings in a mediation analysis suggested that the relation between racial microaggression and alcohol/drug use as a coping strategy is best explained by the psychological distress associated with both. Chapter 6 reports findings from a study exploring a specific type of microaggression, immigration status microaggressions, and their psychological impact on Latinx and Asian college students. Results suggested that immigration status microaggressions psychologically impact both groups. However, moderated mediation findings presented more significant effects for Latinx students than Asian ones.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to:

1) The next generation of minoritized students in higher education whose experiences resonate with those in my studies. May light come forward, and your lived experiences in academic spaces finally dismantle the systems of oppression targeting them.
2) To my husband, no soy doctor, somos Chapis. This doctorate is for both of us. TAMO
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CHAPTER 1

"Microaggressions, slights, and indignities experienced by people of color as death by a thousand cuts…" Derald Wing Sue

Over a half-century ago, Chester Pierce, an American psychiatrist, first coined the term *microaggressions* to describe "subtle and stunning" everyday racist experiences by Black people and suggested paying attention to the possible psychological harm from these aggressions (Pierce, 1977). Almost forty years later, thanks to the groundbreaking work of counseling psychologist Derald W. Sue and colleagues (2007), a taxonomy that not only defined but categorized racial microaggressions reestablished the research area of microaggressions in psychology (Wong et al., 2014). It is precisely over the last two decades, after Sue's taxonomy (Sue et al., 2007), that most of the work on microaggressions has been published (see Wong et al., 2014; and Williams et al., 2021 for a review). Overall, there is a consensus in the field about racial microaggressions being everyday racism (Essed, 1991; Sue et al., 2007) targeting Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC). Similarly, substantial empirical evidence has highlighted that, in general, racial microaggressions are harmful, negatively impacting BIPOC's well-being (see Williams et al., 2021 for a review). However, as this research area continues to bloom, more questions and gaps about its findings have risen (Sue et al., 2019; Williams et al., 2021). Specifically, calls for the inclusion of methods that consider multiple systems of oppression (Crenshaw, 1990), processes associated with these systems (Aneshensel, 1992; Meyer, 1995), and specificity around the *who* and *how* of racial microaggressions' impact within the *BIPOC umbrella* (Zou & Cheryan, 2017). The research agenda presented in this dissertation aimed to address these calls through three different and independent published studies.

Research Agenda

My research program aims to expand the research area of racial microaggressions with three main objectives: 1) apply *intersectional* approaches to explore the effect of racial microaggressions, 2) assess *coping strategies* involved with experiencing racial microaggressions, 3) focus on *specificity* around groups and types of racial microaggressions.

First Objective: Intersectionality

Intersectionality is a framework proposed by Kimberlé Crenshaw to name the complex interplay of various systems of oppression and their connection to social identities, highlighting the interconnectedness of power, privilege, marginalization, and oppression (Crenshaw, 1990). While its origin comes from Black feminist movements, intersectionality highlights how, in order to understand the impact of racial oppression on BIPOC, one also must consider how other aspects and differences among social identities (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, ability) shape and change such experiences with oppression (Crenshaw, 1990). In the field of psychology, particularly in areas focused on oppression, such as racial microaggressions, a call for further intersectional examination has been recommended (APA, 2017). Intersectional microaggressions research targeting the impact of racism and heterosexism on gender and sexually minoritized groups of color is a new research area (Balsam et al., 2011; Nadal et al., 2015). Limited evidence, particularly in quantitative studies, suggests that everyday intersectional oppression is primarily associated with negative outcomes around well-being (Balsam et al., 2011; Fattoracci et al., 2020; Jackson et al., 2020; Nadal et al., 2015). However, given how small this area of research currently is in the literature, more questions remain.

My first study, Barrita, Hixson et al. (2023), investigated implications connected to intersectional microaggressions by sampling college students who identified as both BIPOC and members of sexual minoritized groups. I explored the frequency of microaggressions linked to

everyday racism and heterosexism using Fattoracci et al.'s (2020) quantitative scale, which assesses these experiences with items that named both social identities (i.e., "someone was rude to me because I am a *Black lesbian"*). Fattoracci's intersectional microaggressions scale is innovative because of its adaptability to allow participants to insert their sexual and racial identity before answering any questions and then add these identities to each item, increasing the likelihood of measuring frequencies of microaggressions linked to multiple systems of oppression versus accounting for these experiences separately. My study took an additional step to increase intersectional approaches by assessing cisgender privilege—gender identity and incorporating this as part of our main assessment using a moderation analysis. Thus, Barrita, Hixson and colleagues (2023) explored the impact of microaggressions by focusing on three axes of oppression: racism, heterosexism, and cissexism. This approach is novel as most studies on intersectional microaggressions have typically limited their methods to two systems of oppression, whereas mine explored three.

The third study presented in this dissertation, Barrita, Chang and Wong-Padoongpatt (2023), also used intersectional approaches to explore differences in race, ethnicity, and immigration status. This study exclusively focused on the impact of immigration status microaggressions on Latinx and Asian college students. Immigration status oppression has consistently targeted, primarily at a systemic level, BIPOC in the U.S. (Chavez, 2013). However, with an increase in the anti-immigrant climate in the U.S. over the last decade (Gomez & Perez Huber, 2019), immigration-related oppression has become more normalized in everyday exchanges. A previous two-study project I led (Barrita, 2021) established evidence of immigration status microaggressions—everyday racism connected to immigration status assumptions among BIPOC in the U.S. Specifically, this study developed a quantitative scale

that assesses microaggressions where individuals are not only assumed and objectified as being foreigners but also are criminalized as they are assumed to be undocumented. Barrita, Chang and Wong-Padoongpatt (2023) expanded on this research and explored differences around race and ethnicity for Latinx and Asian people, two groups historically and continuously objectified as perpetual foreigners (Zou & Cheryan, 2017), when experiencing immigration status microaggressions. Furthermore, the study sampled both immigrants and U.S.-born participants to highlight how immigration status microaggressions do not exclusively impact immigrant groups. Combined, both studies answered the call to include intersectional methods in microaggressions research.

Second Objective: Coping Strategies

The second objective of my research agenda for this dissertation was to assess coping strategies used when one experiences racial microaggressions. This objective is critical to better understanding the impact of microaggressions, as it helps explain mechanisms involved when everyday oppression is experienced. According to the social stress theory, individuals respond to social stressors such as discrimination or stigma by quickly evaluating and adapting to these situations, utilizing known or available resources to cope with such stressors (Aneshensel, 1992). However, in the case of microaggressions, which can be quick and ambiguous (Sue et al., 2007), the response strategy can fail to be effective or protective. Two of the three studies in this dissertation incorporate a methodology that explored and assessed different coping response strategies when experiencing microaggressions. The second study included in this research program, Barrita, Strong et al. (2023), investigates maladaptive behaviors utilized when one experiences discrimination. Specifically, this study explored the relationship between racial microaggressions and the use of substances or alcohol as a coping strategy for these experiences.

As previously mentioned, racial microaggressions as daily stressors have been linked to poor mental health symptoms, including anxiety, depression, and stress (see Williams et al., 2021 for a review). Similarly, research on substance and alcohol use has established evidence of these behaviors, often being coping strategies that are used to deal with poor mental health (Walukevich-Dienst et al., 2023). While other studies have explored the relationship between substance use and systemic forms of racism (Farahmand et al., 2020), my study is one of the first to investigate the link between this type of coping strategy and racial microaggressions.

Barrita, Strong, and colleagues (2023) explored the relationship between racial microaggressions, and substance use as a coping strategy for discrimination by accounting for the influence of psychological distress associated with both using a mediation analysis. One of the strengths of this study was the use of the Coping with Discrimination Scale (Wei et al., 2010), which includes a factor that specifically assesses the frequency of use of alcohol and drugs as a coping strategy directly connected to experiences of discrimination (i.e., "I drink alcohol when I feel discriminated"). Additionally, Barrita, Strong et al. (2023) highlighted important implications given its focus on substance use. Based on current statistics, the use of illicit drugs, starting in adolescence among BIPOC is on the rise (NCDAS, 2020; SMHSA, 2021), and current rates of treatment suggest racial disparities for BIPOC receiving fewer opportunities to rehabilitate while also being criminalized for these behaviors more often (Farahmand et al., 2020). Results from my second study can provide evidence that can inform and guide both clinical and policy interventions that address matters of substance use among racial minoritized communities. Furthermore, these implications speak directly to the need for more research exploring coping strategies involved in everyday oppression.

Similarly, my third study, Barrita, Chang and Wong-Padoongpatt (2023), focuses on coping strategies by studying mechanisms of internalization involved in the relationship between immigration status microaggressions and psychological distress among Latinx and Asian college students. Internalization, particularly internalized racism, speaks to the act of believing, endorsing, and acquiring self-defeating messages of racial inferiority (David et al., 2019). Internalizing racism as a coping strategy is a perfect example of maladaptive responses to social stressors such as racism. Particularly for racial microaggressions, which are more continuously experienced than other forms of racism (Sue et al., 2007), it is possible that BIPOC engages in internalization more frequently when experiencing these attacks due to limited response/defensive resources (Aneshensel, 1992). Yet, internalized racism has been briefly studied for racial microaggressions compared to other forms of racial oppression (see David et al., 2019, for a review). My third study explores internalized coping strategies specific to novel forms of everyday racism, such as immigration status microaggressions. Given the continuous rise of the anti-immigrant climate in the U.S. observed since the beginning of the Trump administration, particularly targeting Latinx communities (Gomez & Perez Huber, 2019), and the rise of Asian hate since the COVID-19 pandemic (Wong-Padoongpatt et al., 2022abc), my third study addresses important and current implications for Latinx and Asian communities by examining the impact of immigration status microaggressions not only in their psychological well-being but also as an internalized symptom. Results from this study can expand on evidence of the overall effect of immigration status weaponization and persecution targeting two groups historically marginalized as perpetual foreigners in the U.S. Furthermore, the assessment of these types of coping responses to racial microaggressions highlights specific mechanisms that can inform clinical practitioners working with racialized communities.

Third Objective: Specificity

The third objective of my research program was to apply more specificity about *who* is being impacted by racial microaggressions and *how* this impact takes place. Frameworks about racial positionality, particularly in the U.S., have called for research that explores differences within minoritized groups (Zou & Cheryan, 2017). Similarly, intersectional lenses can be used to make distinctions between those impacted by multiple systems of oppression (Crenshaw, 1990). Barrita, Hixson and colleagues (2023) expanded on specificity within groups by highlighting specific levels of impact between cisgender and gender expansive participants within the LGBTQ+ BIPOC umbrella. Results from my study demonstrated that while intersectional microaggressions in the form of everyday racism and heterosexism impacted gender and sexual minoritized groups of color at alarming rates, gender expansive people compared to cisgender reported more significant effects around the impact of these attacks. These findings are key, as often, research focused on oppression does not amplify differences in experiences within groups, particularly for those at the margins, in this case, gender expansive people of color. The importance of specificity around who is impacted by microaggressions can inform policy. For example, findings from my first study can centralize experiences of gender expansive students on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts in educational institutions, where often DEI is limited to larger marginalized groups accounting typically for only one social identity (e.g., students of color, LGBTQ+ students, undocumented students).

I address aspects of specificity in my third study (Barrita, Chang & Wong-Padoongpatt, 2023), highlighting findings for two groups, Latinx and Asian students, around the impact of immigration status microaggressions. Using moderation analyses, this study assessed differences between Latinx and Asian students across different relationships. Specifically, my findings

highlight how levels of internalized racism associated with immigration status microaggressions differ across both groups, where Latinx students, compared to Asian ones, reported more drastic levels of internalization as they experienced more immigration status microaggressions. Similarly, an interaction between levels of internalized racism and psychological distress was positively associated exclusively with Latinx participants. Addressing specificity within this study highlighted key differences in the way—the *how,* both groups responded, in the form of internalization to the psychological distress associated with immigration status microaggressions. These findings break assumptions about the levels and type of impact two groups historically marginalized as foreigners respond to racial microaggressions.

Statistical Analysis Approach

A key element of the research program across all three studies was the statistical analysis approach, which incorporated mediation, moderation, and moderated mediation analyses. Following the best recommendations for cross-sectional data, mediation, and moderation analyses present powerful statistical methods to explore direct and indirect effects across various variables (Hayes, 2012). Mediation analysis, as proposed by Hayes (2012), uses a statistical approach that explores the mechanisms through which an independent variable (IV) influences a dependent variable (DV). Precisely, mediation captures the level of influence and the indirect effect a mediating variable can have in the direct relationship between IV and DV. While mediation analysis cannot claim causal relation, it does explore causal mechanisms that help research understand the underlying mechanisms by which an IV might influence a DV using robust assessments. Mediation analysis, in summary, highlights *why* effects occur in the relationship between IV and DV by providing insight into the intermediate steps connected to both variables. In contrast, moderation analysis explores interactions between two variables in

relation to the DV. Moderation analysis assesses the *when* and *for whom* effects vary. Specifically, moderation tests how the relationship between two variables changes based on the presence of a third variable (Hayes, 2012). Statistical strength is often measured, as well as the direction in an analysis of interactions. Moderation allows for the account of heterogeneity within a dataset by acknowledging that the relationship is not uniform across all conditions. One major strength in the analytical approach used in all three studies was incorporating Hayes' mediation and moderation models (2012) using bootstrapping techniques. Bootstrapping, in mediation and moderation analysis, allows one to estimate the indirect effects between multiple variables by randomly resampling observations of the same dataset with replacement, which produces more accurate estimates of their parameters. Both mediation and moderation analyses provided the statistical power to explore the three main objectives of my research program across all three studies.

Overview of Manuscripts

The first study in this dissertation, titled "Centering the margins: A moderation study examining cisgender privilege among LGBTQ+ BIPoC college students facing intersectional microaggressions" (Barrita, Hixson et al., 2023), used cross-sectional quantitative methods to assess the impact of intersectional microaggressions on academic persistence using an LGBTQ+ BIPOC college sample. This study primarily incorporates intersectional lenses to explore the impact of multiple systems of oppression. Furthermore, the outcome variable of this study explored implications linked to higher education retention for groups consistently underrepresented, such as LGBTQ BIPOC. Additionally, this study expands on traditional intersectional approaches by investigating the effects of three systems of oppression (racism, heterosexism, and cissexism), assessing differences in experience and the impact of

intersectional microaggressions between cisgender and gender expansive participants. Findings highlight that while intersectional microaggressions impact, at concerning levels, all LGBTQ+ BIPOC college students in the sample, these experiences were linked to lower attitudes to persist or stay in college. More importantly, results from our moderation analysis suggested that gender expansive students, compared to cisgender were more likely to consider dropping out of college in relation to higher levels of intersectional microaggressions.

The second study in this dissertation, titled "Drugs and racial microaggressions: A mediation analysis of racism, psychological distress, and coping strategies" (Barrita, Strong, et al., 2023), utilized cross-sectional quantitative methods with a general sample of BIPOC collected online to assess the use of alcohol and drugs as a coping strategy associated with racial microaggressions and the psychological distress associated with these attacks. A large sample of BIPOC adults residing in the U.S. was collected to explore specific coping strategies associated with racial microaggressions, which was the second objective of this dissertation. Specifically, a focus on substance and alcohol use was a key element of this study to highlight maladaptive coping strategies that speak to larger health implications from experiences with racial microaggressions. Using a mediation analysis, we assessed to what extent racial microaggressions were associated with the use of alcohol and drugs as a direct coping strategy for discrimination and highlighted how the psychological distress associated with these attacks helps explain why BIPOC use this type of coping strategy. Results suggest that BIPOC indeed engage in substance and alcohol use as a coping strategy associated with racial microaggressions, and this relationship is best explained when considering the psychological distress linked to both.

Finally, my third study in this dissertation, titled "Assumptions of immigration status: A moderated mediation analysis of racial microaggressions and internalization impacting Latinx

and Asian students" (Barrita, Chang & Wong-Padoongpatt, 2023), uses cross-sectional quantitative methods to explore the relationship between novel forms of everyday microaggressions, such as immigration status microaggressions and psychological distress by considering the level of internalization involved in this relationship through mediation analysis. Furthermore, moderated mediation analyses are conducted to investigate differences between Latinx and Asian participants in relation to the psychological distress and internalization associated with immigration status microaggressions. This third study aimed to highlight aspects of specificity, my third objective in this dissertation, to unpack evidence of the impact of novel forms of racial microaggression for specific groups. Findings from this study suggested that both Latinx and Asian student participants experienced concerning levels of internalization and psychological distress associated with immigration status microaggressions. Furthermore, significant interactions and evidence of moderated mediation relationships were found where Latinx participants, compared to Asian ones, reported more significant levels of impact. That is, the negative impact of immigration status microaggressions on mental health is best explained by the level of internalization from these experiences, particularly among Latinx college students. Combined, all three studies present a research program that aims to expand the area of microaggressions research by incorporating intersectionality, coping strategies, and specificity in their methods and results.

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CHAPTER 2

"Centering the margins: A moderation study examining cisgender privilege among LGBTQ+ BIPoC college students facing intersectional microaggressions."

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Abstract

Marginalized college students report experiencing both systemic and everyday discrimination in higher education. Scholars have highlighted the effects of microaggressions on well-being and attitudes towards school persistence. Most studies have used a unidimensional approach to unpack oppressive systems for individuals with multiple marginalized identities, and therefore, experiences around intersectionality are often not considered. Particularly among sexual minorities of color, differences in experiences with microaggressions for cisgender and gender expansive people are frequently overlooked when assessing educational outcomes. The current cross-sectional study (N = 153) used an intersectional approach to explore experiences of LGBTQ+ Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPoC). We examined the association between intersectional microaggressions (sexual and racial) and school persistence attitudes, comparing differences between cisgender and gender expansive students. According to our findings, intersectional microaggressions negatively impacted attitudes toward school persistence, and cisgender privilege emerged as a moderator to buffer this effect. Specifically, gender expansive students were less likely to hold positive attitudes toward school persistence compared to cisgender sexual minority students of color when experiencing higher levels of intersectional microaggressions. We used an intersectional approach to explore how cissexism, heterosexism, and racism impact those at the margins among LGBTQ+ BIPoC students highlighting implications for higher education.

Keywords: *microaggressions, cisgender privilege, school persistence, BIPoC, LGBTQ+*

Introduction

College education in the United States (U.S.) has become more valuable in the last few decades, as it signifies upward socioeconomic mobility and higher qualifications for a competitive job market (Pew Research, 2016). Since 1970, college enrollment rates have increased by 195%, and the presence of racially marginalized groups, such as Latinx students, has increased by 441.7% since 1976 (Hanson, 2021). To distinguish the historical oppression some racial groups have experienced in the U.S., we use the term "BIPoC" to acknowledge specific differences in racial experiences among Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. As of 2018, college enrollment in the U.S. hit 19.6 million, where fewer than 45% of students were BIPoC (Hanson, 2021), and approximately 17% identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or gender expansive (LGBTQ+; PNPI, 2020). Among BIPoC, Black and African American college students have decreased 10.6% since 2010 (Hanson, 2021). Consensus in recent findings showed that BIPoC college students face additional barriers (e.g., structural and institutional racism, 1st generation status, less financial resources) that often lead to college dropouts (Blaisdell, 2016; Mustaffa, 2021). In fact, in 2018, Native American and Indigenous students showed the highest dropout rate (36.2%), followed by 30.6% from Black and African American students and 21.4% from Latinx and Hispanic students across U.S. 4-year colleges (Hanson, 2021). Similarly, LGBTQ+ college students have reported a lack of inclusivity as well as hostility due to heterosexism, homophobia, and transphobia (Hong et al., 2016; Kulick et al., 2017). According to a national climate survey (AAU, 2015), 20% of LGBTQ+ college students feared for their physical safety, and demands are high to adequately track dropout rates for LGBTQ+ students (APA, 2012). Overall, these emerging findings warrant more attention, particularly for those most vulnerable to systemic barriers and everyday injustices within higher

education. The literature on school persistence and retention has addressed aspects of class, race, and sexual injustice (e.g., Cadenas et al., 2021; Pyne & Means, 2013); however, most researchers have used a unidimensional approach and independently examined identities without considering intersectional experiences. In turn, less is known about how systems of oppression cumulatively intersect and impact individuals with multiple marginalized identities in higher education, such as LGBTQ+ BIPoC students.

Intersectionality, which highlights the interconnectedness of multiple oppressive systems (Crenshaw, 1990), has recently received more traction when examining the psychology of marginalized people. In 2017, the American Psychological Association (APA) put forth a task force to re-envision the multicultural guidelines for the 21st century where the major change centered intersectionality and the importance of considering the multiplicity of oppressive experiences (APA, 2017). Relatedly, the latest APA guidelines for working with sexual minoritized groups highlight the importance of considering other forms of oppression impacting the individual (Nakamura et al., 2022). Both racism—systemic and individual oppression based on one's membership to a racial or ethnic group (Perry, 2007) and heterosexism—systemic and individual oppression against anyone who is not heterosexual (Neisen, 1990)—are key intersectional systems considered in the literature for LGBTQ+ BIPoC (Balsam et al., 2011; Fattoracci et al., 2020; Jackson et al., 2020; Kulick et al., 2017; Nadal et al., 2015; Velez et al., 2019; Zelaya et al., 2021).

According to the Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1991), institutional racism (see Kirkins et al., 2021 for a review) and heterosexism (see Anderson et al., 2021 for a review) in higher education are nested within larger macrosystems for marginalized people and have often been linked to poor mental health, feelings of exclusion, and lack of support among

college students. Everyday discrimination, also known as microaggressions, is nested within the closer microsystems for marginalized people (Bronfenbrenner, 1991) and can manifest in recurrent hostile behaviors and messages towards marginalized students (Sue et al., 2019). Studies have shown that students from underrepresented backgrounds report constant encounters with microaggressions in higher education (see Ogunyemi et al., 2020, for a review). Among college populations, microaggressions have been linked to higher physiological stress (Wong-Padoongpatt et al., 2020; Wong-Padoongpatt et al., 2017), depression (Torres-Harding et al., 2020), and both internalized racism (Wong-Padoongpatt et al., 2022) and internalized homophobia (Heiden-Rootes et al., 2020) for marginalized students. However, few scholars have explored the implications of intersectional microaggressions and their relation to student academic success (Morales, 2014; Nadal et al., 2015). In this study, we used an intersectional framework to assess the impact of different systems of oppression within the microsystems on school persistence using a sample of LGBTQ+ BIPoC college students.

Microaggressions within Higher Education

The term *microaggression* was coined by Pierce et al. (1977) to describe the subtle and stunning negative offenses against Black people. Microaggressions are daily intentional and unintentional verbal and nonverbal hostile interactions targeting a minoritized group (Solorzano et al., 2000; Sue et al., 2007) to maintain a hierarchical social structure of subordination (Han Sifuentes, 2021). Research on microaggressions has exponentially grown over the last two decades (Wong et al., 2014). However, it is important to highlight and distinguish how experiences with microaggressions in higher education differ from other settings. Factors such as systemic and institutional oppression further perpetrate power differences between marginalized college students and other figures of power (e.g., dominant student groups, professors, institution

administrators). Thus, our study highlights intersectional microaggressions taking place in an environment where there are already pre-existing systemic power (macrosystems) differentials for marginalized groups such as LGBTQ+ BIPoC college students.

Racial Microaggressions in Higher Education

BIPoC experience everyday racism—racial microaggressions consistently (Sue et al., 2019), and researchers have shown several concerning implications for college students (Wong-Padoongpatt et al., 2022a; Wong-Padoongpatt et al.,2022b). BIPoC students in higher education report experiencing racial battle fatigue associated (Hernández & Villodas, 2020), physiological distress (Robinson-Perez et al., 2020; Wong-Padoongpatt et al., 2017), emotional distress (Barrita, 2021), lower implicit self-esteem (Wong-Padoongpatt et al., 2020), and suicidal ideation (Hollingsworth et al., 2017), when experiencing racial microaggressions. Environmental microaggressions might further exacerbate these effects, given the lack of representation for faculty of color, inadequate resources for undocumented and international students, and performative statements around racial social justice (Mills, 2020). Lee et al. (2020) examined a large sample of students of color (N = 4,800) and found that racial microaggressions were experienced almost daily in higher education institutions, and perpetrators were usually instructors and other figures of power. Particularly in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) majors, Black, Indigenous, and Latinx students are subjected to higher oppression than White and Asian American students (Beede et al., 2011). Racial microaggressions can leave BIPoC students feeling isolated and disconnected from higher education (Lewis et al., 2021) which can directly impact their attitudes towards persistence in attending college (McCullagh, 2016).

LGBTQ Microaggressions in Higher Education

Colleges have systematically tracked racial and ethnic demographic records; however, these same tracking practices are not as common for sexual and gender identities (Sell & Holiday, 2014). More alarmingly, several state legislations prohibit acknowledgment or open discussion about LGBTQ+ identities, which renders many sexual and gender minorities invisible within the overall college experience (George, 2022; Stone, 2016). In a U.S. study with sexual minority undergraduate and graduate students ($N = 152$), it was found that students who experienced more microaggressions also had higher intentions to transfer universities (Crane et al., 2020). Seelman et al. (2017) examined students from the U.S. and Canada ($N = 497$) and found that heterosexist microaggressions led to lower self-esteem and higher stress and anxiety. Overall, sexual minority students attribute feelings of isolation and lack of belongingness in college to heterosexist academic structures (Beagan et al., 2021), and these experiences directly and negatively influence their persistence in school settings.

LGBTQ+ microaggressions are experiences with everyday heterosexism. LGBTQ+ students in higher education often report a lack of representation, tolerance, and support (Morris & Lent, 2019; Smith et al., 2020) both systematically and individually. Sexual minorities in higher education often are subjected to bullying from their peers (Abreu & Kenny, 2018) and lack of inclusion or support from their institutions (e.g., failure to acknowledge pronouns, missing LGBTQ centers, or safe spaces). A large portion of the literature on LGBTQ+ microaggressions has used primarily White samples (Aguilera & Barrita, 2021; Nadal et al., 2015) and more scholarship is needed to investigate specific microaggression experiences for LGBTQ+ BIPoC students in higher education (Barrita & Wong-Padoongpatt, 2021). Furthermore, it is unclear whether there are differences among LGBTQ+ communities around

other social factors, such as cisgender privilege, when experiencing microaggressions in higher education.

Cisgender Privilege

LGBTQ research scholars have argued the importance of addressing cisgender privilege (Galupo et al., 2014a; Riggs, 2007), especially among sexual minorities, when such privilege protects them from certain types of oppression. Specifically, gender expansive folks' (e.g., transgender, non-binary, gender-fluid people) unique experiences under the LGBTQ+ umbrella often go ignored or omitted in research (Barrita & Wong-Padoongpatt, 2021). While society is hyper-aware of gender expansive individuals, the literature rarely captures or makes distinctions on their everyday lived realities (Galupo et al., 2014b). Miller and Smith (2020) explored the concept of visibility and found that people who are "visible," meaning they are visibly perceived as a sexual and/or gender minority, were more likely to experience discrimination. And such visibility was based on physical or behavioral characteristics that do not fit heteronormative or *cisnormative* social expectations. Thus, assumptions around *cisness* might shield some within the LGBTQ+ community from certain types of microaggressions. Transgender individuals, for example, not only experience microaggressions from heterosexual people but also from members of the LGBTQ+ community, which sometimes are more harmful (Galupo et al., 2014b; Rivera-Mercado et al., 2022). Additionally, nonbinary transgender individuals report experiencing gender microaggressions based on binary assumptions of their gender (Pulice-Farrow et al., 2020). With so many layers of oppression, gender expansive students' experiences with microaggressions in higher education are often kept in the dark.

Cisness or cisgender identity is often defined as those whose gender identity matches their sex assigned at birth (Morgenroth & Ryan, 2021). Among sexual minorities, gender identity

can create additional layers of marginalization for those who are not cisgender—gender expansive (Galupo et al., 2014a; Ryder et al., 2022). Even more so, in educational settings, environmental gender microaggression based on policy and procedures (e.g., lack of gender-neutral bathrooms, pronouns, lack of name change policies) can further segregate gender minorities and discourage them from staying in school (Woodford et al., 2017). Cisgender privilege speaks to the systemic and individual power coming from the social acceptance that cisgender people experience (Johnson, 2013). Cisgender people's appearances often fit societal standards around gender, and therefore, they might experience less oppression. Those at the margins, under the LGBTQ+ umbrella (e.g., queer, trans, non-binary, and gender expansive), often report not fitting harmful binary gender standards most societies impose (Shelton, 2016), feeling invisible (Galupo et al.,2014a), and experiencing hypervigilance and violence (Perry & Dick, 2014). Yet, when studying LGBTQ+ oppression, cisgender privilege is rarely considered.

Intersectionality and Microaggressions

Although intersectionality is an emerging theme in microaggression research (Nadal et al., 2015), intersectional experiences of racial and sexual oppression in higher education among LGBTQ+ BIPoC have not been fully explored (Balsam et al., 2011; Fattoracci et al., 2020; García, 2021; Kulick et al., 2017; Nadal et al., 2015). Balsam et al. (2011) developed one of the first quantitative measures for intersectional microaggression experiences based on racism and heterosexism. Initial findings suggest LGBTQ+ BIPoC experience psychological distress from intersectional oppression (Balsam et al., 2011; Jackson et al., 2020; Velez et al., 2019; Zelaya et al., 2021). Fewer studies have addressed differences in segmented sexual minorities (e.g., cis lesbian, bisexual, gay, queer, etc.) from gender minorities (e.g., non-cis, trans, gender nonconforming, nonbinary, etc.). Fattoracci et al. (2020) newly developed a quantitative measure

for intersectional microaggressions, including everyday racism and heterosexism. This measure has been used to examine nuance experiences with oppression among gender minorities (Sarno et al., 2021).

Researchers of LGBTQ+ and racial discrimination have argued that other axes of power, such as cisgender privilege, should be considered when studying minorities in higher education (Downing & Przedworski, 2016; Flores et al., 2016; Galupo et al., 2014a; Kachen & Pharr, 2020). Particularly among sexual minorities, gender minorities (e.g., transgender, queer, and gender expansive) have fewer resources in educational settings to counter systemic, institutional, and everyday oppression (Barrita & Wong-Padoongpatt, 2021). We used an intersectional approach to explore the effect from intersectional microaggressions (racism and heterosexism) on school persistence and compare implications for cisgender and gender expansive LGBQ+ BIPoC college students.

School Persistence for LGBTQ BIPoC

Although there have been previous studies on microaggressions in higher education (see Ogunyemi et al., 2020, for a review), there has been little research on the relationship between educational outcomes such as persistence or dropout attitudes. Researchers who have examined school attitudes and oppression have routinely used methods that isolate one system of oppression to investigate rather than consider multiple dimensions. Attitudes around quitting higher education have been linked to experiences with racial microaggressions (Johnston-Goodstar & VeLure Roholt, 2017), sexist microaggressions (Woodford et al., 2014), and heterosexist microaggressions (Crane et al., 2020). Our study is among the first to explore the interconnectedness between multiple systems of oppression in the context of higher education, specifically examining microaggressions and the link to attitudes about persisting in school.

Experiences with everyday racism have led to higher rates of drop-out for cis-heterosexual racial and ethnic minoritized students (Johnston-Goodstar & VeLure Roholt, 2017). Structural racism in higher education has been named as a fundamental barrier to academic achievement among Black students (Merolla & Jackson, 2019). Research on LGBTQ+ samples (primarily White) have also found institutional heterosexism and cissexism are linked to lower sense of belonging in higher education (Crane et al., 2020; Woodford et al., 2014). Research has suggested that those who present as "atypical" gender expression or are sexually minoritized on college campuses experience higher rates of heterosexism and victimization, which can then lead to higher rates of anxiety and stress (Woodford et al., 2014). In addition, previous research has indicated that LGTBQ+ and BIPoC students face unique experiences in college that, in turn, affect their overall satisfaction with schooling (Crane et al., 2020). Tilley et al. (2020) found that LGBTQ+ students reported less overall well-being than heterosexual students. LGBTQ+ college students experiencing microaggression in their classroom report higher discomfort and higher attitudes toward transferring out from their current school, as well as less intention to continue their education (Crane et al., 2020).

Microaggressions occur in everyday life in various social environments (Sue et al., 2019); therefore, it is unsurprising that microaggressions can occur in educational settings (Solorzano et al., 2001). Academic institutions have a long history of being white-centering, masculine, and heteronormative (Fotaki, 2013; Krishen et al., 2020). After examining 60 diverse classrooms across three different college campuses, Suárez-Orozco et al. (2015) found that microaggressions were reported in nearly 30%. In a recent study, Morris and Lent (2019) found that heterosexist harassment led to lower rates of academic satisfaction and persistence. A national survey (Smith et al., 2020) found that Black and African American college students ($N = 3320$) who

experienced more microaggressions were generally less satisfied and happy. Additionally, it was found that the lower rates of academic satisfaction were largely due to a perception of poor environmental support.

Despite previous research on microaggressions in higher education for intersectional oppression, there is a need for studies to center LGBTQ+ BIPoC students' specific experiences with these daily aggressions. More particularly, research exploring the impact around school retention, satisfaction, and persistence given the recent efforts most institutions have committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Present Study

This study explored how racial and sexual microaggressions across cisgender and gender expansive LGBTQ+ BIPoC college students relate to school persistence attitudes. The scholarship on racial, sexual orientation and gender microaggressions has often addressed these attacks as separate dimensions. Our study quantitatively examined multiple layers of oppression (e.g., racism, heterosexism, cissexism) experienced by sexual, racial, and gender minoritized students in higher education. Based on previous findings, we aimed to answer the following questions: 1) Do LGBTQ+ BIPoC college students experience intersectional microaggressions differently when considering cisgender privilege? 2) Do LGBTQ+ BIPoC college students report school persistence attitudes differently when considering cisgender privilege? And 3) Is cisgender privilege a protective factor in school persistence when LGBQTQ+ BIPoC college students experience intersectional microaggressions? We hypothesize:

(H1): Gender expansive LGBTQ+ BIPoC students will report significantly more intersectional microaggressions than cisgender LGBTQ+ BIPoC students.

(H2): Gender expansive LGBTQ+ BIPoC students will report significantly lower attitudes of school persistence.

(H3) Cisgender identity will moderate the relation between intersectional microaggressions and school persistence attitudes among LGBTQ+ BIPoC students.

Methods

Participants and Procedure

We developed an online study using quantitative measures to assess a) intersectional microaggression experiences and b) school persistence attitudes. The data collection for this study was carried out from January to April 2021. We used Qualtrics® to nationally advertise our online study titled "*Microaggressions, Intersectionality, and Academic Progression*," providing full disclosure of the purpose of the study on the initial consent page and offering 5 dollars of compensation for their participation. Compensation was distributed by Qualtrics® immediately after the survey was completed. The inclusion criteria to participate were: 1) being 18 years old or older, 2) currently attending a U.S. university or college, 3) identifying as black, indigenous, or person of color, and 4) identifying as a gay, lesbian, bisexual, asexual, queer, trans, non-binary, or gender expansive. We set specific quotas based on our inclusion criteria around race and sexual orientation to meet minimum sample sizes for our analysis. Initially, 155 participants fully qualified and completed the study. The survey included a consent form, demographics, quantitative and qualitative measures, and a debriefing part with additional resources. The average time of participation was 20 minutes. Two participants were dropped for failure to accurately complete attention check questions, leaving a final sample of 153 adult students (M_{age} = 21.2, SD = 1.7). Using G*Power 3.1, we performed a power analysis, which suggested that our

sample size ($N = 153$), with 80% power ($1 - \beta$), generated enough power to uncover large to medium-sized effects.

The racial breakdown of our sample was 83 Black or African American (54.2%), 41 Non-White Latinx or Hispanic (26.8%), 16 Asian, Asian American or Pacific Islander (10.5%), 3 Middle Eastern (2.0%) and 10 Native American (6.5%). Our sample included 32 people who self-identified as Gay (20.9%), 34 as Lesbian (22.2%), 61 as Bisexual (39.9%), seven as Pansexual (4.6%), and 19 as Queer (12.4%). Of the 39 participants who identified as gender expansive, 18 were Transgender (46.2%), 6 were Genderfluid (15.3%), and 15 were non-Binary (38.5%). See Table 2.1 for a full breakdown by cisgender and gender expansive.

Measures

School Persistence Attitudes. The Persistence/Voluntary Dropout Decision Scale (P/VDD; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1980) is a 30-item Likert scale that measures students' attitudes toward whether to persist or drop college. Items such as "I am satisfied with my academic experience at my university) are rated on a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Previous studies exploring microaggressions and P/VDD have found strong reliability using BIPoC college samples with coefficient alphas from .79 to .86 (Castillo et al., 2006). For this study, Cronbach's alpha was .81. P/VDD has been used to explore the relationship between school persistence attitudes and social support (Nipcon et al., 2008), coping mechanisms (Lesure-Lester, 2013), and depressive symptoms (Boyraz et al., 2016).

Intersectional Microaggressions. The Intersectional Microaggressions Scale (IMS; Fattoracci et al., 2020) is a 36-item Likert style construct that quantifies different types of microaggressions experienced by LGBTQ+ BIPoC individuals. Items such as "I was threatened because I am a person of color who is part of the LGBTQ+ community" are rated on a scale ranging from 0

(*never*) to 5 (*all the time*) when responding to the question, "How often does this occur to you?". The IMS was recently published as one of the first to assess "ntersectional experiences with microaggressions for individuals with multiple marginalized identities. For this study, IMS showed Cronbach's alpha of .97.

Cisgender Identity. As part of the demographic questions, we asked participants if they identified as cisgender, followed by a brief definition: "a person whose sense of personal identity and gender corresponds with their sex assigned at birth." Participants were given *Yes, No,* or *prefer not to respond* as their options to answer. All participants selected *Yes* or *No*. Based on their responses, the sample was divided into two groups: 1) *cisgender privilege* if they identified as cisgender, and 2) *gender expansive* if they did not.

Other Demographics. Participants provided additional demographic information such as age, socioeconomic status (SES), school generation, location of their university, and immigration generation.

Analysis.

We used SPSS Version 27 and R Software to analyze our data. We conducted two independent T-test analyses to test the differences of intersectional microaggressions (H1), and school persistence attitudes (H2) between cisgender and gender expansive LGBTQ+ BIPoC. Given cisgender identity was measured as a categorical variable of two levels, we used PROCESS 3.5 (Hayes, 2013) to run a single model bootstrap approach (Model 1) to test cisgender privilege as a moderator for the impact of intersectional microaggressions on school persistence attitudes (H3).

Results

Preliminary Analysis.

We computed descriptive statistics of quantitative measures and demographics prior to conducting the main statistical analyses to test hypotheses. (See Table 2.1). We used Pearson's correlation analyses to test associations between intersectional microaggressions, school persistence, SES, and age. Point biserial correlation analysis was used to test the relation between racial microaggressions and school persistence with first-generation identity. Bivariate relationship analysis showed SES to be significantly associated (r = -.30, p < .001) with school persistence but only for cisgender participants; other correlations did not indicate any possible covariate for our main analysis (see Table 2.2 & 2.3). Additionally, tests for data normality and assumptions showed normal distribution and no signs of kurtosis or multicollinearity.

Who reports more intersectional microaggressions among LGBTQ+ BIPoC?

We used an independent t-test analysis to compare the level of reported intersectional microaggressions between cisgender LGBQ+ BIPoC college students (n = 114) and gender expansive LGBQ+ BIPoC college students (n = 39). Although the gender expansive respondents reported experiencing more intersectional microaggressions (M = 139.25, SD = 48.42) than cisgender respondents (M = 134.77, SD = 44.99), H1 was not supported since that difference was not significant $t(151) = 0.508$, p = .612.

Who reports more school persistence among LGBTQ+ BIPoC?

Similar to H1, we used another independent t-test analysis to compare the level of reported school persistence attitudes between cisgender LGBQ+ BIPoC college students and gender expansive LGBQ+ BIPoC college students. Cisgender students reported more positive school persistence attitudes (M = 76.15, SD = 14.82) compared to gender expansive students (M = 71.99, SD = 12.88). This difference in school persistence attitudes approached significance

$t(151) = -1.68$, $p = .088$, but H2 was not supported. However, it is worth noting the trending p-value of .088.

Is cisgender privilege a moderating factor among LGBTQ+ BIPoC facing intersectional microaggressions?

A Pearson's correlation analysis between intersectional microaggressions and school persistence attitudes comparing cisgender students (see Table 2.2) and gender expansive (see Table 2.3) showed a significant relationship in the gender expansive group. The hypothesized moderation model (H3) was tested using PROCESS macro model 1, which assesses if cisgender privilege moderates the effect of path intersectional microaggression and school persistence attitudes (Hayes, 2013). The overall model was significant, $R^2 = .253$, $F(3, 149) = 3.40$, $p = .022$ (see Table 2.4). Intersectional microaggressions were a significant predictor of school persistence attitudes; $b = -0.184$, $t(149) = 9.19$, $p = .009$, and being gender expansive compared to cisgender was also a significant predictor of school persistence; $b = -15.548$, $t(149) = -2.01$, $p = .045$. The interaction of intersectional microaggressions and being gender expansive was found as a significant moderator, adding to the variance $\Delta R^2 = .045$, $\Delta F(3,149) = 7.23$, $p = .011$., $b = -0.145$, $t(149) = 2.69$, $p = .008$.

To further explore the nature of the interaction between intersectional microaggressions and cisgender privilege for LGBQ+ BIPoC college students, specific regions (i.e., 1 SD below mean, mean and 1 SD above mean) were calculated using simple slope analysis (Johnson & Fay, 1950). This technique helps to locate regions of significance for the interaction and is considered a superior method to analyze moderating effects (Hayes, 2013). Our plot (see Figure 2.1) shows that when both cisgender and gender expansive students experience lower intersectional microaggressions (1SD below mean), there are minimal difference in school persistence attitudes

effect = -.039, *SE* = .026, *p* = .132, 95% *CI* [-0.089,0.012]. However, when cisgender and gender expansive students experience higher intersectional microaggressions (1SD above mean), cisgender students' school persistence attitudes are higher. In contrast, gender expansive students report lower school persistence attitudes effect = .106, *SE* = .048, *p* = .031 95% *CI* [0.013,0.200]. These results suggest that cisgender privilege serves as a protecting factor when facing everyday discrimination and supported our H3.

Discussion

Overall, our findings suggested that the role of cisgender privilege is important to consider when examining the effects of intersectional microaggressions on school persistence attitudes among LGBTQ+ BIPoC college students. Not all hypotheses were supported given that cisgender and gender expansive students were not significantly different for frequencies of intersectional microaggressions (H1) and school persistence attitudes (H2). However, it should be noted that for H2, difference across gender privilege were trending to significant as findings showed cisgender students endorsed slightly higher school persistence compared to gender expansive students. As predicted, cisness did moderate the effect of intersectional microaggressions on school persistence. Cisgender privilege did seem to buffer the effects of intersectional microaggressions with gender expansive participants endorsing significantly lower school persistence compared to cisgender participants when experiencing more consistent intersectional microaggressions.

Cisgender privilege often operates as a heteronormative acceptance, both systemic and individual, based on assumptions around one's gender or sexual identity (Galupo et al., 2014b), and our results for H3 suggest the idea that such social acceptance can partially shield cisgender people from racial and sexual microaggressions regardless of their racial or sexual identity. Our

results support previous finding where gender expansive people report experiencing higher social violence and having less supportive systems in academic spaces (Perry & Dick, 2014). Large-scale diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts might provide valuable resources for cisgender students to thrive while not adequately serving gender expansive students. The lack of adequate resources for gender expansive students might leave them more vulnerable to intersectional oppression. Discussions in academia around pronouns, binary language, and gender-inclusive spaces have increased in the last few years (Nicolazzo et al., 2018) often highlighting a lack inclusivity and therefore additional stressors for gender expansive students. Gender minorities' rights, equity, and inclusion continue to be challenged at the legislative level in many states, and therefore, institutions might have a difficult time properly recognizing the existence of gender minority communities. Our findings bring to light the important issue of cisgender privilege and the disproportionate burden of intersectional microaggressions on gender expansive students, particularly around attitudes towards quitting school. Current academic resources and inclusive initiatives might need re-evaluation, particularly around providing adequate support to gender expansive sexual minorities of color.

A key aspect of our study involved unpacking the different layers of oppression (e.g., cissexism, heterosexism, racism) using an intersectional approach. Researchers are beginning to use intersectional approaches to explain the effects of microaggressions on students with multiple marginalized identities. To our knowledge, the current study is among the first to explore cisgender privilege using both racial and sexual minoritized participants exclusively. Our results highlight the need to raise consciousness around issues of cisgender privilege, particularly for BIPoC gender expansive people.

Implications

Overall, our findings suggest a crucial need to unpack the nuanced experiences of students with multiple oppressed identities, particularly in higher education. More experiences with intersectional microaggressions seemed to significantly burden gender expansive students compared to cisgender students. The close associations between attitudes of quitting school and the frequency of intersectional microaggression experiences for gender expansive students is alarming and demands further investigation and additional support. Academic institutions should be aware of these experiences and facilitate mechanisms through which students, faculty, and staff can report and document intersectional microaggressions (Carrero Pinedo et al., 2022). Perhaps implementing routine assessments of the cultural climates and asking directly about experiences with intersectional microaggressions would be important initial steps towards creating an inclusive environment for gender expansive students to thrive. Universities may be more successful in retaining students with multiple marginalized identities if these institutions build more awareness around intersectional microaggressions and disrupt the social subordination and *othering* of intersectional identities.

This current study also builds on the existing theoretical work on intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1990), paying particular care to dimensions of oppression. A common misperception of intersectionality and intersectional approaches is that identities are different without the critical consciousness around privileged identities. Our findings are among the first to highlight the important difference between cisgender and gender expansive experiences with intersectional microaggressions, particularly with LGBTQ+ BIPoC college students. Although LGBTQ+ BIPoC students hold multiple identities, our findings suggest that cisgender privilege might be buffering the negative effects of intersectional oppression. More experiences and awareness of intersectional microaggressions for cisgender BIPoC students might even be empowering them

to persist in school. Schools may already have an infrastructure and resources in place to elevate cisgender LGBTQ+ BIPoC college students and our findings might be highlighting the need to have more specific support for gender expansive LGBTQ+ BIPoC college students. Our findings align squarely with experts in the field (APA, 2017; Nakamura et al., 2022), who strongly suggest using intersectional methods to capture the nuanced experiences of people with multiple marginalized identities. The academic implications of our findings build upon the existing research efforts on microaggressions, which have mostly focused on psychological and physiological implications. Efforts to challenge systemic oppression and to create strategies to retain marginalized students are widespread in most U.S. college institutions, and our study echoes existing calls to use an intersectional lens to explore various systems of oppression.

Limitations and Future Research

Whereas our study offers important findings regarding intersectional microaggressions for student populations on university campuses, it also has limitations that provide the groundwork for future research. First, our data collection was limited to a single point in time for each individual; future research can augment our findings by collecting longitudinal data to overlay the aging/experiential process and identify cohort and generational effects of intersectional microaggressions. Our research provides a quantitative design; future research can expand our findings by exploring an ethnographic secondary dataset of one or more online communities (Kozinets, 2020) and incorporate rigorous qualitative or mixed methods that further explain experiences with intersectional microaggressions. A second potential limitation was the uneven sample sizes due to the difficulty in gathering underrepresented populations. Future research can include more diverse student populations, such as additional levels of students (e.g., graduate students) or a global assessment (e.g., cross-cultural settings). Future studies should

also assess other forms of privilege (e.g., white privilege, able privilege, male privilege) since academic settings can foster highly competitive environments where the inequity of various privileged identities may often be less visible. Moreover, additional protective factors—such as strengths, supportive systems, and coping mechanisms—should also be considered when assessing the impact of intersectional microaggressions. Future research can also include social and emotional measures, such as loneliness, anxiety, depression, social exclusion, and fear of missing out, to build upon our findings with cognitive measures. Lastly, our sample size prevented us from conducting further analysis within groups to highlight nuance based on race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. Future studies should address differences of experience with intersectional microaggressions among LGBTQ+ BIPoC.

Conclusion

Intersectional theory expert Kimberlé W. Crenshaw once said, "If we aren't intersectional, some of us, the most vulnerable, are going to fall through the cracks." Our project aimed to explore the impact of multiple forms of oppression among minoritized college students. Our findings highlight important aspects of the educational experiences of LGBTQ+ BIPoC college students. While other studies have addressed the impact of oppression among LGBTQ+ BIPoC individuals, our study focused on distinguishing the differences within these communities, particularly for gender expansive individuals. Specifically, our results highlight the protective factor certain identities, such as cisgender, can provide to marginalized students.

Tables

Table 2.1 Demographics

Sociodemographic Characteristics of Participants (N = 153)

Baseline characteristic	Cisgender (*N* = 114)		Gender Expansive (*N* = 39)	
	n	%	*n*	%
Race / Ethnicity				
Latina/o/x or Hispanic	29	25.5	12	30.8
Asian / Asian American	12	10.5	4	10.2
Black / African American	61	53.5	22	56.4
Middle Eastern	3	2.6	0	0
Native American	9	7.9	1	2.6
1st Generation Student				
Yes	50	43.9	16	41.0
No	64	56.1	23	59.0
Immigrant Generation				
1st Generation	10	8.8	1	2.6
1.5 Generation	9	7.9	5	12.8
2nd Generation	41	36.0	12	30.8
3rd Generation	9	7.9	5	12.8
4th or above Generation	45	39.4	16	41.0
Sexual Orientation Identity				
Gay	31	27.1	1	2.7
Lesbian	27	23.6	7	17.9
Bisexual	45	39.4	16	41.0
Pansexual	5	4.3	2	5.1
Queer	6	5.6	13	33.3
Gender Identity				
Transgender	0	0	18	46.2
Genderfluid	0	0	6	15.3
Non-Binary	0	0	15	38.5

Table 2.2 Correlations Cisgender

Bivariate Correlation with demographic variables for cisgender group.

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. IMS	—				
2. School Persistence	.145	—			
3. Age	-.118	.073	—		
4. First Generation[a]	-.015	.198*	-.087	—	
5. SES	.116	−.303**	.221*	.284**	—

N =114

[a] Point-biserial correlation used for this analysis.

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Table 2.3 Correlations Gender Expansive

Bivariate Correlation with demographic variables for gender expansive group.

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. IMS	—				
2. School Persistence	-.322*	—			
3.Age	-.102	.106	—		
4. First Generation[a]	-.250	.069	.071	—	
5. SES	-.063	−.130	.348*	.047	—

N =39

[a] Point-biserial correlation used for this analysis.

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Table 2.4 Moderation

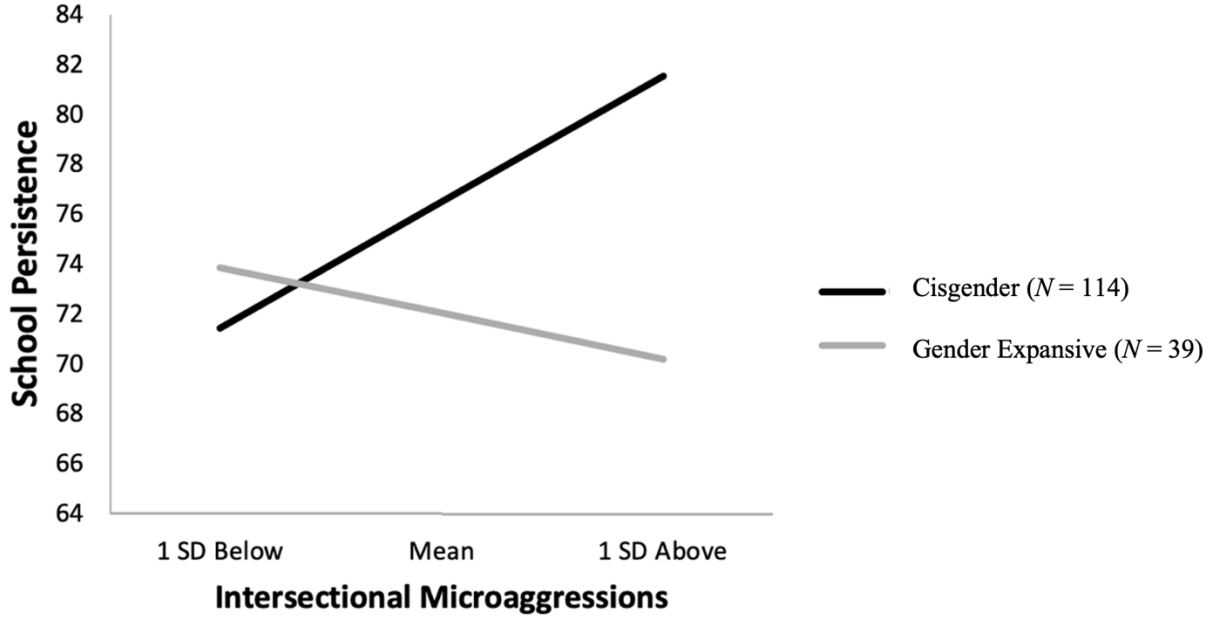
Cisgender Privilege Moderates School Persistence

Predictor	b	*p*	95% CI	
Intersectional Microaggressions (IM)	-.184	.009	-.322,	-.046
Gender Privilege*	-15.548	.045	-30.80	-.293
IM x Gender Privilege*	-.145	.008	-.252,	-.038

Overall Model: R^2 = .253, $F(3, 149) = 3.40$, p = .022
*Compared to Cisgender (N = 114)
Gender Expansive (N = 39)

Figures

Figure 2.1 Interaction



Interaction of Intersectional Microaggressions and Cisgender Privilege

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CHAPTER 3

Bridge

Barrita, Hixson and colleagues (2023) use an intersectional framework to examine the negative impact of intersectional microaggressions—everyday oppression—on educational outcomes among LGBTQ+ students of color. Specifically, this study explores how sexual and racial microaggressions affect the attitudes of LGBTQ+ BIPoC students toward school persistence while conducting a comparative analysis between cisgender and gender expansive students. Findings suggest that intersectional microaggressions negatively affect attitudes toward school persistence, and the burden of these common exchanges is even greater for gender expansive students of color. That is, cisgender privilege buffered the impact of intersectional microaggressions where significant interactions indicated that gender expansive students experiencing greater intersectional microaggressions reported less academic persistence compared to cisgender students, therefore showing higher vulnerability to the effects of intersectional oppression. Barrita, Hixson et al. (2023) also highlights the importance of using intersectional methods that can present specific findings within groups.

To expand on processes and mechanisms involved with the experience of racial microaggressions, a second independent study (Barrita, Hixson et al., 2023) was conducted to assess the impact of racial microaggressions among BIPOC adults residing in the U.S. and investigate how these groups engage in coping strategies such as drugs and alcohol use to cope with the psychological impact associated with these attacks. Combined, both studies unpacked processes and specificity of groups impacted by racial microaggressions.

CHAPTER 4

"Drugs and racial microaggressions: A mediation analysis of racism, psychological distress, and coping strategies"

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Abstract

Racial microaggressions are daily slights and denigrations perpetrated toward people of color (PoC). These forms of everyday racism are significant stressors for PoC and can insult, invalidate, and assault racial identities. Consensus of past findings on discrimination indicates a strong link between engagement in maladaptive behaviors (e.g., substance abuse and behavioral addictions) and perceived racism. Although the topic of racism is receiving more traction, there is still a dearth of knowledge on racial microaggressions and how these daily interactions can elicit negative coping behaviors, particularly substance use. The current study examined the relationship between microaggressions, substance use, and psychological distress symptoms. Specifically, we aimed to explore if PoC cope with racial microaggressions using drugs. We surveyed 557 PoC within the United States using an online platform. Participants answered questions related to their experiences with racial microaggressions, drug and alcohol use as coping strategies for discrimination, and self-reported mental health. Experiences with racial microaggressions were the main predictor variable and drug and alcohol use as a coping strategy was the main outcome variable. The psychological distress was tested as the main mediator for the relationship between racial microaggressions and drug and alcohol use. Findings indicated that microaggressions were a significant predictor of psychological distress symptoms, $B = .272$, $SE = .046$, $p < .001$, and psychological distress was a significant predictor of coping strategies that involved substance and alcohol use, $B = .102$, $SE = .021$, $p < .001$. Racial microaggressions were no longer a significant predictor of coping strategies that involved substance and alcohol use after controlling for psychological distress, $B = .027$, $SE = .024$, $p = .260$. In an exploratory approach, our model was further explained by assessing alcohol refusal self-efficacy which results suggest it to be a second mediator in the relation between racial microaggressions and

substance use. Overall, results suggest that racial discrimination exposes PoC to higher risks for both poor mental health and the misuse of substances.

Keywords: *racial microaggressions, psychological distress, substance use, coping strategies.*

Introduction

According to the American Psychological Association (APA; 2020), People of Color (PoC) in the United States (U.S.) constantly experience racism that negatively impacts their mental health and well-being. Racism is a centerpiece of the social determinant of the health framework for PoC, specifically for the sociocultural and environmental influences on the individual, interpersonal, community, and societal levels (Amaro et al., 2021). Socially based stressors, such as everyday forms of racism, have played a critical role in placing PoC more vulnerable and willing to use and misuse substances (Cunliffe, 2016). Relatedly, psychological distress has been associated with using substances such as alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (see Treur et al., 2021 for a review). According to the 2020 National Center for Drug Abuse Statistics, about 50% of the U.S. population over 12 years old has used illicit drugs at least once (NCDAS, 2020). Among PoC, 20.8% of Black or African American people, 17.4% of Latinx or Hispanic people, and 9.8% of Asian or Asian American people reported illicit drug use between 2015-2019 (SAMHSA, 2021). A glaring public health concern includes the disparities in receiving adequate treatment for substance use disorders (SUDs) among PoC (Farahmand et al., 2020). One factor that may influence the disparities in effective SUD treatment for marginalized groups includes inadequate training of counselors in cultural competency and racism-related stressors for PoC. Mainstream treatment plans for SUDs might not accurately assess previous experiences with racism for PoC and, as a result, uphold aspects of systematic racism and further perpetrate disparities in clinical practices (Montgomery et al., 2020). Furthermore, PoC are more likely to be legally prosecuted because of substance misuse compared to White people, limiting PoC's access to reliable and ethical treatment and resources (Mennis & Stahler, 2016). Several

studies have explored the relation between blatant and systemic forms of racism in the U.S. and the connections to substance use among PoC (see Farahmand et al., 2020 for a review).

Systemic racism has been related to higher alcohol and drug use levels, lower access to quality treatment, and lower treatment completion. Researchers have explored other less visible forms of racism often embedded within everyday exchanges, such as racial microaggressions and their relation to substance use problems. The links between racial microaggressions and distress have been established (see Barber et al., 2019 & Wong et al., 2014 for reviews) with causal evidence of physiological stress and lowered self-esteem (Wong-Padoongpatt et al., 2017). However, less is known about the relation between racial microaggressions, and substance use as a possible coping mechanism among PoC. Therefore, the main objective of the current study is to extend evidence-based knowledge about the relation between racial microaggressions, substance use coping behaviors for discrimination and psychological distress to build more competency among practitioners and clinicians treating PoC struggling with SUD.

Racial Microaggressions and Social Stress Theory

Racism-related experiences disproportionately burden and negatively impact PoC's well-being (APA, 2020), where the less visible and more ambiguous forms of oppression, such as racial microaggressions, become daily stressors (Sue et al., 2019). Racial microaggressions are common occurrences of racism folded into everyday exchanges. PoC receive messages of hostility, intolerance, and dehumanization, which are difficult to detect due to the covert nature of racial microaggressions (Sue et al., 2007). It is important to mention that PoC's experiences with racism may differ based on specific racial or ethnic identities. Furthermore, when considering other systems of oppression (e.g., heterosexism, classism) using an intersectional lens (Crenshaw, 2013), dehumanizing experiences such as microaggressions become unique and

different based on the individual's multiple identities. Black women, for example, are policed around how they display emotions such as anger and treated often as less intelligent or incompetent in work environments (Kilgore et al., 2020). Asian and Latinx American people are frequently racially profiled as foreigners and undocumented immigrants (Barrita et al., 2023; Wong-Padoongpatt et al., 2022). Almost every person of color has encountered at least one microaggression in their lifetime, with many PoC reporting daily experiences.

According to the social stress theory (Aneshensel, 1992), people with disadvantaged social status are burdened with additional and unique stressors (such as microaggressions), which are different from general stressors (such as traffic jams). According to the social determinant of health framework and social stress theory, consistent exposures to stressors can overwhelm psychosocial resources and make POC more vulnerable to maladaptive responses, such as substance use (Amaro et al., 2021). The cumulative stress from microaggressions might explain PoC's substance use specifically to cope with race-based discrimination. Coping frameworks, such as the prototype/willingness model (Gibbons et al., 2003), might further help explain PoC's substance use as a *reactive* coping mechanism when experiencing racism. The prototype/willingness model suggests two paths to health risk behaviors, particularly for young people: 1) the reasoned path, which is planful and deliberative, and 2) the social reaction path, which is quick and unplanned (Gibbons et al., 2003). Gibbons et al. (2010) tested the link between blatant racial discrimination and substance use among Black adolescents and found that racism-related experiences were an important predictor for psychological distress and social reactive path which were further associated with health risk behaviors, such as substance use. Specific social stressors can trigger quick and unplanned reactive risk behaviors (alcohol or drug engagement) as a coping mechanism (Amaro et al., 2021; Buckner et al., 2022; Gibbons et al.,

2010). According to the social stress theory, racial microaggressions might serve as additional stressors that can exacerbate the effects of the already-existing psychological distress from systemic oppression for PoC. Consequently, findings have shown that marginalized people undergoing experiences with discrimination will utilize coping strategies to reduce the psychological impact of these experiences (Amaro, 2021), and such strategies can positively or negatively alter the impact of racism. However, less is known about the overuse of coping strategies that can become harmful, such as the consumption of alcohol or drugs, and the connection with the psychological distress connected to racial microaggressions.

The literature on everyday forms of racism—racial microaggressions has provided substantial evidence highlighting its psychological harm. Racial microaggressions predict increases in depressive symptoms (Nadal et al., 2014), stress symptoms (Wong-Padoongpatt et al., 2020), and anxiety symptoms (Barrita, 2022). Furthermore, racial microaggressions can lead to internalized hate (see Lui & Quezada, 2019 for a review; Wong-Padoongpatt et al., 2022), and consistent encounters can result in racial battle fatigue (Franklin, 2016). PoC report using various coping strategies to neutralize the stressful impact of racism-related experiences. Sanchez et al. (2018), in a sample of Latinx and Asian American college students, found that more experiences with racial microaggressions were related to higher distress and more usage of coping strategies, such as engagement or disengagement. Among early adults, frequent incidents of racial microaggressions have been linked with lower attitudes toward college persistence (Barrita et al, 2023; Hernandez & Villodas, 2019), lower self-esteem (Thai et al., 2017), and lower resilience (Woods-Jaeger et al., 2021). Racial microaggressions are daily stressors that can be weaponized as unseen violence that can wear down PoC over time (Wong-Padoongpatt & Barrita, 2022), prolonging the racism-related psychological distress. While racism is harmful in all its forms,

racial microaggressions are particularly dangerous because of their ambiguous nature (Sue et al., 2007), making it harder to recognize and therefore have fewer coping strategies to counter their impact.

Using Substances to Cope with Racism

The abrupt and harmful impact racism has on PoC's mental health is not surprising. Yet, this social determinant of health is often minimized or not fully acknowledged in the healthcare agencies, such as substance use treatment facilities (Matsuzaka & Knapp 2020). Across several studies on substance use, systemic and blatant forms of racism have been linked to coping mechanisms that involve using alcohol and other drugs (see Farahmand et al., 2020 for a review). However, little is known about the less visible forms of oppression, such as racial microaggressions, impacting PoC. Studies on sexual minorities have shown that bisexual women compared to heterosexual or homosexual women report higher coping behaviors that involve drinking when experiencing LGBTQ microaggressions (Ehlke et al., 2022). Thus, it is hypothesize that PoC might similarly use substances to cope with the psychological stress connected to racial microaggressions.

Recent findings on blatant racism suggest that these discriminatory experiences can lead not only to emotional distress but also to coping mechanisms involving alcohol or other substances (Lee et al., 2021). Similarly, Buckner et al. (2022) found among Latinx American participants that everyday ethnic discriminatory experiences were associated with alcohol-addictive behaviors. These findings are significant considering that a systematic review (Treur et al., 2021) of 63 independent studies in substance addiction research found causal evidence where mental health disorders increased alcohol drinking behaviors among PoC. Thus, suggesting that PoC's substance use might be used as a coping mechanism to deal with the psychological

distress linked to discriminatory experiences. However, no previous studies have explicitly explored the relation between substance use as a coping strategy for the psychological impact behind racial microaggressions. Research on racial discrimination is critical in the current decade, given that some studies have highlighted an increase in racial tension in the U.S. post-2016 elections (Barrita, 2021), where Latinx American individuals have been persecuted around assumptions of immigration status (Barrita, et al 2023), and more recently during the COVID-19 pandemic where anti-Asian sentiment blatantly increased (Cheng et al., 2021; Wong-Padoongpatt et al., 2022). Thus, our study aimed to assess experiences with novel forms of racial microaggressions impacting PoC in the U.S.

Self-efficacy behaviors around intentionally avoiding the misuse of substances are important coping strategies to consider. Alcohol refusal self-efficacy is the ability to abstain from drinking alcohol across different situations (Oei et al., 1998). Previous studies involving alcohol consumption have shown that these attitudes to refuse drinking alcohol can predict changes in the actual behavior, where higher self-efficacy predicts lower engagement in alcohol consumption (Oei et al., 2005). However, alcohol refusal self-efficacy has shown to be less effective for some PoC. For example, Shih et al. (2012) explored cultural values in connection with alcohol initiation and alcohol refusal and found that Black and Latinx Americans, compared to Asian and White American adolescents, reported higher levels of alcohol initiation when lower levels of alcohol refusal were reported. Similarly, another study (Shih et al., 2010) found Latinx American adults, compared to Asian and White Americans, reported lower levels of alcohol refusal self-efficacy, which were associated with higher engagement in alcohol consumption. For our study, we explore how alcohol refusal might have an influence on our PoC sample, given previous findings. As we consider the psychological distress reported by PoC from

racism in general, and more specifically from racial microaggressions, and take into consideration current statistics in the U.S. for PoC using illicit drugs and alcohol, one should wonder to what extent PoC are using substances to cope with the experience and impact from racial microaggressions.

Present Study

This study explored PoC ‘s experiences with racial microaggressions related to psychological distress and behaviors involving using alcohol or other drugs to cope with such oppression. We first assessed if racial microaggressions predicted psychological distress and coping behaviors involving substance use based on previous findings. Next, using a mediation model, we explored if psychological distress serves as a mechanism by which racial microaggressions predict coping substance use to cope with racism. The scholarship on racism and substance use has focused on more overt and systemic forms of oppression, and less quantitative research has focused on covert racism, such as microaggressions. For our study, we hypothesized:

(H1): Racial microaggressions will predict more psychological distress symptoms.

(H2): Racial microaggressions will predict more substance use to cope with racism.

(H3): Psychological distress symptoms will mediate the relation between racial microaggressions, and substance use to cope with racism.

We also assessed how alcohol refusal self-efficacy related to our mediation model in an exploratory approach using Hayes’ (2012) serial mediation model. Specifically, we tested if racial microaggressions predicted a change in alcohol refusal self-efficacy and if alcohol refusal served as a second mediator for the relation between racial microaggressions, psychological distress symptoms, and substance use to cope with racism.

Methods

Participants and Procedure

The current online study assessed experiences with racial microaggressions, coping strategies for discrimination, and symptoms of depression, anxiety, and depression. The data was collected in the Summer of 2020 (May to August). We recruited 570 participants who self-identified as U.S. residents through an online survey using Qualtrics®, promoted on social media and listservs. Participants were recruited using a convenience method from three sources: 1) Facebook users who agreed to participate in the study based on a flier advertised through the research lab's Facebook page, 2) undergrad students at a southwest university taking Psychology 101 and participating for class credit, and 3) participants who accepted an email invitation that was sent to academic, professional, and non-profit listservs. The inclusion criteria to participate was a) be 18 years or older, b) currently live in the U.S., c) be fluent (write/read) in the English language as all measures were presented in English, and d) identify as a racial or ethnic minority (e.g., Latinx, Asian, Black, Native American). The survey included a consent form, demographics, quantitative measures, and a debriefing part with additional resources. The average time of participation was 30 mins. Thirteen participants (2.29%) were dropped for failure to complete attention check questions accurately, leaving a final sample of 557 participants whose ages ranged from 18 to 72 years old (M_{age} = 23.55, SD = 8.74).

Our final sample was primarily composed of cis-women (n = 401; 72.0%), 141 were cis-men (25.3%), 8 self-identified as non-conforming (1.4%), 4 as non-binary (0.7%), and 3 as trans-men (0.6%). The racial breakdown of our sample was 254 Non-White Latinx or Hispanic American (45.6%), 169 Asian, Asian American or Pacific Islander (30.3%), 91 Black or African American (16.3%), 23 Middle Eastern (4.1%) and 5 Native American (0.9%). Around gender,

401 participants self-identified as cis-women (72.0%), 141 as cis-men (25.3%) and 15 as gender expansive (2.7%). Our sample included 425 people who self-identified as heterosexual (76.3%), 35 as gay or lesbian (6.3%), 57 as bisexual (10.2%), 25 as queer (4.5%), 13 as pansexual (2.3%) and 2 as asexual (0.4%) See Table 4.1 for other full demographic information.

Measures

Demographics: Participants provided demographic information such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual identity, immigrant generation, education, and socioeconomic status.

Racial Microaggressions. The Racial and Ethnic Microaggressions Scale (REMS; Nadal, 2011) assessed the participants' experiences with racial microaggressions. The REMS is a 45-item self-report instrument that measures the frequency of racial microaggressions experienced in the last six months. REMS includes items such as "Someone assumed I was not intelligent because of my race" to assess everyday experiences with racism. REMS is divided into six microaggression subscales: 1) Assumptions of Inferiority, 2) Second-Class Citizen, 3) Microinvalidations, 4) Exoticization, 5) Environmental Microaggressions, and 6) Workplace / School Microaggressions. For each item, the participants reported frequency using a 6-point Likert scale that ranges from 0 (*I did not experience this event*) to 5 (*I experienced this event five or more times*). Higher scores suggested a higher frequency of experiences with racial microaggressions. REMS showed strong reliability for the current sample with an $\alpha = .95$, similar to other studies using similar PoC samples (Barrita, 2021; Nadal, 2011).

Psychological Distress. The Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS-21; Antony et al., 1998) assessed the participants' levels of psychological distress. The DASS-21 includes 21 items that measure depression, anxiety, and stress symptoms. Items include statements such as "I felt that I

had nothing to look forward to." For each item, participants reported the frequency of the described symptom or emotion using a four-point Likert-type ordered categorical scale from 0 (*Did not apply to me at all*) to 4 (*Applied to me most of the time*). Higher scores suggested more symptoms of depression, stress, and anxiety. DASS showed strong reliability for the current sample with an $\alpha = .94$, which compares to other similar studies (Barrita, 2021; Torres-Harding et al., 2020).

Coping Racism with Alcohol/Drugs. The Coping with Discrimination-Drugs/Alcohol subscale (CDS-DA; Wei et al., 2010) is a 5-item measure that assesses participants' substance use behaviors as a coping strategy when experiencing discrimination. CDC-DA is a subfactor of a 5-factor (25-items) scale that measures different coping strategies when experiencing discrimination. The factor for *drug and alcohol use* was specifically chosen for this analysis as our dependent variable. Items in this factor include statements such as "I use drugs or alcohol to take my mind off things." For each item, participants reported how much they identified each strategy as a way they typically cope when experiencing discrimination using a six-point Likert-type ordered categorical scale from 0 (*never like me*) to 6 (*Always like me*). Higher scores suggested more likelihood of using alcohol or drugs as a coping strategy. CDC-DA showed strong reliability for the current sample with an $\alpha = .88$, whereas the entire CDC showed reliability of $\alpha = .87$, which compares to other similar studies (Wei et al., 2010).

Drinking Refusal. The Drinking Refusal Self-Efficacy Questionnaire-Revised scale (DRSEQ-R; Oei et al., 2005) is a 19-item measure that assesses participants' self-efficacy to refuse drinking alcohol based on different circumstances. Participants are asked to report how likely they are to resist or not drink alcohol based on each scenario using a six-point Likert-type ordered categorical scale from 0 (*I am very sure I could NOT resist drinking*) to 6 (*I am very sure I could*

resist drinking). Scenarios in the scale include statements such as "When I feel upset" or "When I am feeling down." Higher scores suggested more self-efficacy to resist drinking alcohol. DRSEQ-R showed strong reliability for the current sample with an $\alpha = .92$, similar to other studies (Shih et al., 2012).

Analysis

We used SPSS Version 28 to analyze our data. After conducting preliminary analyses on sample statistics and assumption checks, we ran various linear regressions to assess if the frequency of racial microaggressions was a significant predictor of psychological distress (H1) and substance use to cope with racism (H2). Additionally, we used PROCESS 3.5 (Hayes, 2012) to run a single model bootstrap approach mediation analysis (Model 4) to test psychological distress as a mediator for the relation between racial microaggressions and substance use to cope with racism. Finally, in an exploratory approach, we expanded our mediation model and tested if alcohol refusal self-efficacy served as a second mediator using Hayes' Model 6 (2012) serial mediation analysis.

Results

Preliminary Analysis

Preliminary analyses showed our data had normal distribution and no significant outliers for our main continuous variables (e.g., racial microaggressions, psychological distress, substance use to cope with racism, and alcohol refusal). Similarly, we checked for homoscedasticity, independence of error, and multicollinearity finding no issues with our data. Frequencies around gender showed three-quarters of our sample were cis-women. Thus, we conducted various chi-squares to assess if scores reported for our main continuous variables significantly differed for cis women; results showed no significant differences. The racial

distribution was not equally distributed for all groups; therefore, we decided to control for this variable in the main analyses.

A Pearson's bivariate correlation showed SES was significantly associated with psychological distress (r = -.145, p < .001), that is higher SES was associated with less psychological distress. Similarly, age was significantly associated with racial microaggressions (r = -.203, p < .001), whereas older adults had fewer experiences with racial microaggressions. Based on preliminary analysis, we decided to keep age, SES, gender, and race/ethnicity as covariates for our main analyses. Among our main continuous variables, a Pearson's bivariate correlation (Table 4.2) showed racial microaggressions have a statistically significant and positive association with psychological distress (r = .243, p < .01), a significant and positive association with substance use to cope with racism (r = .098, p < .05), and significant and negative association with alcohol refusal self-efficacy (r = -.101, p < .01).

Do racial microaggressions predict psychological distress and substance use to cope with racism?

Two individual linear regressions, controlling for age, SES, gender, and racial/ethnic identity showed that racial microaggressions significantly predict psychological distress (H1) and substance use to cope with racism (H2). The first model reported a significant effect F(5,551) = 10.26, p < .001, R^2 = .29, where the frequency of racial microaggressions was a significant predictor (B = .256, SE = .046, p < .001) for psychological distress. The second model reported a significant effect F(5,551) = 7.29, p < .01, R^2 = .09, where racial microaggressions were a significant predictor (B = .540, SE = .024, p < .05) for substance use to cope with racism.

Does psychological distress mediate the relation between racial microaggressions, and substance use to cope with racism?

We tested our H3 using a mediation analysis with recommended bootstrapping procedure PROCESS macro-Model 4 (Hayes, 2012), where 5,000 bootstrap samples were used in the analysis. Similar to our linear regression analysis, mediation analysis results indicated racial microaggressions were a significant predictor for psychological distress, $B = .272$, $SE = .046$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.181, .363], psychological distress was a significant predictor for substance use to cope with racism, $B = .102$, $SE = .021$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.060, .144]. Results support the full mediational hypothesis (see Figure 4.1). Microaggression was no longer a significant predictor of substance use after controlling for psychological distress, $B = .027$, $SE = .024$, $p = .260$, 95% CI [-.020, .074], consistent with full mediation. Approximately 11% of the variance in our model was accounted for by the predictors ($R^2 = .110$). The procedure yielded a significant coefficient, $B = .055$, $SE = .024$, $p < .05$ with 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals that did not include zero [.008, .102]. Thus, H3 was supported.

Alcohol refusal self-efficacy was assessed as a second mediator using PROCESS macro-Model 6 (Hayes, 2012) serial mediator (see Figure 4.2). Results showed that alcohol refusal self-efficacy was a second mediator where the procedure yielded a significant coefficient $B = .056$, $SE = .026$, $p < .05$ with 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals that did not include zero [.004, .108]. All paths in Model 6 were statistically significant except for one; racial microaggressions were not a predictor for alcohol refusal. These results suggest that a) alcohol refusal self-efficacy does not independently mediate the relation between racial microaggressions, and substance use to cope with racism, b) both psychological distress and alcohol refusal self-efficacy collectively mediate the relation between racial microaggression and substance use, and c) based on effects for each mediator, psychological distress was the most important mediator in our final model.

Discussion and Implications

The current findings present novel knowledge about the relation between racial microaggressions, mental health, substance use coping strategies, and refusal self-efficacy. H1 was supported and replicated previous findings where racial microaggression experiences predict an increase in psychological distress (Barrita et al., 2023; Nadal, 2011; Wong-Padoongpatt et al., 2022). Similarly, results further supported H2 suggesting that racial microaggressions predict an increase in substance use to cope with racism. The mediation model testing H3, expands on these results and highlights a pathway where the psychological distress from experiencing racial microaggressions is what truly predicts (mediates) an increase in coping mechanism that involve alcohol or substance use. Previous research has shown that when PoC experience other forms of racism (e.g., systemic, institutional, blatant), they also report using alcohol and drugs to cope (Buckner et al., 2021; Lee et al., 2021), and this coping strategy is connected to psychological distress (Treur et al., 2021). The current study is among the first to assess the psychological impact from less visible forms of racism, such as racial microaggression, revealing similar results where substance use is utilized as a coping strategy. Furthermore, current findings coincide with the social stress theory (Amaro et al., 2021; Aneshensel, 1992), providing evidence that milder forms of racism, such as racial microaggressions, can be associated with both psychological distress and maladaptive behaviors such as substance use. Given how frequently PoC experience racial microaggressions (APA, 2020), the current findings highlight the connection between one of the most common forms of racism PoC experience in the U.S. (Sue et al., 2019), its cost on wellbeing, and coping strategies that involve alcohol or drugs, which suggests important implications around use of substances for PoC and more specifically important considerations for those in SUD treatment.

Previous research has found independent connections between racial microaggressions and psychological distress (see Choi et al., 2020 for a review) and psychological distress and substance use to cope with racism (Treur et al., 2022). Yet, the relation between these three variables, to our knowledge, has never been studied. The mediation analysis supported H3 and demonstrated that psychological distress symptoms mediated the relation between racial microaggressions and substance use. That is, as PoC experience racial microaggressions, they also experience psychological distress which predicts an increase in maladaptive coping strategies such as substance use. This finding is key in substance use treatment, as racial-related experiences, and their impact on wellbeing, are rarely considered when assessing PoC' SUD history (Matsuzaka & Knapp 2020). The mediator measured symptoms of depression, anxiety, and stress, and the results indicated that racial microaggressive experiences were a significant predictor for such symptoms, and these symptoms were associated with higher coping strategies involving substance use. Clinicians and practitioners treating mental health symptoms or SUD among PoC should consider the current findings as an indicator that the psychological impact associated with racist experiences could also be related to such disorders. Additionally, in an exploratory fashion, the current study assessed the level to which alcohol refusal self-efficacy influenced our initial model, using a serial mediator model (Hayes, 2012), given previous findings have found differences among PoC (Shih et al., 2012). The results suggest that alcohol refusal should also be considered in combination with psychological distress when assessing coping strategies that involve substance use to counter racial microaggressions. These findings support the prototype/willingness model (Gibbons et al., 2003; Gibbons et al., 2010) and suggest PoC might engage in risky health behaviors such as alcohol or drug consumption as an

unplanned reactive path when experiencing distress from everyday racism. Thus, clinical interventions for PoC who might misuse alcohol or other drugs should consider assessing if such risky behaviors are a reactive response to cope with the psychological distress associated with experiences of racism.

The results of the current study suggest that racial microaggressions negatively affect mental health symptomatology and increase the probability of using coping strategies such as substance use among PoC. Although the present study did not look at the level of substance use and impairment in life functioning, research suggests that increased substance use can have deleterious effects on an individual's health (World Health Organization [WHO], 2004; Rehm et al., 2010) and mental well-being (WHO, 2004; Castaneda et al., 1996). These negative effects are particularly important to consid'r as previous research suggests that PoC are significantly more likely to "drop out" of treatment (Carpenter-Song et al., 2011; Dobalian & Rivers, 2008), receive psychological distress treatment (Olfson et al., 2009), and have less access to mental health services compared to White Americans (Lasser et al., 2002). These barriers in treatment are particularly important to consider as PoC are more likely to experience exacerbated mental health symptomatology due to systemic inequalities decreasing the quality of care received (McCuistian et al., 2022; see Smedley et al., 2003 for a review). Clinicians should consider integrating history of racial microaggressions, as well as assess the psychological cost from these experiences in clinical practice to improve treatment outcomes. Indeed, research has found that validating and processing experiences of racism in the psychotherapy room have increased patients' self-esteem and positive coping skills (McKernan, 2020). The integration of microaggressions in the treatment of substance use is also crucial, as there are high dropout rates

for the treatment of substance users and PoC (Lappan et al., 2020). The current findings suggest that clinicians should consider assessing racial microaggressions' psychological impact on PoC who use alcohol or other substances as a coping mechanism. Furthermore, clinical interventions for PoC clients should include strategies that directly counter past, current, and future experiences with racial microaggressions, given that these experiences are ongoing. Other interventions focused on increasing coping for external stressors, including economic burdens and interpersonal relationships (Gregoire & Snively, 2001), improve treatment adherence. It may be that integrating racial microaggressions' past experiences into treatment may also increase treatment adherence; however, more research is needed to categorize further the relationship between the integration of racial microaggressions in addiction treatment.

Limitations and Future Research

This current study presents several important limitations. First, causal relations cannot be uniformly established, given the cross-sectional nature of the study. The mediation approach assumes theoretically that racial microaggressions occurred before psychological distress and coping strategies; however, the single time-point assessment cannot confirm the temporal precedence of the variables. Future studies should consider experimental or longitudinal methods to test for causal relationships and explore how these effects change over time. Additionally, the combining of the different racial and ethnic groups into one sample to conduct the main analysis, limits the results' interpretation for specific groups. Future research should explore the particular nuance of these racial and ethnic groups. Next, while preliminary analysis showed no major concerns around main demographic variables, the results should be considered conservatively around generalizability, given the sample was composed primarily of cis-women, early adults,

and people who had access to the survey via email or social media. Similarly, the sample was collected online using convenience method, which sets limitations to the interpretation of the results. Future studies should collect more diverse and representative samples for this research line. Finally, the measures did not clinically assess substance use or psychological disorders, limiting the results' interpretations for substance use treatment practices. Future research using clinical trials treating PoC with SUD should consider controlling for inclusion or exclusion of history with racial microaggressions when assessing and developing treatment plans.

Conclusion

The study is one of the first to explore the relation between racial microaggressions and coping strategies for racism involving alcohol or drugs and consider the influence psychological distress and self-efficacy have on them. Specifically, the findings suggest that harmful experiences among PoC, such as racial microaggressions, are connected to coping strategies that can, over time, become similarly harmful such as the addiction to alcohol or drugs. Thus, racial microaggressive experiences should be considered for PoC when assessing alcohol or drug use in treatment.

Tables

Table 4.1 Demographics

Demographic Characteristics

Demographics	*n*	*%*
Gender		
Cis women	401	72.0
Cis men	141	25.3
Non-conforming	8	1.4
Non-binary	4	0.7
Trans-men	3	0.6
Ethnicity/Race		
Non-White Latinx or Hispanic	254	45.6
Asian, Asian American or Pacific Islander	169	30.3
Black or African American	91	16.3
Middle Eastern	23	4.1
Native American	5	0.9
Education		
At least High School or GED	187	33.4
Some college but no degree	208	37.3
Associate Degree (2-year college)	35	6.4
Bachelor's Degree	49	8.8
Master's Degree or Higher	78	14.1
Sexual Orientation		
Heterosexual	425	76.3
Gay or Lesbian	35	6.3
Bisexual	57	10.2
Queer	25	4.5
Pansexual	13	2.3
Asexual	2	0.4

Note: N = 557.
M_{age} = 23.55 years old (*SD* = 8.74)
M_{SES} = 5.49 (*SD* = 1.57) using a self-rated scale 1 to 10 for socioeconomic status

Table 4.2 Correlation

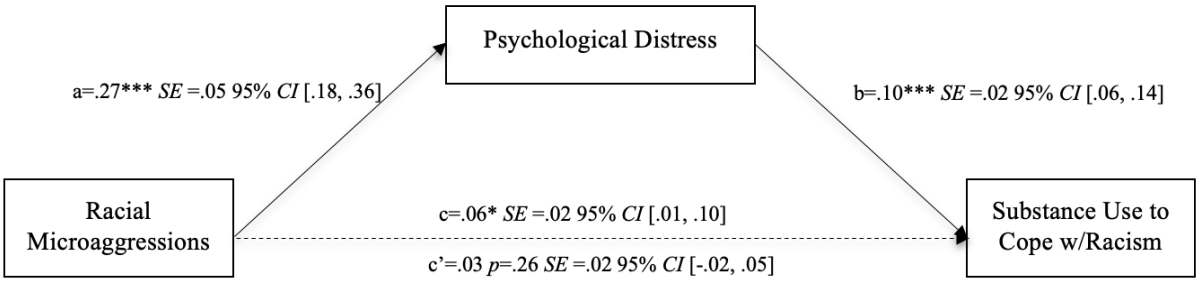
Bivariate correlation for main variables

Variable	1	2	3	4
1. Racial microaggressions	—			
2. Psychological Distress	.24**	—		
3. Substance Use	.10*	.22**	—	
4. Alcohol Refusal	-.10*	−.20**	-.48**	—

N =557
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

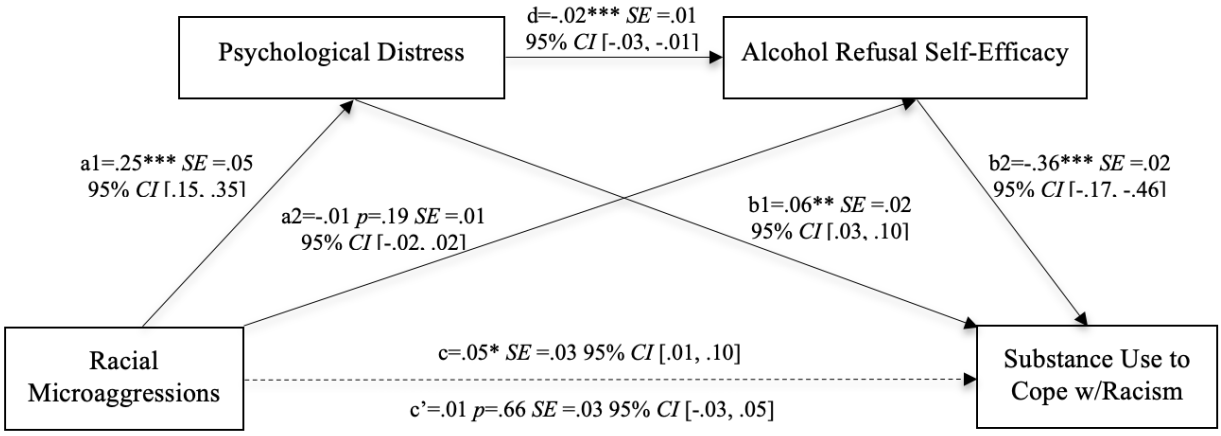
Figures

Figure 4.1 Mediation



A mediation model of racial microaggressions and coping strategies that involve substances through psychological distress. Unstandardized regression coefficients for the relationship between racial microaggressions and coping with substances as mediated by psychological distress. Covariates: age, SES, racial/ethnic identity, and gender.
*p<.05. **p<.01. ***p<.001

Figure 4.2 Serial Mediation



A serial mediation model of racial microaggressions and substance use to cope with racism through psychological distress and alcohol refusal self-efficacy. Standardized regression coefficients for the relationship between racial microaggressions and substance use to cope with racism as mediated by psychological distress and alcohol refusal. Covariates: age, SES, racial/ethnic identity, and gender.
*p<.05. **p<.01. ***p<.001

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CHAPTER 5

Bridge

Barrita, Strong, and colleagues (2023) incorporate mediation analyses to examine how racial microaggressions influence coping strategies that involve using alcohol or substances among BIPOC in the U.S. Specifically, using a national sample collected online, the frequency of racial microaggressions is assessed and linked with engagement of alcohol or drugs consumption as a coping strategy. The mediation analysis's results suggested that this relationship is best explained by considering the psychological distress associated with racial microaggressions. As such, findings present evidence that everyday racism exposes BIPOC to a higher risk for both psychological distress and misuse of substances or alcohol. Important implications from this study include novel findings around the impact of racial microaggressions that could be linked to substance or alcohol use disorders among BIPOC communities, which suggests that practitioners and clinicians treating these groups consider and assess the history of these types of oppressive experiences. This second study highlights mechanisms and coping strategies closely related to the impact of racial microaggressions, an objective of this dissertation, which speaks to broader concerns around the health and well-being of marginalized groups.

In the next third study, Barrita, Chang, and Wong-Padoongpatt (2023), I expand on this objective by focusing on other types of coping strategies, such as internalization, and highlight the specificity of which groups are impacted by also a specific form of racial microaggression linked to immigration status oppression in the U.S. using a college sample of Latinx and Asian students.

CHAPTER 6

"Assumptions of immigration status: A moderated mediation analysis of racial microaggressions and internalization impacting Latinx and Asian college students."

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Abstract

Racial oppression in the United States has changed many forms post-2016 elections, including anti-immigrant sentiments towards highly visible immigrant communities, such as Latinx and Asian people. The weaponization of immigration status against Latinx and Asian people in the U.S. has increased drastically post-2016 and equity researchers have responded with scholarship primarily addressing the systemic and macro levels of these oppressive behaviors. Less is known during this period about the shifts of everyday racism-related attacks — such as racial microaggressions. Racial microaggressions are daily stressors that can severely impact the targets' well-being and people of color often engage in coping strategies to disarm and neutralize these stressors. The internalization of these degrading and stereotypical messages is a common coping strategy with people of color adopting these negative images into their self-view. Using a sample ($N = 436$) collected in the Fall of 2020, we unpack the relationships between immigration status microaggressions, psychological distress, and internalization among Latinx and Asian college students. We compared the frequencies of immigration status microaggressions and psychological distress between Latinx and Asian respondents. We used a conditional (moderated mediation) process model to explore possible significant interactions. Our findings suggested that Latinx, compared to Asian students, significantly reported more experiences of immigration status microaggressions and psychological distress. A mediation analysis showed that internalizing coping strategies partially mediated the relationship between immigration status microaggressions and poor well-being. Finally, a moderated mediation model's results highlighted that being Latinx moderated the positive relationship between immigration status microaggressions and psychological distress through internalization.
Keywords: *immigration status, microaggressions, foreigner, Latinx, Asian*

Introduction

Racial tension in the United States (U.S.) has increased post-2016 elections (Pew Research, 2017) for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPoC). The Trump administration played a major role in endorsing and promoting new waves of anti-immigrant rhetoric (Gomez & Perez Huber, 2019) that depicted harmful categorizations of those perceived as immigrants in the U.S. (Barrita, 2021), such as Latinx and Asian people. It is important to note that we included immigrant and U.S.-born groups in our narrative and study of Latinx and Asian communities. The highly charged and politicized concerns around the U.S. borders and immigration have further sparked the criminalization of specific ethnic or racial communities, particularly Latinx people around immigration status (Chavez, 2013; Villazor & Johnson, 2019). Researchers on racism against BIPoC have highlighted how Latinx and Asian people have been constantly *othered* as immigrants and foreigners in the U.S. despite their nationality (Constante et al., 2021; Museusf & Park, 2015). The perpetual foreigner stereotype (Huynh et al., 2011), for example, is a commonly reported controlling image of Asians residing in the U.S. that depicts this community as unable to assimilate into American culture; therefore, not 'true' Americans (Devos & Banaji, 2005). Similarly, Latinx people in the U.S. are constantly racialized as unwanted immigrants and a threat to the U.S. economy and society (Barrita, 2021; Chavez, 2013). These anti-immigrant sentiments have been historically shared between Latinx and Asian people residing in the U.S. Latinx communities, however, have faced a steep shift in criminalization of the immigration process with recent changes at the south border preventing access for refugees and immigrant groups from specific Latinx countries, family separations at retention centers and media's reinforcement of a Latinx threat. Everyday microaggressions may be commonplace

manifestations of these anti-immigrant sentiments; thus, more work is needed to unpack how immigration status microaggressions can impact the psychological well-being of targets.

Racial microaggressions are daily derogatory and degrading racism-related attacks that can invalidate, insult, and assault BIPoC (Sue et al., 2007). Much work has been done to further categorize the different microaggressions into themes, such as the microinvalidation theme of color-blindness and the microinsult theme of assumed intelligence (see Wong et al., 2014 for review). The current study will center on the microaggression theme of *alien in one's own land*— a microinvalidation that shares key aspects with the aforementioned perpetual foreigner stereotype. These othering experiences based on the assumed country of origin have been shown to elicit psychological distress (Nadal, 2011), physiological stress (Wong-Padoongpatt et al., 2020), and lower self-esteem (Wong-Padoongpatt et al., 2017: Wong-Padoongpatt & Barrita 2022b). That said, less is known about the impact of immigration status microaggressions, where the target is not only seen as an unassimilable foreigner but also a threatening criminal (e.g., assumptions of illegality). Immigration status has been systematically weaponized against BIPoC in the U.S. at the macro (institutional) level (Flores & Schachter, 2018); moreover, BIPoC have reported more immigration status-related attacks post-2016 at the micro (interpersonal) level in the form of racial microaggressions (Barrita, 2021).

Racial microaggressions, and other forms of racism, can be highly stressful for BIPoC and consequently, lead to BIPoC's engagement in unhealthy coping strategies (Barrita et al., 2023; Wei et al., 2010), including believing and internalizing these degrading messages (Wong-Padoongpatt et al., 2022a; Wong-Padoongpatt & Barrita, 2022a). Internalized racism is closely connected to lower collective self-esteem, lower self-worth, and overall poorer mental health (see David et al., 2019, for a review). As anti-immigrant sentiments continue to shift and

increase in the U.S., it is important to pinpoint the specific mechanisms and conditions by which these racism-related attacks affect mental well-being. The current study, therefore, explored the microaggressions of assumed immigration status that included criminalization and alienation among Latinx and Asian college students in the U.S. Specifically, we examined the race-related differences of these microaggressions and how these attacks were associated with internalizing coping strategies and psychological distress.

"Alien in One's Own Land" Racial Microaggressions for Latinx and Asian people

Numerous events in U.S. history have firmly cast Latinx and Asian people as perpetual foreigners and unassimilable immigrants. After the end of the Mexican-American War in 1848, the U.S. forcibly acquired Mexican territory and fostered an anti-Mexican environment that left Latinx people as sudden foreigners in their homeland (Chavez, 2013). Decades later, the U.S. would put forth its first significant law restricting migration—the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act—which barred Chinese people from migrating to the U.S. and prevented Chinese immigrants from becoming naturalized citizens (Kil, 2012). Donald Trump signed a series of executive orders in 2017 that expanded immigration officers' authority to detain and deport undocumented immigrants, with the intention of targeting BIPoC communities (Kopan, 2017). On October 5, 2022, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) was illegal, which impacted over 600,000 immigrants—mostly Latinx and Asian students (Sullivan, 2022). These institutional-level regulations have motivated researchers to better address and understand the impact of these pivotal moments on the racial realities of Latinx and Asian People. Barrita (2021), for example, developed a quantitative measure that captures immigration status microaggressions and found that Latinx and Asian people reported the highest levels of this type of aggression in the U.S. compared to other groups, such as Black

and Middle Eastern people. Similarly, changes in immigration policies post-2016 have been linked to higher stress and poorer well-being for both immigrant and U.S.-born Latinx people in the U.S. (Gomez & Perez Huber, 2019).

Consensus in research findings on racism indicate that Latinx and Asian people experience the perpetual foreigner stereotype in various forms (Huynh et al., 2011; Museus & Park, 2015). For instance, Latinx and Asian college students have felt excluded and unwelcomed in moments when White professors and students questioned their English proficiency and country of origin — despite many being born in the U.S. (Ballinas, 2017; Museus & Park, 2015). During the COVID-19 pandemic, Asian people experienced an increase in microaggressions in the form of microassaults (Cheng et al., 2022; Wong-Padoongpatt et al., 2022bc) which mirrored the anti-Chinese and anti-foreigner sentiments firmly endorsed by the Trump administration (i.e., "China virus" and "Kung Flu"). Daley et al. (2022) found that White People who blamed China for the COVID-19 pandemic were likely to rate Asian people as less American and more foreign. In a sample of Latinx and Asian college students, Huynh and colleague (2011) found those who endorsed the perpetual foreigner stereotype also showed identity conflict, lower sense of belonginess to America and consequently reported greater symptoms of depression, lower life satisfaction and hope. Latinx people in the U.S., similarly, showed higher anxiety levels during governmental endorsements of anti-immigrant executive orders and moments of high anti-Latinx political climate (Jones et al., 2019). Overall, these findings suggest that perpetual foreigner stereotypes and anti-foreigner sentiments are commonly related to racial microaggressions targeting Latinx and Asian people in the U.S (Wong-Padoongpatt et al., 2022c).

Racial Position Model, Internalized Oppression and LatCrit

Latinx and Asian people report similar experiences around being racialized as a (sometimes unwanted) foreigner, however criminalizing labels (e.g., “illegal”, “invader”) are reported more constantly by Latinx communities compared to Asian (Jones et al., 2019). Much of the earlier scholarship on racism focused solely on the Black/White binary, leaving Latinx and Asian communities less visible in the discussions of racial oppression (Zou & Cheryan, 2017). More recently, scholars have constructed racial positionality models to understand and situate Latinx and Asian communities on different dimensions of racism-related sentiments. Zou and Cheryan’s Racial Position Model (RPM; 2017) builds on previous scholarships, like racial triangulation theory (Kim, 1999), and creates theoretical space for Latinx and Asian communities in the understanding of racism. RPM presents a two-dimension model that helps visualize differences around systems of power and systems of oppression among the four largest ethnic/racial groups in the U.S. The dimensions included are: 1) perceived inferiority and 2) perceived cultural foreignness; where communities can either be perceived as having high or low perceptions. The perceived inferiority dimension suggests that racial groups, such as Asian and White people, are seen as academically, socially, and financially superior. The cultural foreignness dimension – mirroring the aforementioned perpetual foreigner stereotype – describes a process of social distancing, where White culture is set as the American prototype and anything outside that norm is seen as foreign. Latinx and Asian people share the same typology on the perceived cultural foreignness dimension and categorized as more foreign compared to White and Black people (Zou & Cheryan, 2017). Latinx and Asian people, however, do not share the same typology regarding perceived inferiority dimension with Asian people being perceived as superior (like White People) and Latinx people perceived as inferior (like Black People). The current study used RPM as a framework in exploring the differences

around immigration status microaggression among the Latinx and Asian people – two communities that have historically shared the perceived foreignness stereotypes. We hypothesized that the differences in the perceived inferiority dimension will serve as a key variation in stress-related experiences between Latinx and Asian people. Specifically, it is assumed that Latinx people will experience more psychological distress compared to Asian people.

One unfortunate consequence of racism is that BIPoC tend to internalize and believe stereotypical messages about their racial groups (see David et al., 2019 for a review). According to the Internalized Oppression Theory (IOT), oppression might be internalized in the form of self-defeating cognitions, attitudes, and behaviors developed from oppressive environments (David, 2013, pg. 14). BIPoC, for example, might internalize messages of racial inferiority to the degree that perpetrators do not need to be physically presented to activate BIPoC's self-assessments of inferiority (David et al., 2019). Previous studies have found Latinx people reported higher levels of psychological distress associated with immigration-related racial microaggressions (Barrita, 2021). Further building on OIT (David, 2013), we assessed how internalized racism relates to immigration status microaggressions and psychological distress.

We incorporated the Latinx Critical Theory (LatCrit) to highlight the specific oppression Latinx individuals experience in the U.S. (Solorzano & Bernall., 2001). LatCrit is a lens that draws attention to Latinx communities' experiences with discrimination based on racialized characteristics, such as language, ethnicity, culture, and immigration (Solorzano & Bernall, 2001). This theory highlights the unique ways in which Latinx people experience racism, such as being perceived as undocumented immigrants (Barrita, 2021; Huber, 2011). Chavez (2013) suggests that Latinx people have historically been seen as a threat to White people given the

continued population growth of Latinx in the U.S. (Chavez, 2013). The U.S. media and former administration portrayals of Latinx people reinforce these stereotypical images of "illegal" immigrants or "invaders" (López-Sanders & Brown, 2020; Gomez & Perez Huber, 2019). Thus, it is likely that Latinx people are currently experiencing more racial attacks based on assumptions of immigration status compared to other racial and ethnic groups.

Psychological Impact of Racial Microaggressions

Researchers examining the effects of racial microaggressions have found strong evidence that these exchanges have a detrimental impact on psychological and physiological well-being (Abreu et al. 2023; Barrita et al, 2023a; Barrita et al., 2023b; Wong-Padoongpatt & Barrita, 2022a). For instance, Wong-Padoongpatt et al. (2017) experimentally tested the causal effects of microaggressions and found that Asian people who experienced a racial microaggression about English abilities showed increased physiological stress. In a study on adolescents, Huynh (2012) found that Latinx and Asian people who reported more experiences with racial microaggressions were also likely to have significantly more depressive and somatic symptoms. Ogunyemi et al. (2019) conducted a systematic review of microaggressions within higher education and found that more experiences with racial microaggressions were related to a lower sense of belonging, lower expectations from faculty, more questioning around academics, more experiences of being ridiculed, more often ignored, and more feelings of invisibility. In another systematic review, Choi et al. (2022) found that Latinx people who experienced racial microaggressions reported more psychological distress, more emotional distress, and lower sleep quality.

Evidence have strongly indicated that racial microaggressions are psychologically and physically costly for BIPoC students; therefore, there is a critical need for rigorous investigation of its impact, particularly around academic implications. Durkee et al. (2020) found that

experiences with racial microaggressions taking place in school were not only associated with poorer mental health but also predicted lower academic achievement and school satisfaction. Racial microaggressions seem to negatively impact BIPoC's overall physical, psychological, and emotional well-being. As research on microaggressions continues to expand (Wong et al., 2014), however, there remains the critical need for a timely exploration of novel microaggressions, such as immigration status-related attacks, since the sociopolitical moments and environments around race can rapidly shift. Furthermore, timely assessments of racial microaggressions can bolster the work on effective coping strategies and disarming interventions (Sue et al., 2019). Sue et al. (2019) suggested a push for research that can inform interventions and microinterventions to counter the psychological impact. These researchers highlighted the importance of coping mechanisms as well as specific experiences across racial and ethnic groups when developing these interventions.

Internalizing Racial Attacks

BIPoC often use various coping strategies when experiencing racism-related attacks (Wei et al., 2010) to protect their well-being. In a sample of Latinx and Black college students, Hope et al. (2016) found that prior experiences with racial microaggressions predicted higher involvement with modern activism against racial oppression as a coping protective strategy. More adaptive coping strategies, such as resisting and mobilizing, have been shown to weaken the negative effects of racism (see Cabrera-Martinez et al., 2021 for a review). Other maladaptive strategies, such as substance use and behavioral addictions, can be more harmful and detrimental to BIPoC (Barrita et al., 2023a). Clearly, these *surviving* techniques do not always protect BIPoC from racism-related encounters; in some cases, these coping strategies can even lead to further harm. The internalization process in response to racism reflects these

negative and maladaptive aspects of coping with racism. This process includes believing and adopting racism-related sentiments and incorporating these degrading images into their own personal and collective identities (Pyke, 2010). Racial microaggressions are commonplace social exchanges that can happen quickly and often covertly (Sue et al., 2007) which makes it more difficult for BIPoC to directly pinpoint and adequately address. These quick slights also elicit quick responses, such as internalizations. Internalizing coping strategies, therefore, seem convenient coping strategies to quickly "place" the attack elsewhere and avoid conflict.

Many race scholars have called attention to the hidden harms of internalized racism (David, 2013). David et al. (2019) conducted a systematic review of internalized racism and included in-depth considerations of 123 publications with implications for BIPoC's mental health. The findings from this review led researchers to urgently call for scholarship on the types of racism that specifically lead to internalized racism. A meta-analytic narrative review of 72 studies on racial microaggressions found that these everyday racism-related experiences were strongly associated with internalizing problems connected to psychological distress and lower well-being (Lui & Quezada, 2019). No study, to our knowledge, has explored the association between internalizing coping strategies for microaggressions related to immigration status. We hypothesize, specifically, that internalized racism will serve as a mechanism for the relationship between immigration status microaggressions and psychological distress. The more frequent experiences with microaggressions related to immigration status is assumed to lead to more psychological distress because these experiences may elicit high levels of internalized racism.

The Present Study

As mentioned earlier, racial tension around immigration experienced a steep shift in the U.S. post-2016 (Pew Research, 2017), particularly for Latinx and Asian people. Our study

answered the urgent calls to explore how changes in manifestations of racism towards highly visible immigrant communities can impact psychological well-being. Specifically, we explored how racial microaggressions based on assumptions of immigration status, race, and ethnicity, can psychologically impact Latinx and Asian college students in the U.S.

Latinx people in the U.S. are often targeted and attacked around immigration status (Barrita, 2021; Chavez, 2013) as suggested by RPM. LatCrit similarly highlights Latinx people experience racial oppression around immigration differently from other racial or ethnic groups. Thus, we hypothesized that compared to Asian students, Latinx students will report higher exposure to immigration status microaggressions (H1). Similarly, we also hypothesized that compared to Asian students, Latinx students will report higher psychological distress (H2).

Previous findings suggested that internalized racism influences how BIPoC's mental health is linked to racial oppressive experiences (Cheng et al., 2021; Garcia et al., 2019; Wong-Padoongpatt et al., 2022b; Wong-Padoongpatt & Barrita, 2022a). Similarly, IOT (David, 2013) argues that experiences with racism, including immigration status microaggressions can be internalized. Yet limited work, if any, has been done on internalizing processes for this specific type of racial microaggression. For our third hypothesis, we test if internalized racism would mediate the association between immigration status racial microaggressions and psychological distress (H3). Finally, in an exploratory approach and conditional of the results for our three first hypothesis, we tested if the racial or ethnic identity moderate the mediating relation between immigration status microaggressions and psychological distress through internalization (see Figure 6.1).

Methods

Participants and Procedure

The online study and protocol were approved by, and in compliance with, the Institutional Review Board (IRB:1572714-4) at a public university with designations as both Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) and Asian American, Native American, and Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI). Overall, Latinx and Asian student populations at this institution were 29.8% and 16.6% respectively, with 3% of the overall population being international students.

This cross-sectional study was conducted using an online survey in Qualtrics. Participants were recruited from different psychology courses (e.g., Intro to Psych, Research Methods, Social Psychology) taught in the Fall of 2020 and completed the study for course credit. Students could register for online studies using the institution's research participation website. Participants were informed that the study will take approximately 45 minutes and would assess for social factors, life experiences, and coping mechanism strategies connected to stress. We filtered in a total of 439 participants who self-identified as adults (18 years or older), currently living in the U.S., and reported being either Latinx/Hispanic or Asian/Asian American. Participants were fluent (write/read) in English as all measures were presented in English. The online survey included a consent form, randomized quantitative measures, demographic questions, and a debriefing informative closing statement with mental health resources. The average time of participation was 24 minutes. Three participants were dropped for failing to respond to attention checks accurately; therefore, our final sample consisted of 436 participants whose ages ranged from 18 to 47 years old (M_{age} = 19.41, SD = 1.87).

Our sample (N = 436) was composed of 210 (48.17%) participants who self-identified as Asian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander, and 226 (51.83%) participants who self-identified as Latinx, Latina/o, or Hispanic. Racial and ethnic identity was asked using an open-ended text box.

For Asian participants' ethnicity, our sample consisted of 113 Filipinx (53.8%), 36 Chinese (17.14%), 14 Vietnamese (6.67%), 11 Japanese (5.24%), 10 Korean (4.76%), 6 Indian (2.86%), 8 South Asian (3.81%), and 12 chose not to disclose (5.72%). Responses for Latinx people's racial identity were complex as some wrote "Hispanic" or "Chicanx" erroneously as their race. Latinx people's racial/ethnic breakdown was 85 Chicanx or Mexican American (37.6%), 43 Indigenous Latinx (19.0%), 32 Mexican (14.2%), 31 Hispanic (13.7%), 22 Afro-Latinx (9.7%), and 13 White Latinx (5.8%). Socioeconomic status (SES) was assessed using a range from 0 to 10, where participants were asked to self-assess their SES based on 0 being extremely poor and ten being extremely wealthy. Our sample reported a SES mean of 5.40 (*SD* = 1.53). For gender, 313 participants identified as ciswoman (71.8%), 119 as cisman (27.3%), and four as gender expansive (0.9%). Regarding sexual orientation, 342 (78.4%) participants self-identified as heterosexual, and 94 (21.6%) as a sexual minority. Finally, the immigrant generation breakdown for our sample was: 15 (3.4%) 1st generation (immigrated to the U.S. after age 12), 53 (12.2%) were 1.5 generation (immigrated to the U.S. at or before the age of 12), 276 (63.3%) were 2nd generation (either one or both parents were born outside the U.S.), 58 (13.3%) were 3rd generation (both parents born in the U.S.), and 34 (7.8%) were 4th or older immigrant generation.

Measures

Demographics: After responding to all quantitative measures, participants were asked about their demographic information, which included age, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, SES, and immigrant generation.

Immigration Status Microaggressions Scale (Barrita, 2021). This 6-item measure assesses the frequency of racial microaggressions connected to assumptions of immigration status. The scale includes items such as "Someone questioned my legal status in the U.S. because of my race" and

"Someone assumed I was a foreigner that came to the U.S. illegally." The participants reported the frequency by answering, "How often does this happen to you?" All responses were assessed using a four-point Likert-type ordered categorical scale, with 0 = *Never*, 1 = *Rarely*, 2 = *Sometime*s, and 3= *Often.* Higher scores indicate a higher frequency of experiences with this type of microaggressions. This measure has reported high reliability for people of color with a Cronbach's alpha of α = .88 and Latinx-exclusive samples (Barrita, 2021). For this study, this scale showed similar strong reliability α = .91.

Psychological Distress. The Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS-21; Antony et al., 1998) includes 21 items that measure depression, anxiety, and stress symptoms. DASS is divided into three subscales of 7 items each. Items include statements such as "I found it hard to wind down" and "I felt that I had nothing to look forward to." For each item, participants reported the frequency of the described symptom or emotion using a four-point Likert-type ordered categorical scale from 0 (*Did not apply to me at all*) to 4 (*Applied to me most of the time*). DASS showed strong reliability for the current sample with an α = .95, replicating previously obtained Cronbach's alphas in similar studies with microaggressions (Wong-Padoongpatt et al., 2022a).

Internalizing Coping Strategy. The Coping with Discrimination-Internalization subscale (CDS-I; Wei et al., 2010) is a 5-item measure that assesses participants' attitudes to internalized discriminatory experiences. CDS-I is a subfactor of a 5-factor (25-items) scale that measures different coping strategies when experiencing discrimination. The factor for *internalization* was specifically chosen for this study given the extensive literature on the internalization of discriminatory experiences. Items in this factor include statements such as "I wonder if I did something to provoke this incident." Or "I wonder if I did something to offend others." For each item, participants reported how much they identified each strategy as a way they typically cope

when experiencing discrimination using a six-point Likert-type ordered categorical scale from 0 (*never like me*) to 6 (*Always like me*). Higher scores suggested more likelihood of internalizing the discriminatory experience as a coping strategy. CDS-I showed strong reliability for the current sample with an $\alpha = .88$, whereas the entire CDS showed a reliability of $\alpha = .87$, similarly obtained in other similar studies (Wei et al., 2010).

Analyses

We used SPSS Version 28.0 to analyze our data. After conducting preliminary analyses on sample statistics and assumption checks, we used two independent sample t-tests to compare the frequency of immigration-status racial microaggressions between Latinx and Asian participants (H1) and the reported psychological distress for each group (H2). Next, we used PROCESS 3.5 (Hayes, 2012) to run a single model bootstrap approach mediation analysis (Model 4) to test internalizing coping strategy as a mediator for the relation between immigration status microaggressions and psychological distress (H3). Finally, using Hayes' Model 58 (2012), we tested if Latinx identity moderated the mediated relation between immigration status microaggressions, internalization, and psychological distress exploring our proposed model (Figure 6.1).

Results

First, we conducted a preliminary analysis which indicated normal distributions and no significant outliers for our three main measures (racial microaggressions, psychological distress, and internalization). Results for multicollinearity, homoscedasticity, or independence errors also showed no concerns with our data for our main analyses. We tested Pearson's bivariate correlations for all continuous variables to identify possible covariates (see Table 6.1). SES was

the only independent continuous variable that strongly correlated with both immigration status microaggressions (r = -.114, p < .05) and psychological distress (r = -.168, p < .01).

We checked for other covariates among our categorical variables by running multiple t-tests or one-way ANOVAs across our dependable variable (psychological distress). Specifically, around gender, less than 1% self-identified as gender expansive making it impossible to run a comparative analysis without violating assumptions. For the cisgender portion of our sample, we conducted three t-test analyses (ciswomen vs. cismen) were results showed no significant differences between the two groups. Thus, gender was not considered a significant covariate for our main analyses [t(434) = -1.513, p < .231]. Similarly, one-way ANOVA's results showed no significant differences around sexual orientation [t(432) = 1.089, p < .324], or immigrant generation [t(432) = 1.078, p < .127] for our main dependent variable. Thus, SES was the only demographic variable controlled for as a covariate in all main analyses.

Who reports higher levels of immigration status microaggressions?

To test H1, we used an independent t-test analysis, controlling for SES, to compare reported frequencies of immigration status microaggressions between Latinx and Asian students. Results supported H1, and suggested that Latinx students (M = 14.65, SD = 4.62), compared to Asian students (M = 8.23, SD = 3.51), reported significantly higher levels of immigration status microaggressions t(434) = -16.415, p < .001, d = -1.16.

Who reports higher levels of psychological distress?

Similar to H1, we used an independent t-test analysis, controlling for SES to test H2, and compared reported frequencies of psychological distress symptoms between Latinx and Asian students. Results supported H2, and suggested that Latinx students (M = 45.62, SD = 8.74)

compared to Asian students (M = 40.54, SD = 11.47), reported significantly higher levels of psychological distress $t(434) = -5.174$, $p < .001$, $d = -0.50$.

Does internalizing coping strategies mediate the association between immigration status microaggressions and psychological distress?

To test H3, we performed a mediation analysis using PROCESS macro-Model 4 (Hayes, 2012), where 5,000 bootstrap samples were used (see Figure 6.2). Mediation analysis results suggested immigration status microaggressions were a significant predictor for internalizing coping strategies, B = .513, SE = .044, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.428, .599], internalization was a significant predictor for psychological distress, B = .115, SE = .012, p = .02, 95% CI [.003, .131]. Results indicated a partial mediation, immigration status microaggressions was still a significant predictor for psychological distress when controlling for internalization as a mediator, B = .411, SE = .107, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.201, .622]. Approximately 6% of the variance in our model was accounted for by the predictors (R^2 = .061). The procedure yielded a significant coefficient, B = .571, SE = .093, $p < .001$, with 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals that did not include zero [.287, .622]. Thus, H3 was partially supported.

Does racial or ethnic identity among Latinx and Asian students moderates the mediating relation between immigration status microaggressions, internalization, and psychological distress?

We performed a moderated mediation analysis using 5,000 bootstrap samples based on PROCESS macro-Model 58 (Hayes, 2012) to test racial/ethnic identity as a moderator in the mediating relationship already established in H3. Specifically, we tested the interactions of being Latinx and experiencing immigration status microaggressions (predictor) and being Latinx and internalizing discriminatory experiences as a coping strategy (mediator) for psychological distress. Finally, our proposed model (Figure 6.1) was supported by our results which suggested

Latinx identity moderated the influence of immigration status microaggression on internalizing coping strategies for discrimination (see X×W interaction in Table 6.2 and Figure 6.3). The combination of being Latinx (compared to Asian), experiencing immigration status microaggressions and their interaction accounted for 34.17% of the variance, with the interaction itself accounting for 4.3% unique variance. Figure 6.3 visually depicts this interaction, suggesting that Latinx and Asian students reported higher levels of internalization as a coping strategy when experiencing higher levels of immigration status microaggressions. Both Asian students (B = .332, SE = .088, p < .001, 95% CI [.160, .504]) and Latinx students (B = .907, SE = .064, p < .001, 95% CI [.781, 1.032]) produced significant conditional effects as moderators for the path *a* in this mediation model.

Our results found the same pattern with respect to path *b* in our mediation model, where being Latinx, compared to Asian, moderated the relation between internalizing coping strategies (mediator) on psychological distress (see M×W in Table 6.2 and Figure 6.4). The combination of being Latinx (compared to Asian), internalizing coping strategies, and their interaction accounted for 10.5% of the variance, with the interaction itself accounting for 2.3% unique variance. Figure 6.4 shows a visual depiction of this interaction, suggesting being Latinx reported higher levels of psychological distress when internalizing coping strategies increased. The results suggest that Latinx identity (B = .443, SE = .124, p < .001, 95% CI [.199, .687]) and not Asian identity (B = -.252, SE = .167, p = .131, 95% CI [-0.579, .075]) produced a significant conditional effect as moderator for path *b* in this mediation model.

Overall, our moderated mediation model was significant and supported our proposed full model. Pathways *a* and *b* were moderated by race/ethnicity, and so were their indirect effects (Hayes, 2018). Table 6.3 shows the degree to which our mediation model was moderated by

Latinx vs. Asian identity, such that the indirect effect of immigration status microaggressions on psychological distress through internalizing coping strategies for discrimination is more substantial for Latinx college students compared to Asian college students.

Discussion

Overall, the current findings highlight important implications around the psychological impact of immigration status microaggressions and internalizing coping strategies for Latinx and Asian people. Findings indicated racial differences across Latinx and Asian students in immigration status microaggressions and psychological distress. Latinx students reported experiencing more immigration status microaggressions compared to Asian students (H1). Latinx students also experienced more psychological distress compared to Asian students (H2). It is important to note that Latinx and Asian students reported frequent experiences with immigrant status microaggressions and high levels of psychological distress. Internalized discrimination seemed to partially explain the relationship by which immigration status microaggressions can cause psychological distress for Latinx and Asian students (H3). Furthermore, this mechanism of internalized discrimination for immigration status microaggressions and psychological distress was further conditioned by race (full moderated mediation model). That is, immigration status microaggressions was a significant predictor for coping strategies involving internalizing such attacks among Latinx and Asian college students. Latinx reports more immigration status microaggressions compared to Asian people

A major study objective was to examine possible race-based differences in experiences with immigration status microaggressions. Again, it should be noted that both Latinx and Asian people experienced many encounters with immigration status microaggressions which does suggest that Latinx and Asian college students experience racial microaggressions founded on

prejudice and stereotypes against immigrants. Findings, however, did indicate that Latinx students were experiencing significantly more encounters with immigration status microaggressions compared to Asian students which did reflect the recent shifts in anti-Latinx sentiments around immigration and other highly charged political initiatives post-2016 around the U.S/Mexican border. These findings highlight important differences across the two highly visible immigrant communities and have implications for theory building and practice.

This finding supports the aforementioned RPM. Although Latinx and Asian people share the perceived cultural foreignness dimension, the RPM has Latinx and Asian people on different typologies regarding the perceived inferiority dimension, with Asian people representing the model minority stereotype (Kim et al., 2021) more so than Latinx people. According to the model minority stereotype, Asian people are perceived as the desired minority group that has been academically capable and economically successful. RMP's □erceiveed inferiority dimension might partially explain the difference between Latinx and Asian college students in our study around immigration status microaggressions as this dimension suggest groups, such as Latinx and Black people, to be inferior compared to Asian and White people. As previously mentioned, assumptions of immigration status, also include assumptions of criminality (e.g., unlawful presence; Barrita, 2021). Previous findings have suggested Latinx and Black people are consistently racialized as criminals more frequently than other groups (Harris et al, 2020). Therefore, it is possible that Latinx people who are seen as socially inferior and foreigner (Zou & Cheryan, 2017), can be criminalized as undocumented immigrants more often than Asian people; thus, experiencing more immigration status microaggressions.

Latinx students report higher levels of psychological stress compared to Asian students

Latinx people might experience more blatant, consistent, and direct attacks around immigration where their documentation or "eligibility" to be in the U.S. is questioned or weaponized against them more blatantly. Studies have previously found that media often use images of Latinx people to cover immigration-related news (López-Sanders & Brown, 2020). In addition, politicians often target Latinx people when discussing immigration status or border security (Wray-Lake et al., 2018). In our study, Latinx college students reported higher psychological implications based on stereotypes that have labeled Latinx people as "illegals" or "invaders." LatCrit (Solorzano & Bernal, 2001) was formulated from other critical theories to address these unique forms of oppression that Latinx people in the U.S. consistently experience. Our study brings light to novel forms of oppression taking place in microsystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1992) involving the foreigner stereotypes and prejudices around immigrants. Our findings highlight how Latinx and Asian American college students are consistently attacked based on racial, ethnic, and immigration status assumptions and inform the psychological impact of these experiences.

Internalization explains the reasons why immigration status microaggressions are linked to psychological distress, especially for Latinx students

Our proposed model (Figure 6.1) was supported suggesting that internalizing strategies to cope with immigration status microaggressions are connected to psychological distress. More specifically, this internalizing process helps explain the psychological impact connected to immigration status microaggressions. These finding supports previous evidence (Ballinas, 2017; Barrita, 2021; Museus and Park, 2015) that both groups are constantly targeted around immigration status based on foreigner stereotypes that can be internalized (David et al., 2019; Wong-Padoongpatt et al., 2022a) as a responsive mechanism. IOT (David, 2013) provides a

framework to explain the mediating effects since BIPoC often engage in self-defeating cognitions and attitudes when experiencing hostile environments. Our findings around internalization can inform clinical interventions to target these processes specifically when exploring racial-related psychological distress.

Race was a significant moderator in our model where Latinx and Asian college students experiencing high levels of immigration status microaggressions also cope with these attacks by internalizing these messages. Only Latinx identity, however, was a significant moderator for the relationship between internalization and psychological distress. That is, the more Latinx people (and not Asian people) internalized; the more psychological distress they reported. The overall model and its indirect effect were fully statistically significant only for Latinx participants in the relationship between immigration status microaggressions on psychological distress through internalization. It is possible that current anti-Latinx climates connected to immigration might expose Latinx people to higher and more harmful levels of internalization than other racial groups.

Our findings have important implications for higher education and clinical work. First, our results come from a college sample collected at an HSI/AANAPISI university where there is institutional support for Latinx and Asian college students. Yet, our findings suggest these groups still experience concerning levels of racial oppression and poor mental health. Therefore, higher education administrators should consider assessing consistently not only the current student climax but the implementation and effectiveness of diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies. Second, institutional interventions supporting racially minoritized college students should include evidence-based and culturally-informed strategies that consider unique forms of oppression, such as immigration status microaggression targeting Latinx and Asian college

students. While specific vulnerable groups, such as DACA or undocumented students, should continue to receive most of the support, institutions must also recognize other marginalized groups that are consistently treated as perpetual foreigners. Third, our findings around psychological distress and coping strategies can inform clinicians and providers currently serving Latinx and Asian communities about the mechanisms connected to immigration-related oppression. Finally, our results provide additional evidence to an already established line of research that names microaggression as a harmful daily stressor that need to be addressed and intervened (Sue et al., 2019).

Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting this study's results. First, our data were collected at one-time point and cannot claim casual relationships. Similarly, important models used in our analysis, such as mediation, assume a theoretical linear relation where microaggressions are experienced before symptoms of psychological distress; however, this direction cannot be confirmed. Future research should adopt longitudinal and experimental methods to better assess the direction, order, and change of the relationship between racial microaggressions and psychological impact over time. Generalizability around our findings is also limited based on demographic characteristics such as gender, educational level, and region, given that our sample was primarily cis-college women from a southwest university. Similarly, while our sample was racially diverse for Latinx students and ethnically diverse for Asian college students, sub-sample sizes were not large enough across all subgroups to explore nuances within groups. Future research should examine specific differences in experiences for both groups, which are often homogenized in racism-related research. Additionally, similar research should be carried out for other racial and ethnic groups historically targeted around immigration,

such as Middle Eastern people. Finally, our study used measures for psychological impact that do not clinically diagnose and cannot differentiate racism-related distress from other forms of distress. Clinical trials and controlled research studies should aim to unpack more closely how much psychological distress reported by BIPoC is related explicitly to racial stereotypes and prejudice.

Conclusion

This study, to our knowledge, is one of the first to quantitatively assess the relationship between immigration status microaggressions, mental health, and coping mechanisms across two racial and ethnic student groups historically stereotyped as foreigners. Our findings highlight differences in experience and impact from assumptions of immigration status that are weaponized in everyday exchanges against Latinx and Asian college students. Our results can inform higher education institutions in forming better and more supportive strategies to dismantle foreigner stereotypes and combat prejudice in a nation of immigrants–the U.S.

Table 6.1 Correlations

Bivariate Correlations

Measure	Latinx Mean SD	Asian Mean SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Immigration Status MA[1]	*M*=14.65 *SD*=4.62	*M*=8.23 *SD*=3.51	—				
2. Psychological Distress	*M*=45.62 *SD*=8.74	*M*=40.54 *SD*=11.5	.235**	—			
3. Internalization	*M*=16.87 *SD*=5.24	*M*=15.62 *SD*=5.60	.492**	.161**	—		
4. Age	*M*=19.54 *SD*=3.42	*M*=19.27 *SD*=2.14	-.009	-.009	-.032	—	
5. SES	*M*=5.18 *SD*=1.58	*M*=5.64 *SD*=1.46	-.114*	-.168**	.022	.058	—

N = 436
[1] Microaggressions
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Table 6.2 Moderated Mediation

Moderated mediation model characteristics for predictors on internalizing coping strategies (mediator) and psychological distress (dependent variable)

	Internalizing Coping Strategy			Psychological Distress		
Predictor	B	SE	95 % CI	B	SE	95 % CI
Immigration Status (X)	-0.818**	.292	-1.392; -0.244	0.373*	.154	0.071; 0.675
Internalizing (M)				1.833***	.473	0.903; 2.763
Latinx (W)[1]	-4.653***	.628	-5.888; -3.419	6.928***	1.533	3.914; 9.941
X × W	0.288***	.054	0.181; 0.394			
M × W				-0.347***	.099	-0.541; -0.154
Model R^2	0.342, $F(3,432) = 74.73$, $p < .0001$			0.105, $F(4,431) = 12.62$, $p < .0001$		
Interaction Δ^2	0.043, $F(1,432) = 28.14$, $p < .0001$			0.023, $F(1,431) = 12.44$, $p < .0001$		

(N = 436)

[1] compared to Asian Americans

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

Table 6.3 Indirect Effects

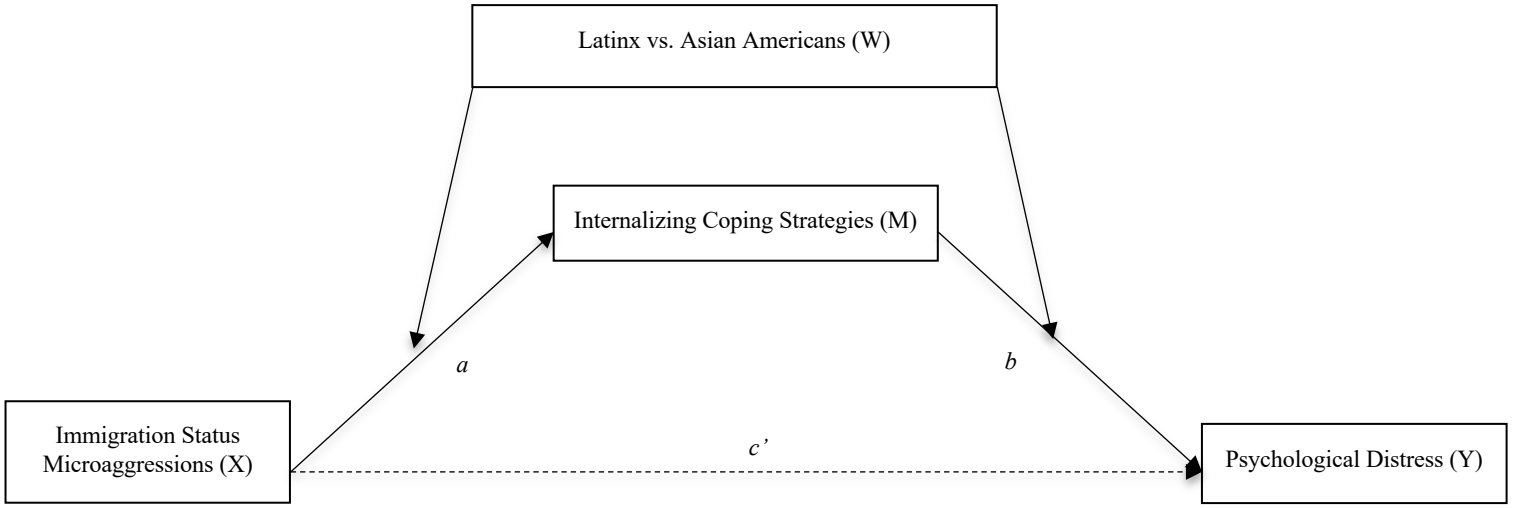
Conditional indirect effects of immigration status microaggressions on psychological distress through internalization for Latinx vs. Asian students.

Moderator	Indirect Effect or Index	BootSE	Boot 95 % CI
Latinx	0.147	.071	0.028; 0.304
Asian	-0.229	.159	-0.534; 0.095
Latinx / Asian	-0.376	.167	-0.699; -0.047

(N = 436)

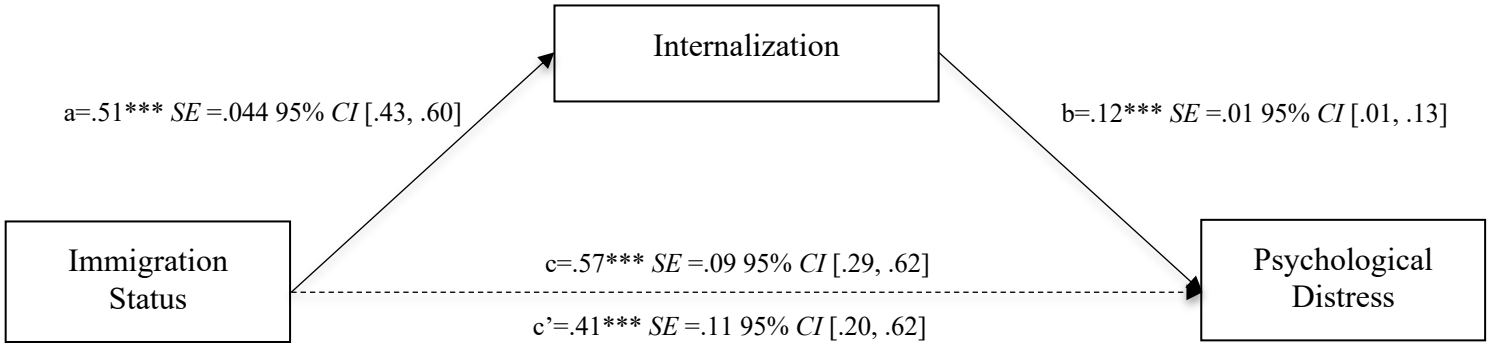
Figures

Figure 6.1 Moderated Mediation



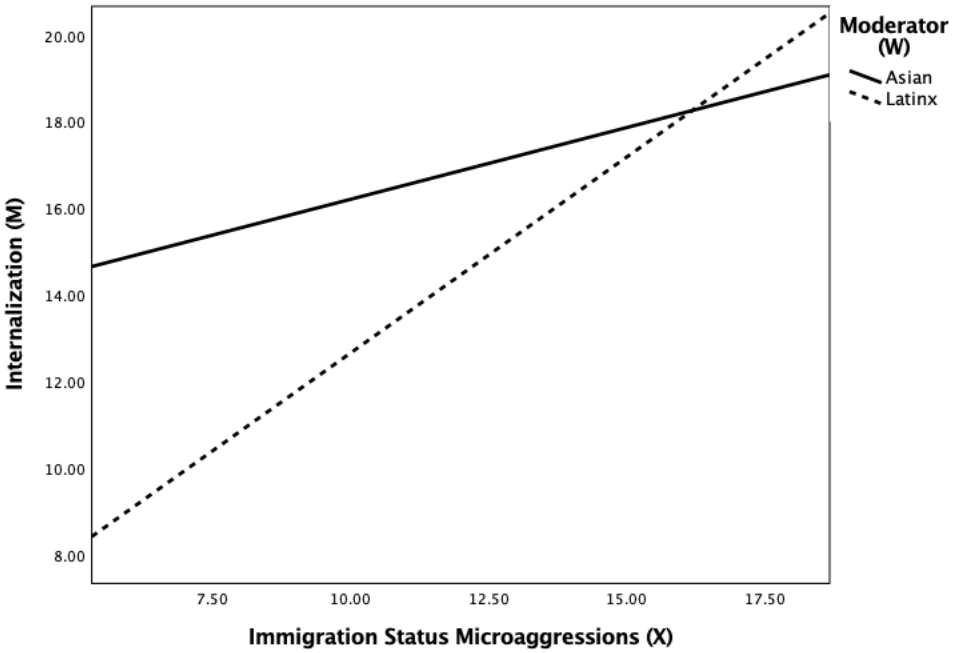
Conceptual moderating effect of racial or ethnic identity on the internalized microaggressions model.

Figure 6.2 Mediation



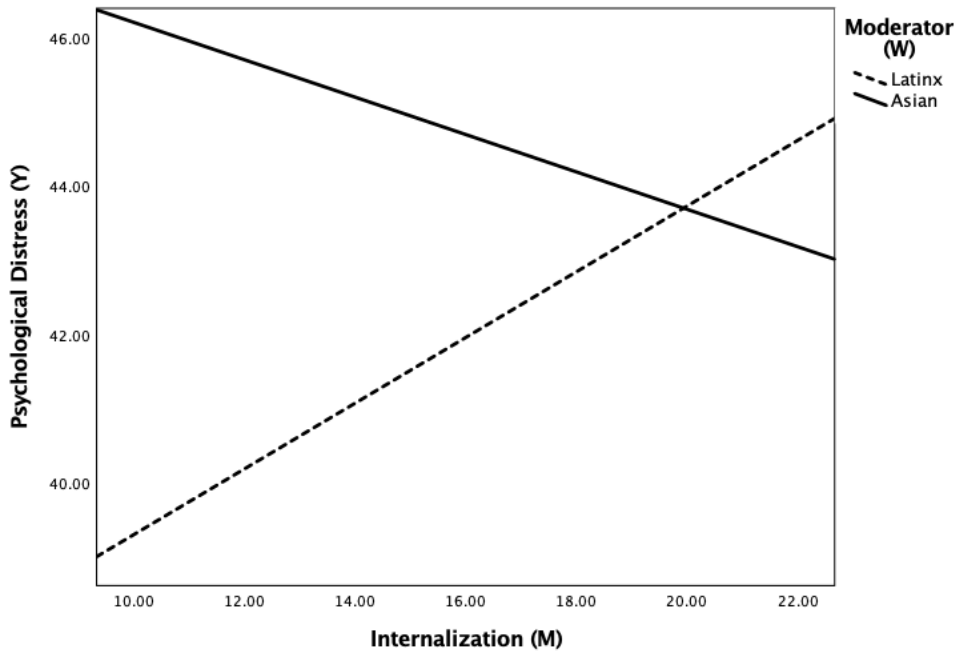
A mediation model of immigration status racial microaggressions and psychological distress through internalizing coping strategies. Unstandardized regression coefficients. Controlled for SES as a covariate.
*p<.05. **p<.01. ***p<.001

Figure 6.3 First Moderator



Moderating influence of racial/ethnic identity on the association of immigration status microaggressions and internalizing coping strategies for discrimination.

Figure 6.4 Second Moderator



Moderating influence of racial/ethnic identity on the association of immigration status microaggressions and internalizing coping strategies for discrimination.

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CHAPTER 7

The research agenda presented in this dissertation focused on three main objectives that expanded the area of microaggressions research. 1) Use of intersectional methods and approaches to addressing not only the impact of everyday racism but other systems of oppression as well, 2) Incorporate methods and analyses that explore coping strategies and mechanisms involved in the experience and impact of racial microaggressions, and 3) Address specificity around who and how racial microaggressions impact BIPOC.

General Implications

Overall, the research agenda and results from the three studies presented in this dissertation address various implications. I summarize these based on the main objectives of this dissertation.

Regarding intersectionality, as mentioned before, this objective was key in order to highlight the impact of other systems of oppression that reinforce the effects of everyday racism on BIPOC. Barrita, Hixson and colleagues (2023) found that intersectional microaggressions (racism and heterosexism) negatively impacted LGBTQ+ BIPOC college students, and these experiences were linked to lower attitudes to persist in higher education. My findings suggest important implications for future studies exploring racial oppression by highlighting the importance of incorporating intersectional methods and statistical analyses that can draw a more complete picture of the impact of these experiences and give voice to those within marginalized groups that are typically not centered. Intersectional approaches disrupt traditional and colonial research practices that often homogenize extremely diverse minoritized groups (Garcini, Barrita, et al., 2024). Furthermore, my findings suggest that clinicians and educators working with diverse groups, particularly students, consider and re-center marginalized groups impacted by

multiple systems of oppression and develop supportive interventions that account for these systems' combined and individual effects. Particularly for LGBTQ+ groups, current DEI initiatives fail to consider differences in power and marginalization around color, race, and ethnicity. My study highlights how intersectional oppression negatively impacts the likelihood of staying in higher education for groups that currently are described as "underrepresented" and presents evidence that this underrepresentation might be the byproduct of intersectional oppression pushing out students with multiple minoritized social identities.

Similarly, my third study in this dissertation (Barrita, Chang & Wong-Padoongpatt) found evidence of intersectional oppression around race, ethnicity, and immigration status for Latinx and Asian college students. Findings from this study suggested that both Latinx and Asian participants, both immigrant and U.S.-born, continuously experience racial microaggressions that objectify them not only as perpetual foreigners but also as criminals. This study highlights how the weaponization of immigration status in the U.S. is not only impacting migrant groups but, in general, is targeting BIPOC, particularly Latinx and Asian people. A key takeaway from this study for future research is that studies on immigration-related oppression should sample both migrant and U.S.-born participants. My results can also inform clinical and legislative implications by incorporating interventions that precisely assess the impact of normalized oppression around immigration status. Given I collected a college sample for this phenomenon, considerations around institutional oppression, including how educators and school administrators discuss and weaponize immigration status, should be reviewed in order to reduce the psychological impact students are reporting from these attacks.

Regarding coping strategies involved when experiencing racial microaggressions, two of my studies explored concerning response strategies that helped explain the impact of racial

microaggressions. Barrita, Strong, and colleagues (2023) found that BIPOC in the U.S. engage in substance and alcohol use as a coping strategy for the psychological distress associated with racial microaggressions. At a societal level, where statistics showed concerning levels of alcohol and drug use, particularly for BIPOC, while also reporting health disparities on who has access to rehabilitation, findings from my study provide novel evidence about the link of everyday racism with these behaviors. Specifically, clinicians and practitioners serving BIPOC communities struggling with drugs and alcohol should consider incorporating assessments and interventions that address possible historical trauma and stress from consistent exposure to everyday racism.

Barrita, Chang and Wong-Padoongpatt (2023) also explored coping strategies associated with immigration status microaggression in the form of internalization. Specifically, results from a mediation analysis suggested that the psychological distress related to immigration oppression was best explained by the level of internalization of these attacks among Latinx and Asian college students. These findings can inform implications for clinical treatment among groups that historically are objectified and persecuted around immigration-related oppression and xenophobia. Clinicians should not only assess for this type of experience or related psychological symptoms but also explore how these racial messages might have been internalized, endorsed, or accepted by members of these communities. Similarly, these results can inform institutional and individual interventions by incorporating inclusive language and techniques that dismantle the possible internalization of racial microaggressions and instead reinforce positive and reaffirming views about minoritized groups.

Finally, regarding specificity, two studies highlighted specific findings within groups by analyzing moderating effects. Barrita, Hixson et al. (2020) expanded on their intersectional

approach by not only assessing the impact of racism and heterosexism but also comparing effects among cisgender and gender expansive participants to highlight protective factors linked to cisgender privilege. Results demonstrated significant differences among these groups, where gender expansive students of color reported lower attitudes toward staying in college as they experienced more intersectional microaggressions compared to their cisgender peers. Given the current retention rates in higher education for minoritized groups and continuous conversations about DEI strategies that can support them, findings from this study highlight the importance of strategic specificity in such interventions. Since these findings were produced among college students, it is likely that current efforts to support BIPOC and LGBTQ+ groups do not address the intersectionality (along with the difference in experiences with oppression) of their social identities, particularly for groups with multiple minoritized identities, such as gender expansive sexual minorities of color.

Finally, implications of specific racial and ethnic groups were covered in my third study (Barrita, Chang & Wong-Padoongpatt, 2023), where various moderation analyses were conducted to explore differences in experiences with immigration status microaggressions and their internalization. Results supported previous evidence of these groups being consistently targeted and persecuted around immigration-related oppression. However, Latinx students presented larger effects and vulnerability to these types of attacks. These findings produce evidence that supports research practices within groups to highlight differences around who is impacted by racial microaggressions and other forms of oppression. Furthermore, my results should influence clinical and policy interventions aiming to support groups historically marginalized around immigration, such as Latinx and Asian people. Many of the current strategies addressing immigration status oppression focus on immigrant groups. While these

communities are the most impacted by such oppression, our findings suggest other groups, such as U.S.-born Latinx and Asian people, are also racialized as perpetual foreigners and criminals.

Future Studies

Lessons learned and findings from the three studies incorporated in this dissertation motivated and inspired me to launch follow-studies in an effort to continue carrying my research program. I briefly presented and summarized findings from three additional published studies, addressing their implications, limitations, and future steps based on my overall scholarship.

First, my research on intersectionality and racial microaggressions produced a second independent study (Barrita, Wong-Padoongpatt, et al., 2023) recently published in the Journal of *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology.* This study aimed to expand findings from Barrita, Hixson et al. (2023) study by continuing to assess the impact of intersectional microaggressions among LGBTQ+ BIPOC college students. Using a moderated mediation analysis, I replicated previous findings (Barrita, Hixson et al., 2023) by not only testing the relationship between intersectional microaggressions and school persistence but also assessing if the psychological distress associated with these attacks helps explain why LGBTQ BIPOC students consider leaving college. Furthermore, we also evaluated internalized racism and internalized homophobia as other moderators in the relationship between intersectional microaggressions and psychological distress. Finally, moderating effects around cisgender privilege were tested at the mediation's direct and indirect effects. Our findings suggested that, just like in our first study (Barrita, Hixson et al., 2023), intersectional microaggressions were associated with lower school persistence, and this relationship was best explained by the psychological distress (mediator) related to these experiences. When exploring significant interactions, our findings demonstrated that higher levels of internalized racism, but not

internalized homophobia, moderated the level of psychological distress associated with intersectional oppression. Finally, cisgender privilege as a second moderator also showed protective traits for cisgender participants, as gender expansive ones reported higher levels of impact across multiple paths. This study supported, replicated, and expanded on evidence found in Barrita, Hixson et al. (2023). Similarly, this study highlighted further evidence of the benefits of incorporating intersectional methods in microaggressions research.

A second independent study exploring coping strategies involved in racial microaggression experiences (Barrita & Wong-Padoongpatt, 2023) was also developed from Barrita, Strong, and colleagues' study (2023) findings. In this second study, I used a cross-sectional design sampling of 696 BIPOC participants to assess the association between psychological distress and racial microaggressions and further examined whether self-blame mediated the relationship. Furthermore, I also tested ethnic identity and resilience as moderators and used a conditional analysis to determine whether these protective factors moderated the mediation model. This study expanded proportionally on the second objective of this dissertation as it addresses multiple types of coping strategies, both negative and positive. Findings from the mediation, moderation, and conditional analyses supported our four hypotheses: (H1) self-blame mediated the relation between racial microaggressions and psychological distress (mediation), (H2) ethnic identity moderated the association between racial microaggressions and self-blame but only at low and average levels (moderation), (H3) resilience moderated the relation between self-blame and psychological distress but only at low and average levels (moderation), and (H4) evidence of moderated mediation were found for all five variables (conditional). Results suggested that they may engage in self-blame when experiencing racial microaggressions, which explains why these everyday, commonplace occurrences might lead to psychological distress.

There was evidence that ethnic identity and resilience can protect BIPOC from the harmful effects of racial microaggressions. These buffering effects, however, only emerged when BIPOC endorsed high levels of ethnic identity and resilience, and it should be noted that for most participants, the link between racial microaggressions and psychological distress was still significant despite using these coping strategies. Future studies might need to explore additional individual and interpersonal alongside institutional factors that can protect PoC from racism-related harms.

Finally, a recent study that aimed to expand findings in Barrita, Chang, and Wong-Padoongpatt (2023) was recently accepted for publication. In this follow-up study (Barrita, Carbajal, et al., 2024), we use a second sample of Latinx and Asian college students ($N = 776$) to unpack the relationships between immigration status microaggressions and psychological stress by exploring their mediating relation with internalized racism (mediator 1), and fear of foreign objectification (mediator 2) using Hayes (2012) PROCESS Model 6—serial mediation. Furthermore, we expanded on this model, highlighting differences between Latinx and Asian participants (moderator) using a moderated mediation. Findings suggest a full serial mediation, consistent with previous studies (Barrita, Chang & Wong-Padoongpatt, 2023). Specifically, the psychological stress associated with immigration status microaggressions was mediated by both internalized racism and fear of foreign objectification. Results also highlighted that Latinx participants, compared to Asian ones, showed a significant positive association between immigration status microaggressions with internalized racism and fear of foreign objectification. Furthermore, a significant interaction for Latinx who experience more fear of foreign objectification was positively associated with psychological stress. This series of studies remained one of the first to explore cultural stress in the form of immigration status

microaggressions in connection with more general forms of psychological stress and internalizing processes for two groups historically persecuted around immigration in the U.S. Furthermore, both studies provided additional evidence of specific impact from racial microaggressions linked to immigration for Latinx and Asian people.

Conclusion

This dissertation aimed to expand the research area of microaggressions by incorporating intersectional methods that assess coping strategies and mechanisms involved in such experiences while highlighting specificity around who is impacted by such attacks. Across three independent published studies, I contribute to the literature on racial microaggression by exploring multiple forms of oppression among specific minoritized groups. To conclude this research program, in some ways, feels misleading, as the reality is this is just the beginning for me. More importantly, additional research on intersectional oppression, particularly for microaggressions, remains necessary, given that only by making *the invisible visible* (Sue et al., 2007), we would produce evidence that informs effective microinterventions aiming to dismantle these systems of oppression (Sue et al., 2019). As such, I decide not to conclude this dissertation and instead commit to continue conducting and producing decolonized research that honors the humanity and pain of those constantly impacted by the thousand cuts of microaggressions…

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Role: Principal Investigator
Amount: $500

2021 **Cultivating Healing, Advocacy, Nonviolence, Growth & Equity (CHANGE)**
American Psychological Association, Trauma Psychology (Division 56)
Project Title: Coping with Racial Microaggressions
Role: Principal Investigator
Amount: $4,400

2020 **Student Research Grant**, ***University of Nevada, Las Vegas***
Project Title: Development of Immigration Status Microaggressions Scale
Role: Principal Investigator
Amount: $2,500

FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS & DISTINCTIONS

Fellowships

2023 Barrick Graduate Fellowship, *University of Nevada, Las Vegas* ($18,000)
2023 UNLV Summer Doctoral Research Fellowship ($7,500)
2022 Mellon Foundation Crossing Latinidades Mellon Fellowship ($30,000)
2022 UNLV Summer Doctoral Research Fellowship ($7,000)
2022 Mellon Foundation Summer Research Fellowship Crossing Latinidades ($3,000)
2021 Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship (Honorable Mention)

Distinctions & Honors

2023 Distinguished Student Contribution Award, *APA Division 44*
2023 Distinguished Research Student Award, *APA Division 45* ($500)
2023 Pre-Doctoral Scholar, *Oregon State University* ($1,000)
2021 Outstanding Master Thesis Honors*, University of Nevada, Las Vegas*
2021 Distinguished Student Service Award, *NLPA* ($500)
2020 NLPA Presidential Citation Distinction, *NLPA*

Research Awards

2024 Best Scholarly Paper Award, *AAHHE*
2023 Stephen C. Rose Award, *National Latinx Psychological Association* ($3000)
2022 Barbara Smith & Jewell E. Horvat Graduate Student Award, *APA Div. 45* ($500)
2021 Edward Lovinger Psychology Scholarship, *UNLV* ($1,490)
2021 Jenessa Shapiro Research Award, *SPSP* ($1,000)
2021 Anastasi Graduate Student Research Award, *APA Division 52* ($500)
2021 Summer Research Award, *University of Nevada, Las Vegas* ($3,000)
2021 Dr. Steven Ungerleider Research Award, *WPA* ($500)
2021 Outstanding Contribution to DEI Award, *UNLV* ($200)
2021 Inspiration, Innovation, and Impact Award, *UNLV* ($1,000)
2021 Ambassador Program Award, *UNLV* ($1,000)
2020 Ambassador Program Award, *UNLV* ($1,000)
2020 Rebel Research & Mentorship Award, *UNLV* ($1,000)
2019 Program Recruitment Award, *UNLV* ($1,000)

Travel Awards & Scholarships

2023 Research Travel Award, *UNLV* ($1,400)
2023 Travel Grant, *American Psychological Association CEMRRAT2* ($300)
2023 Diversity Graduate Travel Award, *SPSP* ($500)
2022 Dr. Richard A. Rodriguez Student Travel Award, *APA Division 44* ($500)
2022 ISPP Conference Travel Award, *ISPP* ($500)
2022 Research Travel Award, *UNLV* ($1,250)
2022 SPSSI Diversity Conference Travel Award, *APA Division 9* ($500)
2022 APS Conference Travel Award, *Association for Psychological Science* ($400)
2021 Research Travel Award, *UNLV* ($1,250)
2021 Service & Leadership Scholarship, *UNLV (*$600)
2021 Graduate Access Scholarship, *UNLV* ($3,500)
2020 Graduate Access Scholarship, *UNLV* ($3,500)

PUBLICATIONS

** Indicates a project for which I served as a mentor to an undergraduate student*

Peer-Reviewed Publications (*n* = 17)

17. **Barrita, A**., Carbajal, I., Abreu, R.L., Chang, R., Moreno O., Garcini, L.M., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2024, in press). *Immigration Status Microaggressions*: A moderated mediation analysis of cultural stress, fear, internalization, and psychological stress among Latinx and Asian college students. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology.* Advanced online publication. https://doi.org/10.1037/cdp0000687
16. Garcini, L. M., **Barrita, A.,** Cadenas, G. A., Domenech Rodríguez, M. M., Galvan, T., Mercado, A., Moreno, O., Paris, M., Rojas Perez, O. F., Silva, M., & Venta, A. (2023). A decolonial and liberation lens to social justice research: Upholding promises for diverse, inclusive, and equitable psychological science. *American Psychologist.* Advanced online publication. https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0001255
15. **Barrita, A**., Wong-Padoongpatt, G., Chang, R., Abreu, R.L., & Krishen, A. (2023). *Internalizing the poison*: A moderated mediation analysis of LGBTQ+ BIPoC college students' experiences with intersectional microaggressions. *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology, 9*(4), 373–391. https://doi.org/10.1037/stl0000375
14. **Barrita, A**., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2023). *Ethnic Identity and Resilience:* A moderated mediation analysis of protective factors for Self-Blame and Racial Microaggressions. *Frontiers in Psychology, 14*(1198375). https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1198375
13. Vierra, K., **Barrita, A**., Wong-Padoongpatt, G., & Robnett, R. (2023). Critical action to redress systemic oppression: A person-center approach. *Frontiers in Psychology, 14*(1189598). https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1189598
12. **Barrita, A**., Strong, M.N., Ferraris J., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2023). Drugs and racial microaggressions: A mediation analysis of racism, psychological distress, and coping strategies. *Journal of Substance Use and Addiction Treatment, 153*(209078). https://doi.org/10.1016/j.josat.2023.209078
11. **Barrita, A.,** Chang, R., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2023). Assumptions of immigration status: A moderated mediation analysis of racial microaggressions and internalization impacting Latinx and Asian college students. *Social Psychology of Education,* 1-20. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11218-023-09792-0
10. **Barrita, A**., Hixson, K., Kachen, A., Wong-Padoongpatt, G., & Krishen, A. (2023). *Centering the margins:* A moderation study examining cisgender privilege among LGBTQ+ BIPoC college students facing intersectional microaggressions. *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity.* Advanced online publication. https://doi.org/10.1037/sgd0000636
9. Abreu, R.L., **Barrita, A.,** Martin, J.A., Sostre, J.P. & Gonzalez, K.A. (2023) Latinx LGBTQ Youth, COVID-19, and Psychological Well-being: A Systematic Review. *Journal of Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology, 53*(1), 98-113. https://doi.org/10.1080/15374416.2022.2158839
8. Abreu, R.L., Lefevor, G.T., **Barrita, A.,** Gonzalez, K.A., & Watson R.J. (2023). Intersectional Microaggressions, Depressive Symptoms, and the role of LGBTQ-specific Parental Support in a Sample Latinx Sexual and Gender Minority Youth. *Journal of Adolescence, 95*, 584-595. https://doi.org/10.1002/jad.12139
7. Wong-Padoongpatt, G., **Barrita, A.,** King, A. & Strong, M.N. (2022). The Slow Violence of Racism on Asian Well-being During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Frontiers in Public Health, 10*(958999). https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2022.958999

6. Wong-Padoongpatt, G., **Barrita, A.,** & King, A. (2022). Everyday Racism Increase for Asians in the U.S. During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Asian American Journal of Psychology,13*(4), 318-327. https://doi.org/10.1037/aap0000295
5. Abreu, R.L., Lefevor, G.T., Gonzalez, K.A., **Barrita, A.,** & Watson R.J. (2022). Bullying, Depression, and Parental Acceptance in a Sample of Latinx Sexual and Gender Minority Youth. *Journal of LGBT Youth, 20*(3), 1-18. https://doi.org/10.1080/19361653.2022.2071791
4. *Cabrera-Martinez, L**.**, **Barrita, A.,** & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2022). A systematic literature review on the resilience experienced by BIPOC in the face of discrimination. *Spectra Undergraduate Research Journal, 2(1), 1-13.* https://doi.org/10.9741/2766-7227.1012
3. Wong-Padoongpatt, G., **Barrita, A.,** & King, A. (2022). Perceived everyday discrimination explains internalized racism during the COVID-19 pandemic among Asians. *Behavioral Medicine, 48*(2), 1-11. https://doi.org/10.1080/08964289.2021.2015277
2. *Cheng, A., *King, B., **Barrita, A.,** King, A., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2021). Asian Americans experience microassaults during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Spectra Undergraduate Research Journal 1(1), 56-62.* https://doi.org/10.9741/2766-7227.1004
1. King, A., Wong-Padoongpatt, G., **Barrita, A.,** *Phung, D., & *Tong, T. (2020). Risk factors of problem gaming and gambling in US emerging adult non-students: The role of loot boxes, microtransactions, and risk-taking. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing 41*(12), 1063-1075. https://doi.org/10.1080/01612840.2020.1803461

Book Chapters, & Encyclopedia Entries (*n* = 9)

9. **Barrita, A**. (2024, in press). Do you remember? Exposing racial attacks in higher education. In O. Clerge, M.A. Harris, A. Ivey & S.L. Sellers (Eds.) *The Pipeline is Broken: BIPOC Graduate Student Narratives of Finding Justice and Joy* (Vol. 1, 1st ed.). University Press of Colorado.
8. Taylor, T.O., Perkins, G.A., Sakyi, G.J., Martin, A., Vasquez, M., & **Barrita, A**. (2024). APAGS Resource Guide for Psychology Graduate Students of Color (3rd ed.). American Psychological Association of Graduate Students. https://www.apa.org/apags/resources/ethnic-minority-guide.pdf
7. Chang, R., **Barrita, A.,** & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2023) Race (racism). In G. Ritzer, C. Rojek & J. M. Ryan (Eds.), *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology* (2nd ed.). Wiley. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405165518.wbeosr007.pub2
6. Wong-Padoongpatt, G**.,** & **Barrita, A**. (2023). The Fast and Slow Violence of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Asians in the USA. In M. Ryan (Ed.) *COVID-19: Cultural Change and Institutional Adaptations* (1st ed, pp. 147-58). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003302612-10
5. **Barrita, A.** (2021). "Presumed Illegal Microaggressive Experience (PRIME): A Microaggression Targeting Latinx Individuals." *UNLV Theses, Dissertations, Professional Papers, and Capstones*. 4231. https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/thesesdissertations/4231
4. Wong-Padoongpatt, G., & **Barrita, A**. (2022). Racial microaggressions and Self-Esteem. In J. L. Chin, Y. E. Garcia & A. Blume (Eds.) *The Psychology of Inequity: Motivation and Beliefs* (Vol. 1, 1st ed., pp.73-94). Praeger. Retrieved from http://publisher.abc-clio.com/9781440877995

3. **Barrita, A**., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2021). Resilience and Queer People. In K. Strunk & S.A. Shelton (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Queer Studies in Education* (Vol. 4, 1st ed., pp. 600-605). Brill. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004506725_118
2. Aguilera, B., & **Barrita, A.** (2021). Resilience in LGBTQ PoC. In J.J. Garcia (Ed.) *Heart, Brain and Mental Health Disparities for LGBTQ People of Color* (1st ed., pp. 137-148). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-70060-7_11
1. **Barrita, A**., Stancato, D., & Keltner D. (2017). The effects of perceived economic inequality on social decision-making. Department of Psychology Honor Thesis, *University of California Berkeley*. Berkeley, CA. https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.25599.56483

Under Review Manuscripts (*n* = 11)

11. Venta, A., Domenech Rodriguez, M.M., **Barrita, A.,** Mercado, A., Garcini, L.M., Moreno, O., Colunga-Rodriguez, C., Angel-Gonzalez, M., & Colunga-Rodriguez, B. (2024, under review). Decolonizing the human research protection enterprise. *American Psychologist.*
10. Carbajal, I., **Barrita, A.,** & Cabrera-Martinez, L., (2024, revised and resubmitted). *Grappling with Whiteness:* Latent profiles of White Racial Consciousness and Affect's Impact on Critical Reflection. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence.*
9. Abreu, R.L., **Barrita, A**., Sostre, J.P., Parmenter, J. & Watson, R. (2024, under review). *PREP* engagement behaviors, cyberbullying, internalized LGBTQ stigma, and parental support among Latinx sexual and gender diverse youth. *Health Psychology.*
8. Parmenter, J. & **Barrita, A**. (2024, under review). A preliminary model of intersectional minority stress and strengths among Sexual and Gender Diverse Black, Indigenous and People of Color. *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity.*
7. Abreu, R.L., Skidmore, S., **Barrita, A.,** Sostre, J.P., Lefevor, G.T., & Watson, R. (2024, under review). Substance use, parental and teacher support, and mental health outcomes among Latinx sexual and gender minority youth. *Substance Use and Misuse.*
6. Rayo. W., **Barrita, A.,** Cabrera-Martinez, L., & Carbajal I. (2024, under review). The complexity in bilingual code-switching research: A systematic review. *Languages.*
5. Carlos Chavez, F., **Barrita, A**., Moore, B., & Cardenas, G. (2024, under review). *In their own words*: What it means to be an emancipated migrant youth in the U.S. farm work. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology.*
4. Chang, R., **Barrita, A.**, & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2024, under review). Predictors of the Fear of Mpox in Sexual Minorities. *Translational Issues in Psychological Science.*
3. Soto, J**.**A., Mena, J., Albrecht Soto, S., Posada Rodriguez, C., Pushpanadh, S., Daas, R., **Barrita, A**., Van Doren, N., Wei, W., Salomaa, A., & Yang, Y. (2024, under review). Development and initial validation of the Multilevel Experiences of Oppression Scale. *Journal of Counseling Psychology.*
2. Chang, R., **Barrita, A**., Razon, M., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2024, under review). A parallel mediating model: Sexual minority identity and psychological distress during the 2022 mpox outbreak. *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity.*
1. **Barrita, A**., Wong-Padoongpatt, G., Kraus, S., Robnett, R., & Rodriguez, C. (2024, revised and resubmitted). "*The Illegal Threat"*: Presumed Illegal Microaggressive Experience (PrIME) Scale. *Translational Issues in Psychological Science.*

Manuscripts in Preparation (*n* = 8)

8. Chang, R., **Barrita, A.,** & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2024, under preparation). Resistance against oppression explains the relationship between historical knowledge & support for Palestine among BIPOC College Students. *Critical Education.*

7. Parmenter, J. & **Barrita, A**. (2024, under preparation). Expanding on resilience: An analysis of LGBTQ BIPOC experiences.
6. **Barrita, A**., Abreu, R.L., & Watson, R. (2024, under preparation). *Alcohol and native language:* A moderated mediation analysis of alcohol use as a coping strategy for intersectional microaggressions among LGBTQ+ Latinx youth.
5. **Barrita, A**., Second, A., Moreno O., & Bravo, A.J. (2024, under preparation). *Negative religious strategies:* A moderated mediation analysis of racial microaggression, self-regulation, and mental health.
4. **Barrita, A**., Second, A., Moreno O., & Bravo, A.J. (2024, under preparation). *Mindfulness and self-regulation:* A moderated mediation analysis of strategies shielding POC's purpose of life from depressive symptoms linked to racial microaggressions.
3. Parra, A.M., **Barrita, A.,** Gattamorta, K., & Abreu, R.L. (2024, under preparation). Validation of Spanish Translation using a Latinx Sample for the LGBTQ Caregiver Acceptance Scale in Spanish (LCAS-S).
2. Cabrera Martinez, L., **Barrita, A.,** Rayo, W., & Carbajal, I. (2024, under preparation*). Racial Microaggressions as Cultural Stressors:* Examining Critical Consciousness, Psychological Distress, and Multiple Identities.
1. **Barrita, A**., Wong-Padoongpatt, G., Caso, T. J., Abreu, R. L., Cabrera-Martinez, L., Kraus, S., & Robnett, R. (2024, finalizing). *Quinceaños con Sue:* A systematic review of racial and ethnic microaggressions research on Latinx communities.

White Papers, Newsletter and Professional Statements (*n* = 6)

6. Garcini, L.M., Nguyen, K., Argueta, D., **Barrita, A**., Barrett, A., Yan, J. (2023, May 25). More Human Immigration Policies Will Reduce Migrant Trauma: A Conversation with Dr. Alfonso Mercado [White Paper]. Baker Institute of Public Policy Center for the U.S.-Mexico Border. https://doi.org/10.25613/D2QT-4J30
5. **Barrita, A**., Abreu, R.L., Caso, T.J., Del Castillo, S., Cerezo, A., Garcia, J., Delucio, K., & Minero, L. (2022, March 18). NLPA Orgullo: Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity. Our communities are Under Attack [Web blog post]. Retrieved from https://www.nlpa.ws/
4. **Barrita, A.** (2022, January 21). When you said you see me. *American Psychological Association of Graduate Students Online Blog*. [Web blog post]. Retrieved from http://www.gradpsychblog.org
3. **Barrita, A**., Caso, T. J., del Castillo, S., Delucio, K., & Heredia, D. (2020, October 15). Challenging Times for Latinx Transgender and Non-Binary People. *Latinx Psychology Today* [Newsletter article]. Retrieved from https://www.nlpa.ws
2. **Barrita, A**., Abreu, R. L., Aranda, E., Caso, T. J., del Castillo, S., Cerezo, A., Delucio, K., & Heredia, D. (2020, June 9). Joint Statement Against the Removal of Health Protections for Transgender and Gender Diverse People [Web blog post]. Retrieved from https://www.nlpa.ws/
1. **Barrita, A**., Abreu, R. L., Castillo, S., Cerezo, A., Delucio, K., Heredia, D., & Rivera-Ramos, Z. (2020, March 3). Hate crime murder in Puerto Rico of a Latinx transgender woman [Web blog post]. Retrieved from https://www.nlpa.ws [Spanish version included].

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2024-Present **Doctoral Researcher Affiliate, University of Missouri-Columbia**
Equity Lab.
Lab Director: Dr. Joshua G. Parmenter

2023-Present **Doctoral Researcher Affiliate, Rice University**
Voicing Opportunities, Community, Equity, and Success (VOCES) Lab.
Lab Director: Dr. Luz Maria Garcini

2022-Present **Doctoral Researcher Affiliate**, **Oregon State University**
Psychophysiology, Intersectionality, Latinx & Acculturative Science (PILAS)
Lab Director: Dr. Ivan Carbajal

2020-Present **Doctoral Researcher Affiliate, University of Florida**
Collective Healing & Empowering Voices through Research Engagement (CHEVERE) Lab.
Lab Director: Dr. Roberto L. Abreu

2020-2024 **Doctoral Researcher Affiliate, University of Nevada Las Vegas**
Social Development Research Lab,
Lab Director: Dr. Rachael D. Robnett

2019-Present **Lead Doctoral Researcher, University of Nevada Las Vegas**
Gambling, Addictions, and Marginalized Experience (GAME) Lab,
Lab Director: Dr. Gloria Wong-Padoongpatt

TEACHING & MENTORSHIP EXPERIENCE

Teaching

2023 Fall **Instructor on Record,** *Heritage University*
Undergraduate 3-unit course: **Latinx Psychology *PSY 390*.**

2023 September **Guest Lecturer, "Mental Health and Latinx People"**
University of Arizona

2023 March **Guest Lecturer, "Oppression research using intersectional methods."**
Oregon State University.

2022 October **Guest Lecturer, "Intersectionality and Latinx People"**
Arizona State University.

2022 Fall **Instructor on Record,** *University of Nevada, Las Vegas*
Undergraduate 3-unit course: **Latinx Psychology *PSY 299*.**

2021-2022 **Instructor on Record,** *University of Nevada, Las Vegas*
Fall / Spring Undergraduate 3-unit course: **General Psychology *PSY 101*.**

2019-2020 **Teaching Assistant** for Dr. Paul Nelson. *University of Nevada, Las Vegas*
Fall / Spring Undergraduate 3-unit course: **Abnormal Psychology *PSY 341***

Supervision & Research Mentorship

2021-2022 **Lianelys Cabrera-Martinez**, Honor Thesis Committee. *UNLV.*
2021 **Lianelys Cabrera-Martinez**, Summer McNair Research Program. *UNLV*
2020-2021 **Aimy Paulsen**, Honor Thesis Committee. *UNLV.*
2020-2021 **Janelle Salcedo**, AANAPISI Scholar Program. *UNLV.*
2020-2021 **Lianelys Cabrera-Martinez**, Rebel Research & Mentorship Program. *UNLV*
2020-2021 **Marvin Fuentes**, Rebel Research & Mentorship Program. *UNLV*
2020 **Lianelys Cabrera-Martinez**, Summer McNair Research Program. *UNLV*

Academic Mentorship

Outreach Undergraduate Mentoring Program (OUMP). *University of Nevada, Las Vegas.*
2020-2021 Mentor for Elizabeth de la Cruz, Psychology undergraduate student.
2020-2021 Mentor for Ivana Hernandez, Psychology undergraduate student.
2019-2020 Mentor for Lianelys Cabrera-Martinez, Psychology undergraduate student.

2019-2020 Mentor for Marvin Fuentes, Psychology undergraduate student.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, TRAINING & SKILLS

Certifications & Trainings

2023 Summer	**Summer Institute for Social and Personality Psychology (SISPP)** Social & Health Psychology Track, *Ohio State University*
2022 Summer	**Crossing Latinidades Summer Institute Fellowship in Latino Humanities Studies Methodologies and Theories**, *University of Illinois*
2021-2022	**Graduate Teaching Certification** The Grad Academy, *University of Nevada, Las Vegas*
2021 Summer	**Latinx Methodology Fellowship,** Michigan Center for Urban African American Aging Research, *University of Michigan*
2020-2021	**Graduate Researcher Mentor Certification** The Grad Academy, *University of Nevada, Las Vegas*
2020-2021	**Graduate Student Mentor Certification** The Grad Academy, *University of Nevada, Las Vegas*

Specialized Skills

- Data Analysis in R Statistical Software Programming & Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)
  - Model construction: Linear, Step, and Logistic Regression analyses
  - Factor analysis (EFA, CFA, Measurement of Invariance)
  - Mediation and Moderation Models (Hayes' PROCESS)
  - Structural Equation Model (SEM)

Languages

Spanish / English

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

*^ Indicates a presentation or poster for which I received an award | * Indicates a student I mentored*

Invited Research Presentations or Workshops (*n* = 6)

6. **Barrita, A.** (2023, March 9). *Intersectional Microaggressions: What we know so far.* [Invited presentation for predoctoral Scholar program]. Office of Institutional Diversity. Oregon State University.
5. **Barrita, A.** (2022, June 3). *A Review of Immigration Policy Reform from Applied and Empirical Perspectives.* [Invited presentation]. Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues. Virtual.
4. **Caso, T. J.,** & **Barrita, A.** (2022, February 12). *Fostering Intersectional Dialogues About Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Across Contexts.* [Invited presentation]. In *A. Garcia (Chair)* MI CASA (Mentors Initiating Community Action, Support, and Advocacy) mentoring project at the University of North Carolina Wilmington, Virtual.
3. **Barrita, A.,** & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2021, April 2). *COVID-19 Racism and Asian Americans.* [Invited presentation]. Brown Bag Research Presentation Series for JADE and SoBaD Labs. University of Virginia. Virtual.
2. **^Barrita, A.,** & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2021, April 1). *Microaggressions impacting Asian American students during the COVID-19 pandemic* [Awarded selected presentation]. The 6th Annual Inspiration, Innovation, Impact: A celebration of Graduate Student Research. University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Virtual.

1. **Barrita, A.** & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2019, November 22). *Impact of microaggressions on marginalized communities* [Invited presentation]. The Women's Council Diversity Data Blitz, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Scholarly Paper Presentations Symposia (*n* = 26)

26. Skidmore, S. J., Parmenter, J. G., Abreu, R. L., Watson, R. J., & **Barrita, A.** (2024). *Synthesis on Diverse LGBTQ+ Individuals' Well-being and Resilience*. [Research symposium]. 2024 Annual National Meeting of the American Psychological Association, Seattle, WA.
25. Chang, R., **Barrita, A.,** & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2024, August 8-10). Intersectional Microaggressions in Higher Education: When LGBTQ BIPOC students are pushed out. In M. Kalantzis (Chair), *A Critical Examination of Microaggressions across Marginalized Identities in Undergraduate & Graduate Students* [Research symposium]. 2024 Annual National Meeting of the American Psychological Association, Seattle, WA.
24. **Barrita, A.,** Chang, R., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2024, August 8-10). Cultural Stress from Immigration Status Microaggressions Impacting Latinx and Asian College Students. In M. Kalantzis (Chair), *A Critical Examination of Microaggressions across Marginalized Identities in Undergraduate & Graduate Students* [Research symposium]. 2024 Annual National Meeting of the American Psychological Association, Seattle, WA.
23. ^**Barrita, A**., Carbajal, I., Abreu, R.L., Chang, R., Moreno O., Garcini, L.M., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2024 March 13-15). *Immigration, Fear, Internalization and Cultural Stress.* [Best Scholarly Paper Award Presentation]. 2024 National Conference of the American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education. St. Louis, MI.
22. **Barrita, A.,** Chang, R., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2023, November 11). *When the pain is absorbed*: Moderated mediation analysis of intersectional oppression, internalization, and mental health. In *The Institute for the Study of Race and Culture.* [Research symposium]. 1st Biennial Graduate Diversity Challenge Conference, Boston College. Virtual.
21. **Barrita, A.,** Chang, R., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2023, October 26-28). Latinx & Asian college students internalize immigration status microaggressions. In **A. Barrita** (Chair), *Intersectional Oppression for Latinx people.* [Research symposium]. 2023 National Latinx Psychological Association Conference. Chicago, IL.
20. **Barrita, A.,** Piña-Watson, B., & Romero, A. (2023, October 26-28). *Teaching Latinx Psychology: A discussion about liberating the syllabus* [Roundtable discussion]. 2023 National Latinx Psychological Association Conference. Chicago, IL.
19. **Barrita, A.,** King, A., Le, D., Chang, R., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2023, August 3-5). Internalized racism impacting Asian Americans during the COVID-19 pandemic. In **A. Barrita** & G. Wong-Padoongpatt (Co-Chairs), *The Slow Violence of COVID-19 Anti-Asian Hate* [Research symposium]. 2023 Annual National Meeting of the American Psychological Association, Washington D.C.
18. Wong-Padoongpatt, G., **Barrita, A.,** King, A., Chang, R., & Le, D (2023, August 3-5). The slow violence of anti-Asian Racism during the COVID-19 pandemic. In **A. Barrita** & G. Wong-Padoongpatt (Co-Chairs), *The Slow Violence of COVID-19 Anti-Asian Hate* [Research symposium]. 2023 Annual National Meeting of the American Psychological Association, Washington D.C.
17. Chang, R., **Barrita, A.,** King, A., Le, D., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2023, August 3-5). Increase of anti-Asian racial microaggressions during the COVID-19 pandemic. In **A. Barrita** & G. Wong-Padoongpatt (Co-Chairs), *The Slow Violence of COVID-19 Anti-*

Asian Hate [Research symposium]. 2023 Annual National Meeting of the American Psychological Association, Washington D.C.

16. Sarabu, V., Yan, J., Yang, M., Le, K., Nguyen, K., Gomez Gorgonio, L., **Barrita, A.,** & Garcini, L. (2023, August 3-5). Overlooked but preventable: Cardiometabolic health and resilience among undocumented Latino immigrants. In L. Garcini (Chair), *Harsh realities: Material deprivation and income insecurity among undocumented latino immigrants* [Research symposium]. 2023 Annual national meeting of the American Psychological Association, Washington D.C.
15. Yang, M., Yan, J., Cuauro, S., **Barrita, A.,** & Garcini, L. (2023, August 3-5). Not enough to go around: Income insecurity and health among undocumented Latino immigrants. In L. Garcini (Chair), *Harsh realities: Material deprivation and income insecurity among undocumented latino immigrants* [Research symposium]. 2023 Annual national meeting of the American Psychological Association, Washington D.C.
14. Yan, J., Yang, M., Mbonobong, U., **Barrita, A.,** & Garcini, L.(2023, August 3-5). Adversity, Disadvantage, and Psychological Distress Among Undocumented Latino Immigrants. In L. Garcini (Chair), *Harsh realities: Material deprivation and income insecurity among undocumented latino immigrants* [Research symposium]. 2023 Annual national meeting of the American Psychological Association, Washington D.C.
13. **Barrita, A.,** Chang, R., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2023, July 13-15). Immigration Status Microaggression: Latinx & Asian's Internalization and Mental Health. In **A. Barrita** (Chair), *Racial oppression: systems of support and influences when experiencing oppression.* [Research symposium]. 7th Biennial National Meeting of the American Psychological Association Division 45 for the Psychological Study of Culture, Ethnicity and Race Research, San Diego, C.A.
12. Abreu, R., Skidmore, S., **Barrita, A.,** Lefevor, T., & Watson, R. (2023, July 13-15). Substance Use, Mental Health Outcomes, and Support Among Latinx LGBTQ Youth. In **A. Barrita** (Chair), *Oppression for QTBIPOC: Risks, impact, and larger implications.* [Research symposium]. 7th Biennial National Meeting of the American Psychological Association Division 45 for the Psychological Study of Culture, Ethnicity and Race Research, San Diego, C.A.
11. **Barrita, A.,** Chang, R., King, A., Le, D., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2023, July 13-15). LGBTQ+ BIPoC college students' experiences with intersectional microaggressions. In **A. Barrita** (Chair), *Oppression for QTBIPOC: Risks, impact, and larger implications.* [Research symposium]. 7th Biennial National Meeting of the American Psychological Association Division 45 for the Psychological Study of Culture, Ethnicity and Race Research, San Diego, C.A.
10. **Barrita, A.,** & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2022, October 20-22). Immigration Status Microaggressions and Mental Health Outcomes. In **A. Barrita** (Chair), *Latinx students at the front of research challenging oppression for Latinx individuals* [Research symposium]. 2022 National Latinx Psychological Association Conference. Denver, CO.
9. Martin, J., **Barrita, A.,** & Abreu R.L. (2022, October 20-22). LGBTQ+ Latinx Youth during the COVID-19 Pandemic. In **A. Barrita** (Chair), *Latinx students at the front of research challenging oppression for Latinx individuals* [Research symposium]. 2022 National Latinx Psychological Association Conference. Denver, CO.
8. **Barrita, A.,** Hixson, K., Kachen, A., Krishen, A., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2022, October 20-22). Cisgender Privilege among LGBTQ+ BIPoC. In **A. Barrita** (Chair), *LGBTQ+*

Orgullo: Intersectional approaches to research with sexual and gender minorities [Research symposium]. 2022 National Latinx Psychological Association Conference. Denver, CO.

7. **Barrita, A.,** Bak D., Chaparro, R., Horne, S. G., Nel, J. A., Pitonňák, M., & Smetáčková, I. (2021, October 18-23). *Roles of sexual orientation and gender identity sections within national psychological associations during the times of politicization of LGBTQ+ issues* [Roundtable discussion]. 32nd International Congress of Psychology, Prague, Czech Republic.
6. **Barrita, A.,** Caso, T. J., & Delucio, K. (2021, July 8-10). *Situated at the margins: Exploring queer Latinidad across contexts* [Roundtable discussion]. 6th Biennial APA Division 45 Research Conference. University of Michigan. Virtual.
5. **Barrita, A.,** & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2021, July 8-10). Substance use: Coping with racial microaggressions and mental health. In **A. Barrita** (Chair), *Impact of Racism, Ableism, Gender-Related Discrimination, Critical Consciousness in Action* [Research symposium]. 6th Biennial APA Division 45 Research Conference. University of Michigan. Virtual.
4. **Barrita, A.,** King, A., Flores B., Paulsen, A., Galdamez, A., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2021, February 25-27). Racial microaggressions, mental health and substance use: A mediation analysis. In **A. Barrita** (Co-chair), *Examining minority stress and systemic oppression among minoritized communities* [Research symposium]. 38th Annual Winter Roundtable Conference in Psychology and Education. Teachers College, Columbia University. New York, NY. Virtual.
3. **Barrita, A.** (2020, November 5). *A review of Latinx experiences with racial microaggressions.* [Data Blitz Oral Presentation-Semi Finalist]. The Rebel Grad Slam Graduate College competition. *University of Nevada, Las Vegas.* Virtual.
2. **Barrita, A.,** Caso, T. J., del Castillo, S., Delucio, K., & Heradia, D. (2020, October 29-30). *A discussion about gender diversity in our Latinx community* [Roundtable discussion]. 2020 National Latinx Psychological Association Conference, Virtual.
1. **Barrita, A.,** Caso, T. J., del Castillo, S., Delucio, K., & Heradia, D. (2020, October 29-30). Braking barriers in LGBTQ+ spaces. In **A. Barrita** (Co-chair), *Rompiendo barreras con arcoiris: exploring social influences and barriers to health in the Latinx LGBTQ+ community* [Research symposium]. 2020 National Latinx Psychological Association Conference, Virtual.

Professional Development Workshops (*n* = 5)

5. **Barrita, A.** (2023, October 26-28). *2023 NLPA Leadership Academy: Mentorship across generations* [Roundtable discussion]. 2023 National Latinx Psychological Association Conference. Chicago, IL.
4. **Barrita, A.** (2022, October 20-22). *Internship Application Resources* [Roundtable discussion]. 2022 National Latinx Psychological Association Conference. Denver, CO.
3. **Barrita, A.** (2022, October 20-22). *2022 NLPA Leadership Academy: Perspectives from Latina Scholars* [Roundtable discussion]. 2022 National Latinx Psychological Association Conference. Denver, CO.
2. **Barrita, A.** (2022, October 20-22). *Fellowship Applications* [Roundtable discussion]. 2022 National Latinx Psychological Association Conference. Denver, CO.
1. **Barrita, A.** (2022, October 20-22). *Applying to graduate school* [Roundtable discussion]. 2022 National Latinx Psychological Association Conference. Denver, CO.

Conference Poster Presentations (*n* = 48)

48. Chang, R., Castano, M., Razon, M., Rodriguez, Y., **Barrita, A.,** & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2024, August 8-10). *Examining Critical Consciousness as a Mediator Between Racial Trauma & Intraminority Solidarity.* [Poster accepted]. 2024 Annual National Meeting of the American Psychological Association, Seattle, WA.
47. Chang, R., Castano, M., Razon, M., Rodriguez, Y., **Barrita, A.,** & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2024, August 8-10). *Calling for a Ceasefire: Resistance and Empowerment Against Racism & Critical Consciousness.* [Poster accepted]. 2024 Annual National Meeting of the American Psychological Association, Seattle, WA.
46. Chang, R., Castano, M., **Barrita, A.,** & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2024, May 4). *A Serial Mediation Model: The Role of Racial Microaggressions & Critical Consciousness in the Relationship Between LGB BIPOC Identity & Intraminority Solidarity* [Poster accepted]. 2024 Cambridge Queer Studies Conference, London, U.K. Virtual.
45. Chang, R., **Barrita, A.,** Razon, M., Castano, M., Rodriguez, Y., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2024, April 11-12). *Sexual Minority Identity & Psychological Distress During the 2022 Mpox Outbreak: A Parallel Mediation Analysis of Fear & Internalization* [Poster presented]. 2024 LGBTQ+ Health Care Conference. Indiana University. Virtual
44. Chang, R., **Barrita, A.,** Razon, M., Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2024, February 10). *Fear of Mpox Mediates the Relationship Between Sexual Minority Identity & Psychological Distress.* [Poster presented]. Society for Personality and Social Psychology Annual Convention. San Diego, CA.
43. **Barrita, A.,** Chang, R., & Wong-Padoongpatt. (2023, August 3-5). *Immigration status microaggressions: Internalization and mental health for Latinx and Asian people.* [Poster presented]. 2023 Annual national meeting of the American Psychological Association, Washington D.C.
42. Le, D., Sim, D., Tong, T., Chang, R., King, A., **Barrita, A.,** & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2023, August 3-5). *Barriers to methadone maintenance treatment: A systematic review.* [Poster presented]. 2023 Annual national meeting of the American Psychological Association, Washington D.C.
41. Le, D., Lim, A., Gaudiane, G., Chang, R., King, A., **Barrita, A.,** & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2023, August 3-5). *A mediation of psychological distress, stigma, and methadone maintenance treatment outcome.* [Poster presented]. 2023 Annual national meeting of the American Psychological Association, Washington D.C
40. Chang, R., **Barrita, A.,** Le, D., Yu, T., & Wong-Padoongpatt. (2023, August 3-5). *Victimization as a moderator of the relationship between Monkeypox fear and psychological distress.* [Poster presented]. 2023 Annual national meeting of the American Psychological Association, Washington D.C.
39. King, A., Le, D., **Barrita, A.,** Chang, R., Sim, D., Tong, T., & Wong-Padoongpatt. (2023, August 3-5). *Do gamers play for money? An analysis of gaming motives, relative deprivation and upward mobility.*[Poster presented]. 2023 Annual national meeting of the American Psychological Association, Washington D.C.
38. Chang, R., **Barrita, A.,** King, A., Strong, M., Le, D., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2023, June 25-27). *Slow Violence of Racism on Asian Americans During COVID-19 Students* [Poster presented]. Annual national meeting of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues. Denver, CO.

37. Chang, R., **Barrita, A.,** Bayless, A., Razon, M., Rodriguez, Y., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2023, April 27-30). *Moderated Mediation Analysis of the Internalization of Immigration Status Microaggressions Among Latinx & Asian American College Students* [Poster presented]. 2023 Western Psychological Association Conference. Riverside, CA.
36. **Barrita, A.,** Chang, R., Razon, M., Bayless, A., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2023, April 27-30). *Using Drugs to Cope: A Mediation Model of Racial Microaggressions, Substance Use, and Mental Health* [Poster presented]. 2023 Western Psychological Association Conference. Riverside, CA
35. Chang, R., **Barrita, A.,** Le, D., King, A., Strong, M., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2023, March 9-11). *Exploring Race as a Moderator of the Relationship Between the Stigma of Illegality and Psychological Distress* [Poster presented]. International Convention of Psychological Science (ICPS). Brussels, Belgium.
34. **Barrita, A.,** Chang, R., Strong, M.N & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2023, March 9-11). *Drugs and Racism: Mediation Analysis of Everyday Racism, Psychological Distress and the Use of Substances Microaggressions* [Poster presented]. International Convention of Psychological Science (ICPS). Brussels, Belgium.
33. ^**Barrita, A.,** & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2023, February 23-25). *Development and Validation of Scale for Immigration Status Racial Microaggressions* [Poster presented]. Annual Convention for the Society for Personality and Social Psychology. Atlanta, GA.
32. King, A., Tong, T., Le, D., Sim, D., **Barrita, A.,** Chang, R., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2022, October 9). *Cumulative childhood adversity predicts disordered gambling and psychopathology in college students: Results from a large U.S. sample* [Poster presented]. International Center for Responsible Gaming Conference, Las Vegas, NV.
31. Carlos Chavez, F., **Barrita, A**., & Sanchez I. (2022, October 20-22). *En sus propias palabras: What it means to be an emancipated migrant youth in the U.S.* [Poster presented]. 2022 National Latinx Psychological Association Conference. Denver, CO.
30. ^**Barrita, A.,** * Ferraris, J., *Hernandez, I., *Cabrera-Martinez, L., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2022, July 14-17). *Immigration Status in the United States: A microaggression targeting Latinx People* [Poster presented]. Annual meeting of the International Society of Political Psychology. Athens, Greece.
29. King, A., Tong, T., Sim, D., Strong, M., **Barrita, A.**, Le, D., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2022, June 25). *Adverse childhood experiences predict addictive behavioral patterns in U.S. college students: Video game addiction is the exception* [Poster presented]. APA Division 50's Practice of Addiction Psychology Conference. San Diego, California.
28. ^**Barrita, A.,** * Ferraris, J., *Tong, T., King, A., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2022, June 24-26). *COVID-19, Microaggressions and Internalized Racism impacting Asian Americans* [Poster presented]. Annual national meeting of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues. San Juan, Puerto Rico.
27. ^**Barrita, A.,** Abreu, R. L., Lefevor, G. T., Gonzalez, K. A., & Watson R. J. (2022, June 24-26). *Latinx SGM Youth and Bullying, Depression, and Parental Acceptance* [Poster presented]. Annual national meeting of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues. San Juan, Puerto Rico.
26. ^**Barrita, A.,** *Hernandez, I., *De la Torre, E., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2022, June 24-26). *Weaponizing immigration status: Microaggressions targeting Latinx in the US* [Poster

presented]. Annual national meeting of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues. San Juan, Puerto Rico.

25. ^**Barrita, A.,** * Ferraris, J., *Tong, T., King, A., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2022, May 26-29*). Everyday Discrimination, Internalized Racism and COVID-19: Its impact to Asians and Latinx Individuals* [Poster presented]. 2022 Association for Psychological Science Convention. Chicago, Illinois.
24. Carlos Chavez, F., **Barrita, A.,** Armstrong, J., & Landor, A.M. (2022, March 3-5). *Against the odds: Latino Migrant Farmworker Adolescents' Perception of Substance Use and Risky Behavior* [Poster presented]. 2022 Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research on Adolescence. New Orleans, Louisiana.
23. *Cabrera-Martinez, L., **Barrita, A.,** & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2022, February 25) *Understanding Resilience in the BIPOC Community: A Systematic Literature Review*. [Poster accepted]. 2022 Winter Roundtable Conference in Psychology and Education. Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY. Virtual.
22. *Salcedo, J., **Barrita, A.,** & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2021, Oct 1-3) *Microaggressions and Filipinx* [Poster presented]. 2021 Asian American Psychological Association National Convention. Virtual.
21. **Barrita, A.,** *Salcedo J., *Ferraris, J., King, A., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G (2021, August 12-14). *Asian Americans at higher risk of microassaults during the COVID-19 Pandemic* [Poster presented]. Annual national meeting of the American Psychological Association, Virtual.
20. Vierra, K., **Barrita, A.,** & Robnett, R. (2021, August 12-14). *Interventions to foster critical consciousness* [Poster presented]. Annual national meeting of the American Psychological Association, Virtual
19. **Barrita, A.,** *Cabrera-Martinez, L., *Hernandez, I., King, A. & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2021, August 12-14). *Resilience: a protective factor for Latinxs in the US in the face of oppression* [Poster presented]. Annual national meeting of the American Psychological Association, Virtual.
18. King, A., *Tong, T., *Cheung, D., **Barrita, A.,** & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2021, August 12-14). *Problem Gaming & Gambling Risk Factors of Problem in US Emerging Adults* [Poster presented]. Annual national meeting of the American Psychological Association, Virtual.
17. **Barrita, A.,** *Cabrera-Martinez, L., King, A., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2021, July 18-23). *Resilience: A protective factor for Latinxs in the US against racial microaggressions* [Poster presented]. 32nd International Congress of Psychology, Prague, Czech Republic.
16. Vierra, K., **Barrita, A.,** & Robnett, R. (2021, May 26-27). *How to be a better activist: Critical consciousness and Activism* [Poster presented]. 2021 Association for Psychological Science Virtual Convention.
15. **^Barrita, A.,** *Ferraris J., Vierra, K., *Galdamez, A., Hixson, K., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2021, May 26-27). *Racial microaggressions, poor coping mechanisms and mental health: A mediation analysis* [Awarded poster presented]. 2021 Association for Psychological Science Virtual Convention.
14. **Barrita, A**., Hixson, K., Kachen, A., Wong-Padoongpatt, G., & Krishen, A. (2021, May 20-21). *Facing more than one type of oppression: Intersectional microaggressions for BIPoC LGBTQ+* [Poster presented]. 7th National LGBTQ Health Conference: Bridging Research & Practice. Virtual

13. King, A., **Barrita, A.,** *Tong, T., *Cheung, D., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2021, April 28-30). *Risk Factors of Problem Gaming & Gambling in US Emerging Adults* [Poster presented]. 2021 Western Psychological Association (WPA) Conference. Virtual.
12. **^Barrita, A.,** Vierra, K., *Cabrera-Martinez, L., *Tong, T., *Patriana, Z., King, A., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2021, April 28-30). *POC coping discrimination with drugs and alcohol: A mediation study of poor mental in racial minorities* [Awarded poster presented]. 2021 Western Psychological Association (WPA) Conference. Virtual.
11. King, A., *Tong, T., *Cheung, D., **Barrita, A.,** & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2021, March 17-19). *The role of relative deprivation in video gaming disorders of US emerging adults* [Poster presented]. Collaborative Perspectives on Addictions Conference. Division 50 of American Psychological Association. Virtual.
10. *Tong, T., King, A., *Cheung, D., **Barrita, A.,** & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2021, March 17-19). *The role of subjective social status in substance use during emerging adulthood* [Poster presented]. Collaborative Perspectives on Addictions Conference. Division 50 of American Psychological Association. Virtual.
9. *Cheung, D., King, A., *Tong, T., **Barrita, A.,** & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2021, March 19). *The links between problematic video gaming and gambling in US college students* [Poster presented]. Collaborative Perspectives on Addictions Conference. Division 50 of American Psychological Association. Virtual.
8. **Barrita, A.,** *Cabrera-Martinez, L., Wong-Padoongpatt, G., & *Fuentes, M. (2021, February 25-27). *Latinxs and racial microaggressions: A decade of research* [Poster presented]. 38th Annual Winter Roundtable Conference in Psychology and Education. Teachers College, Columbia University. New York, NY. Virtual.
7. *Cabrera-Martinez, L., **Barrita, A.,** & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2021, January 24-26) *Resilience: How are Latinx Individuals Coping with Racial Microaggressions* [Poster presented]. 2021 National Collegiate Research Conference. Harvard College Undergraduate Research Association. Virtual.
6. **Barrita, A., ***Cabrera-Martinez, L., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2020, December 11-13) *Racial microaggressions predicting higher resilience* [Poster presented]. 78th Annual conference of the International Council of Psychologists. Virtual.
5. **Barrita, A.,** *Fuentes, M., *Cabrera-Martinez, L., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2020, October 29-30) *Latinx Experiences with Racial Microaggressions: A systematic review* [Poster presented]. 2020 National Latinx Psychological Association Conference, Virtual.
4. King, A., **Barrita, A.,** *Tong, T., *Cheung, D., *Garcia-Leon, J., & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2020, October 15). *Risk factors of problem gaming and gambling in US emerging adult non-students: The role of loot boxes, microtransactions, and risk-taking* [Poster presented]. The annual conference for the International Center for Responsible Gaming, Las Vegas, NV. Virtual.
3. *Cheng, A., *Mendez, A., *Cabrera-Martinez, L., *Patriana, Z., *King, B., **Barrita, A.,** King, A. & Wong-Padoongpatt, G. (2020, October 3-4). *Asian Americans experience greater microassaults during the 2020 COVID-19 Pandemic* [Poster presented]. 2020 Asian American Psychological Association Conference. Virtual.
2. **Barrita, A.,** Wong-Padoongpatt, G., & King, A. (2020, August 6-9). *Discrepancy in Self-Esteem, the Hidden Weapon behind Microaggressions* [Poster accepted]. Annual national meeting of the American Psychological Association, Virtual.

1. King, A., Wong-Padoongpatt, G., **Barrita, A.,** *Phung, D., & *Tong, T. (2020, August 6-9) *The links between problem gambling and video gaming in emerging adulthood* [Poster presented]. Annual national meeting of the American Psychological Association, Virtual.

LEADERSHIP & NATIONAL SERVICE

American Psychological Association (APA)

2024 **APAGS Representative**, Council of Representatives
2024 **APAGS Representative**, Council of Leadership Team
2025 **APAGS Representative**, Board of Directors

American Psychological Association of Graduate Students (APAGS)

2023 **Chair-Elect**
2024 **Chair**
2025 **Past-Chair**
2022 **Member** Committee for the Advancement of Racial and Ethnic Diversity
2021-2022 **APA Campus Ambassador** for the University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Division 44 Society for the Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity

2020 **Member**, Task Force addressing violence against transgender WoC.
2020 **Student Representative** Division 44, 2020 Awards Committee
2019-2020 **Co-Chair** of Community of Students Whiteness Accountability Group

Division 45 Society for the Psychological Study of Culture, Ethnicity, and Race

2021 **Division Campus Representative** for the University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Division 52 International Psychology

2022-2024 **Student Chair** (Elect/Current/Past)
2021 **Member,** Student Committee
2020 **Research Member,** COVID-19 International Task Force

National Latinx Psychological Association (NLPA)

2021-2023 **Student Representative** (Elect/Current/Past)
2020-2022 **Associate Editor** for NLPA Newsletter "Latinx Psychology Today"
2020-2021 **Member** of Leadership Council and Social Media Coordinator
2019-2022 **Co-Leader Committee,** SIG *Orgullo*-LGBTQ+
2019-2022 **Representative** I*Psy*Net for LGBTQ Issues
2020 **Social Media Chair**, 2020 NLPA Conference

Association of Psychological Science (APS)

2020/21 **Reviewer**, APS Student Research Award
2019-2021 **Campus Representative** (UNLV), APSSC

Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP)

2020 **Reviewer**, SPSP Student Awards

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

2020-2023 UNLV Graduate College's Graduate Student Advisory Council
Council Member (2020-Present)
2020-2022 Graduate College *University of Nevada, Las Vegas*
Graduate Rebel Ambassador
2019-2022 Experimental Student Committee, UNLV Psychology Department,
President (2020-2021)
2019-2023 Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Action and Solutions *IDEAS* Committee UNLV
Graduate Coordinator (2020-2022)

2019-2022	Outreach Undergraduate Mentorship Program UNLV Psychology Department **Graduate Coordinator and Mentor** (2019-2022)
2019-2020	**Graduate Liaison** PsiChi International Honor Society, UNLV Chapter

MEDIA COVERAGE

Nov 2022	"Ph.D. student from Mexico" covered by *Al Dia News*
Nov 2022	"UNLV Latinx student" covered by *North Vegas Times*
Oct 2022	"Supporting Latinx Studies on the Way to a PhD" covered by *UNLV News*
May 2021	"Research as a form of Social Justice" covered by *UNLV News*
Nov 2020	"First Generation Experiences" covered by *UNLV Groundbreaking Podcast*

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

American Psychological Association (APA)
Association for Psychological Sciences (APS)
National Latinx Psychological Association (NLPA)
Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP)
Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI)
Sociedad Interamericana de Psicología (SIP)

PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

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