

Microaggressions: A Weight on the Success of Graduate Nursing Students of Color

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Background

- The Institute of Medicine suggests diversifying the health profession workforce as a strategy to mediate health disparities related to provider bias and prejudice.
- Microaggressions have been proven to be just as psychologically detrimental to racial minorities as flagrant discrimination.
- Research has found the experience of microaggressions in nursing education to be associated with decreased wellness and satisfaction.
- Although the success of all students is essential, graduated prepared nurses specifically have the ability to reduce health disparities as educators, care providers, researchers, and leaders.

Purpose

To examine the prevalence of microaggressions and the impact on satisfaction and symptoms of depression in graduate nursing students of color.

Methods

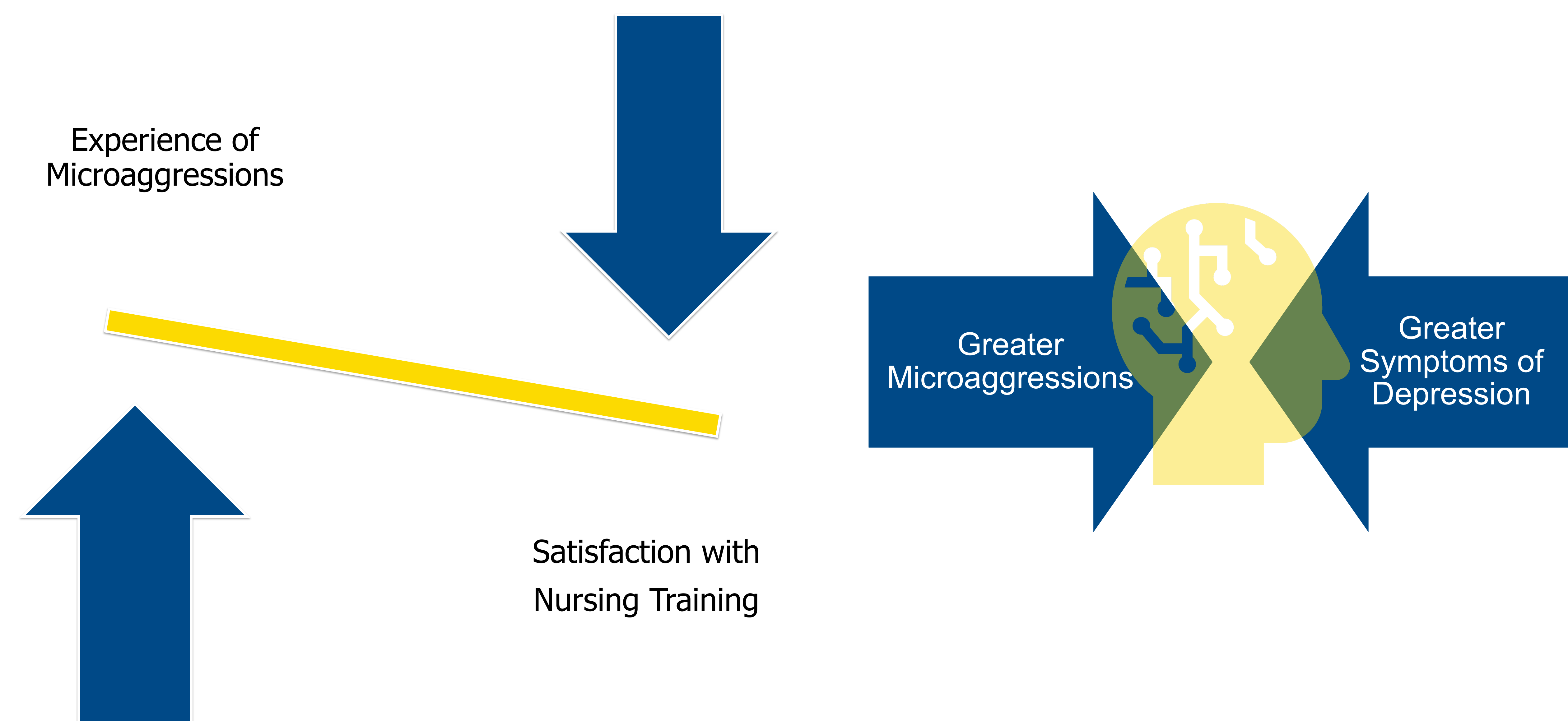
- Quantitative cross-sectional study
- 16-item Racial and Ethnic Microaggressions Scale
- 2-item Patient Health Questionnaire to measure symptoms of depression
- Six questions were generated to measure participants' satisfaction with nursing training
- Sample (n=130)
 - 98 White
 - 18 Asian
 - 8 Black or African American
 - 3 American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 3 Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- 8 of Hispanic or Latino(a) origin.

Hypotheses

- We expect that compared to non-Latino White graduate nursing students, graduate nursing students of color will self-report significantly more experiences of microaggressions.
- We expect that a greater self-reported experience of microaggressions to be inversely associated with satisfaction with nursing training.
- We expect a positive association between greater microaggressions, and greater symptoms of depression as measured by the two-item Patient Health Questionnaire.

Results

- No significant difference in the prevalence of self-reported microaggressions between non-Latino White students and students of color was discovered.
- Data analysis of the entire sample indicated:
 - An inverse association between the greater self-reported experience of microaggressions and lesser satisfaction with graduate nursing training.
 - A positive association between the greater self-reported experience of microaggressions and greater symptoms of depression.



Conclusion:

This study shows the need for continued education for faculty and staff of nursing institutions to create a more culturally inclusive environment for graduate nursing students. The addition of a curriculum focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion will not only support the success of graduate nursing students of color but will benefit the success of all the student body by increasing diversity and creating a more culturally competent workforce.

Implications

The effects of microaggressions on satisfaction and symptoms of depressions are an additional unneeded burden for graduate nursing students of color. Microaggressions negatively impact institutional climate by creating a less inclusive environment for learning and influencing students' sense of belonging. Educational institutions should adopt specific curriculum focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion. A diverse curriculum will not only help to prepare more culturally aware nurses and improve students' satisfaction with nursing training but will also help support the success of graduate nursing students of color training.

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