

Review of: "[Commentary] Exposing the Woke Lie Called Microaggressions for What It Is"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The paper, "Exposing the Woke Lie Called Microaggressions for What It Is", critically examines the concept of microaggressions. It argues that expecting individuals to constantly monitor and adjust their behavior to avoid microaggressions is impractical, given human cognitive limitations. The paper questions the lack of intent in actions labeled as microaggressions and suggests that categorizing these subtle behaviors as aggressions can be problematic. It posits that the concept of microaggressions divides people more than it unites them and that it could lead to a culture of victimhood and unreasonable demands. The paper brings to light an important and relevant topic in contemporary discourse, particularly in a climate where people may fear being canceled for saying the wrong thing.

Strengths:

- The paper effectively highlights the cognitive limitations of human beings in processing a vast array of perceptual details in social interactions, presenting a strong case against the practicality of constantly monitoring for microaggressions.
- The paper also presents the argument of the importance of mutual understanding and fairness in social interactions, critiquing the one-sidedness perceived in the concept of microaggressions.
- It raises important questions about the role of intent in defining microaggressions, emphasizing that many actions labeled as microaggressions lack harmful intent.

Arguments that could have enriched the paper:

- The paper does not discuss how a heightened focus on microaggressions could potentially reduce resilience in newer generations, making them less capable of overcoming trauma and adversity.
- The paper also does not sufficiently expand on the possibility that constant vigilance against microaggressions could lead to social anxiety and a culture of 'walking on eggshells,' making in-person social interactions more strained.
- The paper does not delve into how the microaggression narrative might conflict with principles of free speech and open dialogue.
- There is little exploration of the idea that microaggressions might be acknowledged only when the target belongs to a minority, potentially overlooking similar experiences of others.
- The paper does not consider the challenges faced by individuals from different cultural backgrounds in understanding and adapting to the concept of microaggressions, which is predominantly a Western construct.

- The author mentions it, but does not expand much on how categorizing both substantial aggressions (like physical harm or explicit threats) and microaggressions under similar labels could lead to the inappropriate appropriation of victimhood.

Room for improvement

While the paper presents some valid criticisms of the microaggression concept, it also has some limitations:

- The paper seems to present a one-sided view against the concept of microaggressions, which may indicate a lack of consideration of opposing viewpoints or the broader context of social justice issues. Indeed, the paper does not seem to adequately represent the experiences and perspectives of those who are often the targets of microaggressions, potentially missing key insights into how these actions are perceived and experienced.
- The emphasis on cognitive limitations might oversimplify the complexity of human interactions and the capacity for empathy, understanding, and adaptation.
- The paper fails to acknowledge the cumulative psychological impact that repeated microaggressions can have, particularly on marginalized individuals.

Finally, the paper could integrate more literature about microaggression and empirical data.

Minor note: The author uses ALL CAPS more than once in the paper. I would suggest emphasizing concepts with a specific writing style and refraining from using all caps.

Overall, the paper presents a critical viewpoint on the concept of microaggressions with some compelling arguments, especially regarding cognitive limitations and intent. However, it could benefit from a more balanced perspective and consideration of the experiences of those affected by microaggressions.