

Peer Review

Review of: "Black Female Counseling Students' Experiences of Racial Microaggressions at a Southern University"

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This is a very interesting and relevant research focus necessary in Higher Education institutions. Indeed, the experiences of Black female students are often overlooked. There was a good range of relevant academic literature to support the write-up of this article. Key arguments were therefore referenced accordingly.

However, this article requires major revisions. Firstly, the structure of the essay needs to be reworked. The information requires a logical flow, outlined in a clear sub-titled heading 'Introduction' to clearly and concisely provide a focus for the article. Instead, it starts with the research title, and the write-up focuses on the definition of racial microaggression. It would have been best to introduce the topic clearly. The next section was titled and focused on Racial Microaggression again and then went on to define related key terms such as invisibility, criminality, etc. But again, up to this point, we still do not know the purpose of writing this information. What was required is a sub-head 'Background Context', for you to define key concepts and introduce relevant topical points on the issue. In your work, you presented previous research, but it needs to be more balanced. The way you presented this information, it was reading like the conclusion of your own work already. It is important to adopt a stronger, objective stance in your writing, stating, for example, 'previous academic research highlighted X, Y, Z', key issues further explored in my own study, etc. Then aim for balance in the tone of your writing.

Another factor to consider is the fact that the Abstract lacked crucial details. There was no indication of how many participants were in the study, how they were sampled, no key words, etc. The issue of

methodology requires a lot of work. You did not state basic details of who the participants were, how you sampled them, or whether you were part of the study (this seemed to be the case that you were a student yourself on the course that you were studying for research purposes). This is problematic because your writing and research design need to show consideration for research objectivity. Yes, you mention that you had an external auditor and another colleague, but when you are an insider-researcher, you need to demonstrate in your writing key issues about bias; there should be a focus on reflexivity, etc. I am also unsure about the reason why you needed to specifically state that one of the research team is neurodivergent and transgender - perhaps you want to draw attention to EDI qualities, but then you needed to show the same consideration for your female white colleague. Plus, the way you framed that sentence with descriptions could be better structured to hone in on the point you wanted to make. Nowhere in this article was information about your self-reflections and how participants felt about you interviewing them - you needed to analyse this deeper and then state that these issues could have affected the construction of your data. The entire write-up of the methodology requires rewriting, clearly stating the purpose of the study, who was involved, who the research team was, etc. Only later do you mention the research team - this is confusing.

I am also unclear how you have gone about choosing the themes to write about. Tables 1, 2, and 3 had several themes and emotions, but you only selected some without demonstrating rigor about your data analysis framework and why these themes were explained. You stated that you needed to write about the lived experiences of the participants, but perhaps you could have provided greater care in bringing the women into your write-up of these key themes than leaving their voices in Tables 1, 2, and 3. Greater space and balance in your work were required to centralise their voices.

Your work had a heading Campus Climate, but it read all negative. You needed to position the study by telling us more about the actual campus, how many students study there, the surrounding area, and the make-up of your participants so that we have adequate contextual data underpinning your work.

Lastly, it is crucial that your work has a theoretical framework - it doesn't. You need to find a theory that draws out the context of your work. If it is Critical Race Theory, then write about it. If it is Intersectionality, then please write on this and analyse your research findings linked to the theoretical framework.

I know that there is a lot of work required, but you can do it. Including these points will enhance the write-up of your work. Please ensure you get a proofreader to help you pick out points to be addressed before any resubmissions.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.