

Peer Review

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

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This paper presents a well-researched and insightful analysis of the lived experiences of Black female counseling graduate students at a Southern university regarding racial microaggressions. Employing a phenomenological approach, the study identifies key themes such as devaluing messages, anger, awareness, loneliness, fear/safety, and advocacy. The findings effectively illustrate the psychological and academic consequences of these microaggressions and their role in shaping a hostile campus climate. Participants reported instances of exclusion, stereotyping, and the expectation to educate others while lacking institutional support. The manuscript presents a compelling argument, emphasizing the urgent need for enhanced training, mentorship, and systemic reforms to cultivate a more inclusive and supportive academic environment. However, certain aspects require further clarification and refinement to strengthen the study's overall impact.

Several key strengths contribute to the paper's significance in the field. First, it addresses an underexplored yet critical issue by examining the experiences of Black female counseling graduate students encountering racial microaggressions. The use of a phenomenological approach allows for an in-depth exploration of these lived experiences, ensuring that participants' perspectives remain central. The study is grounded in a strong theoretical foundation that aligns with existing literature while identifying gaps specific to Black women in counselor education programs. The thematic analysis is well-articulated, with clearly defined categories that offer a nuanced understanding of the challenges faced by participants. Additionally, the paper provides valuable practical implications for improving campus climate, counselor education, and mentorship initiatives, making it both

academically and practically relevant. The discussion integrates prior research effectively while introducing new insights, reinforcing the need for institutional change to support the retention and well-being of Black female graduate students. This contribution enhances the broader discourse on diversity, equity, and inclusion within higher education.

Despite its strengths, there are several areas where the paper could be further refined for clarity, rigor, and impact. The methodology section, though well-detailed, would benefit from additional information regarding participant recruitment and selection criteria. Given the small sample size, a clearer rationale for its sufficiency in phenomenological analysis would enhance transparency. In the results and discussion sections, the analysis could be further expanded to connect the findings more explicitly with existing theories on microaggressions and campus climate. Strengthening these connections would ensure that the study's implications are well-integrated within broader scholarly conversations.

The conclusion effectively synthesizes key findings but could be strengthened by elaborating on the study's limitations and future research directions. Addressing how the small sample size and single-institution focus may affect generalizability would improve the study's credibility. Additionally, further exploration of how counselor education programs can actively implement the recommended institutional changes would enhance the study's practical applications. By addressing these areas, the paper would achieve greater clarity, depth, and applicability, ultimately contributing to the advancement of counselor education and diversity research.

Overall, this study makes a meaningful contribution to the field by shedding light on the lived experiences of Black female graduate students and the impact of racial microaggressions on academic and psychological well-being. With refinements in methodology, literature integration, and discussion of practical applications, the paper has the potential to influence both research and institutional policies in significant ways.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.