

Microaggression Experiences and Physical Activity among Female Chinese American College Students

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Purpose

- The purpose of this research study was to examine the relationship between microaggressions (subtle forms of everyday discrimination) and engagement in physical activity among female Chinese American college students.

Background

- Brief, everyday intentional or non-intentional verbal, behavioral, or environmental insults to any marginalized group in society
- Taxonomy
 - Microassaults
 - Microinsults
 - Microinvalidations
- Cumulative effects on physical and mental health

Methods

- Cross-sectional Design
- Sample
 - N = 203
 - Age - Mean 21.32 (3.18), 64% 2nd generation, 76.8% undergrad, 44.8% live off-campus with parents, 41.9% neither parent attended college
- Setting
 - San Francisco Bay area universities
- Recruitment
 - Flyers, Snowball sampling

Racial and Ethnic Microaggressions Scale

- 45-item Dichotomous scale
 - Experiences during previous 6 months
- Domains
 - Assumptions of Inferiority
 - Second-Class Citizen and Assumptions of Criminality
 - Microinvalidations
 - Exoticization and Assumption of Similarity
 - Environmental Microaggressions
 - Workplace and School Microaggressions

Results

- Only 0.5% of participants did not report any microaggression experiences
- Each item reported experienced by at least 5% of participants
- More than half of items (27 items) were experienced by at least 25% of participants
- Almost one-third (13 items) were experienced by at least 50% of participants
- Positive relationship found between microaggression experiences and physical activity ($r = .04$, $p = .609$)

Reported Microaggression Experiences

Sub-scale		%
1	Someone assumed that I grew up in a particular neighborhood because of my race	35
2	I received substandard service in stores compared to customers of other racial groups	25
3	I was told that people of all racial groups experience the same obstacles	34
4	Someone assumed that I spoke a language other than English	75
	Someone asked me to teach them words in my “native language”	67
	Someone assumed that I speak similar languages to other people in my race	66
	Someone told me that all people in my racial group look alike	60
	Someone assumed that I ate foods associated with my race/culture every day	58
5	I read popular books or magazines in which a majority of contributions featured people from my racial group	86
	I observed people of my race portrayed positively in movies	72
	I observed that people of my race were the CEOs of major companies	72
6	An employer or co-worker treated me differently than White co-workers	18

Limitations

- Cross-sectional
- Homogenous sample
- Lack of context for microaggressions
 - Who
 - Where
 - Number of experiences

Implications

- Qualitative Studies
 - Context of microaggression experiences
 - Coping strategies utilized by Asian American college students

References

- Alvarez AN, Juang L, Liang CTH. Asian Americans and racism: When bad things happen to “model minorities”. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*. 2007;12:477-492.
- Nadal KL. The racial and ethnic microaggressions scale (REMS): Construction, reliability, and validity. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*. 2011;58:470-480.
- Sue DW. *Microaggressions in everyday life: Race, gender, and sexual orientation*. New Jersey: John Wiley; 2010

Time Spent Being Physically Active

	Participants	Number of Days	Number of Minutes
Level of PA	N	Mean (<i>SD</i>)	Mean (<i>SD</i>)
Vigorous-Intensity	65%	3.03 (1.61)	80.63 (42.18)
Moderate-Intensity	58%	3.33 (1.90)	75.44 (53.63)
Walking	88%	5.62 (1.71)	57.85 (50.49)

Note. Number of days ranged from 1-7. Number of minutes ranged from 10-180