



The effects of crime related microaggressions on immigrant and non immigrant college students' stress levels

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Introduction

Abstract

Racial microaggressions (RMAs) are subtle forms of discrimination. Whether intentional or unintentional, verbal, environmental or behavioral, RMAs negatively impact the well-being of people of color (Sue, 2007). However, research examining the impact of microaggressions in immigrant populations is limited. The present study examines the relationship between microaggressions and stress for immigrant and nonimmigrant college students of color. Although findings showed no significant correlation between the composite score of racial microaggressions and stress for both groups, when racial microaggressions were categorized according to their typology, a significant correlation between crime-related microaggressions and stress was found. Findings showed a positive correlation between crime related microaggressions and stress in immigrants. On the other side, if exposed to crime related microaggressions, non-immigrant groups had lower stress levels than immigrant students. This study shows that immigrant criminality and biases can negatively impact the well-being of this group by significantly increasing their stress levels.

Hypothesis

- We hypothesized that an increase racial microaggressions reported will have an increase in the stress levels for both immigrant and nonimmigrant college students

Method

Participants:

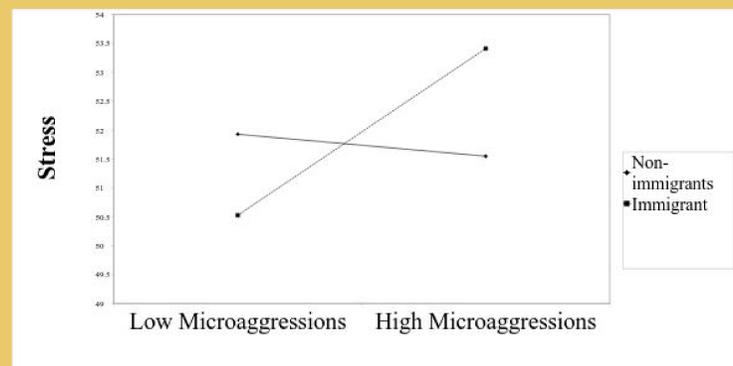
- College students at a public university in California (69.7% female , 26.1% male, 4.3 % other)
- Mean Age: 19.89 years
- Self-identified as: 47.9% Hispanic/Latino/a, 38.8% Asian, 9% African American,, 3.7% Middle eastern, .5% Native American
- 17% not born in the U.S, 82.4% born in thee U.S
- Mean age they resided in the United States: 7.5 years

Measures:

- This study was part of a larger longitudinal study assessing microaggressions on a predominantly white campus.
- The data in this study is collected from wave 1

Results

- Findings showed no significant correlation between the composite score of racial microaggressions and stress for both groups. However, when racial microaggressions were categorized according to their typology- inferiority, criminalization, invalidation, exoticism, environment and work- a significant correlation between crime-related microaggressions and stress was found.
- Findings showed a positive correlation between crime related microaggressions and stress in immigrants: As exposure to crime related microaggressions increases, stress levels also increase
- If exposed to crime related microaggressions, non-immigrant groups had lower stress levels than immigrant students.



	B	SE
Inferiority	.084	.118
Invalidation	.06	.097
Exoticism	.044	.132
Environment	.146	.213
Work	.128	.18
Criminalization	.301	.143

Discussion

- Overall, immigrants are perceived of committing more crimes than those who were born in the United States. The current political climate has highlighted the criminalization of immigrants throughout the country. However, immigrant students are now internalizing such beliefs.
- An increase in perceived microaggressions based on their race negatively affects their well-being by increasing their stress levels .
- While those who were born in the United States report a similar amount of microaggressions related to their criminalization in certain scenarios, they are not as stressed by it compared to immigrant students.

Limitations

- A disproportionate amount of immigrant and nonimmigrant groups as well as of ethnic composition; a higher nonimmigrant population participated
- Categorized each participant on the basis of one question rather than self-reporting their immigration status
- Data was collected at the beginning of the year and students awareness of what microaggressions constitute might be low, especially in first year students

Future Research

- Future research should aim at having an equal amount of immigrant and nonimmigrant participants
- Future research should also calculate the effects of criminality by racial group membership
- A comparison between the different coping mechanisms each groups uses in order to deal with racial microaggressions should be analyzed

References

- Smith, W., Yosso, T., & Solorzano, D. (2006). Challenging racial battle fatigue on historically white campuses: A critical race examination of race-related stress. In C. A. Stanley (Ed.), Faculty of Color Teaching in Predominantly White Colleges and Universities (pp. 299-327). Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing.
- Sohoni, D., Sohoni, T. (2013) Perceptions of immigrant criminality: Crime and social boundaries. Official Journal of the Midwest Sociological Society. 55, 49-71. doi: 10.1111/tsq.12039

● Participants were asked “ Were you born in the united states”