Intersectionality, Ethnic Identity, and Micro-aggressions
(From Dr. Kevin Nadal’s research and presentations)

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1. Discuss theories of intersectionality and ethnic identity development

2. Learn about the impact of microaggressions on well-being and ethnic identity

3. Identify microaggressions and the varying degrees of microaggressions

4. Learn about and discuss ways in which to respond to microaggressions

(From Dr. Kevin Nadal’s presentations)
Intersectionality Theory

• The theory that describes the ways in which structures of power and domination (e.g., racism and sexism) operate simultaneously and are deeply interconnected and mutually dependent.

• The study of ways that multiple identity groups influence an individual’s life experiences

(From Dr. Kevin Nadal’s presentations)
Intersectionality

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=higMpi99RRQ
Discussion of Intersectionality

- Reaction to the video
- Examples of Intersectionality
Ethnic Identity

WHO AM I?
Phinney’s Model

Stage One
- Unexamined Ethnic Identity (Diffusion-Foreclosure)

Stage Two
- Ethnic Identity Search/Moratorium

Stage Three
- Ethnic Identity Achievement
Unexamined Ethnic Identity (Diffusion-Foreclosure)

Stage One

- Not exploration
- Diffusion
- Foreclosure
- Disinterest
Stage One

- Characterized by lack of exploration of ethnicity.
  - Has no explored feelings or attitudes
- Individuals fall into 2 categories
  - Diffusion: Ethnicity may be seen as non issue
  - Foreclosure: Individual acquired attitudes about ethnicity in childhood from significant others.
- Disinterest in ethnicity
Ethnic Identity Search/Moratorium

STAGE TWO

- Aware
- Examine
- Experience
- Awakening
- Explore
Stage two

- Individuals become increasingly aware of ethnic identity issues. They begin an ethnic identity search.
- Characterized by emotional intensity, experiences anger toward dominant culture and embarrassment at being previously unaware of ethnic issues.
Ethnic Identity Achievement

STAGE THREE

Achieve
Resolve
Accepts
Stage three

- Students achieve a healthy bicultural identity.
- Resolve their identity conflicts and come to terms with ethnic and racial issues.
- Individuals are aware of their own ethnicity but are aware of appreciative of all ethnicities.

(From Dr. Kevin Nadal’s presentation)
Microaggressions:

- Brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative slights and insults, particularly towards those of historically oppressed groups.

  (Nadal, 2008, 2013; Sue, 2010)

- Originally derived from research on racial microaggressions

  (Pierce et al., 1970; Sue et al., 2007)

(From Dr. Kevin Nadal’s presentations)
Microaggression Categories

Examples:

– Ascription of Intelligence
– Alien in Own Land
– Assumption of Inferiority
– Assumption of Criminal Status
– Assumption of Universal Experience
– Second-Class Citizen
– Exoticization/ Objectification

(From Dr. Kevin Nadal’s presentations)
Three forms of microaggressions

– Microassaults

– Microinsults

– Microinvalidations

(Sue, Capodilupo, Torino, Bucceri, Holder, Nadal, et al., 2007)

(From Dr. Kevin Nadal’s presentations)
Microassault

• A form of microaggression involving purposeful discriminatory action, such as a verbal attack, name calling, or avoidant behavior (Sue et. al., 2007)

• Examples (Nadal, 2014)

(From Dr. Kevin Nadal’s presentation)
• A form of microaggression that is often unconscious and demeans a person's racial heritage or identity. (Sue, et al., 2007)

• Examples (Nadal, 2014) (From Dr. Kevin Nadal’s presentation)
Microinvalidation

- A form of microaggression, also usually unconscious, that excludes or negates a person's thoughts or feelings (Sue, et. al, 2007)

- Examples (Nadal, 2014) (From Dr. Kevin Nadal’s presentations)
• Individuals may possess an array of social identities that affect their experiences (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, social class, age, & religion)

• Intersectional microaggressions may be experienced by people based on two or more social identities (e.g., sexual orientation and race; gender identity and social class)

(From Dr. Kevin Nadal's presentation)
Intersectional microaggressions are subtle forms of discrimination that may occur as a result of an individual’s multiple identities:

- Race
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Identity
- Ability
- Age
- Religion

(From Dr. Kevin Nadal’s presentations)
Subtlety of Microaggressions

- Did that really just happen?
- Was (race/gender/sexual orientation/ability) involved?
- Should I react?
  - If I react, what are the consequences?
    - Physical safety
    - Psychological safety
  - If I do not react, what are the consequences?

(From Dr. Kevin Nadal’s presentations)
Microaggressions & Mental Health

- Impact

- Acute emotional reactions
  - belittlement, anger, rage, frustration, sadness, and alienation

- Chronic mental health problems
  depression, anxiety, and trauma

(From Dr. Kevin Nadal’s presentations)
Quantitative research has found:

- Racial microaggressions have an influence on depressive symptoms and positive affect (i.e., view of the world).
- Racial microaggressions in the workplace have a negative influence on self-esteem.
- Racial microaggressions have a negative influence on physical health, namely perceived general health, pain, fatigue, and role limitations.
- Sexual orientation microaggressions have a negative influence on identity and self-esteem.

(Nadal, et al., 2014 for a review)

(From Dr. Kevin Nadal’s presentations)
Recommendations

• Lead by example.
• Be willing to admit when you make mistakes.
• Be willing to have discussions.
• Validate the other person’s experience and ask questions if you do not understand.
• Provide a safe space.

(From Dr. Kevin Nadal’s presentations)
Microaffirmations

• Provide **microaffirmations**, or subtle or apparently small acknowledgements of a person's value and accomplishments

(Based on Dr. Kevin Nadal’s presentations)
References

Thank you!

Questions