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Abstract

Limited research compares perceptions of microaggressions between groups. We examined whether ethnoracial identity predicted the identification of microaggressions. There was a significant multivariate main effect and three significant between-subjects effects. In general, BIPOC individuals were more likely than White participants to view social interactions as involving microaggressions that cause harm.

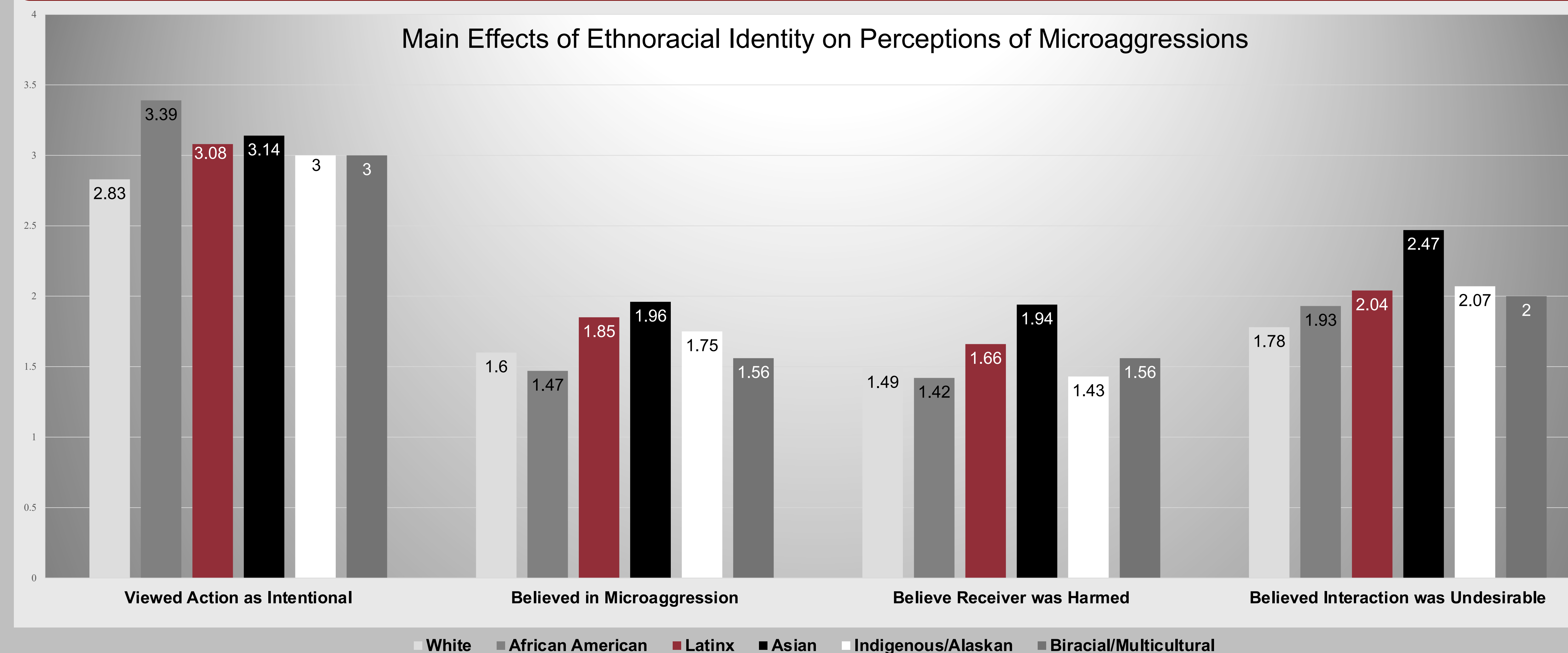
Introduction

- Microaggressions are subtle actions and encounters that undermine ethnoracial minorities (Pierce, 1970).
- Limited research has been conducted on the ethnoracial analysis of experiencing or perceiving microaggressions including the perceptions of intergroup circumstances (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008; Williams et al., 2021).
- Fewer studies indicate how the perceptions might contribute to the targets' poor mental health outcomes (Ching, 2021; Sue et al., 2019).
- Therefore, the purpose of this study was to determine if ethnoracial identity influenced the identification of microaggressions and psychological harm from microaggressions.

Method

- U.S. adults ($N = 322$; $M = 33.8$ years, $SD = 12.0$) completed a survey about perceptions of microaggressions through three vignettes.
- Vignettes depicted social interactions that could be perceived as involving microaggressions; participants were asked their views about each vignette.
- Participants identified as White (24.8%), African American (19.9%), Latinx (18.0%), Asian American (16.8%), mixed (10.6%), Indigenous American (9.0%), and other (0.9%), and men (56.5%), women (37.9%), non-binary (3.4%), transgender women (0.9%), transgender men (0.3%), and other (0.9%) genders.

Graph



Results

- MANOVAs were used to compare ethnoracial groups on perceptions of social interactions related to race, culture, and gender.
- For the social interaction related to race, there were group differences on strength of belief that the actor was acting intentionally, $F(5, 294) = 2.42, p = .04, \text{partial } N^2 = .04$. African American participants were significantly more likely than White participants to view the actors' actions as intentional.
- For the culture-based interaction, there was a significant multivariate main effect, $F(20, 1776) = 1.85, p = .01, \text{partial } N^2 = .03$, and three significant between-subjects effects.
- Asian American and Hispanic participants more strongly believed that the vignette depicted microaggressions compared to African American participants. Asian American participants held stronger beliefs about microaggressions than did White participants, $F(5, 294) = 2.46, p = .03, \text{partial } N^2 = .04$
- Asian American participants more strongly believed that the receiver of the actions was harmed, compared to all groups except Hispanic participants, $F(5, 294) = 2.80, p = .02, \text{partial } N^2 = .05$
- Asian American participants more strongly believed the interaction was undesirable, compared to all groups except Indigenous American participants, $F(5, 294) = 2.94, p = .01, \text{partial } N^2 = .05$

Discussion

In general, the results showed that BIPOC individuals were more likely than White participants to view social interactions as involving microaggressions that cause harm. The results indicate that specific ethnoracial groups may identify the impact of microaggressions differently as it relates to the intentionality of the perpetrator's actions as well as the harm and undesirability of the interaction perceived by the receiver. Future studies should examine how BIPOC individuals acknowledge and support other groups experiencing microaggressions. Additional studies should explore how White participants observe and understand microaggressions of individuals identifying as BIPOC, including investigating the necessary factors that may contribute to the sensitivity of their encounters.

References

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