

A Qualitative Study of Multiracial Experiences of Microaggressions in Mental Health Counseling and Counselor Education: Implications and Recommendations for Culturally Competent Training and Practice

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Abstract : Despite the multiracial population growing exponentially in the world and especially in the U.S., there continues to be a lack of culturally responsive research addressing the unique experiences and needs of this population, especially within counseling and counselor education settings. It is evident that their unique racial microaggressive experiences need to be better understood within the field of professional counseling to not only underscore competent training and practice but also culturally responsive training and practice. The participants of this study were 13 (n=13) individuals from the United States who identified as multiracial and said they had a microaggressive experience with either their counselor or counseling professor. Data were gathered through one-on-one, semi-structured interviews. The analysis employed phenomenological methods based on the transcendental approach, resulting in themes that encapsulated the core of the participants' experiences, including multiracial microaggressions that are derogatory and perpetuate privilege/oppression; counselors and their training programs should embody safety, support, attentiveness, inter-personal sensitivity, and awareness of the impact on others; microaggressions negatively affect the counseling relationship and outcomes; awareness surrounding the emotional impact of microaggressions; strength-based responses and future responses to microaggressions; and advocacy and suggestions for counselors and counselor educators. These themes are discussed in detail, and recommendations for researchers, counselor educators, and professional counselors to improve training and practice are provided. This U.S. study's insights into the Multiracial experience of microaggressions within the mental health profession can inform global mental health practices by highlighting the need for culturally responsive counseling that recognizes and addresses racial nuances. Such knowledge is transferable to international settings where multiracial populations may also encounter similar challenges, aiding in the development of global standards for culturally competent counseling practices.

Keywords : culturally responsive training and practice, mental health, microaggressions, multiracial

Conference Title : ICMHW 2025 : International Conference on Mental Health and Wellness

Conference Location : London, United Kingdom

Conference Dates : July 26-27, 2025