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Examining Racial Microaggressions, Race/Ethnicity, Gender, and Bilingual Status with School Psychology Students: the Role of Intersectionality

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Abstract The current study investigated the intersection of race/ethnicity and two related factors, gender and bilingual status, and the experience of racial microaggressions in a sample of school psychology graduate students. We proposed that race intersects not only gender but also bilingual status, leading to significant differences in the frequency of experiencing racial microaggressions. Through a national survey of racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse school psychology graduate students ($n = 228$), the study examined the interaction of race/ethnicity, gender, bilingual status, and three types of racial microaggressions students might experience in school psychology graduate education: assumptions of inferiority, microinvalidations, and workplace and school microaggressions. Although bilingual status was not significant, our findings indicated that Black males were significantly different from all other groups in their experience of two types of racial microaggressions—assumptions of inferiority and school and workplace racial microaggressions. Implications for school psychology program recruitment and retention practices are discussed.

Keywords Graduate school · Intersectionality · Racial microaggressions · Recruitment · Retention · School psychology

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Recent racially charged events at colleges and universities across the United States (US) along with racially, ethnically, and linguistically (REL) diverse students' call for more inclusive educational environments, safe on-campus spaces, curriculum that represents diverse experiences, and faculty who reflect their backgrounds, underscore the need for attention to diversity issues in higher education. To increase awareness of the subtle and overt forms of racism, classism, Islamophobia, and other "isms" they experience and to encourage social justice, REL diverse students have begun documenting oppressive higher educational environments. For instance, students at Harvard initiated a social media photo campaign—*I, Too, Am Harvard*—that depicts the experiences of Black students at Harvard, particularly their experiences with ignorant and/or racist comments. This campaign quickly spread and was embraced by REL diverse students at other predominantly White institutions (PWIs) in the USA and abroad. Although issues related to bias and prejudices against REL diverse students represent prominent aspects of the higher education landscape, they are rarely addressed in specific relation to school psychology graduate education (Proctor and Truscott 2012). Yet, it is difficult to divorce what is happening at the macro level in higher education from school psychology graduate education and REL diverse students attending school psychology programs, particularly since most school psychology programs are located at PWIs, have majority White faculties, and enroll few REL diverse students (Gadke et al. 2016; Grapin et al. 2016; Proctor et al. 2014).

Being targets of racial microaggressions is among the challenges REL diverse students attending higher education institutions face, as demonstrated by students who participated in the *I, Too, Am* social media campaign. Racial microaggressions are "brief and commonplace daily, verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults to the target person or group" (Sue et al. 2007b, p.

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271). Understanding REL diverse school psychology students' experiences with racial microaggressions *within the context of school psychology graduate education* is salient given (a) the need to recruit more REL diverse school psychologists to serve an increasingly diverse clientele (Castillo et al. 2013; Grapin et al. 2016; Proctor and Truscott 2012; Proctor et al. 2014) and (b) research that suggests the experience of racial microaggressions presents a barrier to higher education degree completion for some REL diverse students (Proctor and Truscott 2012; Solórzano et al. 2000).

Indeed, demographic shifts in the US population demand that school psychology attend to issues related to the diversity of its graduate students, practitioners, and faculty (Proctor et al. 2014; Proctor and Romano 2016). Currently, approximately 13% of school psychologists identify as Asian, Black/African American, and Hispanic (Walcott et al. 2016). This is compared to approximately 50% of the US public school-aged population who are identified as racial and/or ethnic minorities (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES] 2017). Further, 20% of individuals in the USA over the age of 5 speak a language other than English at home, and 9.4% of the school-aged population is English language learners (NCES 2017; US Census Bureau 2015). In comparison, 14% of school psychologists report being multilingual; however, only 7.9% report providing multilingual school psychology services (Walcott et al. 2016). In terms of gender, the profession has shifted from a primarily male one in its early years, to one in which currently 83% of school psychologists identify as female (Castillo et al. 2013; Walcott et al. 2016). Today, the typical school psychologist is a White female.

While the underrepresentation of REL diverse school psychologists has been lauded as a concern since the profession's inception (Fagan 2004), the historical demographics of the field (i.e., White, monolingual English speakers, and male) likely contributed to less focus on professional and training issues that center race, ethnicity, gender, and linguistic diversity. However, the current racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity represented in the US school-aged population necessitates an urgent attention to diversity issues in school psychology's practice, research, and training. In particular, attention to diversity issues in school psychology graduate education is critical since completion of a school psychology program is the primary route into the profession, and thus, the gateway to increased diversity in the school psychology workforce (Castillo et al. 2013; Proctor and Romano 2016; Proctor and Truscott 2012).

Given the essential role school psychology programs play in facilitating workforce diversity, school psychology programs must consider their readiness for increased racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity. Proctor et al. (2014) noted that for successful recruitment of REL diverse students, school psychology programs must have welcoming environments absent of stressors like racial microaggressions that

research identifies as obstacles to REL diverse students' full participation, inclusion, and functioning in higher education. A second and interrelated issue is that school psychology programs with climates that foster racial microaggressions may have difficulty retaining REL diverse students (Proctor and Truscott 2012). Research suggests that the experience of racial microaggressions has negative outcomes (e.g., self-doubt, frustration, and isolation) that can impact diverse students' decisions to stay or withdraw from higher educational institutions (Nadal et al. 2010; Palmer and Maramba 2015; Solórzano et al. 2000). A third and crucially important issue is the negative impact experiencing racial microaggressions has on diverse students in higher education. Studies have documented that racially and ethnically diverse students who are the targets of racial microaggressions are at increased risk for depressive symptoms (Torres et al. 2010), encounter emotional exhaustion and distress (Clark et al. 2012; Palmer and Maramba 2015; Yosso et al. 2009), experience decreased sense of belonging (Clark et al. 2012; Palmer and Maramba 2015; Proctor and Truscott 2012), and have diminished academic engagement (Proctor and Truscott 2012; Solórzano et al. 2000). It is therefore important to study and understand REL diverse school psychology students' experience of racial microaggressions in the context of graduate education for both recruitment and retention purposes, and to support their academic, emotional, social, and psychological well-being.

Thus, this article presents a study of racial microaggressions conducted with a national sample of REL diverse school psychology students. Using an intersectional theoretical and analytical framework, we explored if students' self-identified race/ethnicity intersects with their gender or bilingual status in terms of experiencing racial microaggressions as part of school psychology graduate education. We believe that acknowledging students' intersectional identities is important because identity is complex and multidimensional. For instance, although race is a defining identity marker for many REL diverse graduate students, they may belong to multiple minoritized[1] and marginalized groups (e.g., Black, bilingual, and female) and can experience bias and prejudice based on either one or a combination of their identities (Suárez-Orozco et al. 2015; Truong and Museus 2012). Before moving to a more detailed discussion of intersectionality, we next provide background about racial microaggressions as a construct. Then, we review research that has investigated REL diverse students' experiences with racial microaggressions in higher education. Finally, we describe the intersectionality framework in which the study is contextualized.

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[1] Refers to a person being forced into a group that is mistreated, faces prejudices, and/or discriminated against because of situations outside of one's personal control.

Racial Microaggressions

The construct of racial microaggressions was first introduced in psychiatrist Chester Pierce's work in the 1970s. Pierce described racial microaggressions as subtle and cumulative miniassuaults, which he noted were the substance of racism against African Americans at the time (Yosso et al. 2009). Sue et al. (2007b) renewed awareness of racial microaggressions, leading to widespread attention to the construct in psychology (Wong et al. 2014). Building off the definition Pierce offered, and as previously described, Sue et al. (2007b) defined racial microaggressions as brief verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignities that commonly occur and communicate hostile and negative insults to the targeted population or person. Sue et al. (2007b) underscored that racial microaggressions can be intentional or unintentional. In other words, individuals delivering racial microaggressions may or may not be aware of their behavior and may or may not intend to harm the targeted individual. Despite this, research suggests that individuals who are targeted feel "distinctly uncomfortable afterwards" (Suárez-Orozco et al. 2015, p.151).

Sue et al. (2007b) conceptualized racial microaggressions as falling into three broad categories: microinsults, microinvalidations, and microassaults. Microinsults involve verbal and nonverbal (often snubs) racist behaviors that communicate an insulting message to the targeted individual. Microinsults can occur when students' of color classroom contributions are not acknowledged, when professors avoid making eye contact with students of color, when peers question if students of color are admitted to programs to meet diversity objectives versus due to their ability, and when individuals assume students of color will engage in criminal behaviors based on their race (Sue et al. 2007b). Microinvalidations include actions that deny or invalidate the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of people of color. Examples of this type of racial microaggression include questioning Asian Americans about their place of birth with the underlying assumption that they are not US citizens and proclaiming to people of color that one does "see color"(Sue et al. 2007b). Finally, microassaults include verbal or nonverbal racist behaviors that are overtly and purposely discriminatory (e.g., using racial epithets, displaying racist hate symbols). Verbal examples include referring to an African American person as colored or an Asian person as Oriental, while nonverbal examples include displaying a swastika or Ku Klux Klan flag (Sue et al. 2007b).

The above examples represent racial microaggressions that occur at the individual level, but it is important to note that racial microaggressions also manifest within higher education at the environmental level. Course content and curricula such as readings, training videos, and presentations can result in environmental racial microaggressions (Sue et al. 2009). For example, an environmental racial microaggression could take place if a professor lectures on the history of intelligence testing, and the lecture depicts Black people as inherently less intelligent than White people, but does not critically explore and examine racial bias in intelligence testing development, norming, and standardization practices.

Although Sue and his colleagues have developed a considerable research base that illustrates how racial microaggressions manifest across different environments in the daily experiences of racially and ethnically diverse people, our next discussion focuses exclusively on racial microaggressions in higher education—the setting aligned with the current study.

Racial Microaggressions in Higher Education

Undergraduate Students' experience of racial microaggressions in higher education has been studied at community colleges, 4-year colleges, and graduate schools. Generally, the undergraduate research illustrates that racially and ethnically diverse students experience racial microaggressions in higher education more often than White students (Forrest-Bank and Jenson 2015; McCabe 2009; Solórzano et al. 2000). Of all racially and ethnically diverse students, Black students report experiencing the highest frequency of racial microaggressions, followed by Latino/a and Asian students (Forrest-Bank and Jenson 2015).

The types of racial microaggressions students experience often vary by race/ethnicity. For instance, African American students in Solórzano et al. (2000) reported experiencing microinsults both inside (e.g., feeling invisible and perceiving faculty as having low academic expectations for them) and outside (e.g., assumptions that they will engage in criminal behaviors in public spaces on campus) of the classroom. Similarly, both Black females and males in McCabe (2009) experienced microinsults while attending a PWI. Black females reported experiencing these racial microaggressions the most within the classroom, which resulted in them feeling both hypervisible (being expected to be the spokesperson for their race and gender) and invisible (contributions not being recognized). Black males experienced racial microaggressions that suggested others within the college campus viewed them as threats and likely to commit crime (McCabe 2009). As a consequence, Black male participants reported that campus police aimed to control their bodies and activities.

Like Black college students, Latino/a students attending PWIs report higher frequencies of racial microaggressions related to others assuming that they have lower intelligence, but Latino/a students also report higher frequencies of racial microaggressions characterized by others viewing them as exotic or verbalizing ethnic stereotypes about them (Forrest-Bank and Jenson 2015). For instance, Latina students in McCabe (2009) reported that White males perceived them as exotic and often sexualized them. Yet, the type of racial microaggressions Latino/a students experience may differ by the characteristics of a higher education institution. For

example, Palmer and Maramba (2015) explored the experiences of Latino/a students attending a historically Black college. Their participants reported experiencing open and hostile microassaults from Black peers, including being teased due to their ethnicity, enduring stares, and hearing hostile comments regarding their presence on campus. Latino/a students attributed their peers' microaggressive behavior, in part, to stereotypic views they held of Latino/a people.

In relation to Asian American students, Palmer and Maramba (2015) found that they experienced microinsults related to the model minority myth, which suggests that Asian Americans should be successful and highly educated in the USA. More specifically, Asian American students reported that their peers assumed they were good at math and science. Consequently, they were often invited to participate in study groups and asked to assist peers with math and science assignments. The finding that Asian American college students experience microinsults is consistent with previous research (Maramba and Museus 2013; Ong et al. 2013). However, previous research highlights that Asian American college students also experience microinvalidations such as others assuming that they are foreign born or not an American citizen and do not speak English well (Sue et al. 2007b).

Graduate A handful of studies have been completed to investigate the impact of racial microaggressions on racially and ethnically diverse graduate students. For instance, Nadal et al. (2010) studied the graduate school experiences of 29 (15 female, 13 male, 1 gender unspecified) Filipino Americans and found that they experienced racial microaggressions related to others holding stereotypic assumptions about them. They also noted erasure of Filipino culture from the curriculum, which is an environmental racial microaggression. This led to Filipino American graduate students feeling neglected, unsupported, and/or marginalized. Torres et al. (2010) conducted a mixed-methods, longitudinal study of 174 African American doctoral students and recent graduates' experiences of racial microaggressions and found that their participants also experienced cultural and racial isolation. However, unlike those in Nadal et al. (2010), African American graduate students in Torres et al. (2010) experienced feelings of being viewed as second-class citizens and perceived others as underestimating their ability. Torres et al. (2010) noted that prolonged exposure to racial microaggressions placed added strain on African American graduate students' coping resources and contributed to perceived stress, which increased their risk for depressive symptoms.

Within the field of school psychology, Clark et al. (2012) examined racial microaggressions with a sample of 87 ethnic minority (5.5% African American, 5.8% Asian American, 9.8% Hispanic, and .8% Native American) and 313 White specialist and doctoral level students. They found that ethnic minority students experienced significantly more racial

microaggressions than White students. For ethnic minority school psychology students, their experience of racial microaggressions was associated with higher levels of emotional distress and lower perceptions of belongingness. More specifically, Clark et al. (2012) indicated that the more their participants reported experiencing racial microaggressions, the less likely they were to perceive social support in their programs. Clark et al. (2012) represents one of the first studies in school psychology to investigate racial microaggressions with graduate students and provides an important contribution to the research. However, the study is limited because, although its sample was racially and ethnically diverse, it utilized a measure (the Inventory of Microaggressions against Black Individuals) designed to examine racial microaggressions experienced by Black people. Furthermore, participants were not asked to consider racial microaggressions specifically within the context of their graduate program experience.

Proctor and Truscott (2012) conducted a qualitative study of seven African Americans (six females and one male) who left school psychology specialist and doctoral programs prior to degree completion. These researchers were specifically interested in understanding factors related to African Americans' decisions to leave their programs. Findings revealed that African American students experienced relational challenges with their faculty and peers, particularly in regard to race. African American students provided vivid descriptions of the racial microaggressions they experienced during classroom and social interactions with White faculty and peers. Although not the sole reason for their attrition, being targets of racial microaggressions contributed to African American students' decisions to leave school psychology programs. Proctor and Truscott (2012) is a valuable contribution to the racial microaggressions research in higher education, but the original intent of the study was not to examine racial microaggressions, and their sample was exclusive to African Americans, so the breadth of their findings related to racial microaggressions is somewhat limited.

While research does examine racially and ethnically diverse students' experiences with racial microaggressions across higher education settings, little research has explicitly examined how the intersections of race and gender influence this experience (McCabe 2009). Further, we did not find any study that investigated linguistic diversity and racial microaggressions in higher education. There is a conspicuous gap in the research related to racially and ethnically diverse graduate students' experience with racial microaggressions using an intersectional approach. The current study addresses this gap by exploring how the intersections of race/ethnicity and gender, as well as students' bilingual status influence the frequency of racial microaggressions experienced as part of school psychology graduate education. The need for increased racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity among school psychologists and the prominent role of gender in the profession

influenced our selection of race/ethnicity, gender, and bilingual status as variables of interest. Next, we provide a discussion of intersectionality as a theoretical and analytical framework.

Intersectionality as a Theoretical and Analytical Framework

The term intersectionality was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw and first discussed in Critical Race Feminist legal scholarship in specific relation to Black women and how, historically, the legal system did not protect them because employment discrimination laws were based on disadvantage by race, but not gender or by gender but not race (Cooper 2016). Intersectionality refers to the simultaneous experience of social categories such as race, gender, class, and nationality and highlights the ways in which social categories interact to create systems of privilege, power, discrimination, and oppression (Case 2017). As a theoretical framework, intersectionality compels researchers not to treat individual identity markers such as race, gender, and nationality as mutually exclusive categories of experience and analysis, but to account for participants' multiple identities when considering how the social world is constructed (Cooper 2016; Crenshaw 1989). As originally articulated by Crenshaw (1989), a central tenet of intersectionality is the centering of Black women's experiences. Cooper (2016) noted that recent social science research tends to decenter Black women to make the theory more inclusive. She cautioned that decentering Black women diminishes the theory's potential to interrogate and disrupt systems that serve to oppress some, while privileging others (Cooper 2016). Indeed, intersectionality can serve as a powerful analytical tool that focuses on the ways in which gender intersects with other identities and how these intersections contribute to discrimination, oppression, power, and privilege.

Research that uses an intersectionality frame honors its intent to the fullest by moving beyond just examining the intersections of participants' multiple minoritized, marginalized, and often oppressed identities to exploring how findings relate to systems of power and oppression. At its core, research grounded in intersectionality is social justice work that aims to interrogate and challenge inequality and exclusion (Case 2017). This aim mirrors Speight and Vera's (2009) articulation of social justice as including the examination and transformation of the processes that initially contributed to unequal outcomes and marginalization of certain groups. To advance social justice, school psychologists must examine and challenge practices, policies, and institutional structures that contribute to educational inequities (Speight and Vera 2009). The use of an intersectionality framework offers a tool for examining and contextualizing the intersectional experiences of individuals who belong to multiple "othered"

identities that stand in direct contrast to the typical (White, female) and traditional (White, male) identities represented in school psychology. In the current study, an intersectional framework is utilized to explore and contextualize racially and ethnically diverse school psychology students' experiences with racial microaggressions in school psychology graduate education, with particular focus on how their gender and bilingual status impact this experience. Next, we provide a detailed discussion of the current study and its findings.

Purpose of the Current Study

The current study investigated the intersection of race/ethnicity, gender, bilingual status, and the experience of racial microaggressions in a sample of school psychology graduate students. We proposed that race/ethnicity intersects not only gender but also bilingual status, leading to significant differences in the experience of racial microaggressions. We examined three types of racial microaggressions students might experience in school psychology graduate education: assumptions of inferiority, microinvalidations, and workplace and school microaggressions. Specifically, we investigated the following research questions: What is the interaction effect of race/ethnicity and gender on the experience of racial microaggressions? And would that effect be greater than either race/ethnicity or gender alone? In addition, we expanded the intersectional theoretical framework to explore the interaction of bilingual status and race/ethnicity. As such, will bilingual status interact with race/ethnicity and lead to differences in the experience of racial microaggressions? And is that effect greater than either bilingual status or race/ethnicity alone? Using an intersectional theoretical framework, we hypothesized that racially/ethnically diverse females will differ significantly from racially/ethnically diverse males in their experience of each type of racial microaggressions, specifically that Black females will report higher frequency of microaggressions over all other gender and racial/ethnic groups. Within this same sample of graduate students, we also hypothesized that linguistically diverse students would differ significantly from non-linguistically diverse students in their experience of racial microaggressions by reporting higher frequency of each type of racial microaggression.

Method

Participants

Participants ($n = 228$) from this study were part of a larger study of school psychology students ($n = 717$) who completed an online survey that explored school psychology students' training-related experiences. For this specific study, only the

data from racially and ethnically diverse students enrolled in specialist and doctoral level school psychology programs were analyzed to address each of the study's research questions. Over 55% ($n = 126$) of the participants were completing specialist/masters' degree programs, while 31% ($n = 71$) were enrolled in PhD doctoral programs and 9% ($n = 21$) were enrolled in PsyD doctoral programs. The remaining 4% ($n = 10$) were students enrolled in education doctoral programs. Over 84% ($n = 192$) were female; 15.8% ($n = 36$) were male. Participants' mean age was 28 ($M = 27.55$; SD = 5.95). Approximately, 21.9% ($n = 50$) identified as African American/Black, 17.5% ($n = 40$) Asian, 33.8% ($n = 77$) Hispanic/Latino, 23.2% ($n = 53$) multiracial, and 3.5% ($n = 8$) identified as "Other." Fifty three percent ($n = 122$) reported being bilingual. Participants reported attending school psychology programs in all five regions of the USA with the largest representation from the Northeast (30.3%). See Table 1.

Measure

Racial and ethnic microaggressions scale (REMS): The REMS is a self-report, quantitative scale created to capture the frequency of racial microaggressions experienced by minority populations (Nadal 2011). Consistent with the racial microaggressions conceptualization put forth in Sue et al. (2007b), the REMS (45 items) assesses the frequency of these microaggressions in six areas: assumptions of inferiority, second-class citizen and assumptions of criminality,

microinvalidations, exoticization/assumptions of similarity, environmental microaggressions, and workplace and school microaggressions. Because the larger study in which the current study is embedded included numerous measures and we were concerned about participant fatigue, we did not utilize all six subscales of the REMS. Instead, based on our review of the racial microaggressions research related to graduate education, we selected to include the three subscales with items that most closely aligned with the graduate education environment. Consequently, we used the following REMS subscales: assumptions of inferiority, microinvalidations, and workplace and school microaggressions.

To complete the three REMS subscales, participants were asked to read a statement and rate how often it was experienced in the past 6 months, where *1 = I did not experience this event, 2 = I experienced this event 1 to 3 times, 3 = I experienced this event 4 to 6 times, 4 = I experienced this event 7 to 9 times*, and *5 = I experienced this event 10 or more times*. Sample statements from assumptions of inferiority subscale (eight items) included the following: "Someone assumed that I would not be educated because of my race" or "Someone assumed I was poor because of my race." The microinvalidations subscale (nine items) included the following sample statements: "Someone told me that they don't see color" or "Someone told me that they don't see race." The workplace and school microaggressions subscale (five items) included the following sample statements: "My opinion was overlooked in a group discussion because of my race" or "Someone assumed that my work would be inferior to people

Table 1 Demographic information across racial and ethnic groups

		Asian		Black		Hispanic		Multiethnic		Other		Overall	
Age *Mean (SD)*		26.55 (4.32)		27.84 (5.43)		27.87 (6.53)		27.66 (6.73)		27.13 (5.38)		27.55 (5.95)	
		n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
What is your gender?	Female	31	77.5	43	86.0	63	81.8	48	90.6	7	87.5	192	84.2
	Male	9	22.5	7	14.0	14	18.2	5	9.4	1	12.5	36	15.8
	Total	40	100.0	50	100.0	77	100.0	53	100.0	8	100.0	228	100.0[a]
Are you bilingual?	Yes	29	72.5	2	4.0	66	85.7	23	43.4	2	25.0	122	53.5
	No	11	27.5	48	96.0	11	14.3	30	56.6	6	75.0	106	46.6
	Total	40	100.0	50	100.0	77	100.0	53	100.0	8	100.0	228	100.0[b]
What degree are you pursuing?	Specialist degree	21	52.5	27	54.0	46	59.7	30	56.6	2	25.0	126	55.3
	Ph.D.	16	40.0	18	36.0	19	24.7	14	26.4	4	50.0	71	31.1
	Psy.D.	2	5.0	3	6.0	7	9.1	8	15.1	1	12.5	21	9.2
	Ed.D.	1	2.5	2	4.0	5	6.5	1	1.9	1	12.5	10	4.4
	Total	40	100.0	50	100.0	77	100.0	53	100.0	8	100.0	228	100.0
US region	Northeast	13	32.5	15	30.0	22	28.6	16	30.2	3	37.5	69	30.3
	Southeast	4	10.0	21	42.0	8	10.4	11	20.8	4	50.0	48	21.1
	Southwest	4	10.0	8	16.0	27	35.1	11	20.8	0	0.0	50	21.9
	Midwest	5	12.5	3	6.0	7	9.1	4	7.5	1	12.5	20	8.8
	West	8	20.0	3	6.0	13	16.9	11	20.8	0	0.0	35	15.4
	International	6	15.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	2.6
	Total	40	100.0	50	100.0	77	100.0	53	100.0	8	100.0	228	100.0

[a] $X^2 = (4, n = 228) = 3.482, p = .48, phi = .12$
[b] $X^2 = (4, n = 228) = 91.960, p = .001, phi = .64$

of other racial groups." The REMS standardization sample included 661 minority participants recruited from online listservs, community websites as well as psychology undergraduate students (Nadal 2011). In the current sample, the Cronbach's alpha for each of the REMS subscales was similar to the standardization sample as reported by Nadal (2011): assumptions of inferiority subscale ($\alpha = 0.914$) versus the standardization sample ($\alpha = 0.862$); microinvalidations subscale ($\alpha = 0.906$) versus the standardization sample ($\alpha = 0.792$); workplace and school microaggressions subscale ($\alpha = 0.789$) versus the standardization sample ($\alpha = 0.747$).

Procedure

An internet-based survey was used for data collection. After receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board of the authors' institution, school psychology graduate students were recruited via a recruitment email sent to the directors of 245 specialist and doctoral school psychology programs in the USA. The list of school psychology program directors who received study recruitment emails was obtained from School Psychology Program Database developed by the National Association of School Psychologists and located on their website at http://apps.nasponline.org/standards-and-certification/graduate-education/index.aspx. In Fall 2015, the first author sent the recruitment email asking program directors to forward the email to all enrolled students in their programs. A reminder email, which contained the same information as in the original email, was sent to program directors 2 weeks later asking them to forward the study recruitment email to students if they had not previously. The recruitment email included a hypertext to the survey located on Survey Monkey. The survey's cover page included a statement of informed consent, and students' continuation indicated consent.

Data Analysis Plan

Descriptive analyses were conducted on all independent variables (i.e., race/ethnicity, gender, and bilingual status) and dependent variables (i.e., assumptions of inferiority, microinvalidations, and workplace and school microaggressions). To examine each research question, two-way analyses of variance allowed the simultaneous testing of the main effects as well as an interaction effect where the interaction effects would be significantly different from the individual main effects (Tabachnick and Fidell 2013). This analysis was completed for each of the three dependent variables (i.e., assumptions of inferiority, microinvalidations, and workplace and school microaggressions). Post-hoc analyses were conducted to detect the significant mean differences and due to unequal groups, a stringent p value was set at .01.

Results

Descriptive analyses were conducted on all demographic variables, including age, race/ethnicity, gender, and bilingual status as well as each dependent variable (i.e., assumptions of inferiority, microinvalidations, and workplace and school microaggressions). A chi-square test of independence indicated no significant association between race/ethnicity and gender $X^2 = (4, n = 228) = 3.482, p = .48, phi = .12$. However, chi-square test of independence did indicate a significant association between race/ethnicity and bilingual status $X^2 = (4, n = 228) = 91.960, p = .001, phi = .64$. See Tables 2 and 3.

Race/Ethnicity and Gender

A two-way between groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the effect of race/ethnicity and gender on the frequency of racial microaggressions, specifically the assumptions of inferiority subscale of the REMS. As expected, there was a statistically significant main effect for race/ethnicity and the assumptions of inferiority, $F (4, 216) = 10.612, p < .001$; partial eta squared = .16. Although the main effect for gender did not reach statistical significance $F (1, 216) = 2.378, p = .13$, the interaction effect between race/ethnicity and gender was statistically significant $F (4, 216) = 7.049, p < .001$, suggesting that the relationship between race/ethnicity and the dependent variable, assumptions of inferiority differed due to the level of the other factor, gender (see Table 3). The effect size for this interaction was moderate (partial eta squared = .12). Furthermore, post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Blacks ($M = 1.55, SD = .86$) was significantly different from multiethnic ($M = 1.13, SD = .26$). The mean differences between Black and multiethnic racial groups were plotted and illustrate the difference between these groups and the influence of gender. For example, Black males were significantly different from all other groups, including Black females, and scored the highest mean for assumptions of inferiority. In contrast, both Asian and multiethnic males reported the lowest mean for assumptions of inferiority. See Fig. 1.

Turning to the second dependent variable, a two-way between groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of race/ethnicity and gender on the frequency of microinvalidations. Again, the interaction effect for race/ethnicity and gender was statistically significant $F (4, 216) = 7.196, p < .001$; and a medium effect size for the interaction (partial eta squared = .12). This suggests that the relationship between race/ethnicity and microinvalidations differed based on gender. In addition, different from the assumptions of inferiority, there was a statistically significant main effect for both gender $F (1, 216) = 4.398, p < .05$ and race/ethnicity, $F (4, 216) = 8.410, p < .001$. This suggests that both race and gender were independently associated with

Table 2 Means and standard deviations for racial microaggressions

REL students			Assumptions of inferiority			Microinvalidations			Workplace and school microaggressions		
			M	*SD*	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*N*
Asian	Female		1.24	0.67	31	1.21	0.36	31	1.27	0.74	31
	Male		1.08	0.11	9	1.16	0.36	9	1.33	0.68	9
	Total		1.21	0.59	40	1.20	0.36	40	1.29	0.72	40
Black	Female		1.37	0.64	41	1.32	0.55	41	1.44	0.64	41
	Male		2.59	1.26	7	2.65	1.40	7	2.40	1.12	7
	Total		1.55	0.86	48	1.51	0.85	48	1.58	0.79	48
Hispanic	Female		1.27	0.48	63	1.33	0.60	63	1.29	0.53	63
	Male		1.28	0.40	14	1.34	0.62	14	1.27	0.39	14
	Total		1.27	0.46	77	1.33	0.60	77	1.29	0.51	77
Multiethnic	Female		1.13	0.27	48	1.25	0.46	48	1.13	0.25	48
	Male		1.10	0.16	5	1.16	0.29	5	1.20	0.45	5
	Total		1.13	0.26	53	1.24	0.44	53	1.14	0.27	53
Other	Female		1.21	0.28	7	1.10	0.13	7	1.23	0.39	7
	Male		1.25	0.00	1	1.44	0.00	1	1.40		1
	Total		1.22	0.26	8	1.14	0.18	8	1.25	0.37	8
Total	Female		1.25	0.51	190	1.28	0.51	190	1.28	0.55	190
	Male		1.46	0.81	36	1.53	0.92	36	1.50	0.78	36
	Total		1.28	0.57	226	1.32	0.60	226	1.31	0.59	226

microinvalidations. Although the main effect for gender was significant, the effect size for gender (partial eta squared = .02) was small, suggesting that its significance should be viewed with caution. Similarly, the effect size for race/ethnicity was medium (partial eta squared = .135); however, post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test did not indicate which mean scores were significantly different from one another. See Table 2.

The final two-way between groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the effect of race/ethnicity and gender on levels of workplace and school microaggressions. Again, the interaction effect between race/ethnicity and gender was statistically significant $F (4, 216) = 3.339, p < .05$; yet, the effect size was small (partial eta squared = .06). Similar to assumptions of inferiority, the main effect for gender did not reach statistical significance $F (1, 216) = 4.398, p = .09$; however, there was a statistically significant main effect for race/ethnicity, $F (4, 216) = 6.677, p < .001$. The effect size for race/ethnicity was small (partial eta squared = .11). Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Blacks ($M = 1.58$, SD = .78) was significantly different from multiethnic ($M = 1.13$, SD = .26). As noted earlier, the mean differences between Black and multiethnic were plotted. Again, Black males reported the highest mean for workplace and school microaggressions; Multiethnic females reported the lowest mean for workplace and school microaggressions. See Fig. 2.
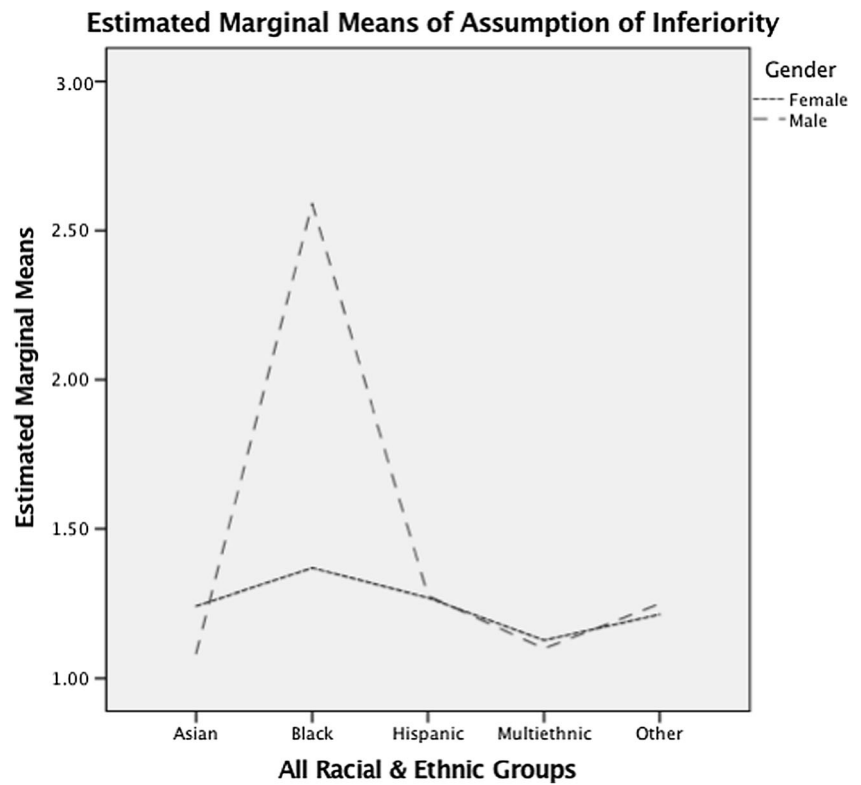
Race/Ethnicity and Bilingual Status

A series of two-way between groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the effect of race/ethnicity and bilingual status on the frequency of racial microaggressions, specifically the assumptions of inferiority, microinvalidations, and

Table 3 Summary of the two-way analyses of variance for each type of racial microaggressions

| Source	Assumption of inferiority					Microinvalidations					Workplace and school microaggressions				
	Type III SS	*df*	*F*	*Sig.*	η_p^2	*Type III SS*	*df*	*F*	*Sig.*	η_p^2	*Type III SS*	*df*	*F*	*Sig.*	η_p^2
REL students	11.751	4	10.612	0.000	0.164	10.364	4	8.410	0.000	0.135	8.409	4	6.677	0.000	0.110
Gender	0.658	1	2.378	0.125	0.011	1.355	1	4.398	0.037	0.020	0.884	1	2.809	0.095	0.013
REL students + Gender	7.806	4	7.049	0.000	0.115	8.868	4	7.196	0.000	0.118	4.204	4	3.339	0.011	0.058
Error	59.800	216				66.548	216				68.006	216			
Total	445.313	226				473.802	226				467.520	226			

Fig. 1 Estimated marginal means of assumption of inferiority

workplace and school microaggressions subscales of the REMS. For assumptions of inferiority, there was no interaction effect between race/ethnicity and bilingual status $F_{(4, 225)}$ = .519, p = .722, as well as no main effects for race/ethnicity $F_{(4, 225)}$ = .538, p = .708 and bilingual status, $F_{(1, 225)}$ = .112, p = .738. Similarly, for microinvalidations,

Fig. 2 Estimated marginal means of workplace and school microaggressions
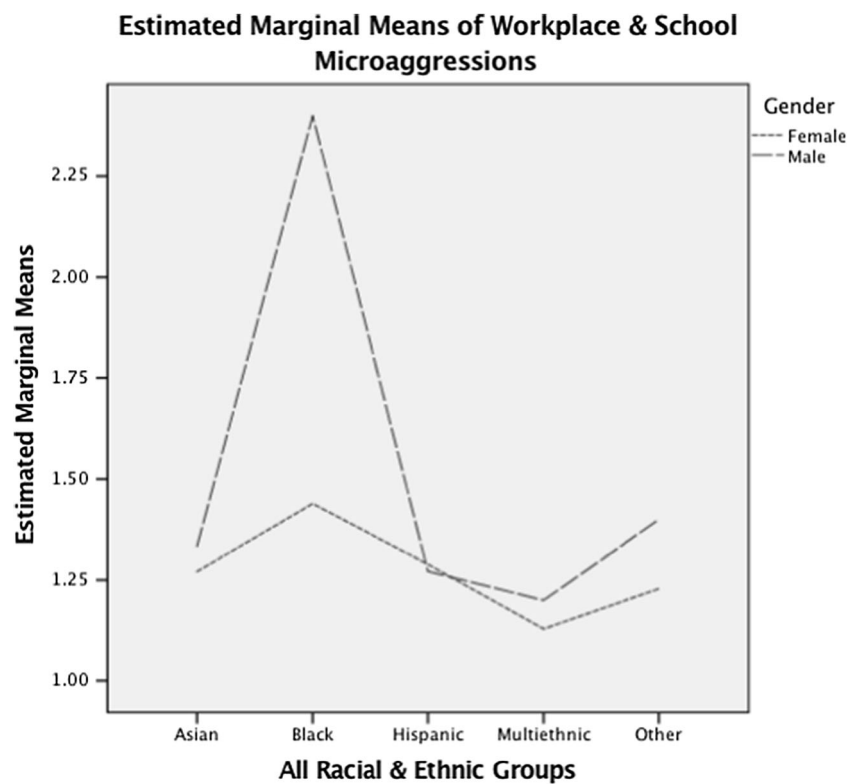
there was no interaction effect between race/ethnicity and bilingual status $F_{(4, 225)} = 1.032$, $p = .392$, as well as no main effects for race/ethnicity $F_{(4, 225)} = .173$, $p = .952$ and bilingual status, $F_{(1, 225)} = .041$, $p = .840$. Finally, for workplace and school microaggressions, there was no interaction effect between race/ethnicity and bilingual status $F_{(4, 225)} = .548$, $p = .701$, as well as no main effects for race/ethnicity $F_{(4, 225)} = .451$, $p = .772$ and bilingual status, $F_{(1, 225)} = .000$, $p = .997$.

Discussion

The current study investigated the intersection of race/ethnicity and gender and bilingual status, and the experience of racial microaggressions in a sample of school psychology students. We were especially interested in the intersection of these factors on REL diverse students' experience of racial microaggressions *within school psychology graduate education* given the increased need for racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity in the school psychology workforce. We hypothesized that racially and ethnically diverse females would report significantly higher frequency of racial microaggressions than racially and ethnically diverse males. Our findings confirmed that females are indeed different from males with respect to their experience of racial microaggressions and this was especially true for Black graduate students. However, we found that across all racial/ethnic and gender groups, Black males experienced the highest frequency of racial microaggressions as opposed to Black females, which our hypothesis and the intersectionality framework would suggest. This finding is not completely surprising given the current racial and gender demographics of school psychology graduate programs (i.e., predominantly White and female), the much discussed need for cultural competency in school psychology training, and the near absence of Black males in school psychology programs (Gadke et al. 2016; Proctor and Truscott 2012; Walcott et al. 2016).

Particularly noteworthy is that Black males experienced significantly higher frequencies than all other groups on assumptions of inferiority and school and workplace racial microaggressions, but not on microinvalidations. This may be due to the way in which the different racial microaggressions manifest. For instance, microinvalidations often involve the perpetrator embracing a colorblind stance or assuming that a person of color is an outsider to US society, while assumptions of inferiority and school and workplace microaggressions are characterized by (a) others assuming people of color have less education, achievement, and intellect due to their race and (b) the experience of being treated less well because of race. Similar to Forrest-Bank and Jenson (2015), we found that, across racial/ethnic groups, Black students reported the highest frequencies of racial microaggressions that would suggest others view them as

inferior to others. Yet, we found that the frequency of these two types of racial microaggressions significantly increased when we examined the intersection of race and gender for Black males. Interestingly, this was not the case with microinvalidations. One possible explanation for this finding is that Black males may not trigger the stereotypic assumptions that underlie microinvalidations.

Although the mean differences between Black males and other races/genders did not reach statistical significance for microinvalidations, it is of interest that Black males still obtained the highest mean of all racial/ethnic groups, while Asian and multiethnic males obtained the lowest means. Similar results were found for assumptions of inferiority except the Black male mean was significantly higher than Asian and multiethnic males. While the model minority myth helps explain why Asian students would obtain a lower mean score on assumptions of inferiority, prior research (e.g., Sue et al. 2007a) suggests that they would experience higher frequencies of microinvalidations. However, it could be that the Asian males represented in this study were shielded, to some extent, from these racial microaggressions due to the intersection of their gender and race. These findings are particularly interesting because one might assume that males share commonalities in their experience of academia influenced by their gender. Certainly, there may be some shared gendered experience for males in school psychology programs, but our findings indicate that depending on their race, males experience different frequencies of these two types of racial microaggressions.

Our findings underscore the importance of using intersectionality as a theoretical and analytical frame in this type of investigation. Use of intersectionality compelled us to account for participants' multiple identities, particularly the intersections of race and gender on their experiences of racial microaggressions. Interestingly, had we not used intersectionality, we may have missed the significant findings related to Black males' experiences with racial microaggressions in school psychology graduate education. At its core, intersectionality's intent is to bring the most marginalized individuals to the center in order to encourage more socially just outcomes for them. Originally, and within the context of US society, intersectionality centered Black women as the most marginalized population. Thus, it may be useful to juxtapose our findings related to Black males against the current context of school psychology as a predominantly White and female profession. In this context, Black males may indeed be the most marginalized graduate student population. This certainly was the case for one Black male student in Proctor and Truscott's (2012) study of African American school psychology program leavers. In relation to his classmates, he noted that he was "very vigilant of and sort of wary of them and any indication that they might be racist" (Proctor and Truscott 2012, p.668). This student also expressed frustration that his professors did not address issues of racialized

gender bias related to the overrepresentation of Black males in special education, noting that he received "polite negotiation" away from the topic (Proctor and Truscott 2012, p. 665). This Black male left his school psychology program feeling angry, isolated, and marginalized.

How then do we reconcile the findings related to Black males with intersectionality's tenet of centering Black women? Here, it is important to underscore that similar to prior research (e.g., Forrest-Bank and Jenson 2015). Black students in our sample reported the highest frequencies of racial microaggressions across races/ethnicities regardless of gender. This means that Black females' experiences should not be decentered, but that there is a critical need to gain further understanding of *both* Black females' and Black males' experiences with racial microaggressions in school psychology programs. This may be particularly important for student retention, as demonstrated by the seven African Americans in Proctor and Truscott (2012) who chose to leave school psychology programs instead of emotionally exhausting themselves to fight what several viewed as barriers to their full inclusion and participation, partly attributed to their experience with racial microaggressions. Like much of the racial microaggressions research conducted in 4-year college settings (e.g., McCabe 2009; Palmer and Maramba 2015), studies that use in-depth focus groups and individual interviews are most promising for gathering rich, deep descriptions of Black school psychology graduate students' training-related experiences with racial microaggressions.

We also hypothesized that linguistically diverse students would differ significantly from non-linguistically diverse students by reporting higher frequencies of racial microaggressions. Yet, our examination of the intersection between participants' race/ethnicity and bilingual status did not reveal any significant relationships. This could lead one to conclude that regardless of race/ethnicity, bilingual status did not influence students' experience of racial microaggressions. However, we caution careful interpretation of this finding since the way in which we measured microaggressions may not have captured issues salient to being bilingual and microaggressed. The REMS scale asks directly about the experience of being dismissed because of race but was not constructed to detect invalidating experiences because, for instance, one speaks with an accent. Additionally, the study may not have had enough power to detect a relationship between race/ethnicity and bilingual status. We also did not ask participants who endorsed being bilingual if they were receiving specialized training to provide bilingual school psychology services. Thus, we have no way to determine if bilingual participants would be expected to use a second language as part of their school psychology training. If not, it is possible that bilingual participants compartmentalized their use of language—using English only in school psychology graduate education. However, we do believe that our non-significant findings related to the intersection of participants' race/ethnicity, bilingual status, and the experience of racial microaggressions are promising given the school psychology workforce is in desperate need of bilingual individuals who can receive training to provide competent bilingual school psychology services (Proctor et al. 2014).

Implications for School Psychology Recruitment and Retention Practices

The study's findings have several salient implications for recruitment and retention of racially and ethnically diverse students. Given the current racial climate in the USA, it is important for school psychology faculty to be aware of issues beyond their programs that impact racially and ethnically diverse graduate students. For instance, Black students recently formed a coalition (i.e., Concerned Student 1950) to end racial discrimination and hostility at the University of Missouri. Although Black undergraduate students led the coalition, a hunger strike by a Black male graduate student, Jonathan Butler, prompted the university's football team to threaten boycott of football games until Butler's demand for the university system's president resignation was honored. This illustrates that despite the graduate department being the university setting in which graduate students engage the most (Lovitts 2001), racially and ethnically diverse graduate students are not immune to what is happening within the larger educational institution. In fact, racially and ethnically diverse students in higher education have detailed experiencing racial microaggressions in public spaces on campus (e.g., Solórzano et al. 2000; McCabe 2009).

For racially and ethnically diverse applicants to school psychology programs, faculty's acknowledgment of the racial climate within the program, department, and university can serve as an indicator that faculty is aware and concerned about their overall well-being. Campus visitation days, admissions interviews, and program orientations are excellent opportunities for school psychology faculty to demonstrate, via explicit discussion, their knowledge of the racial climate at the larger university. For Black students, in particular, one recruitment and retention strategy is to identify and link them with opportunities to connect with other Black graduate students. Prior to enrollment, such linkages can help Black applicants gather information about the university's racial climate, learn about the larger Black community within and outside of the university, and explore opportunities for same race supports if they decide to attend. Once enrolled, connecting Black students to campus organizations such as Black Graduate Student Associations may facilitate more immediate access to resources and supports outside of the program and department. Indeed, research suggests that involvement in campus ethnic organizations creates safe spaces that anchor and support racially and ethnically diverse students in higher education (Grier-Reed 2013).

To encourage retention of Black students, school psychology faculty must also interrogate their training practices and explore why across races/ethnicities, Black students report experiencing the highest frequencies of racial microaggressions as part of school psychology graduate education. This type of interrogation is important because negative conceptions of Black people's intelligence and pathologizing Black children have been an integral part of school psychology's history and culture (Bursztyn and Korn-Bursztyn 2017; Newell et al. 2010; Truscott et al. 2014). Interrogation should occur on two levels: the individual faculty member level and the program level. At the faculty member level, self-reflection must take place regarding biases and stereotypes held related to Black people. For a professoriate that is largely White and female (Proctor et al. 2014), challenging and checking negative perceptions of Black people and ingrained stereotypes about Black people and Black culture are critical to decreasing the likelihood that professors will engage in racial microaggressive behaviors towards Black students.

At the program level, reviewing curriculum for how Black people are portrayed is important. This is relevant because program curricula can present stereotypic snapshots of Black populations that manifest as environmental racial microaggressions. Indeed, the Black male participant in Proctor and Truscott (2012) who challenged his professor's inattention to issues of bias was, in many ways, challenging a curriculum that did not explore school psychology's role in labeling and stigmatizing Black boys. This erasure of content related to problematizing the labeling and stigmatization of Black boys represented an environmental racial microaggression in the form of a microinvalidation. These recommendations represent two starting points for interrogating school psychology training practices in hopes of decreasing the chances that Black school psychology graduate students would consider leaving programs due to environments that support racial microaggressions.

True to the intent of intersectionality, our findings highlight the intersection of gender and race for participants in this study—particularly the significantly different frequencies of racial microaggressions Black males experience in school psychology graduate education. Although only a few Black males were represented in the sample, the findings related to this population are incredibly important given Black males' virtual absence in the profession and the significant contributions they can make to the profession (Beasley et al. 2015; Truscott et al. 2014). The types of racial microaggressions Black male participants report experiencing in school psychology graduate education suggest that they perceive that they are not treated as well as others due to their race and that others assume they are intellectually inferior.

While our findings related to Black males are concerning, they are not surprising given the negative portrayals of Black males in US society (Noguera 2008). Indeed, previously conditioned negative perceptions of Black males can be cemented in the psyche of school psychology faculty and graduate students given the consumption of research that often presents Black, male children from a deficit versus strengths-based perspective (Baker and Rim-Kaufman 2014). This, in turn, could lead to both unconscious and conscious racial microaggressions directed at Black male school psychology graduate students.

Interestingly, Cooper (2016) cautioned that decentering Black women diminishes intersectionality's potential to disrupt problematic relations of power. Yet, in this study, intersectionality uncovered that race and gender may be working together to create oppressive educational environments for Black males in a White, female dominated profession. The use of intersectionality is certainly a helpful tool for exploring how intersecting identities contribute to the experiences of racial microaggressions in school psychology graduate education. The power of the theory is not realized, however, unless those within the profession examine and challenge behaviors, practices, and structures that contribute to Black students', particularly Black males, negative race-related experiences in school psychology graduate education.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

A first limitation is that we intentionally did not ask participants to identify which school psychology programs they attended because we wanted them to feel free to respond without fear that a link to their specific programs could be made. Thus, the potential for sample bias exists because it is impossible to know if any one program was overrepresented in terms of participants. A second study limitation is that we did not ask participants from whom they received racial microaggressions. This limits our ability to make more specific recommendations for targeted interventions to decrease racial microaggressions in school psychology graduate education. Additionally, the small number of Black males in the study's sample represents a limitation. Although Black males made up only 1.14% of the students enrolled in school psychology programs accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA) during the 2014–2015 academic year (APA 2015), a larger representation of Black males in this sample would increase the findings' generalizability. However, we believe that given our sampling methodology and the few Black males in school psychology programs, we obtained a representative sample of Black males. Another limitation is that we asked participants to indicate how they identified in terms of race or ethnicity. For those who identified as Hispanic, an ethnicity, we did not ask them to further indicate their race (e.g., Black, White). Although Latino/as in the REMS standardization sample did not specify racial status (Nadal 2011), the absence of racial identification for those in the current study who identified solely as Latino/a is a limitation because, although often used interchangeably, the constructs of race and ethnicity are different. This is an important consideration given research that suggests

phenotypic characteristics associated with race (i.e., skin complexion) influence life experiences and outcomes in the USA (Forrest-Bank and Jenson 2015). The study would have been strengthened if we could have investigated if differences exist in the frequency of racial microaggressions between Latino/as who identify as White versus Black and/or other races.

Future research should seek to address these specific limitations, as well as investigate the impact of racial microaggressions on other variables such as school psychology students' experiences of stress, social and academic integration, and resiliency. Qualitative studies that explore the experiences of Black males in school psychology programs may provide deeper and richer insight into this subgroup's experiences. Such insight could provide more specific direction for improving school psychology programs' retention practices.

Conclusion

Sue (2017) notes that "microaggressions are about experiential reality and about listening to the voices of those most oppressed, ignored, and silenced" (p. 171). Our use of an intersectionality framework to explore REL diverse school psychology students' experiences with racial microaggressions revealed that Black students, particularly Black males, experience the highest frequencies of racial microaggressions during school psychology graduate education. While we believe that more research is needed to fully understand Black students' experiences with racial microaggressions in school psychology, the detrimental impact of racial microaggressions on REL diverse students necessitates immediate action. Faculty should embrace a social justice stance to program delivery by examining factors that contribute to the marginalization of some Black students. The promise of diversifying the profession of school psychology lies in racially and ethnically diverse individuals viewing the profession as one that is welcoming to them and responsive to the needs of diverse populations (Beeks and Graves 2017). Faculty has the power and can use their privilege to interrogate and change behaviors, practices, and processes that contribute to Black students' negative race-related experiences in school psychology graduate education.

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