Experiences with Microaggressions and Discrimination in Racially Diverse and Homogeneously White Contexts

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Translational Statement

We measured the experiences of discriminations and microaggressions that monoracial People of Color (POC), multiracial, and White individuals reported when living in a racially diverse vs. homogenously White environment. We found that overall, monoracial POC and multiracial individuals reported experiencing less discrimination and microaggressions when living in racially diverse environments as compared homogenously White, while White individuals reported the lowest amounts of discrimination and microaggressions, which did not differ across the two environments. These findings highlight the positive benefits living in a racially diverse environment can have for both monoracial and multiracial POC.

Abstract

The interaction between one's context and identity may be essential in understanding people's racial experiences. ***Objectives:*** In this study we examined two contexts (racially diverse vs. homogenously White) and measured the experiences of discrimination and microaggressions for monoracial People of Color (POC), multiracial, and White individuals. Additionally, we measured experience of microaggressions with a new scale that addressed multiracial specific microaggressions, and offensiveness of these microaggressions. ***Methods and Results:*** Through a self-reported survey, monoracial POC, multiracial, and White individuals across the U.S. reported their experiences with discrimination and microaggressions, and offensiveness of multiracial specific microaggressions. Overall, monoracial POC and multiracial individuals reported experiencing less discrimination and microaggressions in diverse contexts vs. homogenous contexts. White individuals reported the lowest amounts of discrimination and microaggressions, which did not differ across contexts. ***Conclusions:*** Living in a racially diverse context may have positive benefits for racial minorities, and White individuals do not necessarily experience greater instances of discrimination or microaggressions in diverse contexts.

Keywords: Microaggressions, Discrimination, Racial Diversity, Multiracial

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A plethora of research has examined the consequences of race-based discrimination on psychological well-being (Blume, Lovato, Thyken, & Denny, 2012; Carter, 2007; Harrell, 2000; Mays, Cochran, & Barnes, 2007; Owen et al., 2011; Torres, Driscoll, & Burrow, 2010; Williams, Kanter, & Ching, 2018). Research on racial microaggressions—subtle and unconscious verbal and nonverbal behaviors that invalidate and/or insult People of Color (POC; Nadal, 2011; Pierce, 1970; Sue et al., 2007)—has only recently become more prevalent due to society's trend to express prejudice in more covert ways. While some may argue that all individuals experience forms of microaggressions (Thomas, 2008), we posit that context diversity may play an important role in interpreting when racial microaggressions are especially harmful, and that the meaning of individuals' identities in different contexts would operate differently for POC (including multiracial individuals) compared to White individuals.

As the U.S. becomes increasingly racially diverse, understanding how diverse contexts impact our race-related experiences becomes paramount. Previous research suggests that White individuals find information about the projected rise in the racial minority population threatening to their dominant status (Craig & Richeson, 2014a, 2014b; Outten, Scmitt, Miller, & Garcia, 2012; Skinner & Cheadle, 2016). For some White individuals, feeling racial threat is related to beliefs of increased discrimination towards their group (Dover, Major, & Kaiser, 2016). However, less work has focused on how actual racial diversity shapes discriminatory experiences for both racial majority and minority individuals. Will living in a racially diverse context help racial minority group members who become the numerical majority and harm White racial majority group members who become the numerical minority? We investigate whether White and POC experience

various forms of discrimination (e.g., racial discrimination and microaggressions) and how these experiences may differ across racially diverse and homogeneously White contexts.

Microaggressions and Diverse Social Contexts

Although most POC report experiencing microaggressions (Sue et al., 2007), it is possible that in racially diverse contexts, microaggressions occur less frequently, due to frequent and positive intergroup contact (e.g., Allport, 1954/1979; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Within the U.S., racial diversity drastically differs across the country. States in the West and the South have historically been more racially/ethnically diverse than states in the Midwest and North (Lee, Iceland, & Sharp, 2012). Indeed, research has found regional differences in experiences of microaggressions among Asian Americans (Nadal, Wong, Sriken, Griffin, & Fuji, 2015). Specifically, Asian Americans living in the West compared to the Northeast and Midwest experienced fewer microaggressions, which could be due to the greater opportunities for others to have contact with an Asian population and thus garner more positive attitudes through intergroup contact (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006).

Although racial diversity can be conceptualized in a number of ways (Unzueta & Binning, 2010), we define racial diversity as the degree to which historical racial minorities (e.g., Black, Latino, and Asian individuals) comprise the numerical majority of a location's population and historical racial majority group members (i.e., White individuals) are in the numerical minority. In other words, majority-minority contexts will be considered racially diverse in this paper. We focus on monoracial POC, multiracial, and White individuals' experience with racial discrimination, microaggressions, and the offensiveness of microaggressions across both majority-minority and homogeneously White contexts.

Multiracial and White Individuals' Experiences with Microaggressions

Although past work has focused on monoracial POC and their experiences broadly with microaggressions, there is little research with multiracial individuals (e.g., individuals who identify with two or more racial backgrounds). While Nadal et al. (2011) found that multiracial individuals reported experiencing microaggressions just as frequently as monoracial POC, they measured microaggressions using a scale developed for monoracial POC. Past work suggests that multiracial individuals may experience racial identity questioning and identity denial that a monoracial individual might not experience (Albuja, Sanchez, & Gaither, 2018; Johnston, & Nadal, 2010; Nadal et al., 2011; Shih & Sanchez, 2000; Tran, Miyake, Martinez-Morales, & Csizmadia, 2016). Indeed, Johnston and Nadal (2010) found that multiracial individuals face microaggressions that uniquely impact their group in addition to "traditional" microaggressions that they experience as a result of their racial minority group membership. While these studies help to shed light on the types of microaggressions multiracial individuals may experience, quantitative research documenting the frequency with which these microaggressions occur is still needed. Furthermore, given that multiracial individuals' identities encompass multiple racial groups, it is important to understand how racial contexts impact these experiences. For example, multiracial individuals' racial identity can include both White majority and traditional minority groups. Thus, we are interested in examining whether experiences of discrimination and microaggressions differ in contexts where the numerical majority group differs (e.g., majority-White vs. majority-minority contexts). Thus, we oversampled multiracial individuals in this study in order to better understand their experiences with microaggressions in different contexts and how they may compare to monoracial POC. Relatedly for monoracial POC, past work demonstrates that being in the presence of racially similar others is related to greater self-esteem and well-being (Frable, Pratt, & Hoey, 1998; Sanchez & Garcia, 2009). As such, we would hypothesize that living in a racially

diverse context may be more beneficial for all POC, but that diversity may function differently for multiracial individuals who belong to multiple racial ingroups.

Moreover, little research has been conducted on the experience of White individuals in a context where they are in the numerical minority (cf. Xu, Farver, & Pauker, 2015), leaving an open question as to whether White people would experience the same degree of microaggressions in racially diverse contexts. Past research with White individuals in a majority-minority context (e.g., Hawai‘i) found that over 50% reported experiencing discrimination in their lifetime—a similar rate of everyday discrimination as other racial/ethnic groups in the population (e.g., Pacific Islanders, Native Hawaiians, and Filipinos; Mossakowski, Wongkaren, & Uperesa, 2017). Thus, we could predict that White individuals would report experiencing discrimination and microaggressions at the same rate as other monoracial and multiracial POC in diverse contexts. However, White individuals' privileged status in the larger context of the U.S. could protect them from experiencing racial microaggressions, even in a context where they are the numerical minority.

Specifically, White privilege (Neville, Worthington, & Spanierman, 2001) might serve as a protective barrier to mitigate the threat of being a numerical minority. Little research has measured White individuals' experience of racial microaggressions in comparison with other monoracial or multiracial POC, likely due to multiple reasons. First, White individuals are often the perpetrators of microaggressions, not the recipients (cf. Williams, Oliver, Aumer, & Meyers, 2016), so it typically does not make sense to examine White individuals as the target of microaggressions. Second, race is often not a salient characteristic for White individuals (Doucette, 2011; Sue & Constantine, 2007; Sue, Rivera, Capodilupo, Lin, & Torino, 2010), and experiencing a microaggression inherently involves viewing an experience through the lens of your racial identity. However, these experiences may change for White individuals when they are in a context where

they are no longer in the numerical majority. Thus, examining monoracial POC, multiracial, and White individuals' experience of racial discrimination and microaggressions in both racially diverse and homogeneously White contexts is a novel question.

The Current Study

The current research attempts to better understand how the racial diversity of a given context impacts the experience of racial discrimination and microaggressions for monoracial POC, multiracial, and White individuals. We propose that racially diverse contexts will help to buffer experiences of racial discrimination and microaggressions for members of traditional minority groups (e.g., monoracial POC and multiracial individuals). We also examine whether racial diversity in a context exposes White individuals to more racial discrimination and microaggressions or if White privilege immunizes them from these experiences. Given the lack of research comparing monoracial vs. multiracial POC, the degree to which the pattern of results will be similar for both POC groups is unclear. However, we do hypothesize a difference between both monoracial and multiracial POC groups, who we expect to experience *less* discrimination and microaggressions in diverse contexts, as compared to White individuals who we expect to experience *more* discrimination and microaggressions in diverse contexts or *no difference* between contexts.

We were also interested in measuring the experience of microaggressions in two distinct ways. Replicating past research, we used the Racial and Ethnic Microaggression Scale (REMS; Nadal, 2011) to measure microaggressions; however, we also included a new scale to capture microaggressions particularly for multiracial individuals. We hypothesized that multiracial individuals would report higher occurrences of microaggressions using the multiracial-microaggressions scale compared to either monoracial POC and White individuals, because of the

unique experiences they may have due to their multiracial identity (e.g., feelings of exclusion or identity denial based upon their multiracial status). Past research has found the experience of racial discrimination and microaggressions is related to the acceptability of microaggressions (Mekawi & Todd, 2018). Given that we expect greater instances of discriminatory behaviors towards minority groups in homogenous contexts, we would then also expect that these microaggressions to be more offensive for minority groups (monoracial POC and multiracial) but not necessarily for White individuals.

Method

Participants

Participants were sampled from contexts within the U.S. that differed in their racial diversity. According to the U.S. Census (2015), Hawai‘i is currently the only state without a White majority, and when considering the composition of White (25%), Asian (39%), and multiracial (24%) residents (U.S. Census, 2015), the proportion of each group is similar enough to suggest that there is no clear minority or majority group. Given the growing interest in how a majority shift in the U.S. may impact our understanding of race-relations (Craig, Rucker, & Richeson, 2017), we chose to investigate contexts that differed in majority status. While some other regions or cities across the U.S. are now majority-minority[1], we dichotomized our contexts (e.g., Hawai‘i vs. continental U.S.) to remain conservative in our comparison across contexts. A total of 554 participants (140 males, 411 females, 3 other) were recruited. We compared participants recruited in Hawai‘i (n = 266; from two universities, both of which have a similar demographic make-up to the state more broadly) to participants recruited from contexts in the U.S. with a White majority (n = 154; two Universities in the Midwest, and n = 134; online recruitment via Facebook and a

[1] Many of these regions still maintain a White population (e.g., 40%) that largely surpasses any other single racial demographic.

multiracial focused website). We averaged census data from the states in which participants reported currently residing to verify the diversity of their context. According to the U.S. Census (2015), those Midwestern states were comprised of a White majority: White (84%), Asian (3%), and multiracial (2%). Participants who were recruited through Facebook and other online sites resided in contexts that were also majority-White: West coast (76% White, 12% Asian, 4% multiracial), East coast (75% White, 5% Asian, 2% multiracial), Southwest (83% White, 4% Asian, 3% multiracial) and the South (69% White, 3% Asian, 2% multiracial). All participants who completed the survey were entered into a raffle, and two $20 gift cards were given out; some participants also received extra credit for their university courses.

Participants ranged in age from 18-71 years old (M = 23.90, SD = 8.50). Those in the diverse context sample were younger (n = 266; Women = 204, Men = 60, Other = 2; M_{age} = 20.93, SD = 5.42) than those in the homogenous context sample (n = 288, Women = 207, Men = 80, Other = 1; M_{age} = 26.64, SD = 9.82). Due to the wide age-range and misbalance of gender in our sample, we include age and gender as covariates in all of our analyses. However, the inclusion of these covariates do not change the nature of our predicted effects. A sensitivity power analysis conducted with our sample size found that with 80% power, $\alpha = .05$, and our covariates of age and gender, we would be able to detect an effect of .13. In the final diverse context sample, 44% self-identified as multiracial, 33% as monoracial POC, and 23% as monoracial White. Compared to Hawai‘i’s U.S. Census (2015) demographics, where 25% of the population is multiracial, 39% monoracial POC, and 25% monoracial White, our diverse context sample included more multiracial individuals. In the homogenous context sample, 56% identified as multiracial, 16% as monoracial POC, and 28% as monoracial White. The oversampling of multiracial individuals in both contexts was intentional in an effort to better understand their experience of microaggressions

(see Williams, Tellawi, Wetterneck, & Chapman, 2013). This study received University Institutional Review Board approval.

Measures

Participants were asked to complete an online survey where they reported their racial group membership (participants were allowed to choose more than one group; these individuals were categorized as "multiracial"), experiences with racial discrimination, racial microaggressions (REMS and multiracial-microaggressions), and the offensiveness of multiracial-microaggressions. Scales were presented to participants in a random order after participants identified their racial group membership.

Discrimination. The Perceived Ethnic Discrimination Questionnaire – Community Version (Brondolo et al., 2005) was used to measure experience of racial discrimination. Seven items were omitted from the original scale for their irrelevance to our general sample (e.g., pertaining to an organizational setting). Scale instructions were also modified for participants depending on their racial identification. Monoracial participants saw "Because of my racial background", while multiracial participants saw "Because of my multiracial background." Participants answered items such as, "Have others threatened to hurt you?" on a scale that ranged from 1 = *never happened* to 5 = *happened very often*. The scale was reliable overall, $\alpha = .90$, and was reliable for monoracial POC ($\alpha = .90$), multiracial ($\alpha = .90$), and White ($\alpha = .89$) individuals.

Microaggression scale. Participants were asked a series of questions from Nadal's (2011) Racial and Ethnic Microaggressions scale (REMS), which measures the frequency of microaggressions experienced in the past 6 months (1 = *I did not experience this event in the past six months*, 5 = *I experienced this event 10 or more times in the past six months*). This scale measures the experience of microaggressions across 6 subscales: 1) assumptions of inferiority, 2)

second-class citizen and assumptions of criminality, 3) microinvalidations, 4) exoticization/assumptions of similarity, 5) environmental microaggressions, and 6) workplace and school microaggression (see supplemental materials for means and standard deviations across subscales). Participants answered items such as, "Someone told me that all people in my racial group look alike" (assumptions of similarity). The scale was reliable overall, $\alpha = .92$, and was reliable for monoracial POC ($\alpha = .94$), multiracial ($\alpha = .95$), and White ($\alpha = .91$) individuals.

Multiracial-microaggression scale. Participants were asked to rate the frequency with which they experienced certain multiracial-specific microaggressions. The investigators created this scale based on previously collected qualitative data describing multiracial individuals' experiences with microaggressions (see appendix; Johnston & Nadal, 2010). The 16-item scale measured the frequency of microaggressions experienced (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *a great deal*). Scale instructions were "Given both your current and overall experiences in life, how often have you experienced the following incidents?". An example item was "Was told my racial background made me 'exotic', 'unique', and/or 'special'." The scale was reliable overall, $\alpha = .97$, and was reliable for monoracial POC ($\alpha = .85$), multiracial ($\alpha = .91$), and White ($\alpha = .90$) individuals.[2] Furthermore, this scale demonstrates convergent validity with the REMS, $r = .70$, and discrimination scale, $r = .59$.

Offensiveness. In addition to responding to each item of the multiracial-microaggression scale, participants were also asked to indicate whether they thought each incident was offensive (yes or no). We created proportion scores for each participant by dividing the sum of their responses by the total number of items. Higher scores indicated greater frequency of the

[2] Exploratory factor analysis was also conducted on the 16 items, and found they all loaded onto one factor that explained 72.69% of the variance, with factor loadings from .78 to .92.

multiracial-microaggressions marked as offensive (i.e., a score of 1 would mean they found all the items to be offensive).

Results

Discrimination

We hypothesized that racial minorities (both monoracial POC and multiracial) would perceive less discrimination in diverse contexts as compared to those in homogenous contexts. We also examined differences in experiences with discrimination for White individuals across contexts. We conducted a 2 (Context: diverse vs. homogenous) x 3 (Race: White vs. monoracial POC vs. multiracial) between-subjects ANCOVA on the averaged discrimination score[3] with gender and age entered in as covariates. Gender did not explain any differences in experience with discrimination, $p = .72$. Age was related to discrimination, $F(1, 534) = 24.90$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$, such that those who were older in age reported experiencing more discrimination. There was no main effect for context, $F(1, 534) = 1.64$, $p = .20$, while individuals in more diverse contexts experienced less discrimination (diverse: $M = 1.73$, $SD = .72$; homogenous: $M = 1.95$, $SD = 0.87$), this was not significantly different. There was a main effect for race, $F(2, 534) = 14.42$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$. Post-hoc analyses with Tukey's HSD correction revealed that, regardless of context, White individuals experienced less discrimination ($M = 1.54$, $SD = .63$) than multiracial ($M = 1.98$, $SD = .85$; $d = .59$), and monoracial POC ($M = 1.88$, $SD = .81$; $ps < .001$; $d = .47$). There was no significant difference in experiences with discrimination when comparing multiracial to monoracial POC, $p > 1.00$. As predicted, the interaction between context and race was also reliable, $F(2, 534) = 4.52$, $p = .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$. As shown in Figure 1, monoracial POC experienced less discrimination in more diverse contexts ($M = 1.72$, $SD = .74$) than in homogenous contexts (M

[3] Twelve participants did not complete the perceived discrimination scale, therefore these analyses are conducted on $n = 542$.

= 2.20, *SD* = .87; *p* = .01; *d* = .59). Similarly, multiracial individuals in diverse contexts (*M* = 1.80, *SD* = 0.77) reported significantly less discrimination than those in homogenous contexts (*M* = 2.12, *SD* = .88; *p* = .01; *d* = .39). White individuals did not perceive more discrimination in diverse contexts (*M* = 1.63, *SD* = .62) compared to their peers in homogenous contexts (*M* = 1.48, *SD* = .64; *p* = .56).

Overall, we found support for our hypothesis: racial minorities experienced less discrimination in diverse compared to homogenous contexts. White individuals did not report experiencing different amounts of discrimination across contexts. Age also mattered, which may be due to more opportunity to experience instances of discrimination and possible cohort effects (i.e., our eldest participants were alive during a time when segregation was legal). Furthermore, the interaction between context and race demonstrates that being in a diverse context was related to experiencing less discrimination for racial minorities.

Microaggressions

We hypothesized that multiracial and monoracial POC in more diverse contexts will report fewer microaggressions than their peers in homogenous contexts. Additionally, we compared the experience of microaggressions for White individuals in more diverse contexts with their peers in homogenous contexts. We conducted a 2 (Context: diverse vs. homogenous) x 3 (Race: White vs. monoracial POC vs. multiracial) between-subjects ANCOVA on the averaged microaggression score[4] with gender and age entered in as covariates. Gender and age did not relate to reports of microaggressions, *ps* > .50. There was a significant main effect for context, $F(1, 540) = 4.39$, $p = .04$, $\eta_p^2 = .008$, such that individuals in more diverse context reported fewer microaggressions (diverse: *M* = 1.79, *SD* = .47; homogenous: *M* = 1.86, *SD* = .61). There was also a main effect for race, $F(2, 540) = 60.49$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .18$. Post-hoc analyses with Tukey's HSD correction

[4] Six participants did not complete the REMS, therefore these analyses are conducted on *n* = 548.

revealed that, regardless of context, White individuals reported fewer microaggressions (M = 1.43, SD = .42) than multiracial (M = 1.94, SD = .54; d = 1.05), and monoracial POC (M = 1.99, SD = .48; ps < .001; d = 1.24). There was no difference in reported microaggressions when comparing multiracial to monoracial POC, p = .09. As predicted, the interaction of context and race was also reliable, $F(2, 540) = 7.14$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$. As can be seen in Figure 2, monoracial POC experienced fewer microaggressions in more diverse contexts (M = 1.88, SD = .37) than in homogenous contexts (M = 2.21, SD = .59; p = .004, d = .69). Unexpectedly, multiracial individuals in diverse contexts (M = 1.87, SD = .51) did not significantly differ from their peers in homogenous contexts (M = 1.99, SD = .56; p = .28). We did not have specific predictions about how diversity of the context would affect Whites people's experiences with microaggressions. White individuals did not experience greater microaggressions in diverse contexts (M = 1.51, SD = .43) compared to those in homogenous contexts (M = 1.37, SD = .40; p = .57).

Here, we showed support for our hypotheses in that on average, racial minorities experienced fewer microaggressions in diverse compared to homogenous contexts, whereas White individuals did not differ in their experience of microaggressions across contexts. Interestingly, we found that multiracial individuals did not differ in their reported experience of microaggressions with the REMS across contexts. It is possible that due to the unique challenges a multiracial individuals face (e.g., identity denial, social exclusion; Johnston & Nadal, 2010), the REMS may not fully capture their experiences, as this scale was originally developed with the experiences of monoracial POC in mind.

Multiracial-microaggressions

We had similar hypotheses for the multiracial-microaggressions scale, such that both multiracial and monoracial POC would report fewer multiracial-microaggressions in diverse

contexts compared to those in homogenous contexts. Furthermore, we hypothesized multiracial individuals will report more multiracial-microaggressions as compared to monoracial individuals, illustrating more sensitivity to this measure. We conducted a 2 (Context: diverse vs. homogenous) x 3 (Race: White vs. monoracial POC vs. multiracial) between-subjects ANCOVA on the averaged multiracial-microaggression score with gender and age entered in as covariates. Gender was related to differences in reported multiracial-microaggressions, $F(1, 546) = 4.35$, $p = .04$, $\eta_p^2 = .008$. Age was not significantly related to reported multiracial-microaggressions, $p = .26$. There was a significant main effect for context, $F(1, 546) = 12.29$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$, such that individuals in more diverse contexts reported fewer multiracial-microaggressions (diverse: $M = 1.53$, $SD = .58$; homogenous: $M = 1.78$, $SD = .78$). There was also a main effect for race, $F(2, 546) = 38.95$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .12$. Post-hoc analyses with Tukey's HSD correction revealed that, regardless of context, White individuals reported fewer multiracial-microaggressions ($M = 1.26$, $SD = .45$) than multiracial ($M = 1.90$, $SD = .78$; $d = 1.01$), and monoracial POC ($M = 1.60$, $SD = .56$; ps $< .001$; $d = .67$). There was also a significant difference when comparing multiracial to monoracial POC, such that monoracial POC reported fewer multiracial-microaggressions as compared to multiracial individuals, $p = .01$, $d = .44$. As predicted, the interaction of context and race was also reliable, $F(2, 546) = 11.02$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$. As shown in Figure 3, monoracial POC experienced fewer multiracial-microaggressions in more diverse contexts ($M = 1.47$, $SD = .47$) than in homogenous contexts ($M = 1.83$, $SD = .64$; $p = .006$; $d = .67$). Multiracial individuals in diverse contexts also reported experiencing less multiracial-microaggressions ($M = 1.67$, $SD = .67$) as compared to those in homogenous contexts ($M = 2.06$, $SD = .81$; $p < .001$; $d = .52$). Similar to our previous finding, White people did not report experiencing more multiracial-

microaggressions in diverse contexts (M = 1.38, SD = .50) compared to their peers in homogenous contexts (M = 1.18, SD = .37; p = .56).

Overall, we found support for our hypothesis, with racial minorities reporting fewer experiences of multiracial-microaggressions in diverse compared to homogenous contexts. Gender was significantly related to experiencing multiracial-microaggressions, however, this may be due to items in this scale that focus on exoticization, which may be highlighted for Women[5]. Supporting the specificity of the measure, we found that multiracial individuals reported experiencing more multiracial-microaggressions compared to monoracial individuals. These results suggest that the multiracial-microaggressions scale may be more sensitive in measuring multiracial individuals' experience with microaggressions. Again, we found no significant difference in White individuals' experience with multiracial-microaggressions across contexts.

Offensiveness

We hypothesized that multiracial-microaggressions would vary in their offensiveness, such that those in diverse contexts would find examples of multiracial-microaggressions less offensive compared to those in homogenous contexts. We conducted a 2 (Context: diverse vs. homogenous) x 3 (Race: White vs. monoracial POC vs. multiracial) between-subjects ANCOVA on the calculated proportion of multiracial-microaggressions found to be offensive with gender and age entered in as covariates (see Table 1 for percentages of offensive multiracial-microaggressions). Gender and age were not significantly related to offensiveness scores, $ps > .15$. There was a significant main effect for context, $F(1, 546) = 58.41$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .10$, such that individuals in more diverse contexts reported less offensiveness (diverse: M = .06, SD = .12; homogenous: M = .21, SD = .28). There was also a main effect for race, $F(2, 546) = 13.50$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$. Post-

[5] Post-hoc analysis found that Women (M = 1.12, SD = 1.45) did report significantly higher instances of item #4 (exoticization) on the measure as compared to Men (M = .75, SD = 1.12) , $t(549) = 2.74$, $p = .006$, $d = .27$.

hoc analyses with Tukey's HSD correction revealed that, regardless of context, White people reported less offensiveness (M = .06, SD = .16) than multiracial (M = .17, SD = .26; d = .51), and monoracial POC (M = .13, SD = .21; ps < .001; d = .37). There was no significant difference in reported offensiveness when comparing multiracial to monoracial POC, p = .90. The interaction of context and race was also reliable, $F(2, 546) = 8.53$ $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$. As shown in Figure 4, monoracial POC reported less offensiveness in more diverse contexts (M = .07, SD = 0.14) than in homogenous contexts (M = .26, SD = .27; p < .001; d = .88). Similarly, multiracial individuals in diverse contexts (M = .06, SD = .12) reported less offensiveness than those in homogenous contexts (M = .26, SD = .29; p < .001; d = .90). White individuals did not significantly differ in their reports of offensiveness in diverse contexts (M = .04, SD = .08), compared to those in homogenous contexts (M = .07, SD = .19; p = .86).

As hypothesized, individuals reported less microaggressions as offensive in diverse compared to homogenous contexts. However, in decomposing these results, we find a similar pattern to our previous results, such that there were differences for monoracial POC and multiracial individuals across contexts and no differences in White individuals' reports of offensiveness in diverse versus homogenous contexts.

Discussion

Across two contexts (racially diverse vs. homogenously White), we examined how experiences with discrimination and microaggressions, and their offensiveness differed by racial group membership (monoracial POC vs. multiracial vs. White). We provide evidence that monoracial POC and multiracial individuals experienced fewer instances of discrimination and microaggressions in diverse contexts compared to homogenously White contexts. These results offer additional empirical support that diverse contexts provide positive benefits for the people

living in them (e.g., Astin, 1993; Bowman & Denson, 2012; Chang, 1996; Gaither & Sommers, 2013). The presence of diverse individuals (e.g., monoracial POC and multiracial individuals) seem to attenuate the experiences of discrimination and microaggressions. One reason behind this may be increased contact and interaction with those that are racially different which has been shown to improve intergroup relations (e.g., Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006), but another reason could be the interaction between individuals' identity and the larger context. For racial minorities (POC and multiracial), being in a context with a "majority-minority" may serve as an identity safety cue that may reduce the salience of their racial identity (Xu et al., 2014) and mitigate the sting of discrimination and microaggressions.. However, it is also possible that changing demographics and increased contact with POC may not be the only factor in shaping experiences with discrimination and microaggressions. Racial demographics are also strongly related to perpetuating the existing social hierarchy in a given context. For example, the racial hierarchy in Hawai‘i is such that Asians and multiracial individuals are rated highest in status compared to other groups (Pauker, Carpinella, Lick, Sanchez, & Johnson, 2018). Thus, status differences reflected through a contexts' racial hierarchy may explain why some groups are more likely to experience prejudice in one context versus another. Future research should examine the relationship between demographic diversity and racial hierarchies by measuring perceived racial status across contexts and participants' own subjective status.

Importantly, our findings demonstrate that White individuals did not experience significantly more discrimination, microaggressions, or offensiveness of (multiracial) microaggressions in diverse contexts compared to homogenous contexts. Given past research on White individuals' increased identity threat when perceiving society's growing racial diversity (Craig & Richeson, 2014a), these findings provide evidence for the lack of negative

discrimination-related ramifications for White people living in diverse contexts. White individuals (regardless of context) demonstrated the lowest levels of experiencing racial discrimination, microaggressions, and offensiveness, and living in a diverse context did not influence these outcomes. Given the changing social and political landscape of the U.S. (e.g., White people losing majority status), this may serve as evidence of maintained White privilege for these individuals. Future research should examine what factors, other than numerical majority status (e.g., power and/or status), contribute to protecting White individuals against discrimination.

Contrary to other work examining microaggressions among monoracial vs. multiracial POC (Williams, Printz, & DeLapp, 2018), our results indicate that there may be subtle differences between these two groups' experiences. Specifically, multiracial individuals reported experiencing more multiracial specific microaggressions as compared to monoracial POC, and multiracial individuals did not experience the same levels of microaggressions measured by the REMS as monoracial individuals in homogenous contexts. These results speak to the importance of acknowledging unique racial backgrounds (e.g., multiracial) when measuring incidences of discrimination and microaggressions, and recognizing that measurement validated for typical minorities (e.g., monoracial POC) may not fully capture the experiences of multiracial individuals. In other words, our findings demonstrate that multiracial and monoracial POC experience discrimination at similar rates and their experience with microaggressions depends on the measure used. Most anti-discrimination laws have been designed for the purpose of ameliorating the negative impacts of discrimination for those who have been recognized as historically marginalized and oppressed, yet multiracial people have only recently been recognized as a marginalized racial group and their experience of oppression has not been well documented or understood (Botts, 2016). However, future work should also test if experienced discrimination for

multiracial individuals varies based on one's phenotypic appearance, since looking less White is associated with increased discrimination (Young, Sanchez, & Wilton, 2017).

While this paper contributes to a greater understanding of how racial context impacts experiences with discrimination and microaggressions, there are some limitations. First, all of our measures are subject to self-report bias. Asking participants to recall events that may have happened within the last year or in their lifetime may not accurately capture day-to-day experiences (i.e., participants could misremember, over-report, or under-report discriminatory experiences). Future research should employ additional strategies to capture these experiences, such as using experience-sampling methodology to record people's daily experiences with discrimination and microaggressions. Second, we measured discrimination and microaggressions with measures initially developed and validated for traditional racial minority groups (i.e., not White individuals). While our work was largely exploratory, it is possible that given these scales were originally developed with People of Color's experiences in mind, these measures may not be able to capture White individuals' experience with discrimination or microaggressions. Furthermore, given our interest in both racially diverse contexts and examining the multiracial population, we only looked at the context of Hawai‘i (a majority-minority state, with a large multiracial population) and also used different recruitment strategies across our participant samples. We recognize that there may be some unique factors that make Hawai‘i different from other racially diverse contexts (e.g., there has never been a majority White population in Hawai‘i), so future work should test these questions in other contexts. Lastly, we only asked participants if they had experienced discrimination or microaggressions, and the number of multiracial-microaggressions they found to be offensive. However, we did not ask participants who the perpetrators were in these instances. For example, if the typical perpetrators of racial

discrimination and microaggressions are White individuals, then these are less likely to occur in contexts with less White people. Alternatively, people may not see instances that might otherwise be considered discrimination as clearly when the perpetrator is another racial minority. However, our results still give support to the notion that considering contextual factors are important in understanding how racial microaggressions may be harmful. In response to recent critiques against the validity of microaggressions (Haidt, 2017; Lilienfeld, 2017), these findings help to illuminate contexts in which racial microaggressions are reported to occur more frequently, and whether they are perceived as offensive. If microaggressions are not perceived as offensive, it is possible that communication about race and identity in these contexts occur more positively, which could lead to constructive cross-group gains.

Conclusion

This study is one of few to compare both racial majority *and* minority (including a large sample of multiracial individuals) members' experiences of microaggressions and discrimination. Given recent calls for research examining how changing racial and ethnic demographics may impact intergroup relations (Craig et al., 2017), these findings illustrate the benefits of increasing racial diversity within our society. We found that monoracial POC and multiracial individuals experienced fewer microaggressions and discrimination when living in a diverse context. Furthermore, White people in diverse contexts—where they are not majority members—do not perceive experiencing more racial discrimination or microaggressions compared to their peers in homogenous contexts. Considering that in the near future, White individuals will become numerical minority members in the U.S., it is important for research to examine the potential consequences and benefits that could result from shifting from a majority-White to a majority-minority nation.

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Table 1

Percentages of offensive multiracial-microaggressions by racial group and context

	White		Monoracial POC		Multiracial	
Item	Homogenous White	Racially Diverse	Homogenous White	Racially Diverse	Homogenous White	Racially Diverse
1	11.25%	6.45%	34.78%	5.68%	26.54%	5.17%
2	10.00%	3.23%	41.30%	17.05%	41.98%	14.66%
3	8.75%	6.45%	41.30%	10.23%	43.83%	12.93%
4	10.00%	1.61%	41.30%	10.23%	33.33%	7.76%
5	8.75%	4.84%	21.74%	4.55%	38.89%	12.93%
6	7.50%	1.61%	19.57%	3.41%	24.69%	6.90%
7	11.25%	11.29%	30.43%	9.09%	30.86%	6.90%
8	8.75%	11.29%	26.09%	10.23%	28.40%	6.03%
9	5.00%	1.61%	6.52%	4.55%	11.73%	1.72%
10	5.00%	3.23%	26.09%	9.09%	13.58%	2.59%
11	6.25%	1.61%	8.70%	2.27%	12.35%	2.59%
12	6.25%	0.00%	15.22%	1.14%	9.26%	3.45%
13	3.75%	0.00%	17.39%	4.55%	16.67%	0.86%
14	3.75%	3.23%	39.13%	5.68%	32.10%	5.17%
15	3.75%	0.00%	26.09%	3.41%	27.78%	1.72%
16	2.50%	1.61%	26.09%	6.82%	20.99%	0.86%

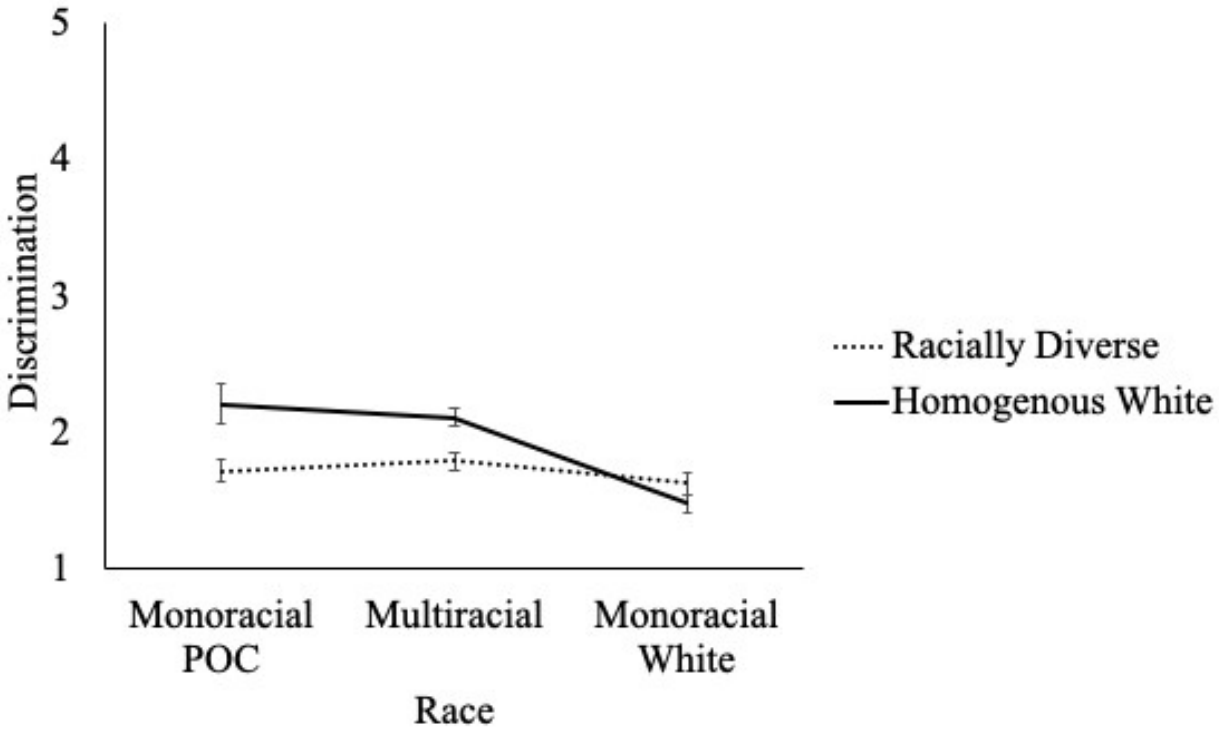

Figure 1. Mean levels of discrimination by participant race and context. Standard errors are represented in the figure by error bars on each column.

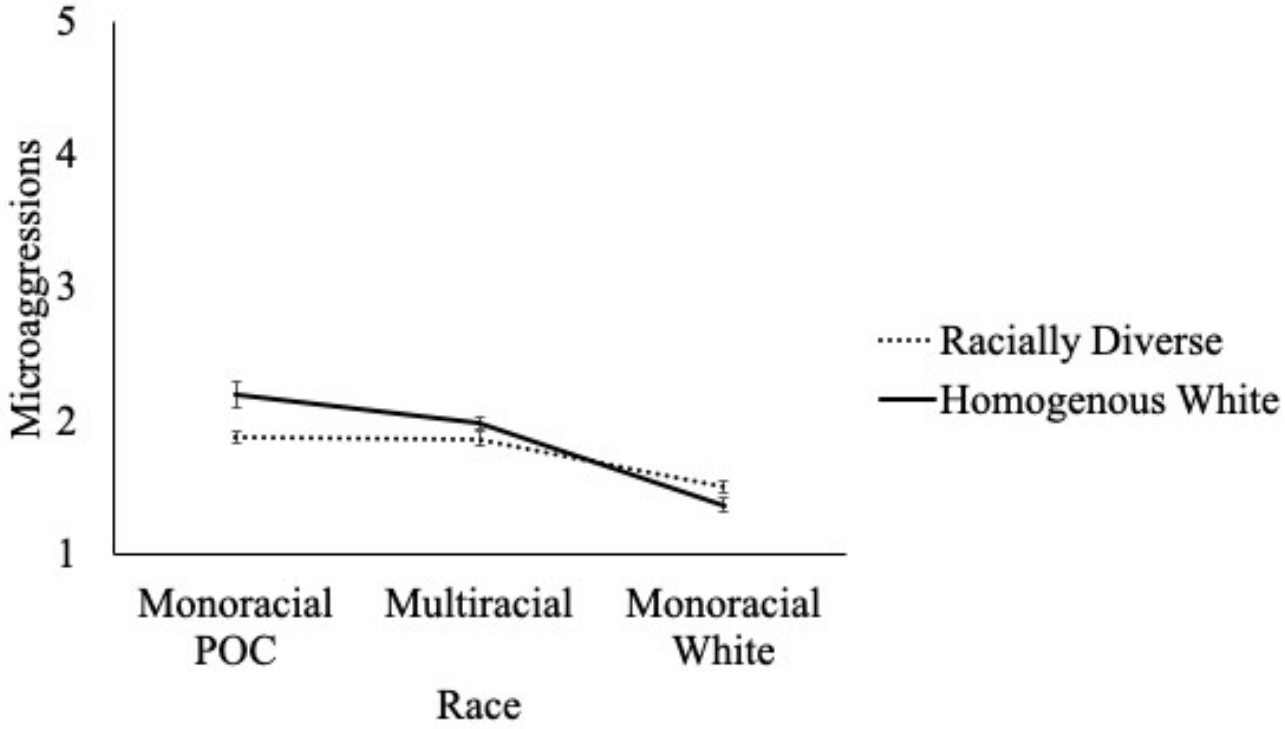

Figure 2. Mean levels of microaggressions by participant race and context. Standard errors are represented in the figure by error bars on each column.

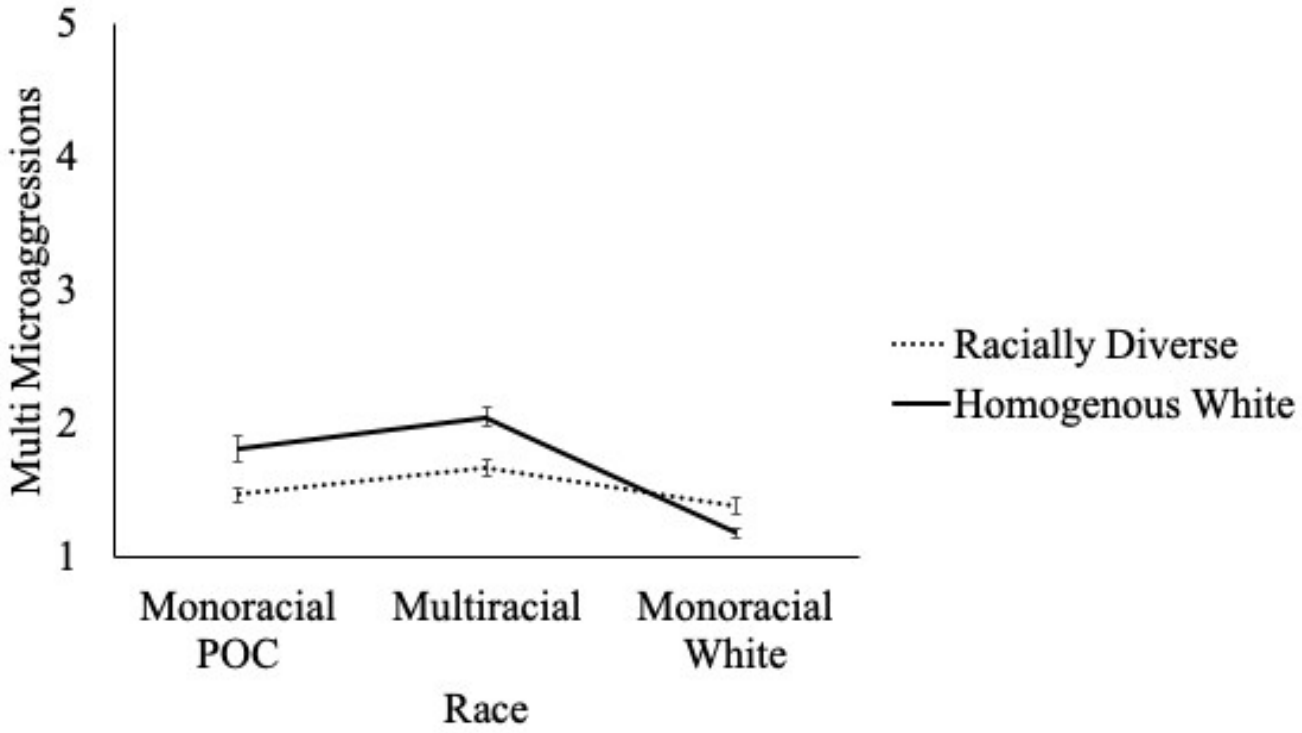

Figure 3. Mean levels of multiracial-microaggressions by participant race and context. Standard errors are represented in the figure by error bars on each column.

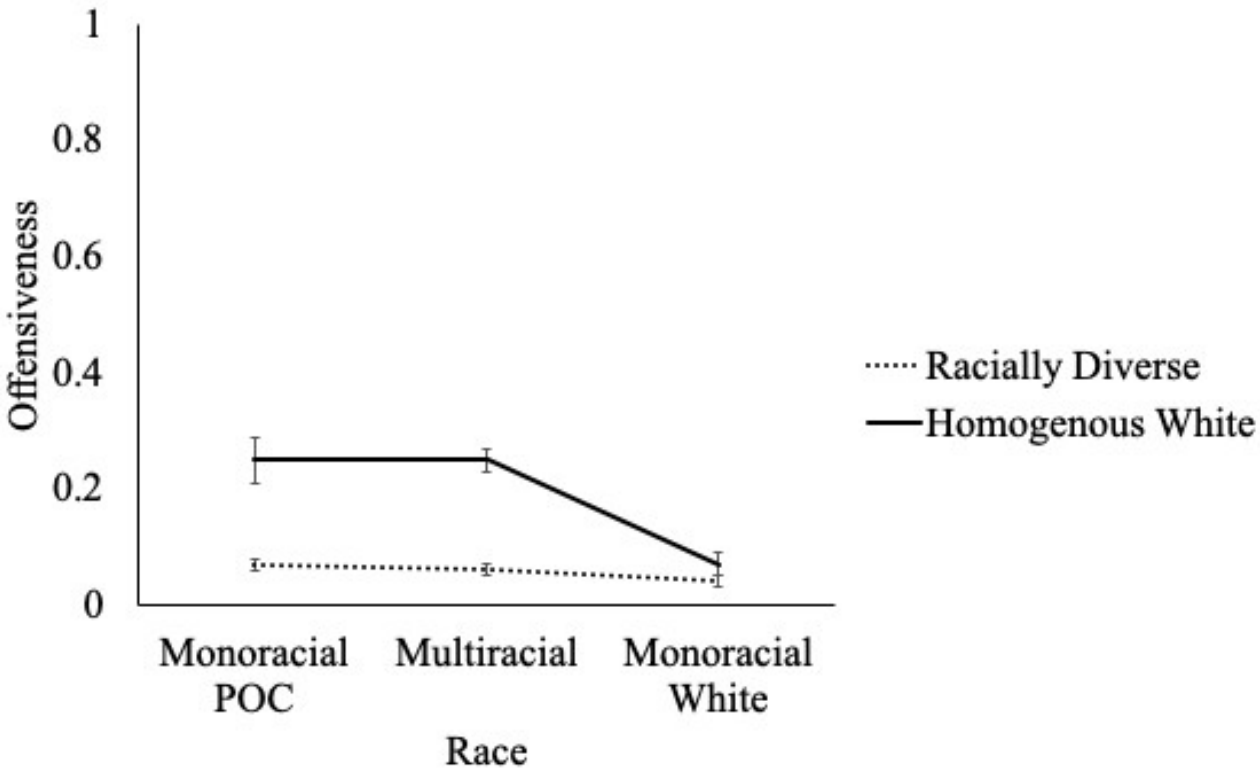

Figure 4. Proportion of offensiveness by participant race and context. Standard errors are represented in the figure by error bars on each column.

Appendix

Multiracial-microaggressions Scale
Given both your CURRENT and OVERALL experiences in life, how often have you experienced the following incidents? 1 (not at all) to 5 (a great deal)

1. Felt excluded by family members, because I'm multiracial (category 1)
2. Felt excluded by people around me, because I'm multiracial (category 1)
3. Made to feel I did not belong because of my multiracial appearance (category 1)
4. People stared at me, because I am multiracial (category 2)
5. People have wanted to take a picture of me or feel my hair or skin because of my multiracial appearance (category 2)
6. Was told my multiracial background made me "exotic", "unique" and/or "special" (category 2)
7. Asked: "What are you?" in reference to my race (category 3)
8. Being told I was wrong or mistaken when I told someone my racial background (category 3)
9. People around me felt uncomfortable about not knowing my racial background (category 3)
10. People around me seem to not pay attention to me and favor people with less ambiguous racial features (category 3)
11. Made to feel guilty about not knowing some cultural aspect of my racial background (category 4)
12. Pressured to pick or choose just one race to identify with (category 4)
13. My family disapproved of me because of my multiracial appearance (category 4)
14. Family members who were of similar age to me were favored over me because they lacked an "ethnic" appearance or behavior (category 4)
15. Questioned by someone on the legitimacy of my racial background (category 5)
16. People often ignore or downplay the discrimination I experience based on my multiracial identity or appearance (category 5)

Note:
Category 1: exclusion or isolation
Category 2: exoticization or objectification
Category 3: assumption of monoracial or mistaken identity
Category 4: denial of multiracial reality
Category 5: pathologizing of identity and experiences
Monoracial participants were asked these questions based upon their "racial" background as opposed to multiracial background.