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Microaggressions That Students From Underrepresented Groups Experience in Communication Sciences and Disorders

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ABSTRACT

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This study explored microaggressions that underrepresented students in Communication Sciences and Disorders experience. Phase I included a survey that was sent out to 276 undergraduate and graduate students at one university with 14 questions. Students were asked to identify with demographic variables, rate their sense of belonging, and discuss microaggressions they had experienced. Phase II comprised of individual interviews with six participants that further explored their experience as an underrepresented student in Communication Sciences and Disorders. Interviews were transcribed and coded using a content analysis. Across the two phases, quantitative, mixed-method, and content analyses were completed. Interviews were transcribed and a qualitative analysis included cross tabulating demographic variables with the number and basis of microaggression. The frequency, type, and basis of microaggressions were identified through the mixed-methods analysis. The content analysis resulted in the emergence of two major themes: belonging and feedback. Within the first theme of belonging, there were three codes: facilitators, obstructors, and changes in belonging. In the second theme, feedback, there were two codes: macrointerventions and microinterventions. Findings reveal students from underrepresented groups experience a variety of types and bases of microaggressions at a higher frequency than their peers. Other findings include students with hidden identities report experiencing higher rates of microinvalidations, the need for multiple interventions, and the benefit of connection for underrepresented students. Future research should study additional universities and demographic variables.

Keywords: microaggressions, diversity, cultural responsiveness, communication disorders

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

DESCRIPTION OF THESIS STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

This thesis, *Microaggressions That Students From Underrepresented Groups in Communication Sciences and Disorders Experience*, is a mixed-methods study investigating the types, frequency, and basis of microaggressions that are experienced by underrepresented students. It is written in a format which brings together traditional thesis requirements with a journal publication structure. The annotated bibliography is included in Appendix A. The Institutional Review Board consent form is in Appendix B, the survey can be found in Appendix C, and the individual interview script and questions can be found in Appendix D. Two references list are included in this thesis format. The first reference list contains citations used in the journal ready article while the second list contains references used in the annotated bibliography.

Introduction

Many speech-language pathology programs have recognized a demographic divide between the students in their programs and the populations they serve. Over the last 10 years, the demographic of the United States' population has shifted and continues to become increasingly diverse in culture, "experiences, skills, knowledge, and attributes that shape every one of us" (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 2022). The demographics of speech-language pathologists and audiologists certified by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) currently do not appropriately reflect the demographics of the populations they serve. For example, 95.6% of ASHA members and affiliates identify as female—up slightly from 95.5% at year-end 2020 (ASHA, 2022). About 13.4% of audiologists, 3.6% of SLPs, and 15.9% of those with dual certification identify as male. About 8.7% of ASHA members and affiliates identify as individuals from underrepresented racial groups. Additionally, about 6.2% of ASHA members and affiliates identify as Hispanic or Latino (ASHA, 2022). In contrast, 38.3% of the U.S. population identify as individuals from underrepresented racial groups; 18.7% identify as Hispanic or Latino (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). Due to this mismatch in professional representation of historically underrepresented groups, ASHA has re-emphasized its active promotion of "diversity of experience and breadth of perspective among [its] membership" and students in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) programs (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 2022).

CSD programs across the nation face similar challenges. To better understand how to recruit and retain students of underrepresented groups, it is essential that we seek to listen to and learn from students' individual experiences. Understanding microaggressions constitutes one important way of understanding the individual experiences of underrepresented students.

Examining common themes in the microaggressions experienced by students within CSD programs will provide information on how to increase students' sense of belonging and how to better implement cultural education.

According to Sue et al. (2007), microaggressions are defined as "brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to certain individuals because of their group membership" (p. 273). Microaggressions typically fall under three forms: microassault, microinsult, and microinvalidation (Sue et al., 2007). A microassault is a verbal or nonverbal attack that is conscious or deliberate and is intended to hurt the individual. Some examples may include name-calling, discriminatory actions, and excluding students that come from minoritized groups. A microinsult is characterized by an assumption that is insensitive and rude to demean an individual. These are known to be more subtle and convey a hidden message. An example is when a student asks, "how did YOU get into the program?" to a student of color. Lastly, a microinvalidation is when someone excludes, negates, or nullifies the psychological feelings of a minoritized individual. This type of microaggression diminishes the experience of that individual.

Current literature has consistently demonstrated that microaggressions can have negative effects on an individual's emotions, increase anxiety, and negatively impact their clinical practice (Sue et al., 2007). Multiple studies support the notion that microaggressions are associated with depressive symptoms (Auguste et al., 2021; Dale & Safren, 2020; Huynh, 2012). For example, previous research has shown that individuals who experienced a higher number of microaggressions reported more severe depressive symptoms (Dale & Safren, 2020). Microaggressions have also been correlated with anxiety, binge drinking events, and alcohol related consequences in college students suggesting that microaggressions can negatively impact

a student's physical health in addition to mental health (Blume et al., 2012). Microaggressions are especially harmful to individuals from underrepresented groups attending college and may even lead to dropping a class or leaving the program or department (Melendez & Thompson, 2020). The presence of microaggressions can create an unwelcoming environment for students and faculty. Such an environment can be compounded by the individuals' membership in multiple groups.

Intersectionality

Understanding microaggressions from underrepresented groups can be complex because a microaggression may not be confined to an isolated demographic variable. Intersectionality acknowledges how multifaceted the experience students from underrepresented groups can be. Intersectionality is defined as the compounding of various forms of inequalities and inequities experienced by a person (Crenshaw, 1991). Originally, intersectionality was discussed with how Black women with various marginalized identities (e.g., Black, impoverished, women) had experiences that were not comparable to experiences that Black men or White women had, even though they had a marginalized identity in common. The experiences of upper-class White women cannot exemplify the experiences of all women, nor can the experiences of Chinese men exemplify the experiences of all Asians.

Wilson et al. (2019) claims that intersectionality has now become a "significant intellectual approach for those thinking about the ways that race, gender, and other social identities converge in order to create unique forms of oppression" (p. 8). As we examine the effects of microaggressions in students from underrepresented groups, it is imperative we understand the complexities of interactions in the lives of these students.

Microaggressions in Underrepresented Students

Verbal microaggressions can be focused on a variety of themes and can be targeted to students of underrepresented groups following perceptions of how they are "different." Common themes of microaggressions that have been reported in the literature by students will now be further explored.

Racial Microaggressions

Recently, studies have examined the effects of microaggressions in Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) students in higher education (Abdelaziz et al., 2021; Nadal et al., 2014; Newkirk-Turner & Hudson, 2021). Microaggressions experienced by individuals in educational or workplace settings have been found to negatively predict self-esteem, which can impact their clinical confidence (Nadal et al., 2014). Prevalent themes reported in our field have included feeling treated as "other," damaging generalizations, maltreatment from faculty and peers (Abdelaziz et al., 2021).

Overgeneralizations and assumptions about an individual's race can be damaging to BIPOC students. One example of an assumption is when a Korean student is asked to explain a Japanese TV show or cultural element. This is damaging because the student's individual culture is not recognized and is overgeneralized to all Asian countries. This creates a sense of "otherness" or feeling treated as other. Abdelaziz et al. (2021) reported students often report feelings of otherness in various ways including "feeling 'out of place,' 'alone,' 'ignored,' 'not belonging,' 'isolated,' and 'alienated'" (p. 1996). To avoid painful microaggressions, some BIPOC students even reported engaging in behaviors to mask their true identities (Abdelaziz et al., 2021).

Studies examining racial microaggressions reported that BIPOC students experienced a wide range of microaggressions. Students sometimes had a convergence of different minoritized identities and researchers were unable to parse out if the microaggression was targeted at their race, socioeconomic status, or language abilities (Ellis et al., 2019). An example can be if a BIPOC student is told "your English is so good" despite English being their native language. In this example, it is difficult to discern if the microaggression was targeted towards their race or assumption that they are not a native English speaker.

Gender-Based Microaggressions

Although men are often considered in the majority, they are a minority within CSD. Currently, most studies related to gender-based microaggressions focus on female participants (Gartner, 2021; Dale & Safren, 2020; Alston, 2014). Even definitions of gender-based microaggressions include women. For example, Gartner (2021) defined gender-based microaggressions as "everyday slights, insults, and invalidations theorized to create and sustain environments in which sexual harassment and assault of women is normative and permissible" (p. 2770). Despite a wide search on gender-based microaggressions, the current literature focuses primarily on female participants. Women have reported themes of invisibility, intersectionality, caretaker and nurturer, women-dominated occupations, presumed incompetence, sexual objectification, and environmental invalidations (Dale & Safren, 2020). This study will aim to include microaggressions male students may be experiencing within CSD.

Other gender-based microaggressions include individuals belonging to the LGBTQIA+ community. Although acceptance of LGBTQIA+ individuals has increased over time, microaggressions are still prevalent toward this population. Studies are focusing on the subtle ways these LGBTQIA+ students experience hostility and discrimination, including

microaggressions. One study analyzed a sample of 2,428 students and found that 18% of those students belonged to a sexual minority. This study conducted by Woodford et al. (2014) concluded that sexual minority students "were significantly more likely to report poorer mental health, specifically moderate/high anxiety and depression symptoms, compared to heterosexual students" (p. 155). LGBTQIA+ students are at significant risks for mental health challenges as they had increased odds of reporting hostility, heterosexist harassment, and incivility. This study concluded microaggressions towards LGTBQIA+ students are often not acknowledged or addressed by faculty members (Woodford et al., 2014).

Other Types of Microaggressions

With an increased awareness of microaggressions, researchers have begun studying other populations outside of racial and gender-based microaggressions. Ellis et al. (2019) conducted a study to include microaggressions toward first-generation college students. They concluded that first-generation college students experience a range of microaggressions from faculty, university staff, and peers on campus. Common themes included demeaning identity, unwelcoming campus culture, academic preparation, inferior intellect, lack of parent college knowledge, and poor parent education experiences. First-generation college students reported damaging assumptions being made based on the educational and occupational backgrounds of their parents. One student reported an advisor suggested the student major in their native language instead of a major in the STEM field. The study highlights how intersectionality creates nuances in understanding microaggressions within this population (Ellis et al., 2019). It is difficult to discern whether these microaggressions were targeted towards their racial identity or socioeconomic status instead of their status as a first-generation college student.

Students with disabilities have also reported experiencing microaggressions. Common themes are low expectations, disregard, and bullying (Dávila, 2015). Due to the low expectations peers and faculty had for students with disabilities, they also reported refusing special education services, such as taking advantage of extra time on a test or receiving additional assistance with homework. This can provide an additional barrier to academic success as students are not willing to utilize their accommodations. As these studies show, regardless of the reason behind the microaggression, the assumptions that people make based on demographic variables are damaging (Dávila, 2015; Ellis et al., 2019).

Efforts to Reduce the Effects of Microaggressions

Various universities and institutions have attempted to mitigate the effects of microaggressions by supporting students and reducing microaggressions through belonging and equity efforts. Sue et al. (2021) developed microinterventions to help acknowledge the compounded and harmful impact microaggressions can have. They define microinterventions as "individual actions that ordinary citizens can take to voice disproval, educate others, and pressure those in authority to make changes" (p. 23). The authors continued that macrointerventions are "the actual implementation of large-scale changes in tradition, policy, custom, or law" (p. 23).

Macrointerventions in Higher Education

Implementing education programs about microaggressions is a macrointervention that universities have attempted to implement across certain fields, including CSD. This education can help students learn how to validate, challenge, and protect individuals from underrepresented groups. Addressing microaggressions in an educational setting can provide a welcome and inclusive environment in the classroom and in the field (Melendez & Thompson, 2020).

However, there is little evidence that CSD programs are systematically addressing microaggressions in this manner.

Florida International University is one university that has attempted to integrate microaggression education into their CSD program. The multicultural program was taught by a diverse faculty member with an emphasis in bilingualism and cultural competence. This study demonstrated culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) education provided by a culturally competent faculty member can be beneficial for CSD students to prepare them to serve populations outside of their own cultures (Alfano et al., 2021).

Microinterventions in Higher Education

Cross-cultural peer mentoring is one-way universities have attempted to increase diverse students' sense of belonging within programs and educate students on microinterventions (Alston, 2014). Three forms of microinterventions include microaffirmations, microprotections, and microchallenges. Microaffirmations are actions that affirm a person's identity. One example can include validating, complimenting, and supporting the victim. Microprotections are actions that individuals close to the victim might do to help others understand the difficulties associated with racism, demonstrate pride in their culture and heritage, and cope with racism and discrimination. Microchallenges aim to take back the power from the aggressor by confronting the person administering the microaggression (Sue et al., 2019). Educating mentors on microinterventions can provide a safe place for mentees to discuss microaggressions they may be experiencing at an institution. Students reported peer mentor programs result in higher levels of connection and mentorship in students from underrepresented groups (Kim & Egan, 2011). Before implementing interventions or addressing microaggressions in a systematic way, it is essential we understand student's experiences with microaggressions.

Purpose of the Study

This study aims to explore the experiences with microaggressions in students from underrepresented backgrounds to affirm the importance of promoting inclusion, equity, and diversity among students in CSD. By addressing the following research questions:

1. What microaggressions are underrepresented students in CSD programs encountering?
2. Which resources, if any, are beneficial to underrepresented CSD students in dealing with the emotional impact resulting from microaggressions?
3. How do microaggressions influence students' sense of belonging in CSD programs?

Findings from the study will help guide belonging and equity efforts in CSD programs, including how to better address microaggressions. These finding may be beneficial for other programs or departments who hope to address microaggressions in a systematic way. It is expected that addressing microaggressions will contribute to the retention of underrepresented students in our department and, thus, the profession.

Method

This study was divided into two phases. Phase I consisted of a survey sent to all undergraduate and graduate CSD students at a religious university. Phase II included individual interviews which students from underrepresented groups self-selected to participate in. As this study involved human participants, approval from the university's Institutional Review Board was obtained.

Positionality

The research team for this study included a biracial graduate student, an undergraduate student, and a professor with a research emphasis in multicultural studies. The biracial graduate

student has reported experiencing microaggressions during their education in a CSD program. This graduate student has strong feelings about this topic, which may have influenced how the data were analyzed. To mitigate this potential bias, the data set was coded with an undergraduate research assistant. The undergraduate research assistant is a white female who was born and raised in the United States. She has experience in research surrounding the topics of bilingualism, multiculturalism, and diversity. The professor, a white female, reported having experienced microaggressions as a student and as faculty related to gender. The professor has mentored students from a range of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and have had many students report experiencing and witnessing microaggressions. The professor acknowledges that they have not personally experienced microaggressions similar to those reported by students but seek to understand the experiences of students from underrepresented backgrounds to better support and respond to student needs.

Phase I: Survey

Participants

All participants needed to meet the following criteria to participate in this phase of the study: age 18 or older and CSD students (undergraduate major or graduate student). Participants for this survey were recruited via email and class presentation to all CSD undergraduate majors and graduate students at one university. Two emails were sent to students reminding them to complete the survey. Survey responses were accepted over a two-week period.

A total of 276 undergraduate and graduate students in CSD were invited to participate in the survey. Phase I included 104 participants, a response rate of 38%. The 13 incomplete responses were excluded from data analysis. Therefore, survey data was analyzed from 91 respondents. Participant characteristics of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability,

language other than English at birth, and first-generation college students are displayed in Table 1. The low representation of students from underrepresented groups mirrors the overall demographics of the university and the profession. In order to lower the risk of identification for participants, more general terms were utilized in this report. For example, if a student identified as Hispanic/Latinx, their responses would be reported in the BIPOC category.

Survey

The survey for Phase I was adapted from the study conducted by Abdelaziz et al. (2021) and had a total of 14 questions. The focus of the survey was to identify microaggressions commonly experienced by students from underrepresented groups. The survey consisted of eleven demographic questions including self-reporting questions regarding age, gender, year of schooling, degree of study, race, ethnicity, and country of origin. Additional questions include whether respondents self-identify as non-traditional, LGBTQIA+ (including with which community they identify), international, or first-generation college students. Three additional questions asked participants to rate their sense of belonging in the program, describe any microaggressions they had experienced, and report their current mentoring experiences within the department.

Procedures

Students in the university's CSD department were invited to participate in a survey regarding diversity in culture, sexuality, religion, gender, and experiences to collect information directly from graduate and undergraduate students in CSD. The survey took 10-15 minutes to complete. After completing the survey, students that selected demographic variables from underrepresented groups were invited to participate in Phase II. Students interested in Phase II were provided with a separate Google Form link to keep their survey responses anonymous.

These students self-selected if they wished to discuss their experiences in a focus group or individual interview.

Phase II: Semi-Structured Interviews

Participants

All participants needed to meet the following criteria to participate in Phase II: age 18 or older, CSD students (undergraduate major or graduates), and self-identify as belonging to one or more of the defined underrepresented student groups. The underrepresented groups demographics included: LGBTQIA+, male, international, disability, non-native English speakers BIPOC and first-generation college students. A total of six students participated in individual interviews. Participant ID numbers will be utilized to refer to the specific participants to maintain confidentiality. Participant IDs include: S109, R604, P505, B307, M208, and G406. In a discussion about results, they/them/theirs will be used to refer to participants to help protect their identity.

Procedures

The results from Phase I informed the development of the semi-structured interview and focus group guides. Specific themes that appeared in the survey were explored in more depth in the interviews or focus groups. Focus groups and interviews provided better understanding of personal experiences and perceived barriers. At the end of the survey in Phase I, students who self-selected a demographic variable from the target underrepresented groups listed above were invited to participate in Phase II of the study: the focus group or interview. Participation was voluntary via the Google Form link and participants were allowed to remove themselves from the study at any time. All students were given the opportunity to choose between individual interviews and focus groups. All six participants selected individual interviews and only one

student expressed some interest in participating in a focus group but eventually selected to participate in an individual interview. Phase II participants completed an informed consent form to indicate their willingness to participate and understanding of the nature of the study. Students were reminded that they did not have to answer any triggering or uncomfortable questions and could leave the study at any time. The individuals facilitating the groups were encouraged to prompt a student if they would like to continue when the participant demonstrated any significant discomfort because of the conversation. All participants were asked about their interest in a referral for additional support after each interview. If the participant demonstrated excessive emotional distress, there were provisions made to walk them to the on-campus counseling service. No participants demonstrated emotional distress during the interview and denied the need for additional support post-interview. Each participant was compensated $30 for their participation in the individual interviews.

The length of the semi-structured individual interviews were typically 60 minutes. The interviews were conducted by the graduate student researcher. Some sample questions from the individual interviews included:

1. In the survey you completed prior to this interview, we asked about microaggressions you had experienced. Would you mind expanding on those experiences? If you cannot remember what you wrote, you can just discuss the microaggressions have you encountered at BYU generally and/or within CSD specifically?
2. Which resources, if any, were beneficial in dealing with the emotional impact resulting from microaggressions?
3. Do you recall rating your sense of belonging at BYU and within the department on the survey? What contributed to your rating?

Data Analysis

Open-ended responses from the microaggression question from Phase I were put into a spreadsheet and coded for the types of microaggressions. The interviews from Phase II were transcribed through a reliable AI transcription service via Zoom and then research assistants refined and completed the transcription process. Transcriptions were verified by a second researcher. Confidentiality was maintained in the final transcripts by using pseudonyms and redacting identifiers and details that had the potential to cause more than minimal risk of identification. Final transcripts were then sent out to each participant with the option to remove or change anything they did not feel comfortable sharing. Participants were given a week to respond with any changes from the transcript. Two participants requested additional redaction of information they felt could have been identifying. In order to analyze the two phases of data, three different types of analyses were used as described below.

Quantitative Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the demographic data. The number of microaggressions students reported experiencing were cross tabulated with the demographic variables to see if underrepresented students experienced higher rates of microaggressions. Responses from the rating question were also cross tabulated with demographic variables to examine mean ratings across demographic groups. In particular, the variables of gender, ethnicity, racial groups other than white, sexual orientation, first-generation college students, disability, and non-native English speakers were examined.

Mixed-Methods Analysis

A mixed-method analysis was utilized to analyze the microaggressions from both Phase I and Phase II data. Apriori codes from previous studies were utilized to code the types and basis

of microaggressions (Sue et al., 2007). Apriori codes included the three types of microaggressions: microinsult, microinvalidation, and microassault and were coded deductively. Reichertz (2014) claimed that a deductive analysis identifies "already known context of features, that is from a familiar rule… and seeks to find this general context in the data" (p. 127). In order to better understand of the prevalence of different types of microaggressions, these qualitative codes were quantified according to frequency.

Content Analysis

The transcript data from Phase II was analyzed qualitatively through a content analysis (Hsieh et al., 2005). A content analysis utilized inductive coding to allow general themes to emerge from the data without using apriori codes (Reichertz, 2014). Inductive coding uses an interactive process with the researchers to identify themes the data demonstrates. A graduate student and an undergraduate research assistant completed the thematic analysis. Transcripts were reviewed as initial categories were created. Coding followed an interactive process until categories and subcategories were finalized. Then, the transcripts were coded with the categories and subcategories via NVivo (QSR International, 2021) until the researchers agreed on the final themes/categories. A code book containing the final codes is available in Table 3.

Results

Quantitative Analysis

Quantitative data analysis from Phase I indicated that students from underrepresented groups typically experienced higher rates of microaggressions. These findings from Phase I data were cross tabulated to demographic variables and are reported in Table 2. Students who spoke a language other than English at birth reported the highest rates of experiencing a microaggression at 66.7%. LGBQTIA+ students were the only underrepresented group that reported experiencing

fewer microaggressions than their majority peers; however, the difference was only 1%. A wide range of students from the majority and underrepresented groups had reported witnessing a microaggression. Students from underrepresented groups also reported higher rates of having a mentor.

Belonging ratings were also cross tabulated with the demographic variables and are reported in Figure 1. Students from underrepresented groups typically rated their sense of belonging lower on both the university and department level. LGBTQIA+ students rated their sense of belonging lower than any other underrepresented group at a 5.2/10 in the department and a 7/10 at the university level. In open-ended responses about belonging, students from these underrepresented groups were more likely to discuss feeling isolated. Students from the following groups reported feeling isolated: male students, LGBTQIA+ students, students who spoke a language other than English at birth, and BIPOC students. For example, one male student said, “being one of the few guys in the program has been surprisingly isolating. I also don’t feel like my [personality] is quite like most in the program.” A BIPOC student mentioned “in [department name] I really feel isolated and even alienated. English is not my first language and not having grown up in the States, I miss a lot of culture.” Although no religious demographic questions were asked, there was a student who reported similar feelings of isolation related to not being part of the dominant religious community.

Mixed-Method Analysis

Experiences with microaggressions were analyzed with a mixed-method analysis. The frequency and examples of microaggressions from Phase I are reported in Table 3. Phase I survey participants who reported a microaggression only reported one microaggression in each of their responses. Survey participants reported microassaults more than any other type of

microaggression. Microaggressions from Phase II are reported in Table 4. Microassaults and microinvalidations were the highest reported types of microaggressions in Phase II. All six participants typically discussed multiple microaggressions they had experienced within their education.

The basis of the microaggression and type of microaggression were examined to understand if the type of microaggression differed across demographic variables. Figure 2 displays the type and basis of the microaggressions reported in Phase II. A student with a disability and students who discussed the LGBTQIA+ community reported only experiencing microinvalidations. Microinsults and microassaults were reported for both language and racially based microaggressions, but no microinvalidations were reported. Only one male student participated in Phase II, and he did not report any gender-based microaggressions.

Content Analysis

When examining microaggressions in the content analysis, participants occasionally mentioned the origin of the microaggression. The location and the source of the microaggression was coded if the participant mentioned them. Participants reported experiencing eight microaggressions inside of class, and nine outside of class. The number of microaggressions committed by faculty and peers were similar based on participants' reports. Eight microaggressions were reported to originate from peers, and nine were from faculty members.

In addition to the analysis of microaggressions, prevalent themes were identified across Phase II data. The data resulted in the emergence of two major themes: (1) belonging and (2) feedback. Within the first theme of belonging, there were three codes: facilitators, obstructors, and changes in belonging. In the second theme, feedback, there were two codes: macrointerventions and microinterventions. Table 5 depicts the themes, codes, and subcodes.

Theme 1: Belonging

The belonging theme attempted to capture what impacted students' sense of belonging. Categories within this theme include facilitators, obstructors, and changes in belonging.

Code 1: Facilitator

This category analyzed ways in which students felt their sense of belonging was aided. Participants primarily discussed resources and relationships as the two subcodes that increased their sense of belonging.

Subcode A: Resources. This subcode explored available resources that students found beneficial in increasing their sense of belonging. Two participants discussed one resource they found beneficial in facilitating their sense of belonging. The CSD department's Peer Mentoring program, which provided students from underrepresented groups with an individual mentor. For example, S109 said "that's basically when I was really involved in Peer Mentoring. And I started to feel like a lot more belonging."

Subcode B: Relationships. This subcode explored how relationships with faculty, peers, or family members impacted their sense of belonging in a positive way. All six participants from the individual interviews mentioned either faculty or peer relationships that increased their sense of belonging for a total of 23 different occasions. Regarding faculty relationships, one participant, P505, accounts a difficult time within the program. P505 said a faculty member provided comfort and said the following "he said you know; I am so sorry you're going through this. I know this is hard, and one of the things that he said… I know that you know it might be hard right now, but I promise you, like everything will come together in just like from the person that you are like people will see your light." M208 discussed how they met a fellow student at a first-generation college student club social. They recounted "we're not exactly the same but we

have a similar experience, like it was just nice to be willing to like talk to someone… she's someone who also thought she only got into [university name] because of my parents." Students often discussed how these relationships with faculty and peers helped provide support and love when they felt outcasted.

Code 2: Obstructor

"Obstructors" primarily focused on obstacles impacting a student's sense of belonging. All six individual interview participants discussed obstructors related to their underrepresented identity. Phase II data identified 17 different obstructors that students mentioned. For example, B307 said "because we're international we cannot work outside campus, and so I know a lot of people around that were working in clinics already and stuff which was also felt pretty like scary, because, like they were already in the world making connections and experience and like I had nothing my on resume to like say that I really do want this." Other examples of obstructors included a first-generation college student struggling to apply to graduate programs, being scared to discuss multicultural topics in class as a BIPOC student and feeling uncomfortable utilizing accommodations for a disability.

Two participants who discussed the LGBTQIA+ community in their interview explicitly mentioned feeling unsafe at the university on three separate occasions. Comments about safety were considered a subcode of the obstructor code. G406 stated "if we dare to defend anyone in public, then our degrees are at risk." R604 mentioned "everybody's out to get me, and I can't come out until I have my diploma." They discussed how feeling unsafe impacted their ability to be vocal about their identities.

Code 3: Changes in Belonging

Three participants discussed how overtime, their belonging increased or decreased throughout their time in the CSD major. Two students noted an increase in their belonging. For example, P505 said "do I feel like I belong here in the [department name]?' And first I would have been like I don't know; I feel like such an outsider. But now, if you ask me, like [student name], like, do you belong here at [university name]? I'd say, not only do I belong, but I know that [university name] needs me." One student discussed how they felt their belonging decreased after returning to in-person class following the COVID-19 pandemic. They reported the increased in-person interactions with peers resulted in an increased number of experienced microaggressions.

Theme 2: Feedback

Participants provided feedback on different types of interventions that currently existed, or they felt would be beneficial if they were instituted. Categories within this theme include macrointerventions and microinterventions.

Code 1: Macrointerventions

As defined earlier, macrointerventions are large-scaled interventions that are instituted. These include organizations, policies, and educational programs. Participants provided suggestions, and feedback on whether or not they felt specific macrointerventions were beneficial.

Subcode A: Suggestions. Two participants mentioned three different types of macrointerventions they felt would have been beneficial to helping mitigate the negative effects of microaggressions. One participant mentioned having a mentor, specifically a peer, would have been helpful in navigating the major. Participant G406 mentioned "I think giving really specific

training on microaggressions and ones that the faculty themselves are likely to use would be helpful." The participant continued to explain that instituting a microaggression training for faculty would provide comfort to students seeking someone to talk to after experiencing a microaggression. Lastly, a participant from the LGBTQIA+ community called for changes in university policies to be more overtly accepting of LGBTQIA+ students.

Subcode B: Effective. Two participants mentioned three different macrointerventions they found beneficial. G406 discussed how graduate students were required to complete a microaggression training in the first week of graduate school. They said, "I feel like the department, specifically the [department name] was facing the issue of microaggressions head on fairly well by acknowledging if they exist, um and trying to do training with us." Another student discussed how the community from the peer mentoring program, and the counseling services on-campus helped mitigate the negative effects of microaggressions.

Subcode C: Ineffective. Four students discussed three different macrointerventions they felt were not beneficial. G406 said "I wouldn't say there were any official resources that were useful." Two students mentioned the three-month waiting period to receive counseling services on-campus hindered their ability to receive help. One BIPOC participant discussed how they were aware of the multicultural student center but were unsure of the resources they provide. They stated "I just get the emails. I got them in undergrad at least. And so, I knew that they were a resource, but I never went to them."

Code 2: Microinterventions

Microinterventions occur on a small-scale level and can occur on an individual or person-to-person basis. Participants provided suggestions, and feedback on whether or not they felt specific microinterventions were beneficial.

Subcode A: Suggestions. Participants provided advice on different microinterventions they felt would be helpful for students from underrepresented groups. Four participants discussed microinterventions they wished were in place. Three students mentioned having faculty be explicit about accepting students from underrepresented groups. For example, R604 said "I've had quite a few professors that on the first day will be like very open about that and be like 'oh, if this applies to you, then please talk to me, work with me' and I think that would be a good example of like within [LGBTQIA+ identity] spaces." These participants discussed when faculty were explicit about their support, they felt more comfortable approaching them with difficult situations.

Subcode B: Effective. There were no students who discussed effective microinterventions that took place. They provided suggestions but did not mention any prevalent microinterventions that were beneficial.

Subcode C: Ineffective. Only one participant mentioned two ineffective microinterventions that are implemented. G406 recounted a time where a professor voiced an opinion in support of an underrepresented group identity. They said "I started to feel more comfortable with that faculty member and it was in the next day or two that she sent out an email essentially apologizing for the discussion she had. Some students had apparently reached out to her and told her how uncomfortable they were and felt like what she said was inappropriate."

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore the microaggressions that underrepresented students experience in CSD. Results from this study indicate that students from underrepresented groups experience a variety of types and bases of microaggressions at a higher frequency than their peers, which is consistent with a previous study conducted in CSD programs (Abdelaziz et

al., 2021). Participants from Phase II reported experiencing both microinsults and microassaults with racial or language-based microaggressions. They did not report experiencing any microinvalidations. Three key findings of the study will be further discussed including insights into hidden identities, the need for multiple interventions, and the benefit of relationships.

Hidden Identities

Participants who discussed LGBTQIA+ topics and a participant with a disability reported experiencing only microinvalidations. These two demographic variables can be considered hidden identities, as they may not be apparent just by an individual's outward appearance. The participants with these hidden identities reported that peers and faculty made comments that would often invalidate their experience as an underrepresented student. One example of a reported microinvalidation was that "LGTB+ relationships aren't 'real' or the same as heterosexual relationships."

Phase I and Phase II data are consistent in reporting that LGBTQIA+ students experience microinvalidations more than microassaults and microinsults. The reported lower incidence of LGBTQIA+ students experiencing a microaggression than their majority peers in Phase I could be attributed to the fact that students might not be as likely to recognize microinvalidations as microaggressions. This finding stands in contrast to racial and language groups who reported more microinsults and microassaults.

Participants with hidden identities also discussed the impact that faculty can have on their sense of belonging. When faculty were explicit about their support towards a certain group, they felt more comfortable approaching them with difficult situations. For example, R604 expressed, "if a professor on the first day says… if you have accommodations then I'll work with you, just email me. I'll make it really easy on my end versus like I sometimes worry that other professors,

if they haven't signified that, then like, oh, if I come up and be like. Oh, they're trying to get out of it… I feel like I justify like, oh, it's a real disability."

One Size Does Not Fit All

Many researchers and universities have tried to implement a variety of solutions to help students from underrepresented groups (Alfano et al., 2021; Alston, 2014; Kim & Egan, 2011). The comments from participants from this study suggest that there is no "one size fits all" solution that can be implemented to help mitigate the negative effects of microaggressions for all students. Participants appeared to have different perspectives on the benefits of macrointerventions the university had in place. For example, some participants reported the free on-campus counseling services were beneficial, while other students reported the three-month waiting period deterred them from receiving help when they needed it most. Other students mentioned they felt the faculty were tackling microaggressions head on, while other students called for further education and discussion of microaggressions for faculty members. The data suggests that students need a wide variety of resources in place so they can access the ones they find most beneficial.

Different students required different types of connection from professors and peers. Some students mentioned peers were the source of their support during their education, while others reported peers were the source of the microaggressions occurring. Faculty members were also cited as supportive and the source of the microaggression. Participants continually expressed their interest in having faculty or peer relationships that would have helped mitigate the negative effects of microaggressions. R604 said "I don't feel like I have any strong relationships with a faculty member yet, and cause some of them, I'm not sure yet right if I can do that." While another student, P505, noted "professors have such a great impact in my personal life."

Participants often cited their desire to increase their relationships with peers and professors to find better connection and a sense of belonging in the department.

The Benefit of Relationships

Although there may not be one solution for everyone, all the participants that were involved in the department's peer mentoring program mentioned that it was an effective macrointervention and increased their sense of belonging which is similar to the findings from previous studies (Alston, 2014; Kim & Egan, 2011; Michel, 2016). The department's Peer Mentoring program invites all students in the major and pre-major to participate in the program. They also send a specific invitation to students from underrepresented groups to participate. These students are assigned an individual mentor that is available to answer questions and be a source of support for the student. S109 said, "that's basically when I was really involved in peer mentoring, and I started to feel more like I belonged." The participants noted it was beneficial that the department had a peer mentoring program in place with faculty that were supportive of the recruitment and retainment of students from underrepresented groups. A participant discussed approaching professors involved in the peer mentoring program with a microaggression and feeling supported.

It is important to note that when coding for facilitators in belonging, participants talked about resources on two occasions, while they discussed relationships with peers and faculty on 23 different occasions. This suggests that connection and relationships with underrepresented students help increase their sense of belonging in the program and are beneficial in mitigating the negative effects of microaggressions. S109 explained, "A person like [faculty name] to talk to, because [they are] like one of like three, but [they are] the most like the one person I feel most

safe telling things to. So, then I just felt like I have a support system in place I didn't ever have at [university name] before."

Limitations

In this current study, while there was a relatively high survey response rate (38%) there were only a small number of students (22) from underrepresented groups who participated. Yet the participants' demographics were representative of the university. Only a small percentage of participants from underrepresented groups from Phase I expressed interest in participating in Phase II. Of the 22 students from Phase I who belonged to a targeted underrepresented group, only nine expressed their desire to participate in Phase II. Despite reaching out to all nine students on multiple occasions to participate in Phase II, only six students responded with their willingness to participate in the study. It is also important to note that students may not have felt comfortable participating in both Phase I and Phase II of the study as this can be an emotionally triggering topic to discuss. This study cannot comprehensively capture the experience of all underrepresented students. Data from this study was only collected at one university and may not be generalizable to other universities or outside of CSD programs.

There have been several factors in this study that may have resulted in the underreporting of microaggressions. Students may not have been as likely to recognize microinvalidations as microaggressions, which may have resulted in LGTBQIA+ students reporting a lower incidence of experiencing a microaggression in Phase I than their majority peers. In addition, some students have been intentionally ambiguous about the origin of the microaggression to reduce the risk of identification. Participants were also primed to discuss microaggressions that occurred within the department resulting in all reported microaggressions occurring on-campus and from

faculty and peers. Therefore, this study does not capture all of the locations and sources of microaggressions that students are experiencing.

The primary researcher is also a biracial student who is involved in the Peer Mentoring program. Therefore, they know a great number of the underrepresented students at the university where this study was conducted. The primary researcher personally knew a large percentage of participants, which may have influenced what the participants were willing to share during data collection.

Implications for Future Research

This study explored the microaggressions that underrepresented students are experiencing within CSD programs. Future research should attempt to collect data from a wide variety of demographic regions across different universities to attempt to capture underrepresented students' experiences across CSD programs. Although a great number of students felt comfortable participating in Phase I, students from underrepresented groups were not as willing to participate in Phase II. Future research can have the individual interviews or focus groups be led by different student groups to create an environment where students feel safe discussing their experiences. Future research aimed at better understanding how to combat microaggressions across different majors would help the college and university support underrepresented students.

Implications for Communication Sciences and Disorders Programs

Data from this study suggests that students need a mechanism in place to find connections with other students and faculty members. Participants in this study noted the Peer Mentoring program in place was beneficial in meeting, interacting with, and sharing experiences as an underrepresented student. CSD programs should attempt to find ways to connect students and faculty members, especially for these students from these underrepresented groups. When

students have a deeper sense of connection in the program, the data suggests their sense of belonging will also increase. Macrointerventions that are programmatic, similar to the department's Peer Mentoring program, may also require funding and administrative support.

CSD programs should also implement a wide variety of resources for students from underrepresented groups so students can utilize the resource they find most beneficial to them. Students also noted that when faculty were explicit about their support of specific underrepresented groups, they were more likely to approach the faculty member with an experience or a difficult situation. Participants in this study suggested reviewing parts of the professor's syllabus in-depth related to underrepresented students (e.g., university accommodations), voicing their desire to connect with students, and being vocal about their support of students. Given faculty do not always receive training on how to address microaggressions, professional development is needed to support faculty. This will allow them to receive training on how to talk about microaggressions and support students from underrepresented groups.

Conclusions

This study is the first study to examine the microaggressions underrepresented students are experiencing in CSD programs through both a survey and individual interviews. This mixed-methods study demonstrates that students from underrepresented groups are experiencing a wide variety of types and bases of microaggressions. Participants also revealed that relationships and resources were beneficial in increasing their sense of belonging at the university and helped mitigate the negative effects of microaggressions. Participants expressed the isolation they feel as an underrepresented student. P505 expressed, "I feel like the color of my skin speaks more than my actual identity." As programs attempt to recruit and retain students from

underrepresented groups in CSD, it is imperative that program leaders understand these students' experiences, implement resources, and find ways to connect students from underrepresented groups to faculty and peers.

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Tables

Table 1

Demographic Information of 91 Survey Respondents

Demographic Variables	**Number of Students**
Ethnicity	
BIPOC	8
White	83
Gender	
Male	8
Female	83
Sexual Orientation	
Straight/Heterosexual	82
LGBTQIA+	9
Disability	
Yes	11
No	80
Language Other than English at Birth	
English Only	85
Other Languages	6
First-Generation College Student	
Yes	10
No	81

Note. BIPOC: black, indigenous, people of color; LGBTQIA+: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual+

Table 2

Phase I Reported Microaggressions

Demographic Variables	Number of Students	Experienced a Microaggression	Witnessed a Microaggression	Has a Mentor
Ethnicity				
BIPOC	8	3 (37.5%)	3 (37.5%)	5 (62.5%)
White	83	18 (21.7%)	10 (12.0%)	32 (34.0%)
Sexual Orientation				
Straight/Heterosexual	82	19 (23.2%)	12 (14.6%)	34 (41.5%)
LGBTQIA+	9	2 (22.2%)	1 (11.1%)	3 (33.3%)
Gender				
Male	8	4 (50.0%)	3 (37.5%)	5 (62.5%)
Female	83	17 (20.5%)	10 (12.0%)	32 (38.6%)
Language Other than English at Birth				
English Only	85	17 (20.0%)	10 (11.7%)	35 (70.0%)
Other Languages	6	4 (66.7%)	3 (50.0%)	2 (33.3%)
Disability				
Yes	11	3 (27.3%)	1 (9.1%)	3 (27.2%)
No	80	18 (22.5%)	12 (15.0%)	34 (42.5%)
First-Generation College Student				
Yes	10	3 (30.0%)	1 (10.0%)	2 (20.0%)
No	81	18 (22.2%)	13 (16.0%)	35 (43.2%)

Note. BIPOC: black, indigenous, people of color; LGBTQIA+: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual+

Table 3

Phase I Types of Microaggressions

Type of Microaggression	# of Students	Example Quotes
Microassault	5	*"Being told I'm not modest enough for a [religious identity]"* *"Comments about being a woman and pursuing graduate work rather than being a mom."* *"In general, I've been faced with a lot of comments regarding my pursuit of a master's degree as a woman. They will make comments like 'why do you want to go get a master's degree? Won't you just stay home with your kids?' or 'why do you get your master's degree before your husband?" do you even like your husband, you spend a lot of time at school' or things along those lines."* *"I've had a couple professors tell me I should just change major because English is not my first language. Like, it makes sense, but it wasn't in a loving way, not in a dismissive and condescending way."*
Microinsult	2	*"Assuming that I'm threatening because I'm [religious identity]"* *"People will mention how my major is a good pick because I can still take care of my kids (which wouldn't be said to my husband)."*
Microinvalidation	2	*"I hear that LGTB+ relationships aren't 'real' or the same as heterosexual relationships."*
Witnessed	3	*"I've been shocked and horrified to witness them. I have friend who, as they were excited to apply to grad school, and were extremely hard working and accomplished, were told 'oh you'll make it in cause you're not white'.* *"I also witnessed microaggressions against transgender people as well, such as 'they're not really a woman', 'I just don't feel like using pronouns makes sense,' or 'they can't change their eternal gender.'"*

Table 4

Phase II Types of Microaggressions

Types of Microaggressions	# of Instances	Examples
Microassault	9	*"So you want to graduate in this? And I'm like, yeah, that's my major. And she was like 'well, I don't know'. Maybe you could go to like [country], you know, in [region], because they like speak [language]… 'you're never gonna be hired in the States'."* *"And so not many were actually walking outside, and a man yelled like [racial slur] at me."* *"You're gonna get in because of what you look like, so stop taking these opportunities from other people."* *"There's like this diversity quota that every university has to meet."* *"You're [race/ethnicity] so you're just gonna get right in."*
Microinsult	7	*"Yeah, do you want to be like a SLTA? Like, so you don't have to like directly work on the plans. And you know, just like you won't be able to do the actual job."* *"'Where are you from?' and I was like 'oh, I'm from [state name] actually.' And he was just like, oh no, but like, where?"* *"People would single me out, or assume that I wasn't from here, or um, when people would just assume, like my faith, my religious faith, and would assume, that English would be my second language"*
Microinvalidation	10	*"I hear that LGBT+ relationships aren't real or the same as heterosexual relationships."* *"I've noticed this in [professor name]'s class so far will often like, make comments about like OCD. I have mild [mental health diagnosis] and it was always like oh, I'm erasing something and making it look prettier because of my OCD."* *"He's always like oh, who has some good news to share and like. There's always some person's like oh, I got engaged like oh, I got married, you know, or like oftentimes where it's like. Oh, like a straight person can like feel comfortable, or like a straight from whatever, and call it can like, share that, and everybody's like yay. But if it's like oh, I started dating someone and it's like someone of the same gender or nonbinary, or whatever it's like you can't. You just can't even say that in the first place, right? Because there's like this, like weird feeling of repercussion or like people are trying to like, catch you."*

Note. OCD: Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, SLTA: Speech Language Technician Assistant

Table 5

Codebook

Theme	Code	Subcode
1. Belonging	I. Facilitator	
		A. Resources
		B. Relationships
	II. Obstructors	
		A. Safety
	III. Changes in Belonging	
2. Feedback		
	I. Macrointerventions	
		A. Suggestions
		B. Effective
		C. Ineffective
	II. Microinterventions	
		A. Suggestions
		B. Effective
		C. Ineffective

Figures

Figure 1

Ratings of Belonging Across Demographic Variables

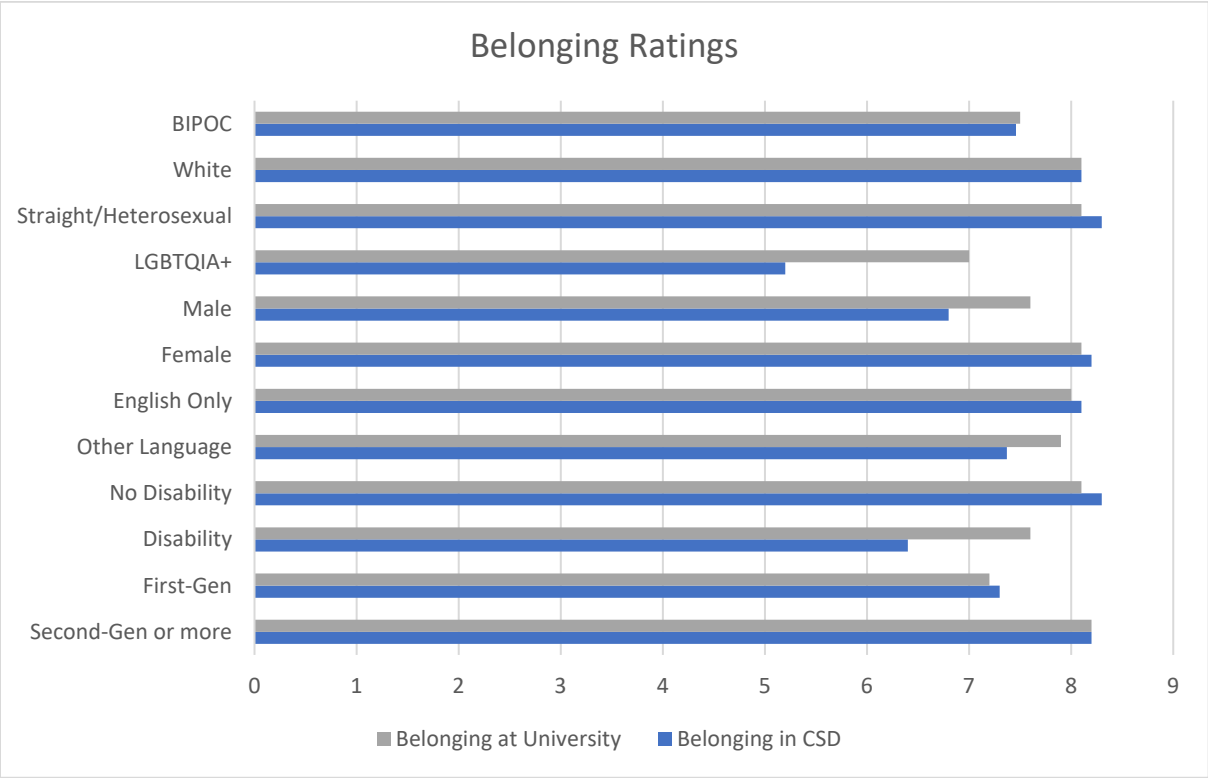
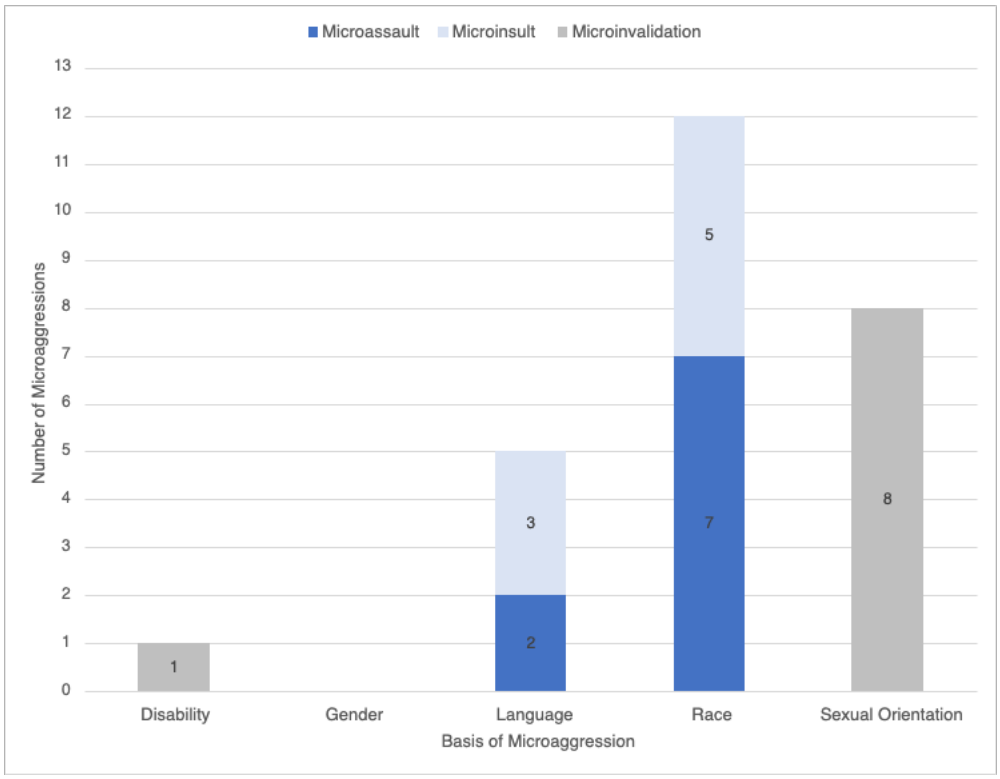


Figure 2

Phase II Patterns of Microaggressions



APPENDIX A

Annotated Bibliography

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Objective: This study captured main themes or microaggressions that underrepresented students in CSD commonly experience.

Methods: They administered a 19-item electronic survey to 155 underrepresented CSD students. They found that 64.51% had experienced a microaggression within their academic program. 155 self-identified underrepresented students completed the survey. A multistage qualitative thematic analysis was conducted with the data.

Relevance: Common themes included feelings of otherness, damaging generalizations, maltreatment from faculty, and maltreatment from peers. This study demonstrated that underrepresented CSD students experience symbolic violence from clients, peers, and faculty within the program. This study emphasized that further research is needed to explore the ramifications of microaggressions and ways to effectively reduce them.

Alfano, A. R., Medina, A. M., & Moore, S. (2021). Preparing culturally and linguistically diverse students to work with culturally and linguistically diverse populations: A program design and student outcomes study. *Teaching and Learning in Communication Sciences & Disorders, 5*(3), Article 2. https://doi.org/10.30707/TLCSD5.3.1649037688.612332

Objective: This study looked at how Florida International University (FIU) integrates multicultural education into their CSD program.

Methods: FIU structured the curriculum, infused bilingual and CLD topics, provided clinical education, and recruited diverse faculty in varying areas of expertise.

Relevance: Their program is primarily Hispanic and Latinx. There were no differences in Praxis scores for race, location, speaking another language or other languages spoken. CLD students remain underrepresented in CLD graduate programs and face difficulties being admitted into graduate programs and passing the praxis. This program removed the GRE and considered a student's skills and experiences (ex-bilingual language skills, of the personal, academic, and professional experiences described during interviews). It is beneficial to have a curriculum with a bilingual emphasis taught by culturally competent CLD faculty.

Alston, G. D. (2014). Cross-cultural mentoring relationships in higher education: A feminist grounded theory study. *Journal of College Student Development, 55*(1), 61-78. https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2014.0000

Objective: Explored the nature of cross-cultural mentoring relationships between Black female faculty members and their White female doctoral student mentees.

Methods: Data were collected using an open-ended protocol and individual interviews that were 60 to 90 minutes each. Participants also completed a critical incident questionnaire after the interview. A systematic inductive approach was used to analyze the data through memo-writing, multi-step coding, and theoretical sampling.

Relevance: Cross-cultural mentoring relationships have the potential to create space of learning about self and others and can result in personal and professional

transformation. Her data included a research diary, memo-writing, and multi-step coding.

Auguste, E. E., Cruise, K. R., & Jimenez, M. C. (2021). The effects of microaggressions on depression in young adults of color: Investigating the impact of traumatic event exposures and trauma reactions. *Journal of Traumatic Stress, 34*(5), 985-994. https://doi.org/10.1002/jts.22675

Objective: This study wanted to identify how microaggressions impacted an individual's mental health.

Methods: There were 137 participants, with a slight overrepresentation of women. To specifically identify and quantify the trauma associated with microaggressions, the study used the Racial and Ethnic Microaggression Scale (REMS) assessment. On the REMS, participants experienced an average of 14.36 (*SD = 7.59*) microaggressions over the past 6 months.

Relevance: They found that microaggressions demonstrated a significant association with depressive symptoms. The current results support that the cumulative load of experienced microaggressions over a discrete period might share direct associations with PTSS and self-reported depression.

Blume, A. W., Lovato, L. V., Thyken, B. N., & Denny, N. (2012). The relationship of microaggressions with alcohol use and anxiety among ethnic minority college students in a historically White institution. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 18*(1), 45-54. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0025457

Objective: The purpose of this study is to examine the mental health of college students of color attending predominately White universities.

Methods: This study was comprised of 684 college students aged 18-20 years old. Of the 864 participants, 176 students self-identified as a student of color. The study had students self-report the number of microaggressions they experienced in the past month, anxiety symptoms, alcohol consumption, consequences, and self-efficacy to cope with daily experiences.

Relevance: The study concluded that students of color experienced microaggressions at a much higher rate than European American students. Those who experienced a high number of microaggressions were at increased risks for higher anxiety and underage drinking. The combination of stress, anxiety, and poor alcohol consumption have been associated with poor academic performance, and even dropping out. This study is important in establishing the adverse effects that microaggressions can have on a college student's mental health and academic performance.

Dale, S. K., & Safren, S. A. (2020). Gender racial microaggressions associated with depression diagnosis among Black women living with HIV. *Journal of Urban Health, 97*(3), 377-386. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11524-020-00432-y

Objective: This study examined the effects of microaggressions in Black women living with HIV.

Methods: 100 Black women with HIV were given a survey, three scales, and a mini-interview to understand their experiences with racial microaggressions. The scales attempted to quantify their experiences with microaggressions and determine if there was a correlation with depressive symptoms and experience of microaggressions.

Relevance: They found correlations between current major depressive episodes and race-related discrimination, HIV-related discrimination, and gendered racial

microaggressions. This study demonstrates that experience of microaggressions can be contributory to depressive episodes.

Ellis, J. M., Powell, C. S., Demetriou, C. P., Huerta-Bapat, C., & Panter, A. T. (2019). Examining first-generation college student lived experiences with microaggressions and microaffirmations at a predominately White public research university. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 25*(2), 266–279. https://doi.org/10.1037/cdp0000198

Objective: Though there is extensive research on racial microaggressions, there is limited research on microaggressions experienced by first-generation college students.

Methods: Qualitative analysis was conducted from 297 open-ended survey responses from first generation college students in a predominately White university. They found that first-generation college students experienced a wide range of microaggressions from faculty, peers, and others. They experienced microaggressions in the form of microinsults, microassaults, and microinvalidations.

Relevance: This study demonstrates first-generation college students experience microaggressions from a wide array of individuals. They are an important underrepresented group to explore for this study.

Gartner, R. E. (2021). A new gender microaggressions taxonomy for undergraduate women on college campuses: A qualitative examination. *Violence Against Women, 27*(14), 2768-2790. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801220978804

Objective: This study looked at the microaggressions that women experienced on college campuses.

Methods: It was a five qualitative semi-structured focus group that contained 23 18–25-year-old undergraduate women. They conducted 5 focus groups in which they

transcribed and coded all of the data. Common themes that occurred were invisibility, intersectionality, caretaker and nurturer, women-dominated occupations, presumed incompetence, sexual objectification, and environmental invalidations.

Relevance: Although women is not an underrepresented group within the field of Speech-Language Pathology, this article explores gender-based microaggressions. This study will be contrasted with the information we receive on male CSD students.

Huynh, V. W. (2012). Ethnic microaggressions and the depressive and somatic symptoms of Latino and Asian American adolescents. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 41*(7), 831–846. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-012-9756-9

Objective: This study had three main purposes. The first goal of this study was to examine ethnic and gender differences and which adolescents are reactive to microaggressions. The second goal was to examine the association with depressive and somatic symptoms and microaggressions. The third goal was to examine the mechanisms by which microaggressions are harmful to youth's development.

Methods: The frequency and reactivity to microaggressions was assessed with the Ethnic Microaggressions (EMA). It consists of 12 items that were generated based on research conducted with Latino and Asian Americans. Additional scales assessed negative treatment, depressive symptoms, somatic symptoms, anger, stress, and social anxiety. A variety of analysis methods were used including ANOVA, bivariate correlations, to analyze the results of this study.

Relevance: This study concluded the frequency of microaggressions, across all scales, were associated with more depressive and somatic symptoms.

Kim, S., & Egan, T. (2011). Establishing a formal cross-cultural mentoring organization and program: A case study of International Student Mentor Association in a higher education context. *Journal of European Industrial Training, 35*(1), 89-105. https://doi.org/10.1108/03090591111095754

Objective: This was an exploratory case study with data collected from secondary sources which discussed the process of implementing a cross-cultural peer mentoring program.

Methods: The data was also collected from memories and experiences recalled by the first author. The purpose of their international student mentor association was to serve the needs of new international students and to foster mentoring relationships between students of different cultures. Their initial strategy was to have the students participate in group mentoring with a paired mentor. They had to modify this method because only half of the mentors showed up. Two mentors were paired up and assigned their mentee groups. The mentors were trained on mentoring, team building and leadership, and cross-cultural communication. Each mentor was given 10-25 mentees and pairing was made based off of the need for the mentees.

Relevance: Cross-cultural peer mentoring is one-way universities have attempted to increase diverse students' sense of belonging within programs. As universities try to combat microaggressions they can also be looking at ways to recruit and retain diverse students.

Locke, L. A., & Trolian, T. L. (2018). Microaggressions and social class identity in higher education and student affairs. *New Directions for Student Services, 2018*(162), 63-74. https://doi.org/10.1002/ss.20262

Objective: This article discusses the types of microaggressions that individuals face in educational settings across many groups.

Methods: Research has demonstrated that higher education norms are gendered, racialized, and classed. It also shows the discrimination, stereotypes, and covert forms of discrimination can impact their success in these educational settings. It explores the idea of classicism and how individuals from higher SES backgrounds are more likely to succeed in educational settings.

Relevance: As there is not a lot of research done on microaggressions within CSD, a general search for microaggressions was done in higher education. This study provides valuable insight on microaggressions that are occurring in various higher educational settings.

Melendez, K., & Thompson, A. (2020). Cultural competency: A call to action to address microaggression in preservice health education. *Health Education Journal, 79*(7), 851-859. https://doi.org/10.1177/0017896920921501

Objective: This article explores the need for more education on cultural competency and microaggressions in preservice health service courses.

Methods: The presence of microaggressions can create an unwelcoming environment for students and faculty. Students can feel marginalized to the extent they may drop a class, leave a program or department. The need to address microaggressions in a classroom will benefit the students in the program and help them in their future career in health service. The authors demonstrate how addressing microaggressions through a cultural competency lens can benefit a student's future career in health services.

Relevance: This is another study that will provide valuable insight on microaggressions that are occurring in various higher educational settings, especially within health education. There is current research on integrating microaggressions into the health educational system but there is a lack of incorporation in programs across the country. It is important this is addressed in an educational setting to ensure a welcome and inclusive environment in the classroom and in the field.

Michel, S. D. (2016). *Cross-cultural mentoring relationships between faculty and students in undergraduate athletic training programs* [Doctoral dissertation, Western Michigan University]. Western Michigan University ScholarWorks. https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2424&context=dissertations

Objective: This research article explored how White professors experienced a cross-cultural mentoring relationship with a Black student in Undergraduate Athletic Programs. To support the increasingly diversified student body, there is a need for the faculty to become more culturally aware and be competent, effective mentors. Black students at this university had a very limited chance of having a Black professor as a mentor when compared to a White professor. This article used the Cross Model of Cultural Competence by Terry Cross which describes cultural competency as a movement along a continuum based on respect and appreciation of individuals and cultures. The levels of this theory include cultural destructiveness, cultural incapacity, cultural blindness, cultural pre-competence, basic cultural competence, and cultural proficiency.

Methods: The study was an interpretive phenomenological design which explores how participants understand their personal and social worlds through intensive examination of people's lived experiences. The data was collected through in-depth

interviews and a reflection journal from each participant. 5 White faculty at different institutions were interviewed to gain insight on how they understood and experienced a cross-cultural mentoring relationship with a Black student. Four major themes emerged that comprised of mentoring is a journey, a foundation of pre-requisites is needed that include trust, the important of interpersonal connection, and understanding the mentee story.

Relevance: A similar analysis and data collection was conducted during this study. This study identified common themes of microaggressions instead of mentoring experiences.

Nadal, K. L., Griffin, K. E., Wong, Y., Hamit, S., & Rasmus, M. (2014). The impact of racial microaggressions on mental health: Counseling implications for clients of color. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 92*(1), 57-66. https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2014.0051

Objective: This study examined the relationship between microaggressions and mental health.

Methods: This study sample comprised 506 participants, including 375 women (74.1%) and 131 men (25.9%). Participants ranged in age from 18 to 66 years. Results from this large sample indicated that higher frequencies of racial microaggressions were significantly correlated with depressive symptoms and negative affect and negatively predicted participants' mental health. Differences in the types of microaggressions experienced by various racial groups and implications for counseling were included.

Relevance: It is important to understand the negative impacts that microaggressions can have on students. These underrepresented students included in this

study can have depressive symptoms or negative effects on their mental health as a result of the microaggressions.

Nadal, K. L., Wong, Y., Griffin, K. E., Davidoff, K., & Sriken, J. (2014). The adverse impact of racial microaggressions on college students' self-esteem. *Journal of College Student Development, 55*(5), 461-474. https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2014.0051

Objective: This study examined the relationship between microaggressions and self-esteem with college aged students.

Method: 225 undergraduate students were included in this study. White students were included in this sample because previous research indicates they do experience microaggressions, just less frequently than students of color. The participants completed the demographic questionnaire, racial and ethnic microaggressions scale (REMS), and Rosenburg self-esteem scale (SES). A correlation analysis was conducted with the average REMS and SES scores. Results of the study concluded there was a significant negative correlation between REMS and SES scores. An ANOVA was conducted to determine if REMS scores differed across racial groups. A significant correlation was found between White and Black, White, and Asian, White and Latinx participants. This study concluded that Black, Latinx, and Multiracial participants experienced significantly more microaggressions when compared to White participants.

Relevance: This study demonstrates the negative effects that microaggressions can have on individuals. It also demonstrated that microaggressions were more prevalent across racial groups.

Newkirk-Turner, B. L., & Hudson, T. K. (2021). Doing our work: Addressing racially based conflict in communication sciences and disorders programs. *Teaching and Learning in*

Communication Sciences & Disorders, 5(3), Article 10. https://doi.org/10.30707/TLCSD5.3.1649037688.74434

Objective: This article explores how the Historically Black University (HBU) in Mississippi has addressed racial situations in their program.

Methods: Racially based conflicts and attempts to solve them were explored in this article. One conflict was a Facebook post made by a white student which was directed towards a group of BIPOC students who attended a march in the capital city. They connected BIPOC students with counseling resources, held opportunities for open and honest conversations, implemented seating charts, and addressed the issue. They also implemented a Campus Scavenger hunt where students were required to learn about the historical designation of the campus. Groups for the scavenger hunt were randomly assigned and encouraged the pairing of classmates that usually do not communicate with one another.

Relevance: It is important to commit to antiracism, foster trust and create a welcoming environment for all students, align actions with core values, move beyond silence, name it, and consider the role of social media in racially based conflict. Racially based conflicts should not be ignored and must be addressed. This is one method that higher educational institutions have taken to improve the experiences of underrepresented students.

Sue, D. W., Capodilupo, C. M., Torino, G. C., Bucceri, J. M., Holder, A., Nadal, K. L., & Esquilin, M. (2007). Racial microaggressions in everyday life: Implications for clinical practice. *American Psychologist, 62*(4), 271-286. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.62.4.271

Objective: This article talks about how microaggressions can impact someone's ability to treat someone clinically. It differentiates microaggressions, microassaults, microinsults, and microinvalidation.

Methods: In psychology, the strength of a therapeutic alliance between therapist and patient can be weakened or terminated when clients see prejudice or biases in their therapist. The suggestions and advice given to patients needs to be culturally sensitive. For example, if an Asian American client talks about feeling overwhelmed and stressed due to high family responsibilities, a therapist may feel inclined to encourage them to speak up to their family members. In this scenario, the therapist is invalidating their strong cultural respect for authority.

Relevance: Sue conducts a wide range of research on the phenomenon of microaggressions. This article explores how a lack of understanding of microaggressions can impact a student clinically.

Woodford, M. R., Han, Y., Craig, S., Lim, C., & Matney, M. M. (2014). Discrimination and mental health among sexual minority college students: The type and form of discrimination does matter. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Mental Health, 18*(2), 142-163. https://doi.org/10.1080/19359705.2013.833882

Objective: This study explored subtle discrimination towards LBTQIA+ students, including microaggressions.

Methods: This study examined the relationship between sexual orientation, experiencing and witnessing hostility, incivility, depression and anxiety symptoms, and heterosexist harassment. They found a strong correlation between experience of

microaggressions and higher rates of reported moderate/high anxiety and depressive symptoms in LGBTQIA+ students.

Relevance: This study demonstrates that LGBTQIA+ students experience microaggressions based on their sexual orientation or presentation and are at higher risk of depression and anxiety.

APPENDIX B

Consent/Institutional Review Board Approval Letter

Memorandum

To: Connie Summers
Department: BYU - EDUC - Communications Disorders
From: Sandee Aina, MPA, HRPP Associate Director
Wayne Larsen, MAcc, IRB Administrator
Bob Ridge, Ph.D., IRB Chair
Date: July 19, 2022
IRB#: IRB2022-252
Title: Microaggressions Experienced by Underrepresented Students in Communication Sciences and Disorders

Brigham Young University's IRB has approved the research study referenced in the subject heading as expedited level, categories 6 and 7. This study does not require an annual continuing review. Each year near the anniversary of the approval date, you will receive an email reminding you of your obligations as a researcher. The email will also request the status of the study. You will receive this email each year until you close the study.

The IRB may re-evaluate its continuing review decision for this decision depending on the type of change(s) proposed in an amendment (e.g., protocol change that increases subject risk), or as an outcome of the IRB's review of adverse events or problems.

The study is approved as of 07/19/2022. Please reference your assigned IRB identification number in any correspondence with the IRB.

Continued approval is conditional upon your compliance with the following requirements:

1. A copy of the approved informed consent statement and associated recruiting documents (if applicable) can be accessed in iRIS. No other consent statement should be used. Each research subject must be provided with a copy or a way to access the consent statement.
2. Any modifications to the approved protocol must be submitted, reviewed, and approved by the IRB before modifications are incorporated in the study.
3. All recruiting tools must be submitted and approved by the IRB prior to use.
4. In addition, serious adverse events must be reported to the IRB immediately, with a written report by the PI within 24 hours of the PI's becoming aware of the event. Serious adverse events are (1) death of a research participant; or (2) serious injury to a research participant.
5. All other non-serious unanticipated problems should be reported to the IRB within 2 weeks of the first awareness of the problem by the PI. Prompt reporting is important, as unanticipated problems often require some modification of study procedures, protocols, and/or informed consent processes. Such modifications require the review and approval of the IRB.

Instructions to access approved documents, submit modifications, report complaints and adverse events can be found on the IRB website under iRIS guidance: https://orca.byu.edu/IRB/Articulate/Study_Management/story.html.

APPENDIX C

Survey

Introduction:

In an effort to best serve our students and provide an inclusive environment within the department of Communication Disorders, we are gathering information for a thesis project about the experience of underrepresented students in Communication Disorders at BYU. All information provided in this survey is anonymous. There will be an opportunity at the end of the survey to participate in Phase II of the study and $15 cash and food will be provided as compensation for participation.

This survey takes approximately 10 minutes. Click the "next" button to get started! By clicking this survey, you are consenting to Phase I of this study, an anonymous survey.

Q1: I identify my ethnicity as (response optional; choose all that apply)

- Hispanic or Latino
- Black or African American
- White
- Native American or American Indian
- Asian
- Pacific Islander
- Other (Please specify)
- Prefer not to answer

Q2: I identify my gender as (response optional; choose all that apply)

- Man
- Woman

- Trans man
- Trans woman
- Androgyne
- Questioning or unsure
- Demigender
- Genderqueer or Gender fluid
- Agender
- Additional gender category/identity (please specify)
- Prefer not to answer

Q3: I identify my sexual orientation as (response optional; choose all that apply)

- Asexual
- Bisexual
- Gay
- Straight (heterosexual)
- Lesbian
- Pan sexual
- Queer
- Questioning or unsure
- Same gender loving
- An identity not listed (please specify)
- Prefer not to answer

Q4: Do you consider yourself to have a disability (response optional):

- Yes

- No
- Prefer not to answer

Q5: What type of disability do you consider yourself to have

- ADD/ADHD
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Emotional disabilities
- Learning disabilities
- Physical disabilities
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Other
- Prefer not to answer

Q6: What languages do you speak?

- English
- Spanish
- Portuguese
- French
- Mandarin
- Arabic
- Japanese
- Russian
- Korean
- German
- Italian

- Other (please specify)

Q7: Which languages have you spoken since birth?

- English
- Spanish
- Portuguese
- French
- Mandarin
- Arabic
- Japanese
- Russian
- Korean
- German
- Italian
- Other (please specify)

Q8: Do you consider yourself a first-generation college student?

- Yes
- No
- Other

Q9: How would you characterize the place you grew up?

- Rural
- Urban
- Suburban
- Other

Q10: Please select the degree to which you agree or disagree to the following statements:

- I view myself as a minority within the COMD field
- Agree, somewhat agree, neutral, somewhat disagree, disagree
- I view myself as a minority within society
- Agree, somewhat agree, neutral, somewhat disagree, disagree

Q11: What is your Communication Disorder enrollment status?

- Another major besides Communication Disorders
- Pre-major in Communication Disorders
- Accepted into the Communication Disorders program
- COMD Graduate student
- Undecided

Q12: Rate how much you feel you belong at BYU and in the Department of Communication Disorders (0- I do not feel like I belong, 10- I really feel like I belong)

- Belonging at BYU
    - Scale of 1-10
- Belonging in COMD
    - Scale of 1-10

Q13: Please explain what contributed to your rating of Belonging

Q14: A microaggression is defined as experiencing a statement, action, or incident regarded as instance of indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against a member or members of a marginalized group. Have you experienced/witnessed a microaggression?

- Yes
- No

- I don’t know
- Prefer not to answer

Q15: Please describe the microaggressions you have experienced or witnessed

Q16: Do you have someone within your program that you view as a mentor?

- Yes
- No
- I don’t know
- I prefer not to answer

Q17: In 3-5 sentences, what qualities makes this person a good mentor for you?

Q18: Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences in COMD (such as challenge barriers, resources that helped you, etc)?

- Yes
- No

Q19: Please describe your experiences in COMD (such as challenge barriers, resources that helped you, etc).

Phase II Invitation: We want to talk to students about their experiences within the department. If you are willing, your participation would require approximately an hour and you would be compensated with $15 cash and food. Please remember your responses to this survey are completely anonymous, but if you are willing to participate in a focus group/interview, please click on this Google form link to leave your contact information.

You will be contacted by Samantha Berryhill, a graduate student, who will provide more details about your potential participation. You can decide whether or not you want to participate at that time after being given more information.

APPENDIX D

Individual Interview Script and Questions

First off, I just wanted to thank you for being willing to talk about your experience within CSD. I want to remind you that everything you talk about in this interview will be completely confidential. The only individuals with access to the transcripts will be me, Dr. Summers, and an undergraduate research assistant. However, we wanted to remind you if you about a faculty member or student that was present during an event, one of these individuals may be able to identify you. After the interview, we will redact all your identifying information from a transcript of this interview. We will also send the transcript to you, and you will be given the opportunity to remove anything you feel uncomfortable including in the study. You can modify the transcript in any way you want so it's less identifiable. I will be recording this session via Zoom but only with audio.

I acknowledge that what we are discussing today can be emotionally triggering. If you feel uncomfortable or do not wish to answer a question, please let me know. You are not obligated to respond to every question asked. You can also request to discontinue the interview at any point. We will reach out to you after the interview to see if you would like to seek out additional support services (ex. CAPS) after your participation. Do you have any questions for me before we get started?

- In the survey you completed prior to this interview, we asked about microaggressions you had experienced. Would you mind expanding on those experiences? If you cannot remember what you wrote, you can just discuss the microaggressions you have encountered at BYU generally and/or within CSD specifically?

    - Did you feel supported by faculty or peers when you encountered those microaggressions? If so, how?
    - Are there any other experiences you would like to share?
- Which resources, if any, were beneficial in dealing with the emotional impact resulting from microaggressions?
    - If you the result was not satisfactory to you, what do you feel could have been done?
- What do you think belonging means to you?
- Do you recall rating your sense of belonging at BYU and within the department on the survey? What contributed to your rating?