Empirical-Mixed Methods

Investigating Ostracism and Racial Microaggressions Toward Afro-Brazilians

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Abstract

We examined two forms of social exclusion toward Afro-Brazilians commonly found in the United States, ostracism and racial microaggressions. We utilized a mixed-methods (quantitative-experimental and qualitative) approach to investigate ostracism and a qualitative focus group approach to study racial microaggressions. In Study 1 ($N = 29$), we experimentally investigated ostracism through a recall paradigm in which participants wrote about being either included or ostracized. An independent t test showed that participants in the ostracized condition reported significantly worse psychological outcomes than those in the included condition ($p < .001$). We coded participants' written responses by whether they included attributions of racial bias by experimental condition. A Pearson chi-square analysis ($p = .017$) revealed that racial bias was mentioned in 75% of the cases in the ostracized condition. Studies 2a and 2b ($Ns = 6$ and 8, respectively)

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consisted of two focus groups in different regions of Brazil that asked participants about their experiences with racial microaggressions. We found similarities to previous microaggression categories identified in the United States, extending our understanding of how microaggressions evoke feelings of social exclusion, which also occur when someone is ostracized.

Keywords

ostracism, racial microaggressions, social exclusion, Afro-Brazilians

People have a basic psychological need to belong: to forge regular, quality social relationships with others (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). When people experience *social exclusion*—any type of negative interpersonal experience that makes them feel isolated physically or emotionally from others—their need for belonging is threatened (Riva & Eck, 2016; Smart Richman & Leary, 2009). One type of social exclusion is ostracism, which is defined as being excluded and ignored (K. D. Williams, 2009). Ostracism has various negative psychological outcomes on the target, such as emotional pain, anger, and threats to psychological needs (i.e., belonging, self-esteem, control, and meaningful existence; Wesselmann et al., 2016). Furthermore, chronic ostracism relates to generalized depression, alienation, helplessness, and meaninglessness (Riva, Montali, Wirth, Curioni, & Williams, 2017). These negative consequences may occur especially among stigmatized individuals, such as members of racial and ethnic groups, who are more likely to be socially excluded than nonstigmatized individuals (Kurzban & Leary, 2001).

Most experimental research on the psychological impact of ostracism has been conducted in the United States and in Western Europe (Hartgerink, van Beest, Wicherts, & Williams, 2015). It is important to study ostracism and other forms of social exclusion beyond these regions, such as Brazil, in order to understand them fully (Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010). We conducted a literature search in both PsychINFO and Google Scholar, and only found one experimental study of ostracism utilizing a Brazilian sample. Donate et al. (2017) tested an updated experimental paradigm via virtual chat room by either ostracizing (i.e., participants received 15% of the messages from two confederates) or including participants (i.e., they received 33% of the messages from two confederates) to supplement extant virtual exclusion paradigms (e.g., those utilizing Cyberball virtual game interactions; K. D. Williams, 2009). Donate et al. (2017) found that ostracized participants reported lower levels of belonging, self-esteem, meaningful existence, and control, as well as greater anger and pain compared with included participants,

replicating the findings from 120 previous studies using different paradigms in other countries (Hartgerink et al., 2015).

Social Exclusion and Race

Donate et al.'s (2017) study was an important first step in increasing the generalizability of studying ostracism experimentally. However, Donate et al. (2017) had a female-only sample of psychology students, used a highly controlled experimental procedure, and did not probe aspects of ostracism that may be unique to the Brazilian context, such as how the social dynamics of race may be related to participants' experiences with ostracism in their real lives that may cause psychological harm. Thus, our first goal is to use a reliving paradigm in which Afro-Brazilian participants are asked to recall a real-life event in which they are either ostracized or included (experimental manipulation); such a paradigm is often used in the ostracism research literature (see Wesselmann & Williams, 2017), providing a balance between internal and ecological validity.

Humans pay attention to their immediate surroundings, sensitive to the smallest hint (verbal or nonverbal) that others may devalue or otherwise exclude them (Kerr & Levine, 2008; Pickett & Gardner, 2005). Researchers (e.g., Kerr & Levine, 2008; Smart Richman & Leary, 2009) have argued that many instances of social exclusion are subtle, ambiguous, and sometimes unintentional. Ostracism may become racialized when individuals perceive being excluded because of their race (Goodwin, Williams, & Carter-Sowell, 2010).

Another form of social exclusion is *discrimination* (Smart Richman & Leary, 2009). Racial discrimination is generally considered a behavioral expression rooted in one's biases against members of a specific racial group (whereas the cognitive elements are considered *stereotypes* and the affective elements are considered *prejudice*; these three components together constitute the broader term *racism*; Nelson, 2006). There are various ways that people of color can experience racial discrimination. In addition to blatant acts of racial discrimination, which are illegal in educational and work settings in the United States (Paludi, Paludi, & DeSouza, 2011) and are considered a crime rather than just a misdemeanor in Brazil (Machado, Santos, & Ferreira, 2013), members of racial groups often experience subtle expressions of racism called *microaggressions*. Racial microaggressions are defined as verbal, behavioral, or environmental slights or insults, often automatic, which communicate hostile, derogatory racial attitudes (Sue et al., 2007). Research suggests that racial microaggressions are widespread; Donovan, Galban, Grace, Bennett, and Felicié (2013) found that in

a sample of U.S. Black female undergraduates, 96% reported experiencing some type of racial microaggression at least a few times a year. Hence, our second goal is to examine racial microaggressions as a form of subtle social exclusion in Brazil.

Using focus group methods, Sue et al. (2007) identified three types of racial microaggressions in the United States: *microassaults, microinsults*, and *microinvalidations*. *Microassaults* are the most explicit and intentional of the three, including verbal (e.g., expressing racial epithets) or nonverbal (e.g., purposely avoiding individuals due to their race/ethnicity) occurrences. *Microinsults* are subtle, rude, and insensitive verbal communication that implicitly devalues an individual's race/ethnicity. *Microinvalidations* represent verbal exchanges that implicitly invalidate, negate, and exclude the experiences of racial/ethnic minority members. Nadal (2011) expanded on the above taxonomy, identifying six categories of racial microaggressions:

1. *Assumptions of inferiority* (e.g., assuming someone is poor or have a lower cognitive ability because of one's race).
2. *Second-class citizen and assumptions of criminality* (e.g., physically avoiding someone or showing signs of fear because of one's race).
3. *Microinvalidations* (e.g., claiming that people do not experience racism anymore).
4. *Exoticization/assumptions of similarity* (e.g., objectifying a person based on racial traits or assuming that all racial minority members look alike).
5. *Environmental microaggressions* (e.g., negative media portrayals of one's race).
6. *Workplace/school microaggressions* (e.g., being treated differently at school or work because of one's race).

Each of these microaggression categories correlates with recipients' perceptions of experiencing racial prejudice in their daily lives.

Sue et al.'s (2007) conceptualization of racial microaggressions (i.e., *microassaults, microinsults*, and *microinvalidations*) has been criticized for not being sufficiently clear (Lilienfeld, 2017). First, *microassaults* resemble blatant racism because, as Sue et al. (2007) pointed out, the perpetrator seems to be aware and deliberate about such acts. Hence, *microassaults* do not fit Sue et al.'s original definition of racial microaggression. A recent review of racial microaggression studies showed that most researchers focused only on *microinsults* and *microinvalidations* (Wong, Derthick, David, Saw, & Okazaki, 2014). Second, Sue et al.'s (2007) taxonomy does

not seem to cover all aspects of racial microaggressions; in fact, others (e.g., Nadal, 2011) have already expanded on Sue et al.'s (2007) taxonomy. Future research will likely continue to broaden Sue et al.'s original work by identifying new microaggression categories. Third, it is not clear whether there are overarching categories common across different groups of people of color or across such groups in the Americas and beyond (Wong et al., 2014); for example, how are microaggression experiences of African Americans in the United States similar or different from African descendants in the Caribbean and Latin America? Moreover, Lau and Williams (2010) and Lilienfeld (2017) criticized Sue et al. (2007) for using purposive sampling to select only people of color who agreed that racism and discrimination were a problem and had personally experienced or witnessed racism (e.g., Sue, Capodilupo, & Holder, 2008), creating demand characteristics that might predispose participants of color to interpret any innocuous interactions with Whites as being microaggressive in nature. Lastly, most of the studies on the ill consequences of microaggressions are descriptive or correlational, with few experimental studies (Lilienfeld, 2017).

At any rate, Sue et al.'s work (2007) provided an impetus to study the ill consequences of racial microaggressions, which include hurt feelings, frustration, anger, rage, alienation, and powerlessness that can last from days to years (e.g., Sue, 2010; Sue et al., 2008). The effects of subtle discrimination, such as racial microaggressions, may be worse than the overt type due to the greater frequency, accumulating effects, and ambiguity of the former compared with the latter (Yoo, Steger, & Lee, 2010). In fact, Jones, Peddie, Gilrane, King, and Gray's (2016) meta-analytic study revealed that the effect sizes for subtle discrimination were not statistically different from those for overt discrimination across all psychological/physical health and work-related variables investigated. Jones et al. (2016) also reported that "across all correlate domains, effect sizes for subtle discrimination were larger in absolute magnitude relative to those of overt discrimination" (p. 1605). Jones et al. (2016) concluded that the ambiguous nature of subtle discrimination impairs cognitive performance, occurs in higher frequency, and is more chronic than overt discrimination. However, the majority of U.S. society often overlooks these negative consequences and thinks that microaggressions are innocuous due to their subtle and ambiguous nature (e.g., DeSouza, Wesselmann, & Ispas, 2017; Schneider, Wesselmann, & DeSouza, 2017). Brazilians may also think that racial microaggressions are inconsequential, as this phenomenon has not been discussed as much there as it has in the United States. Moreover, we conducted a literature search in both PsychINFO and Google Scholar and did not find any published studies investigating racial microaggressions in Brazil.

Racial Exclusion: The Brazilian Perspective

We chose to study two forms of social exclusion, ostracism and racial micro-aggression, because subtlety is at their core. Despite such subtlety, both have negative psychological consequences on recipients. We selected Brazil because it is the largest and most populous Latin American country, with 204 million inhabitants (World Population Review, 2019). Yet there is a dearth of psychological studies on ostracism and racial microaggression utilizing Brazilian samples. Brazil also has historical similarities with the United States. For instance, both countries were colonized by European settlers who displaced the indigenous populations and both countries brought African slaves to the Americas, resulting in large segments of African descendants (Telles, 2004). However, there are significant ideological and social policy differences concerning racial categorizations between these two countries, which should enlighten our understanding of social exclusion based on race. On one hand, the United States followed a segregationist route of exclusion utilizing a Mendelian version of eugenics in which "one drop" of African blood made one Black (Telles, 2004). For example, the instructions to enu-merators for the U.S. Bureau of the Census (1930) stated in part: "A person of mixed white and Negro blood should be returned as a Negro, no matter how small the percentage of Negro blood. Both black and mulatto persons are to be returned as Negroes, without distinction" (p. 26). On the other hand, Brazil followed a neo-Lamarckian version of eugenics that focused on improving its genetic stock quickly through *whitening* (i.e., miscegenation or mixing of Whites with Blacks), including subsidizing European immigration to whiten the Brazilian gene pool (Telles, 2004). Telles (2004) stated that miscegenation in Brazil resulted in a racial categorization that has been fluid and based on skin tone, creating the myth of a harmonious racial democracy that lacked the segregationist and blatantly discriminatory U.S. approach, while maintaining a White ideology.

Concerning how Brazilians describe themselves racially, the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatísticas or Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (1976, 1998, 2008) conducted three national surveys on this topic. The findings showed a variety of "racial" terms that were largely dependent on skin tone. In fact, the Brazilian censuses have used color rather than racial origins to classify people. Recently, J. M. Chen, de Paula Couto, Sacco, and Dunham (2017) examined differences in the United States and Brazil regard-ing racial categorization across three experiments. Overall, J. M. Chen et al. (2017) found that Brazilians relied more on skin tone to categorize individu-als' race than U.S. respondents who favored parents' racial origins. How Brazilians perceive themselves racially is important because 51% of the

Brazilian population is of African origin, including *pretos* (Portuguese for dark-skinned Blacks) and *pardos* (a Portuguese term that means light-skinned Blacks; Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatísticas, 2010). Since Brazil's redemocratization in the mid 1980s, changes have been made in how Brazil counts its people. Both *pretos* and *pardos* are now pooled under the category *Negro*, because both groups experience racial discrimination based on Afrocentric physical features (Schucman, 2010). Only since the mid-1990s has Brazil seriously recognized the near total exclusion of Afro-Brazilians from economic and political power (Telles, 2004). Telles (2004) reported that the most important initiative to fight racial inequalities has been the implementation of affirmative action in Brazilian universities.

Until recently, Afro-Brazilians were less likely to secure one of the highly competitive slots in the free and generally high-quality federal Brazilian universities, which aggravated income inequality and reduced social mobility among marginalized students (Telles, 2004). In August 2012, the Brazilian federal government instituted, for all of Brazil's federal universities, an affirmative action program called the "Quota Law" ("Law No. 12.711," 2012), which reserves at least 50% of all slots for students who have attended entirely public high schools. Of these, at least half should go to students from low-income background (about US$503 a month per household). The law reserves a minimum percentage of vacancies for students who self-identify as Afro-Brazilian or indigenous, according to their representation in each state, as well as people with disabilities. In sum, access to higher education in Brazil is less unequal now. However, a national debate over quotas has emerged (e.g., claims that such law denies the principle of merit). Most of the opposition is from the middle class and the media, especially the major newspapers and news magazines (Telles & Paixão, 2013).

The Current Research

Brazil is not a racial democracy as it often claimed to be. Race relations in Brazil are characterized by exclusion, not inclusion, privileging Whites who hold a disproportionate share of wealth and power than Blacks (Telles, 2004). In fact, Brazil used miscegenation to maintain a racist ideology in which White is better (Nobles, 2000). Racial exclusion at the societal level likely has negative psychological outcomes for Afro-Brazilians. Furthermore, societal exclusion likely leads to interpersonal exclusion for these individuals. Thus, we conducted three studies to shed light on how ostracism and racial microaggressions affect the mental health of Afro-Brazilians. Study 1 consisted of a mixed-methods (quantitative-experimental and qualitative) approach to study ostracism in a region of Brazil that

was predominantly colonized by Germans and Italians. Specifically, we used a reliving paradigm by asking Afro-Brazilian participants to recall a real-life event in which they were either ostracized or included (experimental manipulation) and then write about it. Such a paradigm is frequently used in ostracism research, striking a balance of internal and ecological validity, and it allows participants to recall a specific event in their past that happened outside of a laboratory manipulation (Pickett & Gardner, 2005). Furthermore, it provides researchers the opportunity to code responses via qualitative methods to investigate important nuances that may be conceptually meaningful while avoiding potential response biases if researchers provided participants with explicit instructions about what type of event to recall (Wesselmann, Williams, & Nida, 2017).

We formulated the following hypothesis: We expected that participants who recalled an ostracism event would report experiencing more negative psychological effects than those who recalled an inclusion event. We also coded and analyzed the written responses to investigate whether participants who recalled an ostracism event would mention race or Afro-Brazilian culture in their narrative. This exploratory analysis would shed light on whether Afro-Brazilian participants in the ostracized condition would attribute race-related factors for their social exclusion.

In Studies 2a and 2b, we used a focus group (qualitative) approach to study racial microaggression across two different regions of Brazil. We formulated the following research question: Would the content analyses of the two focus group transcripts show similarities to racial microaggression categories identified by Nadal (2011) in the United States?

Study 1

Method

Participants. The sample consisted of adults unaffiliated with a local university in Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul (RS), Brazil, where the study took place. Porto Alegre has a population of almost 1.5 million inhabitants and is predominantly White (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatísticas, 2010). The sample consisted of 29 Afro-Brazilians (25 self-reported to be preto and four self-reported to be *pardo*) from Porto Alegre, RS, in southern Brazil. The average age was 37.59 (*SD* = 12.06), ranging from 19 to 61 years; 20 (69%) were women and nine (31%) were men. Concerning the sample's educational level, 9 (31%) had completed high school, 18 were college graduates (62%), and 2 (7%) had a postgraduate education (e.g., master's).

Experimental tasks. We conducted a mixed-methods experiment with one between-participants independent variable (two levels: ostracism vs. inclusion). The ostracism condition consisted of the following prompt: "Think of a specific event in which you were socially excluded (ostracized). It must be an event in which you were clearly ignored. Then, write a few sentences about it." The included condition consisted of the following prompt: "Think of a specific event in which you were socially included. It must be an event in which you were clearly accepted. Then, write a few sentences about it." Researchers using this paradigm have found downstream effects comparable to studies using live ostracism manipulations (e.g., Pickett, Gardner, & Knowles, 2004).

Ostracism index. We created a 21-item index of ostracism's consequences comprising of four components, which were previously used in the ostracism literature. One component was the 12-item Basic Need-Threat Scale (Zadro, Williams, & Richardson, 2004). Zadro et al. (2004) reported four subscales and Cronbach's alphas: belonging ($\alpha = .74$), self-esteem ($\alpha = .70$), control ($\alpha = .72$), and meaningful existence ($\alpha = .66$). This measure has been frequently used with diverse laboratory manipulations of ostracism, showing similar effects across different cultural contexts and populations (Gerber & Wheeler, 2009; Hartgerink et al., 2015), including a representative sample of African Americans in the United States (Goodwin et al., 2010) and Brazilian participants (Donate et al., 2017). It can be used to index each need individually or as one aggregate score (K. D. Williams, 2009). Riva et al. (2017) used the aggregated score, reporting a Cronbach's alpha of .93. Two, two items (i.e., pain and discomfort) assessed emotional pain when being ostracized (e.g., Z. Chen, Williams, Fitness, & Newton, 2008). Three, the five-item Sadness and Anger Scale (Kimel, Mischkowski, Kitayama, & Uchida, 2017) was used. Kimel et al. (2017) reported two subscales and Cronbach's alphas: a sadness subscale with three items (i.e., sad, depressed, and lonely; $\alpha = .84$) and an anger subscale with two items (i.e., angry and frustrated; $\alpha = .80$). Individuals who experienced ostracism commonly reported feeling both angry and sad (e.g., Chow, Tiedens, & Govan, 2008). Four, two manipulation check items (i.e., perceptions of being *ignored* and *excluded* during the situation) assessed the core conceptual elements of ostracism (K. D. Williams, 2009). Our rationale to create an index was that these components were often intercorrelated in past research (K. D. Williams, 2009). In fact, in our data these components had significant intercorrelations, ranging from .71 to .92 (all ps < .01). All 21 items were answered using a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*extremely*). We averaged the ratings so that higher numbers indicate more negative experiences of ostracism. Our ostracism index had a Cronbach's alpha of .97.

Demographics. The demographic items included self-reported age, being *preto* or *pardo* (based on skin color for Afro-Brazilians), gender, and completed educational level.

Translation. In Brazil, two bilingual and bicultural university professors who studied extensively in the United States (one man and one woman; both multiracial) fluent in both American English and Brazilian Portuguese, with extensive training performing translations, translated the above experimental tasks and measures into Brazilian Portuguese using the back-translation procedure (Brislin, 1986); four iterations were performed to achieve language equivalence. Next, the following steps were used according to Geisinger's (1994) guidelines. A different set of reviewers (one male university professor and a male doctoral student; both multiracial and fluent in both languages) carefully reviewed the original and the translated version and offered few minor suggestions (i.e., two synonyms), which were incorporated in the final version. Lastly, a different set of reviewers (a male Afro-Brazilian undergraduate and a female multiracial doctoral student) reviewed the final version, reporting that it was clear to native Brazilian speakers.

Procedures. Participants were recruited from a no-cost workshop titled, "Being Affirmative [in reference to affirmative action] to Enter Graduate School: A Preparatory Course," which was offered to members of underrepresented groups (e.g., Afro-Brazilians) in the community who wished to apply for slots (quotas) in master's and PhD programs at local universities and colleges. Participation was voluntary and no financial incentives were offered. Data collection occurred in a large auditorium with individual desks. A multiracial male professor invited attendees to participate in a study on social relations. All of those present agreed to participate and signed a written consent form informing of their rights as research participants. Participants were instructed not to talk among themselves during data collection and none did. Participants' assignment to condition consisted of alternating the order in which two versions of a questionnaire (i.e., an *ostracism* or an *inclusion* version) were passed out. All participants completed the 21 ostracism items in the same order. Participants took approximately 15 minutes to complete the study. Participants then received a debriefing statement explaining the purpose of the study.

Research design and analysis. We had a mixed-methods experimental design with one between-participant independent variable (*event type*; two levels: ostracism vs. inclusion) and the ostracism index as the dependent variable. Thus, we conducted an independent samples *t* test. Given we had

one hypothesis, we set our critical cutoff for statistical significance at p = .05. We used Cohen's (1988) guidelines for difference between two means ($|d|$), with 0.20, 0.50, and 0.80 representing small, medium, and large effect sizes, respectively. Concerning our manipulations, we checked participants' open-ended responses to verify that every participant wrote something. All participants responded to the prompt by writing about a life event and no participant wrote a nonsensical response. In addition, no participant wrote anything remotely related to ostracism in the included condition or about inclusion in the ostracism condition. Thus, participants successfully followed our manipulation instructions.

Regarding the exploratory analysis of participants' narrative (qualitative data), two coders (a multiracial man and a White woman; both Brazilian with advanced degrees) independently coded whether participants mentioned race in their responses; then, their codes were compared in order to obtain interrater agreement. Next, we used a Pearson chi-square test to investigate how many participants included racial nuances in their responses, and if this differed by condition. Due to the exploratory nature of examining racial nuances, we set our critical cutoff for statistical significance at p = .05. We followed Cohen's (1988) conventions for difference contingency table analysis (φ), with .10, .30, and .50 representing small, medium, and large effect sizes, respectively.

Results

The overall average for the ostracism index was 2.85 (SD = 1.33), range = 3.86, skew = 0.03 (standard error [SE] = 0.43), and kurtosis = −1.72 (SE = 0.84). There were no missing data. A Kolmogorov-Smirnov test on the dependent variable suggested it violated the assumption of normality (p < .001 for inclusion and p = .062 for ostracism). We conducted the equivalent nonparametric analyses (Mann-Whitney U tests) and found the same results (p < .001). Thus, we have presented the parametric results for simplicity. Participants in the ostracized condition reported significantly more negative effects (M = 3.84, SD = 0.76) than those in the included condition, M = 1.63, SD = 0.72; $t(27)$ = −7.95, p < .001, showing a large effect size ($|d|$ = 2.98; Cohen, 1988).

Although we systematically alternated the condition order in the questionnaires, we examined participants' demographic characteristics (i.e., colorism or dark vs. light skinned, gender, educational level, and age) to find out whether these demographics were balanced across both conditions. The only significant finding was for gender, Pearson chi-square = 5.73, p = .017, with a medium effect size (φ = .44; Cohen, 1988). There were more women (n = 14; 87.5%) than men (n = 2; 12.5%) in the *ostracism*

condition. The inclusion condition was balanced by gender, with six (46%) women and seven (54%) men.

Because of the gender imbalance, we used participants' gender as a covariate. As such, we conducted an analysis of covariance with event type as the fixed independent variable and gender as a covariate. The findings indicated that gender as a covariate did not have a significant effect on the dependent variable, $F(1, 26) = .37, p = .55, \eta\rho^2 = .01$. After controlling for gender, the independent variable still had a significant effect on the dependent variable, $F(1, 26) = 45.81, p < .001, \eta\rho^2 = .64$, which was congruent to the previous *t*-test analysis. Because gender did not have a significant effect in the analysis of covariance, we chose not to control for gender in the content analysis.

Content analysis of written narrative. We coded all written accounts with "1" if participants mentioned race/ethnicity or Afro-Brazilian culture in their narratives and "0" if they did not (interrater agreement = 100%). Then, we performed Pearson chi-square analysis on the two categorical variables (experimental condition and mentioning racial factors or not), which was statistically significant, Pearson chi-square = 5.67, $p = .017$, showing a medium effect size ($\varphi = .44$; Cohen, 1988). Racial bias was mentioned in the narratives of 12 participants (75%) in the ostracized condition, suggesting a racialized component to ostracism in this sample. Of these, six participants explicitly recounted negative emotions (e.g., hurt, sadness, forgotten, disenchanted, disgust, and anger) in their accounts of being ostracized because of their race. A participant wrote,

> My initial feeling was one of disgust and anger. I also felt impotence, helplessness for not being among my peers. The situation occurred in the city of Dois Irmãos, RS, a town of German colonization, where I was teaching at a new school and did not get an extension of my work. The discrimination was racial. At the time, I did not know how to defend myself.

Race or Afro-Brazilian culture was also mentioned by four participants (31%) in the included condition. However, the emotions race evoked were markedly different between experimental conditions. In the inclusion condition being with other Afro-Brazilians evoked positive feelings (e.g., belonging and joy). These participants felt included when they were part of an Afro-centric group. Below is a verbatim account of their feelings.

> This year, I participated in MARACAXIAS, a group of *Maracatu*, in my hometown (Caxias do Sul). I was very happy for the invitation. *Maracatu* is a show of Afro-Brazilian culture and everything sent me back to my ancestral origins, making me feel strong and prized.

Ad hoc analysis. We were surprised that four women (25%), but none of the men, wrote about being ostracized because they had children or were planning to start a family (these topics were not mentioned by any participants in the inclusion condition). Thus, we thought it would be informative to probe these data further. Two raters independently coded all written accounts with "1" if participants mentioned children, pregnancy, or family planning and "0" if they did not. The interrater agreement was 100%. The analysis by these terms and experimental condition was marginally significant, Pearson chi-square = 3.77, p = .052, with a medium effect size (φ = .36; Cohen, 1988). The following is a verbatim excerpt from one of these women.

> In the selection of Masters in Education in 2017, during the interview I was asked if I was married, if my relationship was serious, and if I wanted to have children at that moment. These questions came from a woman and were sexist, aggressive, and excluding. The most important thing at that moment was my thesis project and the time that I would have to complete it. If I were pregnant and I did not know it, cannot a pregnant woman produce a thesis? This is gender bias.

Discussion

The findings supported our hypothesis that participants who recalled an ostracism event would report experiencing more negative consequences than participants who recalled an inclusion event. The findings were congruent with a recent meta-analysis of 120 experimental studies on ostracism conducted in the United States and Western Europe (Hartgerink et al., 2015). Moreover, our findings were congruent with a recent study examining the harmful effects of ostracism via chat room utilizing a Brazilian sample of college students (Donate et al., 2017). In their study, being ostracized in a chat room resulted in significantly lower basic psychological needs (the same needs that were assessed in our study), more anger, and higher levels on pain-related words than included participants. Thus, our study provides preliminary evidence that ostracism, induced by a reliving paradigm, has some negative psychological consequences for the African Diaspora in Brazil, with implications for prevention of psychological disorders, such as depression and anxiety, within Caribbean contexts as well. In addition, the real-life stories of those who described an ostracized event (e.g., being rejected in spite of being more qualified than other White applicants, being ignored by salespeople in an empty store) showed negative emotions, which were completely absent in the inclusion condition, reflecting perceptions of injustice or differential treatment due to one's race, possibly explaining the anger reported by

some of the participants in the ostracized condition. These real-life narratives are similar to a U.S.-based study, which found that African Americans experienced ostracism as more threatening than Whites, possibly because African Americans experience racial bias and discrimination on a daily basis (Goodwin et al., 2010).

Given our small sample size and the medium effect size found in the Pearson chi-square analysis, it is possible that racialized ostracism is a meaningful construct to be investigated in future studies. Interestingly, though marginally significant, in the ostracized condition, four Afro-Brazilian women reported gender bias because they had children or might be planning to have a child. Being Afro-Brazilian and female suggest a double jeopardy. In other words, Afro-Brazilians may not only experience racialized ostracism but ostracism may also be gendered. There seems to be a complex interplay between race/ethnicity and gender, implying that these social identities, as well as others such as socioeconomic status, should not be studied in isolation because they intersect. In Brazil, as well as elsewhere in the Caribbean and the Americas, race, gender, and socioeconomic status are deeply intertwined, where being White and male is better than being Black and female (Bonilla-Silva, 1999; Telles, 2004). Future studies should investigate other forms of ostracism that individuals with multiple stigmatized social identities may experience.

There are several limitations that reduce the generalizability of the findings. First, the sample size was small and, overall, highly educated. We did our best to recruit Afro-Brazilian participants already enrolled in college, but the universities did not have a record of their students by race, making it impractical to recruit enough Afro-Brazilian students there, given their small numbers. We then became aware of workshops being offered to members of underrepresented groups (e.g., Afro-Brazilians) interested in applying to graduate school in local universities. Thus, the second limitation is that these Afro-Brazilian attendees might have been primed to recall events related to race given the nature of the workshops and the low numbers of Afro-Brazilians enrolled in college (Telles, 2004). We sought and received permission to recruit participants before the actual workshops began, which would minimize possible priming by race. Although this remains a possibility, we still found significant differences by the manipulated conditions. Third, our tasks involved recalling past events. Memories are reconstructions susceptible to biases; regardless, this manipulation has been used successfully to induce similar psychological effects that are found in live ostracism manipulations (e.g., Pickett et al., 2004). Fourth, although all participants in each condition received the same standardized prompt language, the recalled memories are idiosyncratic to each

participant rather than the standardization found in a live manipulation. This limitation can also be a strength because recalling a personal event yields a higher amount of ecological validity.

Overall, participants' written accounts in Study 1 suggested that ostracism might become racialized. Thus, Studies 2a and 2b investigated another type of social exclusion, racial microaggressions, which are subtle forms of discrimination that people of color experience daily (Sue et al., 2007). The extant research on subtle discrimination indicates that the negative effects on the mental and physical health of members of marginalized groups are comparable to those of overt discrimination (Jones et al., 2016). We found no published studies that explored racial microaggressions in Brazil; thus, a qualitative focus group approach was used to investigate microaggressions toward Afro-Brazilians. Utilizing such an approach is also empowering because it gives these participants "voice" as they express themselves in their own way (Israel, Eng, Schulz, & Parker, 2005).

Study 2a

Method

Participants. The sample consisted of six Afro-Brazilian college students (five women and one man) enrolled in a small private Catholic university in Canoas, Rio Grande do Sul (RS), Brazil. Canoas has a population of 345,000 inhabitants and is predominantly White (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatísticas, 2010). The Catholic university where this study took place has no information available of the racial background of underrepresented groups; it has about 5,000 students and 200 faculty members. The sample ranged in age from 21 to 51 ($M_{age} = 37.33$, $SD = 11.55$) years. All participants self-reported to be Afro-Brazilian. Concerning their social economic status, four (66.67%) were from a working-class background and two (33.33%) from a middle-class background. All participants were undergraduate college students, with two majoring in education (33.33%), one majoring in psychology (16.67%), one majoring in history (16.67%), one majoring in nutrition (16.67%), and another majoring in literature (16.67%).

Procedures. Participation in the focus group was voluntary and no financial incentives were offered. Notes were placed on campus inviting Afro-Brazilian college students 18 years of age or older to participate in a study on race relations, including contact information (e-mail) asking for dates and times that students would be available. The rationale for choosing such a procedure was to avoid some methodological problems that earlier studies on microag-

gressions had. Specifically, some critics argued that focus groups should not include a priori procedures to select only participants who agree that racism is widespread and pernicious, because they may be prone to interpret any ambiguous racial statements as showing racial bias (Lilienfeld, 2017). Twelve e-mails from interested students were received. On average, three e-mails were exchanged with each student in order to find the best day/time that would fit students' schedules. Next, these students were informed of the designated time and place on campus where the focus group would occur. Six of the 12 invitees showed up (50% response rate) at the reserved room on campus that was large, quiet, and equipped for audio-video recording. When students arrived, refreshments were available. An Afro-Brazilian male professor, who is employed at the local university where this study took place, was the focus group facilitator. He has training in observational/interviewing approaches with Afro-Brazilian groups and teaches only at the doctoral level and did not know the six undergraduates present. He introduced himself as the focus group facilitator and the five observers present (two Brazilian women and three Brazilian men; all multiracial with training in observational-interviewing approaches), who helped the facilitator preserve the integrity of the discussion by taking detailed notes. The facilitator explained the focus group process, including confidentiality, and that the observers were there to provide "checks and balances" when analyzing the data. The facilitator asked students whether the observers would cause any discomfort. Students reported that they were fine with the observers and were happy the observers wanted to hear them.

The rationale to have the observers present during the focus group, rather than rely solely on the transcripts and video-audio recording, was that direct observation would be a richer procedure to capture verbal communication (e.g., spoken words), nonverbal communication (e.g., gestures), and paraverbal cues (e.g., loudness and tempo of speech) than video-audio recording, which often reduces the richness of the data because some of the nonverbal and paraverbal cues are absent due to the constrained viewable and audible space (Fletcher & Major, 2006). Then, participants received and signed a written informed consent, including that the discussions would be videotaped and audio-recorded. Next, participants were asked to introduce themselves, including their age, racial identification, social class, academic major, and level (i.e., undergraduate or graduate school). Then, the facilitator asked an open-ended question about their experiences with "subtle racial discrimination," which was explained as "slights or insults, intentional or not, that communicate negative racial attitudes," essentially paraphrasing Sue et al.'s (2007) definition of microaggression. There were two follow-up questions: one about microinsults (i.e., subtle putdowns, including jokes, that are demeaning to Afro-Brazilians) and another about microinvalidations (i.e.,

negating the contributions of Afro-Brazilians, including their heritage). The focus group lasted 90 minutes.

Design and data analysis. Qualitative designs have been extensively used to gather data in the recent microaggression research, as participants' narratives provide a phenomenological perspective to capture everyday experiences of subtle discrimination (Lau & Williams, 2010). We used a focus group approach because it is well-suited to collectively capture a vast array of perspectives by allowing a natural flow guided by open-ended questions, with the facilitator as the data collection instrument (Lau & Williams, 2010). The focus group recordings were transcribed verbatim by the research team, which composed of three multiracial Brazilian professors and two multiracial Brazilian graduate students; they were all knowledgeable about qualitative methods. Next, the research team (minus the auditor who functioned as an independent "checks and balances") content analyzed the written transcripts based on grounded theory guidelines (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Specifically, the researchers used the transcripts to extract themes (axial codes). Once consensus was obtained through discussions, the auditor independently reviewed the axial codes, provided feedback, and helped finalize the axial codes into categories, utilizing a software for qualitative research called ATLAS.ti, version 8.2.4 (559) (Woolf & Silver, 2018). The final step utilized directed content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) to examine whether the Brazilian categories, derived from grounded theory, fit with Nadal's (2011) taxonomy, which is based on microaggression theory (Sue, 2010). Directed content analysis has been widely used in the United States "to validate or extend conceptually a theoretical framework or theory" (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1281).

Results

The data analysis revealed 13 categories that captured participants experiences of racial microaggressions. These categories are presented based on the number of the quotations. We also included the number of participants who spoke on themes related to each category. Table 1 shows a label, a description, and an example for each category.

Macro-level systems. The category, macro-level systems of oppression (i.e., government, industry, labor market, and the media), contributing to the exclusion of Blacks while privileging Whites, had 75 quotations and agreement by all six participants. It focused on Brazilian society and history, revealing a system-level machinery that has since slavery utilized major social institutions to oppress Afro-Brazilians. Participants frequently

reported on the current low representation of Afro-Brazilians in government, industry, labor market, and the media. For example, a male participant reported on the total lack of representation of Afro-Brazilians working in the banking sector: "Go to any bank anywhere and see how many Blacks are working there. None. Neither in a private bank nor in a bank owned by the state or the federal government."

"Bad" hair. The category, with 47 quotations and agreement by four participants (all women), was about "Bad" hair as target of prejudice in the labor market, in the intrafamilial environment, and in interpersonal relationships. The difficulties in taking care of chemically treated hair and the treatment itself added to existing negative feelings toward Afro-hair. The transition to natural hair, however, led to a positive self-image and Black empowerment. Participants reported that others viewed kinky Afro-hair as "ugly and dirty." Such prejudice was also present in their own homes, as some family members openly criticized them when they stopped straightening their hair to transition to natural hair. This transition was empowering, as they began to develop a Black consciousness and accept their own *negritude*, as exemplified by the following excerpt:

> During childhood my hair was natural [kinky]; however, from 11 years of age until I was 15, my mother chemically treated my hair; it was an aggression against my hair. When I was able to liberate myself from this situation, for me it was exhilarating because I wanted my hair to be different; I did not want it to be always straight.

The university campus. This category, with 31 quotations and agreement by five participants who talked about the university campus, was about the low representation of Afro-Brazilians on campus and the dominant White standard at this university, which caused distress among Black students, leading them to avoid interactions with Whites and not displaying elements of Afro-Brazilian culture in class. Participants reported on the low representation of Afro-Brazilian faculty, staff, and students. Such invisibility on campus reflected societal racism. A female participant reported that she was surprised to be in a focus group on campus with only Afro-Brazilian students; she said, "There are so few Black students on campus that it was a surprise to see new Black people here [at the focus group]. It was a surprise to see Black people." Another female participant described her anxiety whenever she was on campus because she perceived that everybody would be staring at her dark skin; she said, "I can never feel relaxed here. I can never wake up saying, 'Today I go to the university and nobody will be staring at me.'"

Table 1. Taxonomy of Racial Microaggressions: Canoas Sample (N = 6).

Labels	Descriptions	Examples
Macro-level systems	Macro-level systems of oppression: Government, industry, labor market, and the media contributing to the exclusion of Blacks while privileging Whites	"In every state, Blacks are underrepresented."
"Bad" hair	"Bad" hair as target of prejudice in the labor market, in the intrafamilial environment, and in interpersonal relationships. The difficulties in taking care of chemically treated hair and the treatment itself add to existing negative feelings toward Afro-hair. The transition to natural hair, however, leads to a positive self-image and Black empowerment	"Here in Canoas there is only one beauty shop for Afro-Brazilians; moreover, the hairdresser does not know very well how to deal with kinky hair."
The university campus	Low representation of Afro-Brazilians on campus and the dominant White standard at this university which cause distress among Black students, leading them to avoid interactions with Whites and not displaying elements of Afro-Brazilian culture in class	"I can count on my hand the number of Black people I see at this university."
Consequences of racism	Desire to become White or invisible, low self-esteem, despair, suffering, submission, fear, pain, shame, and discomfort are the consequences of racism, negatively influencing the self-image of Afro-Brazilians	"I would like to become invisible. I really would like to be invisible."
Affirmative action	The labor market, institutions of higher education, and the media portray Afro-Brazilians as requiring racial quotas rather than focusing on their abilities	"Even at this university, people perceive you as a quota recipient and not because of your intellectual ability."

(continued)

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Table 1. (continued)

Labels	Descriptions	Examples
Racial stereotypes	Pejorative stereotypes of Afro-Brazilians as ugly, slave, thief, poor, soccer player or samba dancer, and skin-tone euphemisms when referring to Blacks	"Here there is a widespread perception that if you are a Black male, you will be a soccer player and if you are a Black woman, you will be a samba dancer."
Regional differences	Regional/geographic differences of racism in Brazil	"In the south there are two types of parties. One for Black people and another for White people."
Black aesthetics	Devaluation of Black aesthetics (beauty) causing Blacks to question their worth, and those with Caucasian phenotype suffer less prejudice	"If you have African traits, you will suffer more than if you have White traits."
Gender differences	Gender differences: Black men experience less racism/discrimination than Black women	"Statistically, Black men have more positions of power than Black women."
Biracial microaggressions	Biracial (Black/White) people are in limbo and have trouble fitting in with Blacks and Whites	"People say I am biracial but I never felt that way. They say I am not Black and I am not White. It is hard for biracial people to belong somewhere."
Empowerment	Empowerment: Studying and having pride being Black	"I have realized that being Black is beautiful."
Disparaging humor	Racist Jokes	"When you arrive, we can tell from far away [Black people stand out in a group of White people]."
Environmental microaggressions	Public indignities, including the Internet and a racist climate in stores where there are products only for Whites	"I think they discovered yesterday that Blacks also wear makeup, right? Black people have a horrible time finding foundation that matches their skin tone . . . everything is for Whites in the stores."

Consequences of racism. This category, with 31 quotations and agreement by four participants (all women), was about the desire to become White or invisible, low self-esteem, despair, suffering, submission, fear, pain, shame, and discomfort as consequences of racism, negatively influencing the self-image of Afro-Brazilians. For example, a female participant said, "I grew up wishing not to be Black and this was painful to me." Another woman reported her angst being Black and her desire to be invisible at work and at the university.

> Sometimes I want to wake up invisible. I wished nobody could see me. Why do I have to be different from my co-workers? . . . I sit down and speak very little with my professors . . . I prefer not to mingle; I prefer not to be visible on campus. . . . Sometimes I think, "this is not for me." I wish to give up. Sometimes the despair is so strong. I avoid walking on campus. I arrive here from work, go to my classes, and hardly go to the bathroom. I avoid leaving the classroom. I don't leave the classroom.

Affirmative action. This category, with 29 quotations and agreement by four participants (all women), focused on the labor market, institutions of higher education, and the media portrayal of Afro-Brazilians as requiring racial quotas rather than focusing on their abilities. Participants discussed how they had to work much harder than their White counterparts in order to dispel myths that they are less able than Whites and can only have access to jobs and higher education because of racial quotas and not because of their personal skills and abilities. A female participant stated, "Here in the South, Blacks are quotas. You literally see this expressed in the media."

Racial stereotypes. This category, with 25 quotations and agreement by five participants (all women), was about pejorative stereotypes of Afro-Brazilians as ugly, slave, thief, poor, soccer player or samba dancer, and skin-tone euphemisms when referring to Blacks. Participants stated that society perceived Blacks negatively. So when Whites did encounter a "nice" Afro-Brazilian, they had a difficult time calling him or her Black and preferred to use terms like chocolate or *moreno* (tanned). Even seemingly positive stereotypes, such as soccer player or samba dancer (samba is a Brazilian musical genre and dance style of African roots), were not compliments, as they suggested that all Afro-Brazilians played soccer and danced samba. The stereotype that Blacks are ugly is exemplified in the following quote from a female participant who was told: "You are Black, but you are pretty. You don't even look Black." Euphemisms for dark-skinned Afro-Brazilians was reported by a female participant who said, "One time I went to a primary school and visited a second-grade class and a child followed me around and asked me whether I was made of chocolate."

Regional differences. This category, with 21 quotations and consensus by all six participants, was on regional/geographic differences of racism in Brazil. Participants stated that racism was worse in predominantly White regions (south) or areas (small towns). They said that the south of Brazil, which is mostly White, was more racist, citing festivities and traditions that excluded Blacks or Afro-Brazilian culture. For example, a female participant stated the lack of Blacks in the local cultural environments, especially in the *Centros de Tradições Gaúchas* (CTGs) or Centers of Gaucho Traditions, which disseminate the food, history, dance, folklore, and traditions of the [European] ancestors of the state of RS; she said, "Where are the African traditions here? Where are the Blacks in the CTGs?"

Black aesthetics. This category, with 15 quotations and agreement by four participants (all women), was about the devaluation of Black aesthetics (beauty), causing Blacks to question their worth, and those with Caucasian phenotype suffering less prejudice. Participants stated that *pardos* (light-skinned Blacks) generally suffered less prejudice than *pretos* (dark-skinned Blacks). Afro-Brazilians who wore clothing or jewelry associated with African culture brought attention upon themselves and were looked down, questioning their self-worth as Blacks. For example, a woman who recently moved from the state of Bahia, where there are strong African roots, stated the following: "When I arrived here people kept looking at me weird—me with my Afro-hairstyle walking on the sidewalks and receiving nasty looks."

Gender differences. This category, with 15 quotations and agreement by four participants, was about gender differences, with Black men experiencing less racism/discrimination than Black women. For example, a female participant stated, "Then, there is the gender question of being a woman, of being Black, of being a poor Black woman . . . " She concluded with the following statement, "It is different for Black men. I say this because I have two brothers. It seems that for men, I am not sure, it is easier." Interestingly, two female participants noted that others think that White men pity Afro-Brazilian women and try to "save" them, possibly from poverty. Below is an excerpt from one of these women describing how they were "saved."

> I met my husband, who is White, at work. And there were people who, when he introduced me to his colleagues, said "ah, how cool. I admire you!" As if he had saved me, Bah humbug. . . . As if thanking him, thanking him for having "saved" a Black woman.

Biracial microaggressions. This category, with 13 quotations and agreement by two female participants, was about biracial people having trouble fitting in with Blacks and Whites. A female biracial participant reported feeling "different" among Whites and Blacks, even in the *Quilombos*, which are communities settled by descendants of freed or escaped slaves. She stated the following:

> And if you ask me where I feel I belong, it's among Black people; I love going to the *Quilombo*, because there I see myself; I'm not disrespected as I am among White people, but I also have a very subjective thing about me, that there I am not *preto* [dark-skinned]. There I am White, to them I am White . . . , but I lived in a Black household. My father and brother are brown. . . . And then I had my first son, who is very light-skinned like his father. I went to the bakery to buy bread, and the girl at the counter said: "What a beautiful thing, you're his nanny?" [Laughter by the entire group]

The other female participant elaborated further on how being in limbo is hurtful; she stated the following:

> This colorism hits us hard because of the two extremes for Black people. *Pretos* [dark skinned Blacks] say, "Ah, wait a minute, why do I have to suffer more than you?" And really, a lot happens because of the color of one's skin; the color! . . . If you have African traits you will suffer more than those with White traits, for example, the nose. So each little thing will define you racially. . . . It is this middle ground that hurts more.

Empowerment. This category, with five quotations and consensus among three female participants, was about Black empowerment (pride and education). A female participant said,

> I have a sister who is studying law and she told me, "I am tired of going out and not being able to defend myself. The only way for Black people to win is through studying and showing their talents. You must study."

Disparaging humor. This category, with five quotations and agreement among three female participants, was about racist jokes. A female participant described an incident with her 7-year-old son who was teased by his classmates who called him "*neguinho do pastoreio*," which is a legend of a slave shepherd child who was whipped to death for losing some animals in the pastoral ranches of RS; he became a symbol for the countless slaves who died by the cruel hands of their masters (Trapp, 2011). She reported, " . . . mother, I don't want to be Black anymore. Why my son? Because they are calling me *neguinho do pastoreio*."

Environmental microaggressions. This category, with five quotations and agreement by two female participants, was about public indignities, including the Internet, and a racist climate in stores. The excerpt below is about the Internet being full of racist memes.

> I had to prepare a history lesson for one NGO and I needed pictures of Black children for my Black students to color and identify with the pictures of Black children, so I put the following in the Google search for images: "Black children to color." Do you know what images came up? All with fetters in their hands, slave clothes. That hurt me so much; I would not take them with me.

Comparisons with U. S. categories. Table 2 summarizes the linkages between Nadal's (2011) six racial microaggression categories (first column) with the categories identified in Canoas, Rio Grande do Sul (RS; second column). Nadal's *Assumptions of inferiority* category was reflected in the *Affirmative action* category. Nadal's *Second-class citizen and assumptions of criminality* category was manifested in the *Macro-level systems* and *Racial stereotypes* categories. Nadal's *Microinvalidations* category was partly displayed in the *Regional differences* category and the *Racial stereotypes* category (skin-tone euphemisms). Nadal's *Exoticization/assumptions of similarity* category was partly reflected in the *Racial stereotypes, "Bad" hair*, and *Black aesthetics* categories. Nadal's *Environmental microaggressions* category was replicated in the Brazilian category of the same name, which included the Internet. Nadal's *Workplace/school microaggressions* category was reflected in the *Macro-level systems, University campus, Affirmative action*, and *Disparaging humor* categories.

Study 2b

Method

Participants. The sample consisted of eight Afro-Brazilian adults (six women and two men) recruited from a public library in the city of São Paulo, SP, which has a population of over 11 million inhabitants (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatísticas, 2010). The sample ranged in age from 19 to 49 ($M_{age} = 31.63$, $SD = 9.04$) years. Concerning participants' educational level, three (37.5%) had completed high school only, three (37.5%) had some college education, one (12.5%) had completed college, and an additional participant (12.5%) had completed graduate school. All participants self-reported to be Afro-Brazilian, with seven (87.5%) self-classifying as *preto* (dark-skinned) and one (12.5%) as *pardo* (light-skinned). Three participants (35.5%) reported previous participation in groups that discussed racial-ethnic issues, whereas five participants (62.5%) reported having never participated in such discussions.

Table 2. Comparisons of Nadal's (2011) Taxonomy With Those of Canoas, RS, and São Paulo, SP.

Nadal's (2011) Taxonomy	Canoas, RS	São Paulo, SP
Assumptions of inferiority	Affirmative action	Meritocracy; Affirmative action
Second-class citizen and assumptions of criminality	Macro-level systems; Racial stereotypes	Macro-level systems; Intersectionality of race, gender, and occupation; Perceptions of criminality; Good appearance
Microinvalidations	Regional differences; Racial stereotypes (skin-tone euphemisms)	*Whitening*; Afro-religions; Misappropriation of Afro-religions; Afro-aesthetics
Exoticization/ assumptions of similarity	Racial stereotypes (soccer player and samba dancer); "Bad" hair; Black aesthetics	Sexuality; Afro-aesthetics; Good appearance
Environmental microaggressions	Environmental microaggressions (including the Internet)	Sexuality; Disparaging humor; Importance of the social context
Workplace/school microaggressions	Macro-level systems; University campus; Affirmative action; Disparaging humor	Macro-level systems; Meritocracy; Affirmative action; Intersectionality of race, gender, and occupation; Good appearance

Procedures. Participation was voluntary and no financial incentives were offered. Notes were placed in a public library inviting Afro-Brazilians 18 years of age or older to attend a focus group on race relations at a designated time and place at the local public library that hosts community events. When they arrived at the designated room, refreshments were available. An Afro-Brazilian female therapist introduced herself as the focus group facilitator and the two observers present (two Brazilian multiracial men with advanced degrees in Counseling Psychology), who helped the facilitator preserve the integrity of the discussion by taking detailed notes. As in Study 2a, she explained the nature of the focus group process, including confidentiality, and that the observers were there to provide "checks and balances" when analyzing the data. After obtaining written informed consent, she asked participants to introduce themselves, including their age, racial identification, past participation in groups that addressed racial-

ethnic issues, and educational level. Then, she asked an open-ended question about their experiences with "subtle racial discrimination," which she explained as "slights or insults, intentional or not, that communicate negative racial attitudes." There were two follow-up questions: The first was about microinsults and the second was about microinvalidations. The focus group lasted 2 hours.

Design and data analysis. We followed the same format as in Study 2a.

Results

The data analysis had 15 categories that captured the experiences of racial microaggressions in this group of Afro-Brazilian adults. These categories are presented below based on the number of the quotations. We also included the number of participants who spoke on themes related to each category. Table 3 shows a label, a description, and an example for each category.

Whitening. This category, with 61 quotations and consensus among all seven participants, was about the negation/devaluation of *negritude* by Whites due to the history of whitening in Brazil, which has been internalized by most Blacks. It addressed how most White and Black Brazilians have lacked an understanding about *negritude* due to *whitening*, which has isolated many Afro-Brazilians from each other, for example, many Afro-Brazilians have described themselves as something other than Black, such as *moreno* (tanned). A female participant described how *whitening* has been ingrained in the psyche of many Afro-Brazilians.

> . . . We are targets of prejudice all the time because we are Black. Because we're in a *whitened* [mixed] society. It is very complicated, so the person does not realize, but at the same time it is not the fault of the person not to notice. We were trained; we were instructed for it. We were conditioned to conform to the situation.

Concerning being called anything else but Black, a female participant said:

> No, I'm not brunette; I'm not chocolate; I'm not brown bonbon; I'm Black alright. It does not bother me directly, but it bothers me to realize that this is a veiled bias; it seems like an offense being called Black, like a curse. White people tell me, "You are not Black, God forbid; you are just tanned!" . . . There is no room to be oneself because one cannot even assume one's *negritude*.

Macro-level systems. The category, with 60 quotations and agreement by seven participants, focused on macro-level systems of oppression like

Table 3. Taxonomy of Racial Microaggressions: São Paulo Sample ($N = 8$).

Labels	Descriptions	Examples
Whitening	Negation/devaluation of *negritude* by Whites due to the history of *whitening* in Brazil, which has been internalized by most Blacks	"I see still a very small number of Black people who understand their *negritude* and all this historical weight and why the need for struggle, why the need to organize and understand and accept our *negritude*."
Macro-level systems	Macro-level systems of oppression like government/work settings, schools, and the media that marginalize Blacks, negatively influencing their self-esteem and socioeconomic success	"It is hard to really feel that you are represented somewhere in order for you to take pride."
Sexuality	Sexual objectification, dating, and marrying Whites. Ambivalence by Black men and loneliness by Black women	"This Black man is racist, for he married a White woman."
Afro-religions	Expressions of racism toward Afro-Brazilian religions: Pejorative attitudes toward African scarves and turbans	"Concerning religion, it is much more aggressive; I think the prejudice toward African-based religions is much more aggressive, and I think it's absurd."
Afro-aesthetics	Devaluation of Black aesthetics (beauty and "bad" hair) coming from friends and family members	" . . . pressure to straighten my hair, dyeing it blonde to look like Xuxa [she is a blonde, White Brazilian television host, singer, model, and business woman]."
Disparaging humor	Negative consequences of racist jokes and comments	" . . . She called it a joke, but I was embarrassed, bothered when it occurred . . ."
Meritocracy	Getting into a profession, including internships, is harder than enrolling in higher education, revealing meritocracy as another obstacle	" . . . and there is meritocracy also that it is very hard to overcome. A Black person will get to become a lawyer. But what are the ways to do so? Even if he or she gets there, what law company is going to hire you?"

Table 3. (continued)

Labels	Descriptions	Examples
Perception of criminality	Black people being perceived as criminals	"I go to the grocery store and I am followed by security."
Good appearance	Good appearance being necessary to avoid being stereotyped as criminal or slum dweller, as well as not to preclude other Blacks from getting jobs	"We have to look and be 200%, to be perceived by others as 100%."
Empowerment	Mechanisms of coping, including empowerment, that help identify subtle prejudice	"We have to show people that yes, we are aware of our *negritude*."
The importance of the social context	The social context determines whether an event is racist	"If he calls me 'monkey' outside the soccer field, then it is different."
Affirmative action	The belief that racial quotas being necessary because Blacks are intellectually inferior to Whites	"It has even become a bad word, right. You QUOTA-RECIPIENT!"
Microaggressions committed by White friends	White friends' motivation to aggress being often automatic/spontaneous, as they try to make up through apology, pretense that nothing happened, or make faulty comparisons with minimize the effect of racism	"I experience racial bias among my White friends. I have a list of them who are very prejudiced."
Intersectionality of race, gender, and occupation	Interface between gender and race/ethnicity in engineering	"Besides being a woman in a classroom dominated by male engineering students, my daughter is the only Black woman."
Misappropriation of Afro-religions	Appropriation of Afro-Brazilian religions by Whites	"The question of cultural appropriation of Black elements."

government/work settings, schools, and the media that have marginalized Blacks, negatively influencing their self-esteem and socioeconomic success. A male participant discussed how racism was taught to children in the public schools and specifically mentioned an incident that appeared in the news about the "Rainbow Family," a book given to young elementary school children. He stated the following:

> . . . The government of the state of São Paulo adopted a book for children called the Rainbow Family, I think . . . and there is this colorful family: the pink mother, the white father, the blue son, the yellow daughter, and such; and the black bandit. He was black. . . . The black color represented the bandit; and this activity occurred inside the classroom with school children. The book stated that the Rainbow Family lived happily until the Black man came to steal and the teacher asked the children to write an essay about it. Everyone wrote a little story with the help from the teacher. But as a consequence of this book . . . from this activity, the children began to reproduce this prejudice toward a Black pupil; they began to say that "he was Black and that his father was a thief" and began to exclude the child from the group until the child could not stand it any longer. Then, he was assaulted and he lost his tooth in the bathroom; the little friends were in the bathroom while he was there and they assaulted him. All of this was a consequence of this activity that occurred in the classroom. And then this activity resulted in a lawsuit in which the state was found guilty and had to remove this book from the public schools and such. And paid the family for what they went through.

Sexuality. This category, with 30 quotations and agreement by six participants, focused on sexual objectification, dating, and marrying Whites, including ambivalence by Black men and loneliness by Black women. A female participant discussed the sexual objectification of Afro-Brazilian men as bulls (well-endowed). She said:

> Sexuality has many implications because of the culture. Even for Black men . . . with their big dicks, which have more sexual appeal than White men. So Black men are useful only to reproduce? Only useful for . . . You get the idea. All this implies prejudice. It seems like prejudice toward White men, too; however, in fact, what you are doing is to treat Black men as sexual objects.

"And Black women, too!" [Voices by the group.] The following excerpt from a female participant describes how the media have frequently objectified Afro-Brazilian women:

> I remember that it came out a while back . . . a dark beer advertisement by *Devassa* [a beer company] with a naked Black woman on the label. It is absurd, given the history of slavery and the rape of so many Black women, and still today we have this lack of awareness by advertisers in the way they objectify Blacks. This happens a lot and it's very absurd.

Four female participants discussed how Whites have been portrayed as the standard for dating and marriage, including in the media, for example, "In a totally White media where the Prince is always White, where everyone is extremely White." Black men have also shown preference to date White women, as exemplified by this comment by another female participant, "It is super prestigious for Black men to date real blondes . . . with their pink genitalia and nipples." In addition, participants discussed ambivalence toward interracial dating, as exemplified by the experience of this Black male participant: "Dating Whites is a topic of heated debate in my family because I lived in the South and there are only White people there, so Black men will date some White women." This ambivalence was explained by a female participant who said:

> But the justification of Blacks only dating other Blacks is precisely this *whitening*, right . . . a White person will not understand our struggle, which has made me aware of being a Black woman today. . . . A White person will not understand all this stuff. . . . And then there is your Black identity . . . that a White person will not share the same things, the same fight as you do. So that's an argument that I hear a lot when people talk about Afrocentric relationships. I do not know, I do not know, but I'm looking for a Black man. [Laughter by the group.]. . . . There is also the issue of the Black Woman Solitude, the implications of Black men looking for White women.

Afro-religions. This category, with 28 quotations and agreement by seven participants, was about expressions of racism toward Afro-Brazilian religions, including pejorative attitudes toward African scarves and turbans. Participants reported that Blacks who wore clothing associated with African-derived religions were often denigrated by Whites. A female participant said the following:

> And there are two problems. First, a Black person is stereotyped as *macumbeiro* [those who follow *macumba*, an Afro-based religion that incorporates sorcery elements] for wearing a turban, which people associate with African-based religions. Second, they associate *macumba* as something pejorative, eh. [Laughter by the group.] This is crazy, right, to attack Blacks for practicing

macumba and being *macumbeiro*, as an offense because it is an African-based religion that Black people practice.

Another female participant described an incident that took place in the classroom. She said, "At school, not long ago, a girl said that I was a *macumbeira* because I wore a scarf and criticized me for wearing it to the teacher. I was a little annoyed, a little embarrassed."

Afro-aesthetics. This category, with 17 quotations and agreement by five participants, focused on the devaluation of Black aesthetics (beauty and "bad" hair) coming from friends and family members. Participants reported pressure to change African traits (e.g., kinky hair). They stated lack of support from their own family and close friends. A female participant said:

My mother did not know how to handle my natural hair growing up. As a teenager, I told her that I couldn't take it anymore; I did not want to straighten my hair anymore. I was looking for my identity . . . "to know who I am and see what'd happen." Then, I told her that I was going to need her support because I've always been very insecure about my hair, so I had to think, "Wow, how's it going to be, huh?" If someone said, "your ugly hair," . . . I was going to straighten it, running home and crying because at school we suffer a lot of prejudice about our looks, so I had all this insecurity. But today I can look in the mirror and say, "Now, that's me."

Disparaging humor. This category, with 13 quotations and agreement by six participants, described negative consequences of racist jokes and comments. Participants stated that hearing derogatory jokes or comments about Blacks and their culture from friends, family members, and the media hurt a lot, making Afro-Brazilians feel marginalized. A male participant stated the following about racial jokes in social media and in public places:

There are lots of racial jokes in *WhatsApp*, sometimes directed at me from my friends who call me monkey; this is a recurring theme. Suddenly I hear it in public locales, "your friend there, the monkey there." . . . it's loaded with racism, which I have experienced since childhood. Such jokes make us feel different but in a negative way. They negate Black people as human beings. . . . Addressing these little jokes is always so exhausting, right? . . .

Meritocracy. This category, with nine quotations and agreement by four participants, described that getting into a profession, including internships, was harder than enrolling in higher education, revealing meritocracy as another obstacle. Participants stated that others often criticized affirmative action and its quotas, but critics did not realize that employers have been

reluctant to hire Blacks after college graduation. Participants also discussed the myth of meritocracy that negated the existence of social inequalities, even in internships. A female participant stated the following:

> My daughter is finishing college and has an internship. She has to do extra paperwork for the internship as well as paperwork for her scholarship at school. When they have group projects, the group members give her extra work to do during the weekend while they go drinking together. There are extra-criteria that she has to meet besides doing her job.

Perception of criminality. This category, with eight quotations and agreement by four participants, was about Black people being perceived as criminals. A female participant whose son was turning 14 years of age discussed the following incident:

> My son is going to be 14, he's a young man, right? . . . And the police already follow him, because of the color of his skin. He had to go to the drugstore for me . . . he went to the São Paulo Drugstore and he was followed by guards. I think it was about 6 o'clock in the afternoon. He went there and he was followed by guards. Once he got there and went over to the shelf, the salesgirl followed him and kept staring at him. Then, he went to the cashier, he said that she kept staring at him and he also stared at her, and I said, "But son, don't do this," but he said that she kept staring at him, thinking that he was going to rob her.

A male participant provided a similar example: "In a party with lots of people with one Black man and if something goes missing, the first person people will point to is the Black man."

Good appearance. This category, with eight quotations and agreement by four participants, was about good appearance in order to avoid being stereotyped as criminal or slum dweller, as well as not to preclude other Blacks from getting jobs. Participants reported how family members, especially mothers, emphasized the need to look well and never to wear hoodies, caps, or torn clothing to avoid confrontations with the police, or being stereotyped as a slum dweller or drug-trafficker. Participants stated how unfair it was for Whites to dress as they wished without being stereotyped as criminal or poor, but Blacks had to look perfect to be respected. Participants also reported on how burdensome it was to carry the weight of an entire race on one's shoulders. Concerning good appearance, a male participant discussed how his mother insisted that he had to look his best in order to avoid negative stereotypes; he said:

If I have a beard, my mother complains about it. If I have long hair, she complains, too. Since I was small, she has insisted on good appearance. . . . At school, there was a Black girl who was often unkempt and everybody teased her, "Look at that smelling girl." They teased her hair, too, saying it was dirty . . . If you don't have good appearance, people will say that Blacks are not hygienic . . . that they are slum-dwellers.

A female participant joined in and said the following, "I am just like your mother . . . I also tell my son to keep his hair short and combed, to put cream on his skin, and to be very careful with the police." Another female participant added the following:

Yeah, it is funny: If there are two men, a Black man and a White man, dressed alike with holes in their pants, which one is going to be followed [by the police]? The Black man. Regardless, Black people will be stereotyped. This is bad. We think, "why can't we dress like we want?" Because Black people will be labeled as slum-dweller. Damn it.

A fourth participant discussed further the issue of Black people having to look "perfect" at the workplace because if they do not, they may be contributing to other Black people being negatively stereotyped (e.g., slum-dwellers). She said:

 . . . Is it wrong for a Black person to dress up casually to go to a job interview? If yes, is it right for such a person to diminish the chances of the next Black candidate being stereotyped as slum-dweller? Do we always have to present ourselves extremely properly so that the next Black person will not be stereotyped as slum-dweller or a junkie? . . . Because White people lump Blacks together. . . . But Whites will individualize each other. "The one who came yesterday was bad, but this is another person who has nothing to do with that one." Got it?

Empowerment. This category, with seven quotations and agreement by three participants, was about mechanisms of coping, including empowerment, which might help identify subtle prejudice. Accepting one's *negritude* and developing Black consciousness were also empowering, which facilitated identifying subtle prejudice rather than ignoring it or seeing it as "normal." A female participant discussed the need to organize and develop a Black consciousness; she said:

We need to organize and understand ourselves and accept our *negritude*. . . . We suffer subtle prejudice every day, all the time. Myself, I have suffered a lot because of the color of my skin. However, today I understand myself as a Black woman. It is funny that now I see things that I didn't see before. We are not less,

and we are not more than others. We are here to construct and reconstruct our history together.

The importance of the social context. This category, with seven quotations and engagement by four participants with no consensus, was about the social context determining whether or not an event was racist. Specifically, there was an exchange between one of the two male participants and three female participants who disagreed with his position. He explained why being called a "monkey" during a soccer match was not offensive. He said: " . . . playing soccer, the first thing a guy will do is to curse your mother or call you monkey. 'You monkey!' But when the game is over, things go back to normal and I never had a problem." The facilitator then asked, "In this situation of calling you 'monkey' what was your reaction? How did you feel then?" He said:

> During the game, it is fine. If he calls me "monkey" outside the soccer field, then it is different. During the game, no. Players want to win; it's a competition. They are excited and enthused. That's normal. I have never experienced prejudice on the soccer field. On the contrary, I have always been well-treated.

At this point a female participant joined in and said, "So you have been well-treated. Okay. Do you think that such act . . . calling you a 'monkey' . . . was racially biased?" He then replied as follows:

> No, I do not see it as prejudice. . . . On the soccer field players shout profanity; they swear all the time. They call you and your mother and your family bad names. They want to destabilize you. . . . It happens a lot, so I do not see this as prejudice. No, I do not. I have never experienced prejudice playing soccer.

A second female participant then made the following remark: "That's good, but the moment he said it, he showed prejudice; it was a type of prejudice." He then responded: "He wants to make me mad; he wants to unsettle me, so he's going to make nasty remarks about my skin color or my mother." Then, a third female participant said the following:

> But the point is that he used the color of your skin to attack you and your identity as a Black person; it shouldn't be used as a way to attack you. Calling you a "monkey" is an offense. Why "monkey"? It's racial bias. It is related to the history of Blacks.

He then said, "No, I don't see it as a form of prejudice."

Affirmative action. This category, with six quotations and agreement by three participants, was about racial quotas being necessary because Blacks were intellectually inferior to Whites. This category revealed that some White Brazilians believed that Blacks were cognitively inferior and would not be able to attend higher education without racial quotas. A female participant said:

> After the quota system was enacted, it is the only thing that people talk about and that Blacks are accepted only because of quotas. You have no competence. You are stupid like a donkey and only get accepted because of the quota system. I hear this the whole time. They cannot understand that one thing has nothing to do with the other. You haven't been given anything. You are as capable, as studious, and as hardworking as any other student at the university. But they do not see that and instead insist that it is an unfair system. Wow, in college there is so much discussion about it that it gets nauseating!

Microaggressions committed by White friends. This category, with five quotations and agreement by three participants, was about White friends' motivation to aggress being often automatic/spontaneous, or apologizing, pretending that nothing happened, or making faulty comparisons to minimize one's racism. For instance, a male participant discussed that his White friends often called him "monkey"; he said that " . . . when the game is over, they apologize. They come to me and say, 'sorry for my words and such.'" A female participant related a conversation that she had with a White friend of hers who provided a weak analogy between the discrimination that obese people experience and the discrimination that Afro-Brazilians experience; she said:

> " . . . Ah [name of participant], but I'm also very discriminated against for being chubby." Then, I told him "okay, but historically how many chubby people have been murdered for being fat? . . . Historically, countless Black people have been murdered because of their skin color."

The second male participant said the following about his White friends:

> And they tell me racial jokes, but when I let them know in a nonaggressive way that such jokes are unwelcomed, my friends are embarrassed. They say, "It was really an innocent thing." . . . My friends' embarrassment shows that, for them, it was spontaneous, natural, inside them, and deeply ingrained in their upbringing. They don't realize what they have done or pretend that it did not happen.

Intersectionality of race, gender, and occupation. This category, with three quotations and agreement by two participants, was about the interface between gender and race/ethnicity in engineering. Participants discussed how engineering is a field dominated by White men, with very few Black engineers, especially Black female engineers. A female participant who worked in Human Resources in a large engineering company reported the following:

> The issue of the photo that accompanies a candidate's application is already discriminatory. They say, "Ah, this person is Black." The Black applicant may have a great resume, but if it is between a Black applicant and a White applicant, the White one will get the job. It is a reality. I work with engineers, which is the exclusion of the exclusion, with very few women . . . the ratio is about one female to 100 male engineers. For Blacks, it is even worse . . . I value diversity in the workforce, but when it comes to the managers deciding whom to hire, there is a barrier to hire Blacks . . . There is no representation. This discrimination happens and it is absurd in large corporations. The stigma is very heavy. . . . And it's horrible for me to see this. . . . There are three male Black engineers . . . and they try to fit in and become White themselves. They put oil in their hair to smooth away their frizzy hair. [Laughter by the group]. . . . They dress like Whites. They lack any Black characteristics. It seems that they try to hide their *negritude*. . . . And women become masculinized in an environment dominated by men in order to be accepted . . . to be viewed as competent. It is very complicated.

Another female participant agreed, saying, "My daughter is studying mechanical engineering, and she is the only woman. Really . . . People do not give women a chance, right? It's prejudice."

Misappropriation of Afro-religions. This category, with two quotations and agreement by two participants, was about the appropriation of Afro-Brazilian religions by Whites. This category focused on the influx of Whites to Afro-Brazilian religions like Candomblé and Umbanda, causing Blacks to lose their space in such centers. One female participant said:

> There are many discussions about the cultural appropriation of African-based traditions, such as our religions. . . . I think that in an ideal society this should not be a problem, right? There should be White people practicing African-based religions and wearing turbans and everything, as long as they don't hurt Blacks for doing so. So it is stolen from us twice, right? First, they appropriate our space where we practice our traditions; it is so important to have our own space. Second, they do not respect us for practicing what is ours. They lack empathy, right? So, I think that this is a big problem.

Another female participant agreed and reported the following:

> Folks, I was thinking about that the other day when talking to my mother. I told her that I no longer wanted to go here in São Paulo to any Umbanda or Candomblé center. My mother asked me why. I told her the reason: They were all White. You don't see Black folks there anymore. [Laughter by the group.] We lost even this . . . our home. I can no longer say that I have returned home. Now you look around at such centers and I have the feeling that we lost again. I no longer want to return to such centers in this city.

Comparisons to U. S. categories. Table 2 illustrates the linkages between Nadal's (2011) six racial microaggression categories (first column) with the categories identified in São Paulo (third column). Specifically, Nadal's *Assumptions of inferiority* category was reflected in the *Meritocracy* and *Affirmative action* categories. Nadal's *Second-class citizen and assumptions of criminality* category was displayed in the following categories: *Macro-level systems, Intersectionality of race, gender, and occupation, Perception of criminality*, and *Good appearance* categories. Nadal's *Microinvalidations* category was related to the *Whitening, Afro-religions, Misappropriation of Afro-religions*, and *Afro-aesthetics* categories. Nadal's *Exoticization/assumptions of similarity* category was reflected in the *Sexuality, Afro-aesthetics*, and *Good appearance* categories. Nadal's *Environmental microaggressions* category was evidenced in the *Sexuality, Disparaging humor* category (racist jokes being spread in social media such as *WhatsApp*), and the *Importance of the social context* (references to racist comments being shouted at soccer matches that could be overheard by bystanders) categories. Nadal's *Workplace/school microaggressions* category was shown in the *Macro-level systems, Meritocracy, Affirmative action, Intersectionality of race, gender, and occupation*, and *Good appearance* categories.

Discussion of Studies 2a and 2b

In Studies 2a and 2b we examined linkages between our two Brazilian samples and Nadal's (2011) U.S.-based taxonomy. We found preliminary evidence that our themes fit with all of Nadal's categories, suggesting that microaggressions are everyday occurrences in Brazil as well. We note that in both focus groups we had more categories than Nadal did. We used grounded theory to capture participants' phenomenological perspectives (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Participants also reported both their experiences and how they reacted to and coped with such events. These factors may explain the large

number of categories we identified. For example, Afro-Brazilian participants from both groups discussed empowerment, showing resilience in the face of widespread oppression. One way to help people of color cope with discrimination and foster resilience is through therapy. First, therapists should do no harm by not perpetrating microaggressions themselves during therapy. Second, because microaggressions appear to be commonplace, therapists should invite clients to discuss their experiences with subtle discrimination, empowering them. Unfortunately, about 53% of clients of color from a U.S. university counseling center who completed a survey about their therapy experience reported encountering microaggressions from their therapists (Owen, Tao, Imel, Wampold, & Rodolfa, 2014). Owen et al. (2014) reported detrimental effects due to the therapists' microaggressions, such as diminished rapport as these clients' experiences with discrimination and oppression from the larger society were repeated during therapy.

The São Paulo focus group delved into the motivation of perpetrators of subtle racism when they discussed microaggressions committed by White friends, essentially explaining in their own words what microaggression theory is (Sue, 2010), increasing the construct validity of racial microaggressions in a different cultural context from the United States and addressing some of Lilienfeld's (2017) criticisms. In our opinion, not only therapists but also supervisors, teachers, coworkers, friends, and acquaintances can benefit from multicultural awareness training on microaggressions in order to avoid unintentionally engaging in microaggressive behaviors themselves. In multiracial societies like Brazil and the United States, the responsibility to address subtle prejudice should be shared by everyone who should become an ally by first altering one's thinking (e.g., developing new cognitive schemas that are inclusive rather than divisive) in order to become aware of microaggressions (e.g., disparaging humor) in oneself and others. Then, allies should speak up when they witness microaggressions. Even brief comments (e.g., "not cool" or "ouch") can be useful by bringing awareness to perpetrators, helping them rethink their acts of subtle bias rather than ignoring such acts, which can "normalize" insults and putdowns (Schneider et al., 2017). We argue that allies should also combat microaggressions present in the Internet, as evidenced by both focus groups. The Internet is full of racist memes. Research indicated that racist memes were more offensive to people of color, who also faced off-line everyday racial slights, compared with Whites; such memes were also disseminated through social media (e.g., Facebook), lengthening the exposure and increasing the negative impact of such racist messages (A. Williams, Oliver, Aumer, & Meyers, 2016). In sum, societal efforts at multiple levels are necessary to combat marginalization

and discrimination of members of stigmatized groups who experience many types of social exclusion daily.

General Discussion

There are many types of social exclusion that people of color experience. The overall purpose of our research was to investigate two forms of social exclusion toward Afro-Brazilians that are commonly found in the United States, ostracism and racial microaggressions. The findings revealed similar negative experiences among Afro-Brazilians in three cities across two different regions of Brazil, helping to build an increasingly comprehensive understanding of social exclusion-related phenomena beyond North America and Western Europe (Henrich et al., 2010). Concerning Studies 2a and 2b, participants reported that microaggressions evoked social pain and other negative emotions, such as anxiety, angst, anger, exhaustion, powerlessness, sadness, shame, and decreased their self-esteem; these negative outcomes have been found in research on ostracism and other forms of social exclusion (e.g., Wesselmann et al., 2016). Participants also reported that microaggressions can make them feel invisible and lead them to avoid social interactions; both outcomes also occur when someone is ostracized (Ren, Wesselmann, & Williams, 2016; K. D. Williams, 2009). Note that this is an initial empirical attempt to connect two different literatures (ostracism and microaggression) that have not been previously connected. Future studies should further explore the nuances between these two literatures by adapting exclusion paradigms to study microaggressions.

Methodologically, we attempted to address a criticism of previous qualitative studies on microaggression (Lau & Williams, 2010; Lilienfeld, 2017) by not preselecting only participants who agreed that racism and discrimination were a problem. Although we found initial support to Nadal's (2011) taxonomy across two different regions of Brazil, with consensus among participants, there was one remarkable exception. The category of the *Importance of the Social Context* lacked consensus. Specifically, one participant was adamant that it is the social context that dictates whether or not a comment, such as being called a "monkey," would be viewed as racist. Moreover, participants reported experiencing microaggressions by family members and friends. The implication is that racial microaggressions may come both from in-group and out-group members, suggesting that some people of color may internalize a racist ideology and perpetrate microaggressions among themselves and toward members of other racial groups.

All three studies suggested intersectionality, a complex interplay between race/ethnicity and gender in which men have more power than women, and

Whites more power than Blacks (Bonilla-Silva, 1999). Social identities should not be studied in isolation because people with multiple identities often experience multiple forms of microaggressions (Nadal et al., 2015). Instead, intersectionality highlights the inseparable and complex relationships between micro (e.g., social exclusion experiences) and macro factors (e.g., economic and educational inequality, oppression, privilege, and power; Bowleg, 2012). For example, participants in Studies 2a and 2b emphasized a macro (systemic) perspective by examining systems of inequality (e.g., social structures that benefit Whites) that trickled down to their interpersonal experiences with subtle racism in the workplace, educational settings, stores, and the media. In addition, female participants in Studies 2a and 2b discussed "bad" hair that needed chemical treatment, suggesting gendered racism. As Gilliam and Gilliam (1999) stated about race in Brazil:

> Of all the physical characteristics, it is particularly hair that marks "race" for women. . . . It is in the issue of hair that one sees a distinction between men and women and the differential social coding of race and ethnicity. Thus, "race" is gendered. (pp. 68-69)

Some female participants discussed that they were choosing not to change their natural hair through chemical treatment and, instead, cultivated various Afro-hairstyles, as it is often done in the United States. Future research needs to investigate the relationship between hairstyle practices with racial identity development in Brazil and the United States. Participants in Studies 2a and 2b also discussed being the target of disparaging humor—mean-spirited jokes and laughter due to their race. Recent research suggests that hurtful laughter and jokes can make people feel socially excluded (Klages & Wirth, 2014; Wesselmann, Schneider, Ford, & DeSouza, 2018). Furthermore, participants in Study 2b discussed the racialization of religion—an intersectionality of religious and racial microaggressions. Participants reported stereotypes of Afro-Brazilians as *macumbeiro*, as well as the exoticization and misappropriation of Afro-based religions while mocking their customs. These slights are similar in nature with those reported by Nadal et al. (2012) who investigated religious microaggressions toward Muslims in the United States.

Participants in Study 2a discussed biracial microaggressions, another intersectionality. There is a dearth of empirical studies on multiracial microaggressions. Nadal et al. (2011) found that U.S. multiracial individuals experienced similar frequencies of racial microaggressions as monoracial people of color. Nadal et al. also reported that unlike monoracial people, multiracial individuals described experiences of being excluded or isolated by their own

family members, which is in keeping with the experiences of this sample of Afro-Brazilian participants. More recently, Harris (2017) found a distinct new category among multiracial college students in the United States, *Not (monoracial) enough to "fit in*," which fits perfectly with what an Afro-Brazilian participant in Study 2a said about being "in limbo," not Black or White enough to be fully accepted in either racial group. Finally, participants in Study 2b discussed sexual objectification. Both women and men can be made to feel objectified, often leading to negative psychological outcomes (e.g., body shame, fear; Fairchild & Rudman, 2008; Tiggemann & Boundy, 2008). Recent research even suggests that sexual objectification can make people feel socially excluded and experience threats to other psychological needs (e.g., self-esteem, meaningful existence; Dvir, Kelly, & Williams, 2017).

Limitations

There are limitations that constrain the generalizability of the findings. First, participants across all three studies were, overall, well-educated. We do not know about the experiences of less-educated Afro-Brazilians. Second, the sample sizes were small, with few men, across all three studies. Third, all three studies relied on participants' memories, which are susceptible to biases. Fourth, Studies 2a and 2b fall prey to a key criticism of the microaggression literature: Inferences of causation require an experimental approach (e.g., Lilienfeld, 2017). Regardless, these studies suggest promising future directions for investigating racialized ostracism and microaggressions in other regions of Brazil and the Caribbean where Blacks are more prevalent.

Conclusion

Although our findings need replication with larger samples, we believe that our findings are important to the field of Black Psychology. Study 1 showed that many Afro-Brazilian participants reported feeling ostracized because of their race. Studies 2a and 2b showed convergence between the experiences of persons of color both in United States and Brazil, and also revealed that participants who experienced microaggressions reported social pain and other negative emotions. Social pain due to exclusion is not hyperbole. Neuroimaging studies demonstrate that areas of the brain active during physical pain are also activated during social exclusion (e.g., Kross, Berman, Mischel, Smith, & Wager, 2011). Research on ostracism and microaggressions indicate that they are frequently subtle, widespread, and lead to various

physical and psychological health outcomes (Wesselmann et al., 2016). We urge administrators, educators, and community leaders to create guidelines and policies to reduce all types of social exclusion whether they are blatant (macro) or subtle (micro) to create truly inclusive societies in Latin America and the Caribbean. Lastly, we urge future investigators to continue connecting research on microaggression to social exclusion and to do so experimentally. Specifically, it would be promising to study the negative consequences of microaggressions as mediated by relational devaluation (Smart Richman & Leary, 2009) due to one's stigmatized status in society, which may strengthen the conceptualization of microaggression by bringing it under the theoretical umbrella of social exclusion.

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