


Chapter 3

Legal and Ethical Dimensions: Understanding Rights and Responsibilities

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ABSTRACT

Microaggression is something that has been on the rise in higher education for some time. However, according to the research there are little to no research concerning the legality of this action that is faced by African American faculty working in higher education. Of course, there are Title VII and Civil Rights Laws that protect minorities from discrimination but being able to prove microaggression is a grey area. Since the removal of DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) inclusion may be a hindrance to the culture climate at institutions.

INTRODUCTION

“Equality is treating everyone the same. But equity is taking differences into account, so everyone has a chance to succeed.” — Jodi Picoult

This chapter addresses the legal and moral effects of microaggressions, which are small, often unintentional comments or actions that make people feel less important or insulted because of their race, gender, sexual orientation, or other traits. According to Cantu and Jussim (2021), fighting microaggressions is a component of a larger effort to eradicate the allegedly most dangerous forms of racism that exist today: the subtle forms that are ingrained in society and that we take for granted, such as

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linguistic patterns that perpetuate harmful racial stereotypes. Microaggressions are subtle, often unintentional, discriminatory comments or behaviors directed to individuals based on their marginalized identities. These micro-level interactions, though innocuous, can contribute cumulatively to a hostile or undesirable environment for the African American faculty in higher education. According to Sue et al. (2007), micro-arts manifest themselves in various microsaults, microinstults, and microbalances with distinct but harmful implications for the psychological and professional well-being of the directed. The prevalence of micro-arts in predominantly white institutions (PWIS) is worrying. Such institutions often reflect systemic racial disparities, where Afro -American faculty members experience a unique set of challenges that can hinder their professional growth and academic contributions (Orelus 2020; Ogyemi et al., 2020).

Within the context of higher education, the meaning of approaching these micro-arts cannot be exaggerated. Research indicates that microaggression experiments can lead to various negative results for Afro -American faculty, including a sense of decreased belonging, greater stress, and decreased job satisfaction. These experiences not only affect individual faculty members, but they can also have broader implications for the academic climate, teaching-body retention, and the general diversity of academic institutions. Recognition and recognition of the presence of microaggressions raises the discourse surrounding equity in the gym and brings critical discussions about institutional responsibility.

The impact of microaggressions brings the legal and ethical implications associated with these discriminatory practices. African American teachers have rights that must be protected under various civil rights laws, including Title VII of the Civil Rights Law, which prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, gender, and national origin. Institutions have a legal duty to guarantee a work environment free of discriminatory practices. Failing to approach microaggression not only compromises the well-being of the faculty but can also expose institutions to legal liabilities related to discrimination in the workplace and hostile environments.

Ethically, institutions are required to promote an inclusive academic environment that supports diversity and equity. This responsibility transcends compliance with legal structures; It covers a moral imperative to cultivate a campus culture where all teachers feel valued and respected. Institutional policies should reflect a commitment to approach micro-giving, which requires continuous training and education for teachers, staff, and students. Implementing restorative practices and promoting open dialogue around race and equity are essential strategies that can mitigate the impact of microaggressions and contribute to a more equitable environment.

This article aims to analyze the legal and ethical implications surrounding the micro-arts faced by the Afro -American College in Higher Education. A complete exploitation of their rights in the context of predominant microaggressions will

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