Profiles of Racial Socialization Messages from Mothers and Fathers and The Colorblind and Anti-Black Attitudes of Asian American Adolescents

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Abstract

Racial equality requires coalitions and solidarity across racial groups, but there continues to be racially colorblind and anti-Black attitudes within the Asian American community, a diverse community consisting of individuals with ancestral origins in East, Southeast, and South Asia. However, there is limited research on the factors that contribute to the development of these attitudes among Asian Americans. Parents could potentially play an important role in perpetuating or challenging the colorblind and anti-Black messages that pervade U.S. society. Thus, the current study investigates how 309 Asian American adolescents' (M age = 16.8; SD = 1.15; 50.5% female) perceptions of parents' racial socialization messages about race and racism relate to the youth's racial attitudes. Latent profiles of youth's perceptions of mothers' and fathers' racial socialization messages and their associations with colorblind racial attitudes and anti-Black attitudes were examined. For mothers, three socialization profiles were identified: Race Avoidant, Race Hesitant, and Race Embracing; for fathers, two socialization profiles were identified: Race Avoidant and Race Embracing. Adolescents with Race Embracing mothers reported less anti-Black attitudes compared to those who had Race Hesitant mothers. For fathers, there were no differences among the profiles and anti-Black attitudes. However, surprisingly, adolescents with Race Embracing fathers were more likely to have colorblind racial attitudes compared to those with Race Avoidant fathers. The findings highlight the importance of racial socialization in the development of Asian American adolescents' racial attitudes to continue fighting for interracial solidarity.

Keywords Asian Americans · Colorblind racial attitudes · Anti-Black attitudes · Racial socialization · Latent profile analysis

Introduction

Research shows that race and racism are not topics regularly discussed in Asian American families (Juang et al., 2017). Thus, little is known about how mothers and fathers talk to their Asian American children about race, and the role parents play in the process of *critical reflection*, or the development of awareness of racial inequity in societal institutions (Bañales et al., 2019). The current study addresses the important issue of whether the transmission of race-related messages is associated with the development of colorblind and anti-Black racial attitudes, filling a gap in the racial socialization literature that mainly focuses on individual psychosocial and academic outcomes rather than the development of racial attitudes that may affect interracial solidarity and engagement in actions that promote racial justice. This study also seeks to understand the potentially unique roles that mothers and fathers play in the formation of Asian American youth's racial attitudes to increase knowledge of the unique dynamics within Asian American families, and potentially inform understanding of racial socialization processes in all families. Using a new measure of racial socialization that focuses on how parents discuss (or avoid discussing) issues of race and racism in the United States (US), this study starts to fill the gaps in the literature by examining how profiles based on parents' transmission of different combinations of messages to their Asian

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American adolescents relates to youth's colorblind and anti-Black racial attitudes.

A Critical Race Perspective on Racial Socialization

The process of *racial-ethnic socialization*, or the transmission of messages about being a member of a certain racial-ethnic group, has been shown to influence the development of Asian American youth (Juang et al., 2017). For detailed definitions of race, culture, and ethnicity, please see the article, "Race terminology in the field of psychology" (Atkin et al., 2022). The terms racial-ethnic socialization and ethnic socialization are common in the literature, with *ethnic socialization* referring to messages about one's culture (e.g., values, language, food). In the current study, the term racial-ethnic socialization is used when discussing prior research that involves racial and/or ethnic socialization, but given that the construct measured in this study is focused on race and does not assess transmission of ethnic/cultural messages, racial socialization is used when discussing the current study. The term *racial socialization* has been most commonly used in literature with Black families, but often the racial socialization messages measured have focused on the socialization target's membership in a racial group (e.g., Black cultural socialization, preparation for bias one might encounter as a member of the group, promotion of mistrust of outgroup members; Hughes et al., 2006). For the purposes of this study, *racial socialization* is defined and operationalized as the transmission of messages about race and racism in society, not necessarily specific to one's personal experiences as an Asian American or limited to Asian Americans.

In a systematic review of the literature on Asian American familial racial-ethnic socialization (Juang et al., 2017), findings suggested that Asian American parents more frequently discuss ethnic heritage and culture while promoting diversity and equality, focusing less on talking about racial issues such as discrimination. The authors also reviewed adjustment outcomes associated with racial-ethnic socialization, finding that different types of messages are uniquely related to a number of psychosocial and academic outcomes for Asian American youth. The review concluded with a section calling for future research on Asian American parental racial socialization to be informed by a Critical Race perspective that incorporates Asian American history. Moreover, the authors called for future studies to investigate how parents emphasize interracial solidarity and help their children engage in the process of critical reflection (Juang et al., 2017).

In line with these recommendations, this study utilizes a Critical Race perspective (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012) to frame race as a sociopolitical construct created to separate people into races to justify white supremacy and the inferiority of people of color. Through this lens, racism is understood to be embedded in the institutions of the US to uphold a system that privileges Whites and oppresses people of color. Thus, racial socialization for Asian Americans from a Critical Race perspective should involve teaching about the origin and history of race and racism in the US, the ways in which racism still continues to perpetuate racial inequality today, and the role of individuals, including Asian Americans, in resisting and fighting for equality (Juang et al., 2017). While it is important to study socialization about youth's personal experiences with race and discrimination, it is also important to examine how it affects their racial beliefs relative to not just their own, but all racial groups' positions in society.

To assess how racial socialization messages co-exist with one another instead of examining the prevalence of each message separately, a latent profile analysis (LPA) approach can be utilized. This holistic approach presents an overall picture of the combination of messages youth perceive given that parents send various types of messages. Previous studies using LPA to study racial-ethnic socialization with Asian Americans have been carried out using a variety of variables to compose profiles. The only study to exclusively focus on profiles of racial-ethnic socialization variables (maintenance of heritage culture, becoming American, awareness of discrimination, avoidance of outgroups, minimization of race, promotion of equality, and cultural pluralism) found unique associations with ethnic identity and social connectedness depending on the combination of racial-ethnic socialization messages Asian American adolescents perceived (Atkin & Yoo, 2021). One study examined profiles including racial discrimination, model minority stereotyping, and racial-ethnic socialization (cultural socialization, preparation for bias, and promotion of mistrust), and generally found that Asian American adolescents who were attuned to both positive and negative racial experiences had positive outcomes (Kiang et al., 2019). Another study involved many profile indicators, including racial-ethnic identity (exploration, commitment, private regard/centrality), racial-ethnic socialization (cultural socialization and preparation for bias), and internalization of the model minority myth (achievement orientation; Xie et al., 2021). The study reported that adolescents with higher levels of racial-ethnic identity and cultural socialization but lower levels of preparation for bias had the best academic and psychosocial outcomes. In sum, recent LPA studies on Asian American parental socialization have made significant contributions to the literature, but still largely focus on how socialization messages target the youth's own experiences with race and culture and their personal adjustment outcomes. Thus, there is a gap in the literature in terms of outcomes related to critical reflection, such as racial attitudes.

Racial Socialization and Racial Attitudes

To achieve racial equality requires coalitions across racial groups, i.e., interracial solidarity (Tran et al., 2018). In addition to teaching Asian American youth about racism faced by Asian Americans, racial socialization also needs to involve teaching youth about racism faced by other groups and challenge anti-Black attitudes existing in Asian American communities. However, the stereotype of Asian Americans as the model minority continues to pit Asian Americans against other people of color by perpetuating the idea that Asian Americans have achieved success and Black Americans are simply not working hard enough (Matriano et al., in press). This stereotype was emphasized during the Civil Rights movement to discredit the idea that racial inequality existed and place the blame on Black and Brown individuals and communities for existing disparities (Yoo et al., 2010). Racial triangulation theory (Kim, 1999) provides a helpful illustration of how Black, Asian, and White groups have been positioned in relation to one another. The theory posits that Whites, the dominant group, valorize Asian American culture as superior relative to Black American culture, while simultaneously demoting Asian Americans by civically ostracizing them as unassimilable foreigners relative to Black Americans who are accepted as insiders, despite their inferior racial position. These racial positions allow white supremacy to thrive while shaping how Asian and Black Americans view one another, preserving tensions between groups. Unified resistance and action to challenge these imposed racial positions requires critical reflection, which parents' socialization messages may inform.

The model minority stereotype also perpetuates *colorblind ideology*, which is the belief that "color should not and does not matter" (Neville et al., 2000, p. 60) and everyone is treated equally regardless of their race. The Ecological Model of Racial Socialization (Barr & Neville, 2014) includes an illustration of how racial socialization experiences predict colorblind racial beliefs, which are a product of the dominant racial ideology in the US that denies or minimizes the role of structural racism in people's lives (Bonilla-Silva, 2003). Colorblind racial attitudes go hand in hand with anti-Black attitudes, as the belief that race is not important erases the reality that the US has oppressed Black Americans. Both attitudes fail to acknowledge the sociohistorical realities of Whites forcing Africans to come to the US on slave ships and the centuries of racist laws and policies that continue to affect the Black community today.

Scholars have long discussed the link between the model minority myth and anti-Blackness, but few studies have empirically examined this relationship. A recent study found that Asian American college students who internalized the model minority myth of achievement orientation (i.e., the belief that Asian Americans are more successful because they work harder than other racially minoritized groups) were more likely to report anti-Black attitudes (Yi & Todd, 2021). Moreover, colorblind racial attitudes mediated the relationship between internalization of the model minority myth of unrestricted mobility (i.e., the belief that Asian Americans are treated fairly and do not face racism at school or work) and anti-Black attitudes. In other words, Asian Americans who minimized racism and believed that the world is fair were more likely to espouse colorblind racial attitudes, which in turn predicted more negative perceptions of Black Americans.

Three types of racial socialization messages that may be important for understanding the development of youth's anti-Black and colorblind racial attitudes include race-conscious, diversity appreciation, and colorblind socialization (Atkin et al., 2021a). These factors are all related to the construct of egalitarian socialization in that they each promote viewing all races as equal, but there are important distinctions in the connotations of these messages that could result in the formation of dissimilar racial attitudes (Atkin et al., 2021b). Specifically, *race-conscious messages* acknowledge the truth about racial inequality while promoting the need for racial equity; *diversity appreciation messages* promote equal treatment and respect of people from different cultures without directly addressing racism; and *colorblind messages* argue that everyone is already equal and race does not matter. In addition, a fourth type of socialization known as *silent socialization* addresses whether parents are actively avoiding discussions of race, which can implicitly send children the message that race is a stigmatized or unimportant topic. Though there is no research that has directly measured these specific constructs with Asian Americans, related literature is reviewed below to highlight the key role these socialization messages could potentially play in the development of youth's racial attitudes.

Given that the model minority myth is still prevalent in society today, parents' racial socialization efforts need to actively involve deconstructing this stereotype with their children. If parents express colorblind ideologies instead of helping their children become aware of racial inequities through race-conscious socialization, their children may learn to believe that racism is not real. One study found that Asian American college students with higher levels of colorblind attitudes are less likely to have intergroup empathy, which in turn related to less engagement in actions to challenge prejudice (Yi et al., 2020).

The literature on racial beliefs, critical consciousness, and sociopolitical development also supports the importance of parents' racial attitudes and beliefs in youth development (Anyiwo et al. 2018; Diemer, 2012; Kurtz-Costes et al., 2019). Several studies have examined how

racial-ethnic socialization relates to youth's critical reflection (Christophe et al., 2021). Low critical reflection can be considered to be akin to high colorblindness, and vice versa. One study with Black adolescents found a positive association between preparation for bias socialization and youth's critical reflection as assessed by attributions of achievement gaps to structural factors (Bañales et al., 2019). Moreover, in an LPA study with diverse adolescents (25.6% Asian American), researchers found that the profile consisting of the highest scores on family, school, and neighborhood racial-ethnic socialization and online discrimination experiences was associated with the highest critical reflection scores (Byrd & Ahn, 2020).

Gender Differences and Socialization

Previous research suggests that there may be differences in the types of racial socialization messages each parent provides and the effects of these messages due to gender roles. For example, Asian American mothers, who are often the primary caregiver at home (Kim & Wong, 2002) might generally communicate more frequently to their children. Differences in mother and father socialization have rarely, if ever, been studied in Asian American families. One study with Black families reported that mothers engaged in more racial-ethnic socialization (cultural socialization and preparation for bias) with older offspring, while fathers engaged in more socialization with sons (McHale et al., 2006). Other studies with Black families reported that mothers engage in higher levels of racial socialization compared to fathers (Crouter et al., 2008; Thornton et al., 1990). However, socialization practices have been found to vary across racial groups, as supported by findings that Black mothers discuss discrimination more with their adolescents than Latino and Chinese mothers (Hughes et al., 2009). This could be due to differences in perceived discrimination and stereotypes faced by different racial groups, or a difference in parents' comfort levels with discussing race due to cultural values and immigrant status.

Current Study

Given the lack of research on the role of mothers' and fathers' racial socialization in the development of Asian American youths' racial attitudes, the current study assesses whether there are unique profiles for mothers and fathers in terms of how they teach their children about the existence of racial inequities in the broader society (race-conscious socialization), convey that race is not important (colorblind socialization), teach the appreciation of diverse people and cultures (diversity appreciation socialization), and/or avoid talking about race altogether (silent socialization).

Furthermore, instead of examining youth's adjustment outcomes, there is an examination of how their racial attitudes (i.e., colorblind racial attitudes and anti-Black attitudes) are associated with profiles of the racial socialization messages they receive. Based on previous research, it is hypothesized that profiles with higher agreement regarding perceptions of race-conscious and diversity appreciation messages will be associated with less colorblind and anti-Black attitudes, while profiles with higher agreement regarding perceptions of colorblind and silent socialization messages will be associated with more colorblind and anti-Black attitudes (Hypothesis 1). Regarding differences between mothers and fathers, given prior research suggesting that mothers engage in socialization more than fathers, it is hypothesized that youth will report significantly higher mean scores indicating agreement that mothers engage in race-conscious, diversity appreciation, and colorblind appreciation relative to fathers, and significantly higher mean scores for fathers engaging in silent socialization compared to mothers (Hypothesis 2). In terms of differences in mother and father profiles, it is hypothesized that more youth will have a higher probability of being in profiles with relatively low race-conscious, diversity appreciation, and colorblind socialization and high silent socialization when it comes to father socialization messages in comparison to mother socialization messages (Hypothesis 3). Given the lack of established research evidence, there is no hypothesis of what specific profiles might emerge through the combination of socialization variables.

Method

Participants

Participants in the current study were 309 Asian American adolescents between the ages of 14 and 18 (mean age = 16.8 years, $SD = 1.15$). In terms of gender identity, the sample included 145 males (46.9%), 156 females (50.5%), 4 gender non-conforming (1.3%), 2 who preferred not to answer (0.6%) and 1 who wrote in "unsure" (0.3%). For the race and ethnicity questions (which were distinct), participants were asked to check all that applied from a provided list. There were 286 participants (92.5%) who checked only Asian American, 15 (4.9%) who checked both Asian American and White, 2 (0.6%) who checked both Black and Asian American, 2 (0.6%) who checked both Asian American and Pacific Islander, 1 (0.3%) who checked both Asian American and Latinx, 1 (0.3%) who checked only Pacific Islander, 1 (0.3%) who checked both Asian American and Middle Eastern North African, and 1 (0.3%) who checked only Latinx. The Latinx identified participant responded that their biological mother is Asian American

and their biological father is Latinx, and they did respond yes to the screening question asking if they identified as Asian American, so they were included in the sample. Ethnic groups represented in the sample were 112 (36.2%) Chinese, 56 (18.1%) Vietnamese, 43 (13.9%) Filipino, 42 (13.6%) Korean, 41 (13.3%) Indian, 16 (5.2%) Japanese, 12 (3.9%) Taiwanese, 8 (2.6%) Pakistani, 6 (1.9%) Hmong, 5 (1.6%) Thai, 4 (1.3%) Cambodian), 3 (1%) Malaysian, 2 (0.6%) Singaporean, 2 (0.6%) Bangladeshi, 2 (0.6%) Bengali, 2 (0.6%) Sri Lankan, and 1 (0.3%) Laotian. The majority ($n = 294$, 95.1%) of the sample was U.S. born, and 11 (3.6%) were foreign-born (4 did not respond).

Procedure

The study was approved by the institutional review board of the first author's institution. Given that Asian American youth are a minority group that are difficult to recruit in large numbers, participants were recruited using Qualtrics Panels, with the eligibility criteria being Asian American-identified adolescents between the ages of 14 and 18 (see Brandon et al., 2014, for an explanation of how Qualtrics Panels works). Eligible participants took an online Qualtrics survey lasting approximately 30 min between April 30th and August 4th of 2021. For those ages 14 to 17, their survey started with a parental consent form which required an electronic signature from a parent. After obtaining parental consent, participants completed an assent form. Eighteen-year-old participants were able to provide their own consent to participate. After completing the survey, participants were compensated by the panel they participated in with the agreed upon reward[1]. In addition to requiring screening questions for eligibility and parent signatures, quality of the data was carefully checked by excluding participants who failed a validity check question (i.e., "Please select 'strongly disagree' in both columns"). Qualtrics Panels partners also helped to evaluate data quality by excluding participants that finished the survey too quickly, did not respond to all of the measures, and/or did not provide valid answers to short answer questions. The dataset from Qualtrics Panels had 512 participants, but was narrowed down to 309 after removal of cases for the following reasons: not making it past the first measure ($n = 120$); test case ($n = 1$); outside of eligible age range ($n = 32$); did not provide consent ($n = 8$); did not complete short answer questions ($n = 39$); did not pass validity checks ($n = 3$).

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[1] Qualtrics is a panel aggregator such that participants are paid differently based on the panel they are recruited from. Incentives are most often given on a point system. Those points can be pooled and later redeemed in the form of gift cards, skymiles, credit for online games, etc. The informed consent stated, "Compensation will be provided to you by your panel in the previously agreed-upon amount".

Measures

Primary caregivers

Given that not everyone is raised by a combination of a mother and father figure, the language of "primary caregivers" was used in the survey. Prior to answering the measures, participants indicated who they considered their primary caregivers, or "people who had the most influence while raising you". They selected their first and second primary caregivers from a list of options (e.g., biological mother, adoptive father, stepfather, foster mother, grandma). They also had options to write in someone, and for their second primary caregivers, they could select "I was raised by only one primary caregiver" if they were raised by a single parent/caregiver. In the data, less than 2% of caregivers in the sample were not mothers or fathers (i.e., they were grandparents). Therefore, in this study, caregivers are referred to as parents when discussing them collectively, and mothers and fathers when discussing them separately, though grandparents were retained in the analyses because they represented a mother or father figure for the participant.

Racial socialization

Four subscales from the Multiracial Youth Socialization Scale were utilized to assess racial socialization that youth perceived they received from each of their parents (Atkin et al., 2021a). Although the development of the subscales was informed by interviews with Multiracial college students about their experiences with familial socialization (Atkin et al., 2021b), these four subscales assess socialization experiences relevant to families of all racial backgrounds. Participants reported whether they agreed that their parents provided the messages to them, rated on a scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). Questions were presented such that there were two response columns, side by side, and the two primary parents they had selected were auto-filled in at the top of the columns. Participants were instructed to answer the questions with the parents in mind, and leave the second column blank if raised by a single parent/caregiver.

Race-conscious socialization consisted of 6 items that measured youth's agreement that parents discussed systemic racism and inequality in society with them (e.g., "My [caregiver] taught me about unfair laws and policies in the United States that target racial-ethnic minorities"). This subscale excluded one item from the original scale developed for Multiracial youth due to it being less relevant for Asian Americans, "My [caregiver] taught me that there used to be laws that banned interracial marriage in the United States".

Colorblind socialization is a 7-item subscale that evaluated transmission of messages that disregarded the significance of racism (e.g., "My [caregiver] says that they don't see race").

Diversity appreciation messages were measured by ten items that promoted learning about and respecting cultural differences and accepting people of diverse racial-ethnic backgrounds (e.g., "My [caregiver] taught me to be accepting of people from all racial-ethnic backgrounds").

Silent socialization was assessed using six items addressing whether parents avoided talking about race (e.g., "My [caregiver] avoids talking about race").

Composite scores for each subscale were calculated by taking the average of the items. The validity of the four-subscale structure of the Multiracial Youth Socialization Scale was assessed using confirmatory factory analysis, whereby fit was considered adequate if the comparative fit index (CFI) was close to 0.90, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) was close to 0.06, and square root mean squared residual (SRMR) was close to 0.08, recognizing that researchers recommending these values do not support rigid cut-offs (see appendix for supplemental table; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Perry et al., 2015). The internal reliability of the subscales in the scale development study ranged from 0.74 to 0.94 (Atkin et al., 2021a). In the current study, reliability scores also ranged from 0.74 to 0.94 for mothers' socialization and fathers' socialization (see Table 2 for details).

Colorblind racial attitudes

The 14-item Colorblind Racial Attitudes Scale Short Form (CoBRAS-SF; Neville et al., 2007) was used to evaluate the extent to which individuals minimize the existence of racism based on their attitudes towards racial issues. Scored on a 6-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*), higher scores represented more colorblind attitudes (e.g., "Everyone who works hard, no matter what race they are, has an equal chance to become rich"). The mean of the items was used as the composite score. A prior study using a 19-item version of the scale with a diverse sample of adolescents (16% Asian Americans) reported an internal reliability of 0.86 (Aldana et al., 2012). In the present study, internal reliability was 0.87.

Anti-Black attitudes

The 10-item Anti-Black Scale (Katz & Hass, 1988) was employed to measure individuals' anti-Black attitudes. Items were presented with a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*), with higher scores indicating stronger anti-Black attitudes. A sample item from the scale is, "On the whole, Black people don't

stress education and training". A composite score was calculated using the average of the items. A previous study with Asian American college students (Yi & Todd, 2021) reported an internal reliability score of 0.87 for the scale. In the current study, the alpha was 0.84.

Data Analysis

Given that there are notable differences in how parents in differently gendered roles engage in socialization, the data was reorganized to allow for analyzing mother and father figures separately. All participants reported a mother figure as a primary caregiver: 297 (96.4%) biological mothers, eight (0.03%) grandmothers, one (0.003%) stepmother, and two (0.006%) adoptive mothers. Father figures were reported by 281 participants: 271 (96.4%) biological fathers, six (0.02%) stepfathers, three (0.01%) grandfathers, and one (0.004%) adoptive father. None of the participants in the current study's sample reported having same-sex parents, but there were five participants who listed two female figures (three mother and grandma, one grandma and grandma, and one mother and sister). For these participants, the person they chose as their first primary caregiver was selected and the second female figure was excluded from the analysis so that these five participants would not be represented more than once in the mother analyses.

Latent profile analysis was conducted in Mplus 8. Missingness was handled using full information maximum likelihood. Separate analyses were run for mother and father data. The variables included in the profiles were the four racial socialization subscales. Six models were specified with classes ranging from one to six. After examining the model fit indices and considering the interpretability of the classes, the best model for each group was selected. Fit indices were judged based on which class models had smaller values for the Bayesian information criteria (BIC) and sample-size adjusted Bayesian information criteria (ABIC), entropy closer to 1, and a *p*-value below 0.05 for the Lo-Mendell-Rubin likelihood ratio test and the Vuong-Lo-Mendell-Rubin likelihood ratio test. Profiles with acceptable fit statistics were graphed to determine which class solution had more conceptually meaningful profiles. After determining the best class size for the mother and father data, colorblind racial attitudes and anti-Black attitudes were added as auxiliary variables to test their relationship as continuous distal outcomes across the latent profiles. The analysis was conducted using the Bolck, Croon, and Hagenaars (BCH) method (Bakk & Vermunt, 2016; Bolck, Croon, & Hagenaars, 2004), which employs a weighted analysis of variance (ANOVA) model to test both overall and pairwise comparisons through Wald chi-square difference tests.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive and correlational analyses were performed using SPSS v28 (see Tables 1 and 2). First, analyses were conducted to examine whether there were differences in the variables based on the adolescents' gender identities (see mean scores reported in Table 1). Using t tests, differences between participants who identified as male or female were explored, given small sample sizes of participants identifying as gender non-conforming or who chose not to answer. T test results suggested that both mothers ($t(298) = 4.555$, $p < 0.001$) and fathers ($t(271) = 4.291$, $p < 0.001$) were perceived by male adolescents to provide more colorblind socialization messages. In addition, male

adolescents reported significantly higher anti-Black racism ($t(299) = 3.679$, $p < 0.001$) and colorblind racial attitudes ($t(299) = 7.950$, $p < 0.001$) compared to female adolescents. In terms of differences in adolescent's perceived socialization based on parents' gender, t tests indicated there were no significant differences.

Next, correlations were examined. Findings are discussed in terms of effect sizes, where r of 0.10 would be considered a small effect size, 0.20 would be medium, and 0.30 is large (Funder & Ozer, 2019). As might be expected, race-conscious socialization and diversity appreciation were strongly positively correlated for both mothers and fathers. Interestingly, race-conscious socialization for both mothers and fathers correlated positively with colorblind socialization with a medium effect size but correlated negatively with silent socialization at about a medium effect size. Meanwhile, colorblind and silent socialization correlated positively with a large effect size. For reports of mother socialization, only colorblind socialization was correlated with the outcome variables, exhibiting a large effect in relation to colorblind racial attitudes and a small to medium effect in relation to anti-Black attitudes. For reports of father socialization, there was again a large effect in the relation between colorblind socialization and colorblind racial attitudes, but no relation to anti-Black attitudes. Furthermore, father's diversity appreciation socialization was positively associated with colorblind racial attitudes (small effect size) and father's silent socialization was negatively correlated with anti-Black attitudes (small effect size). Colorblind racial attitudes and anti-black attitudes were strongly correlated.

Table 1 Mean Score Breakdowns by Adolescent Gender ($N = 145$ males, 156 females)

Variable	Male	Female
Mother's Race-Conscious Socialization	3.03	3.03
Father's Race-Conscious Socialization	2.98	3.01
Mother's Colorblind Socialization	3.14	2.66
Father's Colorblind Socialization	3.19	2.70
Mother's Diversity Appreciation Socialization	4.07	3.84
Father's Diversity Appreciation Socialization	4.04	3.84
Mother's Silent Socialization	2.85	2.67
Father's Silent Socialization	2.81	2.74
Colorblind Racial Attitudes	2.83	2.16
Anti-Black Attitudes	3.01	2.65

Table 2 Correlations among Study Variables ($N = 308$ for mothers, $N = 281$ for fathers)

| Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Mother's Race-Conscious Soc	--									
2. Mother's Colorblind Soc	0.238*	--								
3. Mother's Diversity Appreciation Soc	0.635**	0.320**	--							
4. Mother's Silent Soc	−0.193**	0.328**	−0.119*	--						
5. Father's Race-Conscious Soc	0.808**	0.266**	0.551**	−0.133*	--					
6. Father's Colorblind Soc	0.278**	0.859**	0.317**	0.263**	0.217**	--				
7. Father's Diversity Appreciation Soc	0.584**	0.295**	0.897**	−0.101	0.646**	0.308**	--			
8. Father's Silent Soc	−0.106	0.283**	−0.089	0.802**	−0.216**	0.347**	−0.137*	--		
9. Colorblind Racial Attitudes	0.042	0.395**	0.102	−0.045	0.100	0.359**	0.136*	−0.109	--	
10. Anti-Black Attitudes	−0.031	0.168**	−0.056	−0.068	0.028	0.099	−0.051	−0.137*	0.558**	--
M	3.02	2.90	3.94	2.78	2.97	2.96	3.91	2.81	2.46	2.80
SD	1.08	0.95	1.29	1.09	1.06	0.99	1.27	1.10	0.82	0.86
Alpha	0.79	0.75	0.94	0.83	0.78	0.75	0.94	0.84	0.87	0.84

Soc Socialization

*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$

Table 3 Model Fit Statistics from Latent Profile Analyses of Racial-Ethnic Socialization Subscales - Mother ($N = 308$)

Classes	Class N	BIC	ABIC	Entropy	VLMR p value	LMRT p value
1	308	3761.573	3736.2			
2	107-201	3640.604	3599.373	0.712	0.2405	0.2488
3	**102-63-143**	**3579.232**	**3522.143**	**0.774**	**0.0041**	**0.0047**
4	12-135-61-100	3562.461	3489.514	0.836	0.0002	0.0002
5	14-66-55-25-148	3560.565	3471.761	0.773	0.4599	0.4753
6	69-13-10-147-25-44	3548.468	3443.806	0.809	0.0477	0.0514

The bolded text indicates the model determined to have the best fit

BIC Bayesian information criterion, *ABIC* adjusted Bayesian information criterion, *VLMR* Vuong-Lo-Mendell-Rubin likelihood test, *LMRT* Lo-Mendell-Rubin likelihood test
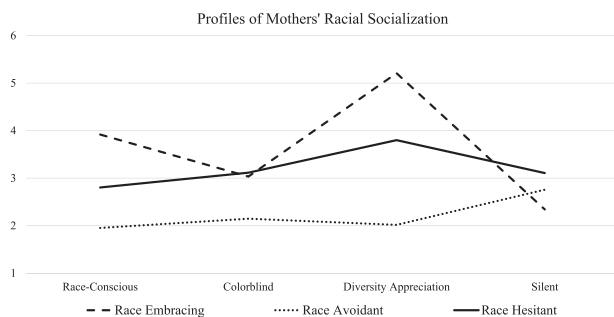
Fig. 1 Profiles of Mothers' Racial Socialization

Identification of Racial Socialization Profiles

For youth's reports of their mother's socialization messages, the 4-class model had the best fit according to the fit indices (See Table 3 for class comparisons). However, the smallest profile size was quite small ($n = 12$), justifying the rejection of the model based on recommendations that models with a class less than 1% and/or numerically $n < 25$ be rejected or rigorously grounded in theory and research (Bauer & Curran, 2003, da Silva et al., 2019). The next best model with acceptable fit indices and conceptually interesting profiles was the 3-class model (see Fig. 1). Based on their characteristics, the three profiles were labeled "race avoidant," "race embracing," and "race hesitant." The race avoidant socialization profile (20.4%, $n = 63$) was characterized by the lowest levels of race-conscious, colorblind, and diversity appreciation messages, and the second highest reports of silent socialization. The race embracing profile (33.1%, $n = 102$) was characterized by the highest levels of race-conscious and diversity appreciation messages, moderate reports of colorblind messages, and the lowest reports of silent socialization. Lastly, the race hesitant profile (46.4%, $n = 143$) was the largest group, consisting of participants who reported their mothers engaged in moderate levels of race-conscious, colorblind, and diversity appreciation socialization, and moderate but relatively highest levels of silent socialization.

Turning to youth's reports of their father's socialization messages, the 3-class model has the best fit according to the fit indices (see Table 4 for class comparisons). However, the 3-class model had a small profile ($n = 9$), and thus was rejected (Bauer & Curran, 2003; da Silva et al., 2019). The next best model exhibiting acceptable fit and conceptually interesting profiles was the 2-class model (see Fig. 2). The two classes resembled the race avoidant and race embracing classes in the mother profiles. Specifically, the race avoidant profile (32.4%, $n = 91$) was characterized by lower levels of race-conscious, colorblind, and diversity appreciation messages, but high silent socialization. Meanwhile, the race embracing profile (67.6%, $n = 190$) consisted of higher levels of race-conscious, colorblind, and diversity appreciation messages, and lower levels of silent socialization. The means (and standard deviations) for each socialization profile for mothers and fathers are displayed in Table 5.

Relations Between Racial Socialization Profiles and Outcome Variables

In examining the profiles for mother socialization, the Wald's chi-square tests suggested that there were significant mean differences between classes for anti-Black attitudes, but not for colorblind racial attitudes (see Table 6 for details). Specifically, the race embracing profile had a lower mean score on anti-Black attitudes compared to the race hesitant profile ($\chi^2(2) = 7.15$, $p = 0.007$). For the father socialization profiles, significant mean differences emerged between classes for colorblind racial attitudes, but not for anti-Black attitudes. Specifically, the race embracing profile exhibited a higher mean score for colorblind racial attitudes relative to the race avoidant profile ($\chi^2(1) = 6.01$, $p = 0.014$).

Discussion

In the past decades, scholars have pushed the field of developmental psychology by examining the formation of

Table 4 Model Fit Statistics from Latent Profile Analyses of Racial Socialization Subscales – Father (N = 281)

Classes	Class N	BIC	ABIC	Entropy	VLMR p value	LMRT p value
1	281	3342.367	3416.999			
2	**91-190**	**3313.174**	**3271.952**	**0.779**	**0**	**0**
3	9-94-178	3294.53	3237.46	0.827	0	0
4	46-9-77-149	3274.686	3201.754	0.795	0.1228	0.1307
5	9-149-63-9-51	3267.01	3178.223	0.813	0.2089	0.2197
6	64-9-21-40-9-138	3262.903	3158.261	0.811	0.0838	0.0899

The bolded text indicates the model determined to have the best fit

BIC Bayesian information criterion, *ABIC* adjusted Bayesian information criterion, *VLMR* Vuong-Lo-Mendell-Rubin likelihood test, *LMRT* Lo-Mendell-Rubin likelihood test
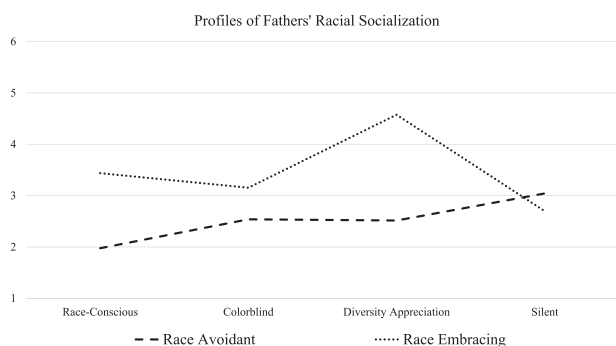
Fig. 2 Profiles of Fathers' Racial Socialization Messages

racial attitudes (e.g., Bigler & Hughes, 2009, Castelli et al., 2009, Levy & Killen, 2008). More recently, research has found that one factor that contributes to these attitudes is parental messages about race and racism, also known as racial socialization (Anyiwo et al., 2018; Bañales et al., 2019; Barr & Neville, 2014). However, there are no studies that investigate this association among Asian American families, which is problematic given that some may espouse anti-Black and colorblind racial attitudes due to the "model minority" myth, or the view that Asian Americans are more academically and financially successful and superior compared to other racial groups (Yoo et al., 2010). Thus, the current study extends the literature by examining whether mothers' and fathers' patterns of racial socialization have associations with Asian American adolescents' colorblind and anti-Black racial attitudes. This is especially important to help Asian American adolescents become stronger allies to the Black community while also raising critical consciousness levels.

Descriptive analyses revealed that Asian American males endorsed greater anti-Black racism and colorblind racial attitudes than females, which makes sense given that males reported receiving more colorblind socialization messages from their parents. This is consistent with prior studies demonstrating that Asian American men reported greater colorblind racial ideologies than women (Keum et al., 2018;

Yi et al., 2020), which may be because women are more aware of societal injustices given differences in social status and women experiencing multiple forms of oppression (Neville et al., 2014). This study advances the field by suggesting that males may receive more colorblind messages from parents during development, so future studies could examine whether this is a potential factor in the differential development of colorblind and anti-Black racial attitudes between males and females. However, no differences emerged for the other types of socialization messages, contrary to a previous study with a diverse sample of adolescents (including Chinese Americans) finding that boys reported receiving more preparation for bias messages from mothers than girls (Hughes et al., 2009). Other studies with African American families have also suggested that silent socialization is more common among parents of boys while cultural socialization is more common among parents of girls (Caughy et al., 2011), and that boys are more likely to receive messages about coping with discrimination (McHale et al., 2006). Thus, future research is needed to understand which socialization messages are transmitted differently by Asian American parents based on their child's gender. It is also notable that there were no significant differences found between reports of socialization scores from youth based on parental gender. This finding is contrary to previous research suggesting that mothers engage in more racial socialization than fathers (e.g., Hughes et al., 2009).

Regarding the correlational data, youth who received messages about racial inequalities were also likely to receive encouragement to appreciate diversity, consistent with previous research (Neville et al., 2014). However, there was a positive link between race-conscious and colorblind messages, which disregard the significance of race. Although this is an unexpected finding, it is possible that parents are not always consistent with their messaging, such that parents may have been providing both types of messages despite their contradiction to one another. In addition, parents could have emphasized different messages during different developmental periods; for example, depending on

Table 5 Means (SDs) for Racial-Ethnic Socialization Profiles

	Mother - Race Avoidant	Mother - Race Hesitant	Mother - Race Embracing	Father – Race Avoidant	Father – Race Embracing
Race-conscious	1.95 (0.16)	2.80 (0.10)	3.92 (0.13)	1.98 (0.11)	3.44 (0.08)
Colorblind	2.15 (0.20)	3.12 (0.07)	3.03 (0.11)	2.54 (0.15)	3.15 (0.07
Diversity Appreciation	2.12 (0.14)	3.80 (0.13)	5.21 (0.11)	2.52 (0.15)	4.58 (0.09)
Silent	2.76 (0.21)	3.11 (0.10)	2.34 (0.13)	3.04 (0.14)	2.70 (0.08)

Table 6 Mean Differences in Distal Outcome Variables by the Racial-Ethnic Socialization Profiles

	Colorblind Racial Attitudes	Anti-Black attitudes
Mother - Race Avoidant	2.26 (0.11)	2.79 (0.09)
Mother - Race Hesitant	2.55 (0.08)	2.96 (0.08)
Mother - Race Embracing	2.46 (0.09)	2.60 (0.09)
Omnibus Wald χ^2 Test (df)	$\chi^2(2) = 4.16$, $p = 0.125$	$\chi^2(2) = 7.18$, $p = 0.028*$
Father – Race Avoidant	2.28 (0.09)	2.73 (0.11)
Father – Race Embracing	2.57 (0.06)	2.83 (0.07)
Omnibus Wald χ^2 Test (df)	$\chi^2(1) = 6.01$, $p = 0.014*$	$\chi^2(1) = 0.50$, $p = 0.478$

$*p < 0.05$

their racial identity development, parents may have first started sending colorblind messages during early childhood and then later on sent messages about structural racism. Parents may also change their messaging based on different contexts including particular places and times (Juang et al., 2018). Given that this data collection occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic, when Asian Americans became targets of anti-Asian sentiment due to the virus's supposed origins in China and discriminatory rhetoric from political leaders, it is possible the increased incidences of violence towards Asian Americans prompted more conversations around structural racism in Asian American families (Cheah et al., 2021). As expected however, youth receiving race-conscious messages were less likely to report their parents staying silent about race; in contrast, youth reporting more colorblind messages were more likely to endorse their parents also staying silent.

Most interestingly, there were three different profiles for youth's reports of mother racial socialization and two different profiles for father racial socialization. Both groups had a race embracing profile, which consisted of parents who talked the most about racial inequities and appreciation of cultural diversity, rarely stayed silent about race, but sometimes sent colorblind messages (i.e., denying the existence of race). In addition, both groups had parents who did not discuss race often, as demonstrated by high scores on silent socialization and low scores on race-conscious, colorblind, or diversity appreciation messages, which were labeled as the race avoidant profile. Lastly, a third profile emerged only for mother socialization. Labeled as race hesitant, this profile was in between the other two, with some race-conscious, colorblind, and diversity appreciation

messages, and the highest score on silent socialization. However, it is important to note that silent socialization was somewhat similar across all mother and father profiles, corresponding with "disagree" or "slightly disagree". In other words, on average, none of the youth for any of the profiles thought their parents ignored the topic of race.

When examining whether the profiles related to outcomes, the findings demonstrated that youth with race embracing mothers reported less anti-Black attitudes than those with race hesitant mothers. Youth with race embracing mothers may have a greater understanding of structural racism and thus greater critical consciousness (Bañales et al., 2019) and less anti-Black attitudes. In contrast, youth with race hesitant mothers received inconsistent messaging including colorblind messages alongside messages about structural racism, which may perpetuate reinforcement of negative stereotypes that justify the racial hierarchy (Plaut, 2010). Another explanation is that parents may have only emphasized racism experienced by Asian Americans and neglected educating their children about anti-Blackness, which could perpetuate the model minority myth. Youth may then internalize the model minority myth, which has been linked to greater anti-Black attitudes (Yi & Todd, 2021). Findings also suggested that youth with race avoidant mothers did not have significantly higher anti-Black attitudes compared to the race embracing mothers. Perhaps youth who recognize their mothers are not willing to talk about race are seeking out information from other sources such as schools (Byrd 2017; Saleem & Byrd 2021) or peers (Ahn et al., 2021; Wang & Benner, 2016; Wang et al., 2015). It also should be noted that the mean scores for all profiles for anti-Black attitudes for both mother and father

profiles had a small range just below slightly disagree, consistent with the overall mean for the sample. Unfortunately, even only slightly disagreeing with anti-Black statements indicates a major issue in that anti-Blackness is still prevalent among Asian American adolescents.

Results indicated different relations between the profiles and outcomes for fathers. Although there were no differences in anti-Black attitudes between the two father profiles, findings indicated that youth with race embracing fathers scored higher on colorblind racial attitudes than youth with race avoidant fathers. Although unexpected given that youth with race embracing fathers received more messages about racial inequities and appreciation of diversity, they also received more colorblind messages. Thus, although fathers may acknowledge that racism exists, they may also encourage their children to brush off discrimination and work hard to overcome racism as a result of the model minority myth.

It is difficult to conclude why there were differences between mother and father profiles and adolescent outcomes. Adolescents with race embracing mothers reported lower anti-Black attitudes, but those with race embracing fathers indicated more colorblind racial attitudes. One possible explanation could be that Asian American fathers are perceived as harsher than mothers (Kim & Wong, 2002). Thus, when fathers educate their children on race and racism, it could be perceived as a demand, an educational tool, and children may struggle to internalize the messages. On the other hand, Asian American mothers are often warmer and less controlling than fathers (Kim & Wong, 2002), so adolescents may be more receptive to taking in the socialization messages. These differences may also possibly be a result of *how* parents are sending these messages to their children and a function of the parent-child relationship. Future studies might explore whether the emotional climate may explain possible differences when mothers and fathers send socialization messages to their children.

It is important to note that the cross-sectional nature of this study prevents drawing conclusions about causality. Longitudinal studies are needed to examine how racial socialization messages relate to the development of racial attitudes over time. It is possible that the racial awareness of participants affected their reports of their parents' socialization efforts. In addition, the profiles identified only represent the present sample and thus are not generalizable. Given that more than half the sample was East Asian, future research should include representation from Southeast Asian and South Asian participants. Furthermore, future studies should include other sources of socialization such as teachers, peers, neighborhoods, and social media (e.g., Byrd & Ahn, 2020), which could potentially play a role in adolescent development of racial attitudes, as well as examining

how these attitudes translate to anti-racist actions. Moreover, examining how parents engage in socialization differently based on the child's gender is an important area of future research. Qualitative research may contribute to an enhanced understanding of youth's intersectional identities, similar to one study that interviewed Asian American women to understand the uniquely gendered racial socialization messages they received based on their experiences as women (Ahn et al., 2021). Another possible direction for future research is to examine how the combination of mother and father socialization profiles relates to youth attitudes (e.g., if both parents are race-hesitant vs. a race-embracing mother and race avoidant father).

As the fight continues to rage on in school board meetings across the United States about whether primary school teachers should be allowed to talk about race and racism in classrooms, this study suggests that the types of messages youth receive about race may play a role in their development of racial attitudes. Notably, it is parents as well as policy makers pushing to restrict teachers from talking about race in their classrooms, which will inevitably continue to perpetuate racial inequalities. Future research should examine the effects of such policies and programs to educate parents and teachers about how to approach talking about race with children. Moreover, in addition to examining racial attitudes, future studies should investigate how racial-ethnic socialization impacts critical action (Christophe et al., 2021).

Conclusion

Although there is growing research on the effects of parental racial socialization on Asian American adolescents, most prior studies examine academic and psychosocial outcomes (e.g., Atkin & Yoo, 2021; Kiang et al., 2019). Using latent profiles, the current study extends the literature by addressing whether racial socialization profiles from mothers and fathers affect their adolescents' anti-Black attitudes and colorblind racial attitudes. The findings demonstrated that racial socialization messages from mothers affect children's anti-Black attitudes, and racial socialization from fathers affect their children's colorblind racial attitudes. Results suggested the importance of parents in the formation of children's racial views among Asian American families. Research has shown that adolescents have an understanding of critical consciousness and engage in anti-racist actions (Aldana et al., 2019), and the findings demonstrate that this developmental time period is one in which parents can have an influence on their children's racial attitudes. In conclusion, the current study points to a need for further research examining Asian Americans

learning about and fighting for racial justice in solidarity with their peers of color.

Authors' Contributions A.L.A. conceived of the study, led its design and coordination, performed the statistical analysis, and drafted and revised the manuscript. L.H.A. participated in the study design, and revised the manuscript. Both authors read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Data Sharing and Declaration The datasets generated and/or analyzed during the current study are not publicly available but are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Conflict of Interest The authors declare no competing interests.

Ethical Approval This study involved human participants and was determined as exempt by the Review Board (IRB) at Arizona State University (IRB #STUDY00013444).

Informed Consent Parental consent and signature were required for participants under the age of 18. Participants under the age of 18 provided assent, and 18-year old participants provided consent.

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