Black Lives Matter Movement Attitudes and Experiences among Latinx Families: A Mixed Method Approach

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Background

- ❖ **Critical consciousness (CC)**– the ability to recognize systems of inequality (**critical reflection**), coupled with the desire to take action to remedy it – can be an important developmental asset for youth.
- ❖ The heightened attention to the murders of innocent Black people by law enforcement in 2020 has led to the resurgence of the **Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement** that included a more ethnically and racially diverse group of participants.
- ❖ However, few studies have examined BLM attitudes, support, and participation among Latinx youth and families.
  - ❖ There is wide variety in appearance and racial-identification within Latinx communities, yet anti-Black sentiment rooted in colonization and White supremacy exists.[1]
  - ❖ Latinx individuals experience **racial profiling** by both police and immigration officers, which could make them either more or less supportive of the BLM movement compared to other racial-ethnic groups.[2,3]
- ❖ **STUDY AIM**: Guided by models of CC[4] and intersectionality,[5] the current study aimed to examine how BLM attitudes and experiences differ according to participant demographics, CC, and experiences with law enforcement.
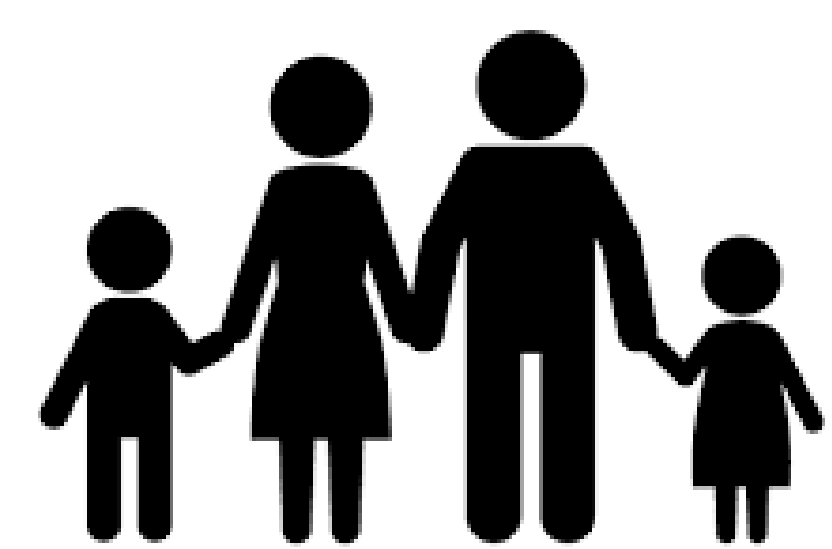
Methods

- ❖ Latinx families (N= 293) consisting of **one parent** (M_{age}= 39.8, SD = 6.6) and **one adolescent** (aged 12-15; M_{age}= 13, SD = 1.41) were recruited in the US Southwest.

  Parents:
  - ❖ 57.5% US-born
  - ❖ 67.7% Mexican-origin
  - ❖ 57.3% had a yearly household income of $40,000-$50,000 or lower (ranged from less than $10,000 to $150,000 +)

  Youth:
  - ❖ 95.1% US-born
  - ❖ 68.3% Mexican-origin
  - ❖ 47.7% identified as girls/females, 50.5% as boys/males, .3% as trans girl/female, and 1.4% as non-binary

Quantitative Measures

- ❖ **Short Critical Consciousness Scale[6]** (α =.93): 4-items assessing **critical reflection (CR)**; asked agreement with statements about inequality e.g., "Certain racial or ethnic groups have fewer chances to get ahead." Higher scores indicate higher CR.
- ❖ **Police and Law Enforcement Scale[7]** (α =.90-.93): 10-items assessing *negative* experiences with police. Higher scores indicate more experiences.
- ❖ **Perceptions of Police Survey[8]** (α =.92-.96): 12-items assessing attitudes/perceptions of police. Higher scores indicate less favorable perceptions.
- ❖ **BLM Attitudes Scale[9]** (α =.95-.97): 6-items that ask about attitudes and beliefs about the BLM movement. Higher scores indicate more positive attitudes.
- ❖ **Experiences with Protests and Black Lives Matter:[10]** three-items asking about involvement and experiences surrounding the BLM movement.

Statistical Analysis

- ❖ Independent samples t-tests, chi-square tests, & one-way ANOVAs were run to test differences in BLM attitudes/experiences by demographics. Regressions were run to test the role of CR and experiences with police on BLM attitudes and experiences.

Qualitative Data and Analysis

- ❖ Parents and youth were each asked to share in their own words, their feelings and thoughts about the BLM protests of Summer 2020 and police brutality.
- ❖ Responses were analyzed using a grounded theory approach.[11] Emergent themes were identified through memos and refined into parent and youth codebooks. Inter-rater reliability was high for both youth (93-94%) and parent (92-94%) coding teams.

Results
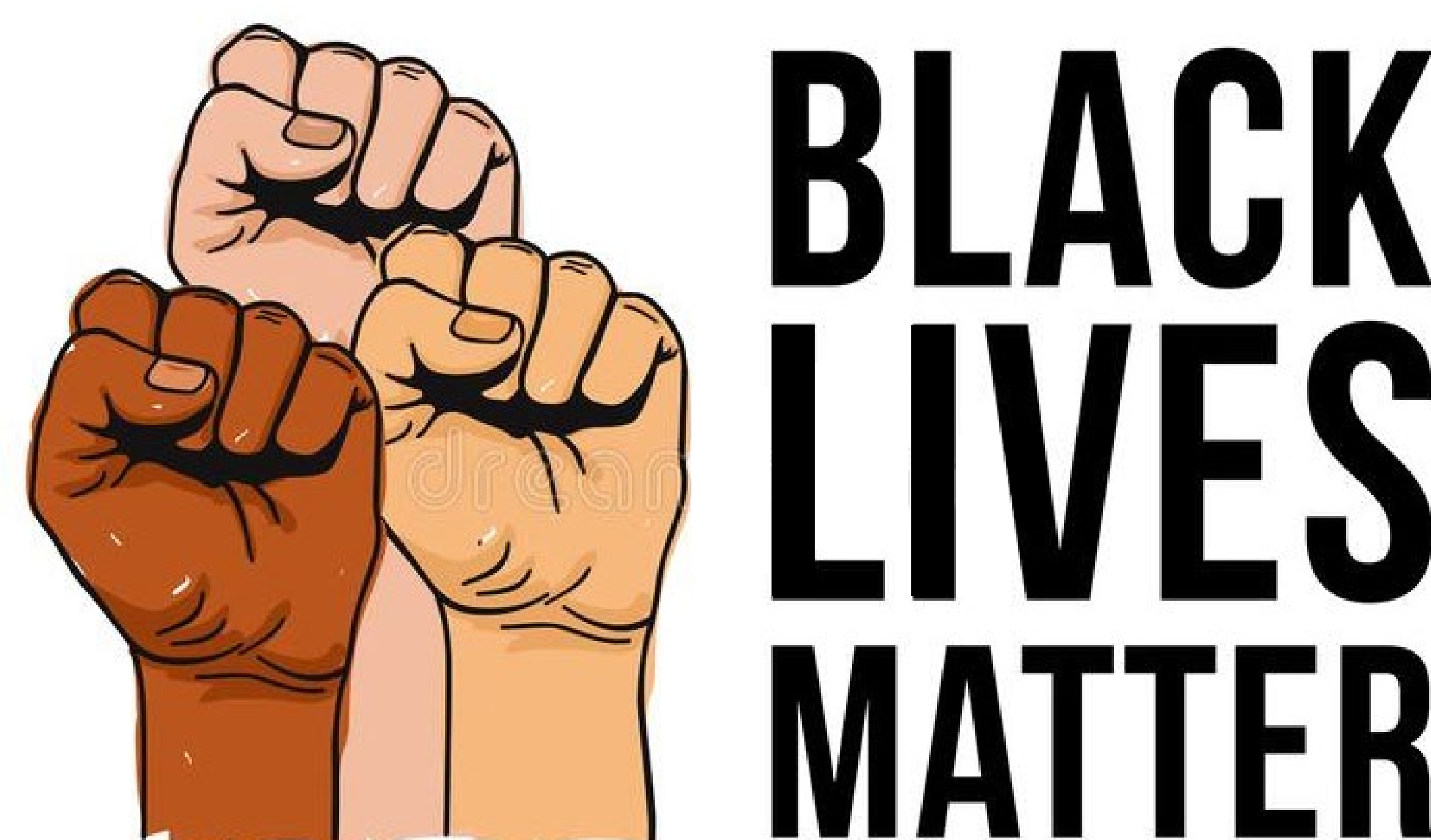
Quantitative Findings

- ❖ Parents
  - ❖ **Foreign-born** parents were significantly **less likely to discuss the BLM protests with their children** compared to US-born parents (χ2 (1, 289) = 20.57, p < .001); however, nativity did not predict BLM attitudes.
  - ❖ Age and self-reported skin tone did not predict BLM attitudes or experiences.
- ❖ Youth
  - ❖ **Girls** reported **more positive BLM attitudes** (M=5.82, SD=1.29), and were significantly **more likely to watch BLM protests and related news** compared to boys (M=5.37, SD=1.54, p< .01; χ2 (1, 283) = 4.52, p = .034, respectively).
  - ❖ **Higher levels of critical reflection** associated with **more positive BLM attitudes** (b= .23, SE= .05, p <.001).
  - ❖ Age and self-reported skin tone did not predict BLM attitudes or experiences.
- ❖ Parents and Youth
  - ❖ More **negative perceptions of police** predicted **more positive BLM attitudes** among parents (b= .33, SE= .10, p< .001) and youth (b= .47, SE= .08, p< .001).
  - ❖ However, experiences with law enforcement did not significantly predict BLM attitudes

Qualitative Findings (Table 1, supplementary materials)

- ❖ Overall, of those coded for explicit BLM content, most youth and parents expressed Pro- and Mid-BLM attitudes. A large portion of parents and youth also discussed issues of inequality and racism.
- ❖ Parents and youth who expressed Pro-BLM sentiment were frequently coded for discussing inequality, racism, anti-police sentiment, and a personal experience with police or border patrol/ICE.

Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

- ❖ Parents
  - ❖ **US-born parents** endorsed more **pro-BLM** (26.9%) and **mid-BLM** (23.1%) attitudes than foreign-born parents (17.0%; 18.7%, respectively).
  - ❖ **Parents with at least one encounter with police** were more likely to discuss **general racism** (34.3%) compared to those who reported no experiences with the police (22.0%), but both were similarly likely to discuss systemic racism (9.0%; 9.8%, respectively)
- ❖ Youth
  - ❖ **Older youth** (6.3%) were more likely to identify **systemic racism** in their responses compared to younger youth (2.1 - 4.4%)
  - ❖ **Girls** (47.4%) were more likely to identify issues of **inequality** and **general racism** (32.3%) compared to boys (39.1%; 26.1%, respectively), but girls and boys were similarly likely to discuss **systematic racism** (3.8%; 4.3%, respectively)
  - ❖ **Youth with at least one encounter with police** were more likely to discuss **general racism** (37.0%) and **systematic racism** (8.7%) compared to youth who reported never having any experiences with the police (28.1%; 3.1%)

Conclusions and Implications

- ❖ Overall, quantitative and qualitative data revealed that a good portion of parents and youth expressed **solidarity and support for the BLM movement**, and many acknowledged of issues of inequality. Findings also suggest, however, that support for BLM may be higher among US-born Latinx parents, girls, older youth, and youth and parents with negative perceptions of police. Thus, **generational status, gender, and lived experiences may intersect with ethnic identity to inform attitudes towards the BLM movement** and future work should continue to explore this nuance.
- ❖ Qualitative data suggested that older youth, girls, and youth with negative encounters with police were more likely to identify issues of **inequality** and **racism**, which may help to explain their more positive attitudes toward the BLM movement. Additionally, Latinx youth with **higher critical reflection** expressed more support for the BLM movement, suggesting that greater awareness of inequality **may help to promote cross ethnic-racial group solidarity**.
- ❖ Notably, there was a lack of diversity and representation within our sample. Most of the sample identified as Mexican-origin and there was a lack of variability in skin tone. Thus, we may have failed to capture the unique experiences and perspectives of Indigenous, Black, and Afro-Latinx individuals across different ethnic/racial backgrounds.
- ❖ Altogether, these findings have important implications for **understanding Latinx BLM attitudes and experiences** and for **fostering solidarity and coalition building.**