

**BLACK ON WHITE LOVE:
HOW RACIAL/ETHNIC IDENTITIES INFLUENCE
PARTNER-DECISIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS**

A Senior Thesis
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Sociology Major and the B.A. Degree,
The University of California, Santa Cruz

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2/26/2019

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ABSTRACT

The topic of interracial dating has historically been muffled due to its controversy. Previous literature has emphasized that racial biases and economic differences have played a major role in choosing a potential partner. With primarily racial motivation influencing decisions, my research aims to answer the following question: in what ways does ethnicity/race and economic status affect the thoughts behind romantic/sexual relationships. To answer the question, an online survey was administered to 1350 people of various backgrounds to gauge 1) if those previous findings are still accurate, and 2) to have a better understanding of where those potential biases come from. This project then attempts to find commonality in the comfortability between intra-racial or inter-racial communications. The ultimate objective of my work is to open up the traditionally private and closed-off discussion of interracial relationships, and to further deepen the understanding for both racially and economically motivated choices of partner selection and courtship.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to take this time to thank the UCSC Sociology department for continuous support and love. In particular, Professor Hiroshi Fukurai for helping me along the way as I completed this work. His guidance and expertise have both given me the opportunity to succeed, but also allowed me the creative freedom to explore the subject openly. In addition, I want to thank Tina Cossaboom for both being a mentor, in my undergraduate struggles, but also by giving me support and the tools to succeed in developing my thesis. Julian Rodriguez, James Sirigotis, and Toni Rouhana were all tremendous help, allowing me to meet and discuss my work and giving me great feedback. Also, I want to express gratitude to my dear friend Laura Benavidez who supported the topic of choice when it was severely underdeveloped back in 2017.

Lastly, I want to thank all of the participants who completed my survey. Data collecting was one of my primary concerns. Without everyone who participated, I would not have been able to accomplish such a feat. I greatly appreciate all of the work everyone has done to assist in helping me finish, and I would not have been able to otherwise. I also want to acknowledge those who shared their sensitive stories because without their contribution, the paper would not be same and would not have the same impact. Thank you.

1 | RACIAL THEORY

The concept of race has shifted historically from its original social and political contexts in which it was first adopted. Explored by Omi and Winant (1986), in North America, the taxonomy of race has often been identified through a phenotypic biological lens. However, social scientists began to look at race and its emergence as a socially constructed concept. According to Omi and Winant, race “[is] given concrete expression by the specific social relations and historical context in which they are embedded. Racial meanings have varied tremendously over time and between different societies” (4). In other words, the racial categories and their meanings in today’s vernacular have shifted and changed to accommodate the differing structure of socio-political and economic relations. For instance, in 1970s, Susie Guillory Phipps of Louisiana attempted to change her racial designation from black to white. While she passed as white all her life, Phipps who shared 3/32 black ancestral roots was designated as “colored” in her birth certificate. She filed the lawsuit against the Louisiana Department of Vital Statistics to change her racial designation. Her case went all the way to the Louisiana Supreme Court, where despite her purported desire, ruled that her race was still black, not white.

Although phenotypes are stagnant, the language people use to describe racialized groups varies from country to country. In the case of Britain, blacks typically included the descendants of those from Africa, the Caribbean, and South Asia such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, among other South and Southeast Asian countries. The racial designation and their meanings have been subjected to the colonial legacy, as well as changing and emerging structures of social, economic, and political forces in society. The concept of race has also led to the creation of various non-white labels and identities in order to describe racially-designated divisions of white populations, often called “racialized others.”

Despite the fact that race is a social construction, the meanings, ideas, and stereotypes attached to racial groups have exerted racializing impacts in society. In daily interactions, when people look at, or speak to one another, the identity of race is one of the first identifying features people are conscious of. Although race does not give information on peoples' name, age, or occupation, race does give a set of assumptions for someone to work off—often referred to as stereotypes. According to Omi and Winant (1986), “racial beliefs operate as an ‘amateur biology,’ a way of explaining the variations of human nature. Temperament, sexuality, intelligence, athletic ability, aesthetic preferences, and so on are presumed to be fixed and discernible from the palpable mark of race” (6). For instance, being a black boy could indicate to others racialized stereotypes of being violent, or being a thief. These racialized notions are developed off of race alone and not who the boy actually is. Specifically, in the United States, a type of “racial etiquette” (Omi and Winant 1986; p. 6) pertains to most people. By belonging to a certain race, based off of phenotypical looks, various assumptions are made.

Racial categories and groups affiliations can change overtime and integrate other groups of people. Race is not static, rather its meaning changes. Although not easily malleable, racial meanings have shifted; “black” once solely referred to slavery. With the abolition of slavery, “black” has become extended to Africans from the Ibo, Yoruba, and Fulani. Described as the concept of racialization— the “extension of racial meaning to a previously racially unclassified relationship, social practice or group,” existing racial groups can expand and integrate other unknown social groups (Omi and Winant 1986; p. 7). In practical terms, when an unfamiliar group becomes more apparent, that group will undergo a process of racialization in order to categorize them. Like other races, they too will adopt certain stereotypes and other preconceived notions.

Below, I build on this theory of racialization to examine the way certain groups of people have become legally recognized, and the way the United States has disenfranchised the intermingling of people of different ethnic/racial groups. First, I will discuss the history of anti-miscegenation, and use Texas as a particular case study to analyze the actual laws and sanctions against interracial dating. Second, I will look at how the Supreme Court case *Loving v. Virginia* (1967) has played a role in dismantling old regulations that prohibited the practice of interracial dating and the precedents that the case set. Third, when applying race to the social phenomenon of dating, I examine previous researchers and the way they perceive the impact of race in dating today. Lastly, I look at how amongst all of these factors, the combination of socioeconomic status can play an even deeper role in the selecting a partner.

2 | HISTORY OF ANTI-MISCEGENATION

Looking towards marriage, we can begin to understand the effects of racialization in its broader context. Historically, a marriage between people of different races was once considered illegal in many states in the U.S. Beyond much of the romanticized showmanship portrayed in the media, interracial dating was barred between white and people of color, including African American, Latino, Asian, Native, and others of mixed-descent due to anti-miscegenation policies. Enforced by the U.S. state courts, anti-miscegenation's impact played similar roles to other methods of white imperialism, continuing a manifestation of xenophobic ideologies against people of color, immigrants, and religious minorities.

2.1 | CASE STUDY: TEXAS'S ANTI-MISCEGENATION LAWS

For most places in the United States, anti-miscegenation laws existed—Texas was no exception. After only a year since Texas had become independent from Mexico in 1836, Texas state legislators passed anti-miscegenation laws. Instructed by the Texas Penal Code, someone of

a mixed race could marry a white person, on the condition that the racially mixed person did not share African ancestry. If violated, the perpetrator would be found guilty on the terms of “[offending] against public morals, decency, and chastity,” resulting in imprisonment for up to five years. Discrimination against people with an African ancestry did not stop with marriage; black people that resided in Texas were subjugated to slavery, regardless if they had been a free person previously (Menchaca, 2008). They were given the option of either getting deported to Mexico, or to become slaves and stay in Texas. However, in December of 1840, the Act for Relief of Certain Free Persons of Color was instilled, combating previous legislature and allowing certain free black individuals from becoming slaves on the condition that they could prove that they were free (Menchaca, 2008).

After the initial ten years of anti-miscegenation laws, the Texas courts amended some of their initial laws to officially recognize interracial marriages prior to 1836. For instance, lawmakers originally did not recognize any interracial couples. However, in 1845, they repealed their law to only uphold interracial marriages that had been conducted prior to 1836. If they had not done so, then white Anglo-American families would not be guaranteed inheritance rights (Menchaca, 2008). The reason for this is due to the complexity of Texas’ and Mexico’s laws, and comprehension of the Texas court case, *Smith v. Smith* (1846). In *Smith v. Smith* (1846), Maria de Jesusa Smith, a widowed Spanish woman, was challenged by her son in law, Samuel Smith, over the rights of her husband’s, John Smith—former mayor of San Antonio, property. Initially, John claimed that he was the son of an earlier marriage, and thereby should be given rights to the land. However, he was denied—resulting in an appeal to the Texas Supreme Court. In his second trial, the main point was that Maria’s marriage was illegitimate because it was declared under Mexican law, following traditions outside of the United States. Once again, the court ruled

against him, and establishing that while John was alive, he did not recognize Samuel as his inheritance. This left the precedent that miscegenetic marriages that were held under Mexican law were seen as legitimate under common law. Although this is a victory for interracial marriage as a whole, only those who had been married under Mexico's common law were seen as valid. For those who desired an interracial marriage after 1836, they were restricted and could still be persecuted under the Texas Penal Code.

2.2 | THE EFFECTS OF *LOVING V. VIRGINIA* (1967)

One-hundred years later, *Loving v. Virginia* (1967) eliminated statewide rulings against interracial dating. As a result, two fundamental principles of interracial dating emerged. The first is that interracial dating/marriage is legal, establishing the legality of interracial courtship. In this case, Richard Loving, a white man, married a woman with mixed ancestries of African and Native American roots. While they were originally from Virginia, they married in the District of Columbia to avoid Virginia's anti-miscegenation law. Upon returning, they were immediately arrested for violating Virginia's Racial Integrity Act of 1924, and were sentenced to one year in prison. Eventually the sentence was suspended and replaced with a 25-year expulsion from Virginia. Soon after, with the help of the American Civil Liberties Union, they repealed the state laws when the case finally reached the Supreme Court in 1967. Since dating someone of a different race was no longer illegal, it influenced those who wished to date someone else from a different racial background. The second precedent is that the state has no influence over the private matters between individuals dating or marrying. As a result, the ruling created some degree of safety for those who wanted to interracially marry.

Along the precedents that *Loving v. Virginia* had on the general public, news corporations attempted to sway public sentiment. In the study done by Hoewe and Zeldes (2012), after a deep

analysis of three major news sources: The New York Times, The Washington Post and Times-Herald, and Chicago Tribune, the rendition of their publications were “largely one-sided.” Demonstrated in Hoewe et. al studies, most news sources had unbiased coverage but of the sources, all three contained favoritism toward Loving. Favoritism was measured by the means of word count, total number of stories, and stories representing each side of the case. The era of 1960’s reflected a time of social unrest against predominantly right-leaning ideology, and in this case, it was no different; publications of these newspapers helped encourage a change in public perception. In other words, the case was presented in hopes of gaining “public sympathy [and] in the acceptance (both legally and otherwise) of interracial marriage” (Hoewe and Zeldes 2012).

3 | APPLICATION OF RACIAL THEORY IN DATING

Since the legalization of interracial marriages, several studies have evaluated the effects of race in the social phenomena of dating. The perception of dating is often seen as a private practice; due to the normality, race does not appear to be an element. However, based upon previous statistical data, a racialized hierarchy is apparent in dating. Black women are the least preferred among men, and Asian and black men are least preferred for women. Meanwhile, white men and women both had a higher and more favorable response rate from all other races (Rudder 2014; Chow and Hu 2013). A common justification for explaining why someone is more attracted to one race over another is the idea of preference. (Tessler 2015). On the surface, it appears no different than favoring individuals who are taller, smarter, or stronger, but critics argue differently. A common critique is that the favoritism of a particular race/ethnicity will lead to the commodification of said race/ethnicity. It exoticizes certain groups of people based on stereotypes and other forms of prejudice, culminating in the fetishization of race.

In spite of potential issues regarding fetishization, previous researchers have elaborated on the positive outcomes in developing a racial preference. For theorist George Yancey (2002), interracial dating allows for a more unified community by equalizing the racial differences amongst people. The general demographics of people will change as more couples become interconnected because of interracial dating, producing offspring that will become inevitably mixed. If Yancey's theory proves true, then after multiple generations of intermingling, the formation of a post-racial society—that is a society where racial discrimination and prejudice are nonexistent, will occur. In other words, if there was ever a scenario where everyone was mixed, then under the thought of a post-racial society, everyone would move past race and have racial equality (Yancey 2002).

While Yancey foretells the achievability of racial equality where the assimilation of other ethnic/racial groups can occur, others argue the opposite: that it could potentially lead to a more racially stratified society. From one perspective, racial assimilation is seen as an ideal, but in Yancey's later research, people act differently to that belief. In 2009, he surveyed African Americans and found two primary responses to racial assimilation: those who wanted to racially assimilate, and those who felt threatened because of other racial/ethnic groups intermarrying. For African American women specifically, he found that they were the least likely to marry interracially (2009). Addressed by Yancey and previous researchers Rudder, Chow, Hu, and Tessler, African American women were found to not only be intensely disliked, but also found that African American men are more likely to interracially date (2009; 2013; 2014; 2015). Although other respondents believed that racial equality could be achieved, race must play a role as a determining factor for partner selection.

If race is to play a role in partner selection, a fundamental ingredient lies in the way people communicate with someone of a different race/ethnicity. To assess this, Tina Harris conducted a study to explore the concept of the racial motivation theory—having a direct interest based off of racial appearance. While her study did not look at dating in particular, her data found compelling evidence for the change in behavior when interacting with someone of a different race (2000). In her Q-sort study, 120 students were given the ability to hypothetically choose how they would act/respond in a situation, based off of the actions set in an index card, with someone of a different race. The results demonstrated that people interact differently when communicating with people of a difference race; people take a more defensive and passive approach in hopes of not offending or upsetting someone of a different race/ethnicity.

With the addition of Harris' study of evaluating communication, Raymond Fishman and his colleagues managed a study that combined that aspect, as well as dating through a more common conventional practice—speed dating. While emulating a Speed Dating Industry, he found that there are racial influences in terms of speed dating (2008). Compared to the U.S. census in 2000, 4% of marriages were interracial. However, within Fishman's controlled experiment, people were more open to interracially dating someone. He theorized that if someone had a personal experience or had a higher tolerance of different racial/ethnic group, then dating someone outside of their racial group would be more common. Fishman's study showed that 47% of the matches were tolerant of interracial relationships because of exposure to higher education, or residing in a diverse community (2008). While most of his participants were impartial, one discrepancy was that those same people also had a strong preference for someone of the same race, regardless of educational background. To put it simply, the observational

studies did not match up with the survey-based evidence, implying that despite there being openness to interracial relationships, many preferred same-race relationships.

In the more traditional practice, researcher Diane Fujino evaluated the patterns and reasoning for interracial dating within the Asian American community. Within her study, she had two important findings come out of her questionnaire, (1) that propinquity was the strongest factor between Asian Americans and their different racial partner, and (2) that there is more familial pressure on sons to intramarry than daughters (2000). While she did find that race does impact interracial relationships, her findings of propinquity in specifically Asian American interracial dating indicate the potency of other components. In particular, socioeconomic status and gender, which, according to her study, played roles in partner decision making.

4 | SOCIOECONOMIC THEORY ON INTERACIAL DATING

Mentioned briefly in Fujino's study, socioeconomic status also has the potential to impact interracial dating. While some relationships may be solely economically driven, studies have indicated that the interwoven relationship between socioeconomic status and race have a far greater influence than being mutually exclusive. Drawing from scholarship on the status-exchange theory, Hongyu Wang examines the theory to explain interracial relationships (2007). The status-exchange theory states that if someone belongs to a minority group, like black, Latino, Asian, etc., but has a high socioeconomic status, their potential to pair up with someone who is of a "higher" racial group is more likely. However, some of the exceptions are people who are high-status whites, and low-status minority groups. Furthermore, Wang notes that those in who fit within the theory are more likely to be in an interracial relationship, depending on the location and living conditions because socioeconomic status is indicative of the community people belong to (2007). Regardless of the immediate differences in just socioeconomic status,

previous researchers have also found that interracially married whites were most likely to follow a simplified racial hierarchy: Asian, Hispanic, and black (Qian 1997).

Although measured in various ways, parental education is one of the primary ways to analyze socioeconomic status. In previous studies, three key components make up the socioeconomic status of parents; (1) parental education, (2) parental occupational class, (3) parental income (Erola, Jalonen, Lehti 2016). Diagrammed like a funneling flow chart, the skills and traits attained in education will often produce highly educated individual who attain prestigious occupations like doctor, lawyer, or engineer. For those types of jobs, a high educational background is necessary with multiple years of extra schooling. On the contrary, if an individual's education concluded at high school, the types of occupations would be greatly limited, resulting in a lower income, thus impacting the social class of their children. Although not always correlated, having an occupation like doctor, lawyer, or engineer will often produce high amounts of income; allowing them to purchase homes in a community that reflects their wealth. As a result, the children of those doctors, lawyers, or engineers will be set in an environment that replicates their social class. In other words, the study demonstrated by Erola, Jalonen, and Lehti's found that education status of parents had the largest role out of determining socioeconomic status (2016). While income and inheritance may play a role in a child's socioeconomic status, its impact is short and does not have long-lasting effects compared to parent's educational level.

5 | RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Upon assessing the literature review, one of the key components that peaks my interest is how ethnic/racial groups become preferential in dating. When people are stereotyped and subjected under repetitive racist remarks, the internalization of those ideas take shape in thoughts

and actions. The way race has ubiquitously entered all forms of social life, and has established certain systems of oppression leaves no institution free of its reign. The social practice of dating is no exception; as a result, understanding the effects of that internalization and the form it takes in interracial relationships is pivotal. Simply, my interest is on how race has infiltrated the desire for someone to romantically and sexually love another. With primarily racial motivation influencing decisions, I ask the following question: in what ways does ethnicity/race and economic status affect the thoughts behind romantic/sexual relationships?

When people see another person, a big factor of a relationship is how romantically and sexually they fit with the other person. Romantic and sexual gratification have become key components for marriage; however, stereotypes and other forms of public perception can permeate and influence the thoughts and feelings of people involved in interracial relationships. People may be conscious of certain qualities or traits that they desire out of their partner, but subconsciously, race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status can have larger effects in the selection of a partner.

With all of this in mind, I am looking at how race and class can be a possible hinderance for people pursuing an interracial relationship. I want to know the social class of people, how they choose to communicate and interact with those who are different and whether that differs between races, and what possible impact those factors have when it comes to finding a partner belonging to a different race. Upon attaining the data, if race does play a role, then I hope that relationships becomes less race-dependent, and instead allows for people to become more open-minded to difference. Part of this acceptance of change would be to apply this perspective in K-12 education so children can start to become knowledgeable and not see people for their stereotypes shown in media or other mediums.

6 | METHODOLOGY

To answer my research question, I conducted a questionnaire on Google Forms to assist in analyzing public reception to the thoughts of interracial dating. For the format, I was predominantly asking how the participant felt regarding varying statements, ranging from strongly agreed, to strongly disagree. For the most part, the concentration of questions were focused on race, but I left an open-ended question if they had any particular comments regarding a specific experience that they wanted to mention, or any ideas regarding this. To analyze the data, I used two statistic programs: SPSS and Stata. I used SPSS in order to formulate tables and percentages when cross tabulating for race and gender with respect to the eight statements, and finding the correlation between parent's educational level and race with respect to the eight statements. Meanwhile, I also used Stata in order to provide regression analysis for parent's education level. Although overwhelmingly quantitative, the open-endedness of the last question allows for variations of responses which I have encoded accordingly depending on the content of the message. While I did not account for my research to be a qualitative study, I have personally categorized some of the similar responses together on Microsoft Word in order to help obtain a fuller analysis on the topic.

6.1 | DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

There were no intrinsic qualifications that I was looking for when seeking responses from people. One of the more preferable identities I was looking for was people of different race/ethnic groups, but also people who were of at least adolescent age (18+) because they are more likely to have experience dating in general. Although that is not a necessary requirement, I wanted to cover a large population of people from various backgrounds and with different experiences.

As a result of my goals in mind, while conducting my survey, I purposefully outreached to different organizations and contacted close friends and family. Additionally, I did not ask for any form of identification from who the participants were, or where they come from; I left it open for anyone to take. At the end of the research, a total of 1350 people responded, while in addition, obtaining over 100 responses from the open-ended question. While my study had an overwhelming amount of people who identified from the age of 18-24, I also got participants who were a bit older from networking with both my old co-workers, but also co-workers of my immediate family. By email and calling, I was able to successfully accumulate responses.

In addition, I had several major spikes of people taking my survey when I posted it online. With the assistance of social media: primarily Facebook, and Reddit, I got varying responses from all sorts of individuals, including international people. Through the Facebook group page: “Official Group of UCSC Students,” many people participated. Although that was the biggest group that I shared my survey with, I also sent it to various Facebook groups focused on exchanging dissertation surveys. Through a random anonymous selection process, while participating in other peoples’ surveys, people overseas responded to mine as well. Some of the responses also included varying perspectives on race and how it was interpreted in their country and its commonality. Another social media platform I used was Reddit. By nature, Reddit has varying smaller communities where people online are able to react and comment on various posts. In the subreddit “r/SampleSize,” which has a focus on sharing surveys and obtaining responses, I posted my survey anonymously and like the dissertation survey Facebook group, some of the responses I obtained discussed being from another country and having an entirely different experience.

One of the big risks in allowing people to take a survey online is how accurate the survey results will be, and whether it is of quality. In attempting to ensure the most accurate results possible, I personally selected where and who I would share the survey with. Barring some individuals who may have randomly clicked and did not put much thought into their responses, I believe that by posting in a Facebook group with my peers (Official Group of UCSC Students), and posting it in a private Facebook group that has the sole intent of sharing surveys for the purpose of academic research, my results will prove much more accurate than posting it elsewhere randomly. If there were some individuals who did randomly click, their data is still being included for the sole purpose that I would not be able to differ them differently. In similar fashion, the subreddit I used has the same goal as the private Facebook group being used, meaning that I am more likely to obtain honest responses.

6.2 | INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

To assess my question: in what ways does ethnicity/race and economic status affect the thoughts behind romantic/sexual relationships, a quantitative questionnaire proved most useful in answering it. In comparison to a qualitative survey, although I would have been able to obtain a more in-depth response, I believe that the number of responses would have been far less, and I would have had a bigger margin of bias. By constructing a quantitative study, I can easily measure the following variables: race, gender, age, and parent's educational background, all while asking how they feel regarding a select number of statements. In other words, I can reach a far larger number of people, while also addressing the major variables that I would like to measure.

For the quantitative dataset, I decided to express the information in concise tables based off of the data that SPSS and Stata gave out. In the first section, I look at race and gender, for the

second section, I look at race and socioeconomic status, and for the third section, I find the look at the multiple regression analysis for race, gender, and socioeconomic status. For the major groups, the breakdown will follow: “Black” (n=59; female=45, male=14), “Native American” (n=26; female=22, male=4), “Asian” (n=421; female=279, male=142), “Latinx” (n=278; female=205, male=73), “Middle Eastern” (n=42; female=28, male=14), “Non-Hispanic White” (n=484; female=287, male=197). Although there may be some implicit bias since some groups are smaller than others, e.g., Native American males, black males, and Middle Eastern males, the point is to see if there are similar forms of commonality.

Additionally, based off of the comments in the last open-ended question in the questionnaire, I have coded them accordingly due to either large number of similar comments, or information that provided more insight on their personal cultural/ethnic/racial background. In doing so, the following response categories are: “Religious Influence on Dating,” “Familial Influence on Dating,” “Societal Influence on Dating,” “Socioeconomic status’ effect in interracial dating,” and “Colorblindness in dating.”

7 | ANALYSIS OF QUANTITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE

Although I gathered data from various race/ethnicities, the general results all had common trends that reflected similar behaviors. To illustrate, I have broken down the quantitative section into three parts. The first part of the quantitative data will look at tables separated by race and gender, and the percentages of responses corresponding to each of the eight statements. Using the white racial group as a focal point, I will compare each of the other racial groups side by side and point out the major trends and differences. The second part of the quantitative data tables will analyze the relationship between parent’s education status, race, and their responses to the eight statements by measuring the Pearson correlation coefficient. And for

the last part, I have conducted a multiple regression analysis, measuring the dependent variables (the eight statements), to a list of independent variables (all race groups except Native Americans, gender, and education).

7.1 | STATEMENT ONE BY RACE AND GENDER BREAKDOWN

When comparing responses to statement one: “I feel comfortable communicating with someone of the same racial/ethnic group,” based by race, there were similar trends for most racial groups. For each response, regardless of race or gender, the majority of people strongly agreed with the statement, followed by the next largest group: somewhat agree. In the case of gender, men, regardless of race, had a higher strongly agree percentage than their female counterparts—but this was compensated for women had a higher percentage in the somewhat agree category. The black racial group was the only one that did not follow this trend. While the majority of black people still felt comfortable speaking to someone of the same racial/ethnic group, black men had the lowest percentage in the strongly agree category with only 42.9% -- indicating that they felt less confident in their response. On the contrary, black women felt the most confident with 80% strongly agreeing that they would feel more comfortable speaking to someone of the same racial/ethnic group.

For those who disagreed with the statement, only a small minority felt that they were not comfortable speaking to someone of the same race. Of the white and Asian people, about 2% of men disagreed, and 1.4% of women disagreed. However, for the black, Latino, Middle Eastern, and Native American groups, there was a slightly higher degree of disagreement—4.4% of black women disagreed, 7.1% of black men disagreed, 1% of Latina women disagreed, 4.1% of Latino men disagreed, 7.2% of Middle Eastern women disagreed, 7.1% of Middle Eastern men disagreed, and 4.5% of Native American women disagreed.

7.2 | STATEMENT TWO BY RACE AND GENDER BREAKDOWN

For statement two: “I feel comfortable communicating with someone of a different racial/ethnic group,” I found that although there are similar trends to statement one, percentages have shifted for strongly agree have lowered. While statement one and statement two are stating near contrasting statements, most groups have a lower percentage in the strongly agree category, despite still containing the majority for all groups. For statement two, only 68.5% of white men chose strongly agree—10% less than what it was previously, and for white women, 66.2% of them chose strongly agree, 5% less than what it was prior. Contrasted to the other groups, percentages have dropped for the strongly agree category—Asian men and women dropped to near 50%, black women dropped significantly, Latino men and women dropped, and Native American men dropped. The only groups that stay either consistent, or increased were black men, Middle Eastern men and women, and Native American women. Although Middle Eastern men had an increase in percentage, the largest increase was seen in black men increasing to 64.3% In addition, the remaining black men chose somewhat agree—there were no other responses for any of the other categories from them. In other words, for all groups, barring black men, people felt less comfortable speaking to someone of a different racial/ethnic background compared to if they were speaking with someone of the same race (statement one).

Based off of the evidence, some important takeaways can be made about statement two. The Middle Eastern male group feels the most comfortable speaking to people of a different race/ethnicity; white females feel the most comfortable speaking to people of a different race/ethnicity. Similarly to statement one, for every single group except the Native American group, males had a higher percentage to strongly agree as opposed to their female counterparts. Amongst the group that felt the least comfortable communicating with someone of a different

racial/ethnic group, it was the Latinx group—although once again, disagreements as a whole were the minority in all groups. For the Asian and white groups, a slight increase was made for the disagree options—meaning that they feel less comfortable communicating with someone of a different race.

7.3 | STATEMENT THREE BY RACE AND GENDER BREAKDOWN

In statement three: “I feel comfortable being in a relationship with someone of a different race/ethnicity,” I ask a direct question that seeks to find out how tolerable they are to people beyond their own racial/ethnic group. The majority of the choices were in the agree category. However, like the previous two statements, there are some common trends. Between men and women for the Asian, Middle Eastern, Native American, and white racial groups, the difference was negligible. The stark differences are shown in the black and Latino groups, where males have a significantly higher percentage—meaning that they feel comfortable being in a relationship with someone of a different racial/ethnic background. In particular, black men had an astounding 92.9% that strongly agreed. Meanwhile, for the Latino male population, 74% of them strongly agreed. In both groups, the male population felt more comfortable than their female counterparts.

Although the minority, there was an increase of disagreement for statement three. In particular, the white group had an increase in disagreement to the statement. Compared to the Asian group, they had the most disagreement to the statement—9.1% of Asian men disagreed, and 6.4% of Asian women disagreed. The data of statement one: “I feel comfortable communicating with someone of a different racial/ethnic group” and statement three: “I feel comfortable being in a relationship with someone of a different race/ethnicity” indicate that although certain groups of people—Asian men and women, black women, Middle Eastern

women, and white men and women, felt comfortable speaking to people of various races, they would not participate in any romantic relationship themselves.

7.4 | STATEMENT FOUR BY RACE AND GENDER BREAKDOWN

In the table for statement four: “If there were more interracial relationships within society, I would feel more inclined to participate in an interracial relationship,” the majority of responses were in the neither agree nor disagree option. For both white men and women, about 25% agreed respectively for both genders. Compared to the other groups, men and women from the following groups: Asian, Latinx, Middle Eastern, and Native American all followed the same trend—the percentages between the genders and the agreement were comparable. Unlike the rest of the groups, black men and Middle Eastern women, had substantial differences. Aside from being the largest percentage, they also had the lowest total disagreement percentage amongst all other groups. In other words, according to the data, black men and Middle Eastern women are more likely to feel inclined to be in an interracial relationship if it was more normalized. For all of the other groups, many did not believe that the influence of other people interracially dating would affect their decision to take part in one. Furthermore, for those that disagreed with the statement, the percentages all across were comparable and not substantial.

7.5 | STATEMENT FIVE BY RACE AND GENDER BREAKDOWN

For statement five: “My behavior or attitude changes when I communicate with someone from a different racial/ethnic group,” I found that people of color are more likely to change their behavior/attitude versus their white counterparts. For white men, less than 40% agreed with the statement; white women had less than 30%. However, when compared to the other groups, only two groups had less than 40%, Middle Eastern and Native American women. For all of the other groups, they felt that they would change their attitude or behavior when speaking to someone

that did not belong to their racial/ethnic group. On the other hand, as many people of color did believe that their attitude changes, the data also demonstrates that white men and women do not believe that they change their attitude/behavior when interacting with other people from various racial/ethnic groups.

Despite being different statements, statement two and statement five are relatively similar in that they gauge the communication between people of different races. In the data, although people can be comfortable speaking to someone of a different race, I found it interesting in that the majority of people of color tend to change their behavior and attitudes, while also being comfortable. According to the data, the white group followed a common trend—in that most both men and women felt comfortable communicating with someone of a different race, but also believed that their behavior or attitude do not change. Aside from Native American women who shared the same sentiment as their white counterparts, everyone else agreed that their behavior or attitude changes.

7.6 | STATEMENT SIX BY RACE AND GENDER BREAKDOWN

Similarly to statement four, statement six is a direct assertion, stating “I feel more attracted to a different racial/ethnic group.” While the majority of responses ended up selecting neither agree nor disagree, many of the responses were mixed and split. The percentages of white men and women were fairly similar, but when compared to other racial/ethnic groups, the percentages for people of color were generally larger, other than Native American men which had 0% in agreement. In other words, the data illustrates that people of color, regardless of gender, feel slightly more attracted to a different racial/ethnic group than their white counterparts. Furthermore, my findings indicate that white men felt the least attracted to people of a different race. Not far behind, Asian men and women did have a strong percentage that also

disagreed. Of the categories, the one group that stood out the most were black men. Black men had both the highest percentage in both agree categories (over 78% total), but also the lowest percentage in the disagree category (7.1%). Of the past six previous statements, the data regarding black men demonstrates the biggest contrast to the rest of the groups—that black men are attracted to people outside of their race group, and would as a result, most likely prefer to date non-black people.

7.7 | STATEMENT SEVEN BY RACE AND GENDER BREAKDOWN

In statement seven: “I believe that there are societal expectations when it comes to dating within my own racial/ethnic group,” the data indicates similar trends for people of color, but for white people, differs slightly. For the white group, neither men or women were able to reach the majority. However, for every single other race, regardless of gender, the majority of people had some degree of agreement. The groups that had the highest percentage total for agree were Asian men and women, Middle Eastern women, and Native American women. Once again, barring black men, most of the other groups had somewhat agree as the most common option selected—for black men, they chose strongly agree. 64.3% of black men chose strongly agree—a percentage that was far greater than the next highest. In words, of the black male respondents, a majority of them believed that they have societal expectations to date another black individual. However, while many people of color agreed with this statement, white people had the largest total percentages of disagreement. Of the other racial groups that also had a relatively high percentage of disagreements it was from black women, and Middle Eastern men.

7.8 | STATEMENT EIGHT BY RACE AND GENDER BREAKDOWN

For the last statement: “I believe that in general, other people of my race/ethnicity expect me to date someone within my racial/ethnic group,” similar to statement seven, the

overwhelming majority of people of color agreed, while their white counterparts felt otherwise. In the same fashion, white men and women had the lowest agree percentage to the statement, indicating that they don't feel as much pressure to date other white people. In comparison to people of color, the largest group that strongly agreed were Asian women at 35.5%; the highest percentage amongst men though were black men at 42.9%. Once again, the data demonstrates that the black male respondents had a higher confidence of agreement with the statement. In other words, Asian women, in comparison to the other groups in the survey, feel the most pressure from their Asian peers to date someone of an Asian descent. Likewise, black men are expected the same from their peers. On the flip side, white men and women had the highest disagree percentage compared to the other racial groups. This is simply providing more data—that white people do not feel nearly as much pressure from their white peers to date other white people.

TABLE 1

PERCENTAGES BY RACE AND GENDER

	Asian		Black		Latinx		Middle Eastern		Native American		White	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Statement 1: I feel comfortable communicating with someone of the same racial/ethnic group.												
Strongly Agree	63.8%	73.2%	80%	42.9%	73.7%	76.7%	60.7%	71.4%	72.7%	75%	71.8%	78.7%
Somewhat Agree	28.3%	20.4%	15.6%	50%	22.9%	15.1%	32.1%	21.4%	22.7%	0%	23.7%	15.2%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	6.1%	4.9%	0%	0%	2.4%	4.1%	0%	0%	0%	25%	3.1%	4.1%
Somewhat Disagree	1.1%	.7%	4.4%	0%	1%	4.1%	3.6%	7.1%	4.5%	0%	.7%	1.5%
Strongly Disagree	.7%	.7%	0%	7.1%	0%	0%	3.6%	0%	0%	0%	.7%	.5%
Statement 2: I feel comfortable communicating with someone of a different racial/ethnic group.												
Strongly Agree	49.1%	55.6%	57.8%	64.3%	48.3%	60.3%	60.7%	85.7%	72.7%	50%	66.2%	68.5%
Somewhat Agree	40.5%	33.8%	35.6%	35.7%	44.9%	26%	35.7%	14.3%	27.3%	25%	30%	22.3%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	7.9%	8.5%	2.2%	0%	3.9%	9.6%	3.6%	0%	0%	25%	2.8%	5.6%
Somewhat Disagree	1.8%	1.4%	2.2%	0%	2.0%	4.1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	.7%	2.5%
Strongly Disagree	.7%	.7%	2.2%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	.3%	1%
Statement 3: I feel comfortable being in a relationship with someone of a												

TABLE 1

PERCENTAGES BY RACE AND GENDER

	Asian		Black		Latinx		Middle Eastern		Native American		White	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
different race/ethnicity.												
Strongly Agree	50.5%	50.7%	64.4%	92.9%	57.1%	74%	71.4%	78.6%	77.3%	75%	69%	62.9%
Somewhat Agree	34.4%	32.4%	26.7%	0%	33.7%	15.1%	10.7%	14.3%	18.2%	0%	22.3%	22.8%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	8.6%	7.7%	2.2%	7.1%	8.3%	8.2%	14.3%	7.1%	4.5%	25%	6.3%	8.1%
Somewhat Disagree	5.7%	7.7%	4.4%	0%	0%	2.7%	3.6%	0%	0%	0%	1.4%	3%
Strongly Disagree	.7%	1.4%	2.2%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	3%
Statement 4: If there were more interracial relationships within society, I would feel more inclined to participate in an interracial relationship.												
Strongly Agree	17.6%	19%	15.6%	28.6%	19%	13.7%	10.7%	0%	18.2%	0%	11.1%	14.7%
Somewhat Agree	24.4%	21.8%	6.7%	14.3%	18%	21.9%	25%	7.1%	13.6%	0%	16.4%	13.7%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	47.3%	40.1%	55.6%	50%	50.7%	49.3%	57.1%	78.6%	68.2%	75%	60.3%	46.7%
Somewhat Disagree	7.2%	12%	13.3%	7.1%	7.3%	6.8%	7.1%	14.3%	0%	25%	7.7%	12.2%
Strongly Disagree	3.6%	7%	8.9%	0%	4.9%	8.2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4.5%	12.7%
Statement 5: My behavior or attitude changes when I communicate with someone from a												

TABLE 1

PERCENTAGES BY RACE AND GENDER

	Asian		Black		Latinx		Middle Eastern		Native American		White	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
different racial/ethnic group.												
Strongly Agree	9%	14.1%	15.6%	21.4%	6.8%	9.6%	0%	7.1%	0%	0%	2.4%	4.6%
Somewhat Agree	43.7%	51.4%	28.9%	28.6%	47.8%	39.7%	39.3%	50%	27.3%	75%	26.8%	34.5%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	15.4%	7%	13.3%	28.6%	14.1%	15.1%	21.4%	14.3%	4.5%	25%	15%	16.2%
Somewhat Disagree	21.1%	19.7%	26.7%	14.3%	18%	21.9%	14.3%	7.1%	40.9%	0%	33.8%	23.9%
Strongly Disagree	10.8%	7.7%	15.6%	7.1%	13.2%	13.7%	25%	21.4%	27.3%	0%	22%	20.8%
Statement 6: I feel more attracted to a different racial/ethnic group.												
Strongly Agree	15.8%	21.8%	15.6%	28.6%	15.1%	16.4%	17.9%	28.6%	27.3%	0%	10.5%	9.6%
Somewhat Agree	29.4%	23.9%	15.6%	50%	25.4%	28.8%	32.1%	28.6%	18.2%	0%	24.4%	21.3%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	34.4%	25.4%	46.7%	14.3%	40.5%	39.7%	39.3%	28.6%	40.9%	75%	41.1%	33.5%
Somewhat Disagree	14.7%	19.7%	11.1%	7.1%	15.1%	11%	10.7%	0%	9.1%	0%	16%	21.8%
Strongly Disagree	5.7%	9.2%	11.1%	0%	3.9%	4.1%	0%	14.3%	4.5%	25%	8%	13.7%
Statement 7: I believe that there are societal expectations when it comes to dating within my own racial/ethnic group.												
Strongly Agree	40.9%	26.8%	26.7%	64.3%	28.8%	28.8%	25%	21.4%	13.6%	0%	9.1%	7.1%
Somewhat Agree	36.2%	52.8%	37.8%	7.1%	43.4%	43.8%	57.1%	42.9%	63.6%	50%	40.1%	40.6%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	10%	10.6%	6.7%	14.3%	12.2%	12.3%	7.1%	14.3%	13.6%	50%	18.8%	18.3%

TABLE 1

PERCENTAGES BY RACE AND GENDER

	Asian		Black		Latinx		Middle Eastern		Native American		White	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Somewhat Disagree	10%	5.6%	17.8%	14.3%	9.3%	12.3%	3.6%	14.3%	9.1%	0%	23%	20.8%
Strongly Disagree	2.9%	4.2%	11.1%	0%	6.3%	2.7%	7.1%	7.1%	0%	0%	9.1%	13.2%
Statement 8: I believe that, in general, other people of my race/ethnicity expect me to date someone within my racial/ethnic group.												
Strongly Agree	35.5%	32.4%	31.1%	42.9%	29.3%	27.4%	32.1%	28.6%	18.2%	0%	12.2%	9.1%
Somewhat Agree	35.8%	43.7%	35.6%	35.7%	37.1%	35.6%	46.4%	64.3%	59.1%	75%	44.6%	36%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	13.3%	12%	8.9%	14.3%	15.6%	11%	7.1%	7.1%	4.5%	25%	14.3%	18.3%
Somewhat Disagree	9%	9.2%	8.9%	7.1%	11.7%	13.7%	14.3%	0%	9.1%	0%	21.3%	19.3%
Strongly Disagree	6.5%	2.8%	15.6%	0%	6.3%	12.3%	0%	0%	9.1%	0%	7.7%	17.3%

7.9 | UNDERSTANDING PEARSON'S COEFFICIENT CORRELATION

As demonstrated above, race and gender do play roles in the way people look for a romantic or sexual partner. However, another aspect that can dramatically shift the way people choose a partner is with the addition of socioeconomic status. Studied by previous researchers, the role of a parent's educational level may demonstrate ties to socioeconomic status; thereby the role of race and social class can influence dating (Erola, Jalonen, Lehti 2016). To measure this relationship between parent's educational level and race, with respect to the eight statements, I will be using Pearson's Coefficient Correlation. The closer the coefficient value is to "-1" or "+1," then the stronger the relationship is.

7.10 | STATEMENT ONE BY RACE AND PARENT'S EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

BREAKDOWN

Shown in the table below, I found that for the black, Middle Eastern, and White racial groups, if their parent's education level goes up, then they are more likely to agree with the statement: "I feel comfortable communicating with someone of the same racial/ethnic group." Of the coefficients, the black group had the lowest value (-.348). In other words, the people in my study who are black, Middle Eastern, or white, and have a higher socioeconomic status, are more likely to agree with the statement. On the flip side, if they have a lower socioeconomic status, then they are more less likely to feel comfortable communicating with someone of the same race. The only finding that was statistically significant was from the black group. The groups that had a positive coefficient correlation were the Asian, Latinx, and Native American groups. For these groups, if their socioeconomic status is higher, then they are less likely to feel comfortable communicating with someone of the same racial/ethnic group. If their socioeconomic status is lower, then they would feel more comfortable talking to someone of the same race. While Asian

and Native Americans had a small coefficient, the Latinx population had the highest at .147, and was also the only one to be statistically significant.

7.11 | STATEMENT TWO BY RACE AND PARENT'S EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

BREAKDOWN

For statement two: “I feel comfortable communicating with someone of a different racial/ethnic group,” I found that the Asian, Latinx, and Middle Eastern groups had a negative coefficient correlation. In other words, if an Asian, Latinx, or Middle Eastern person has a higher socioeconomic status, then that person’s response is more likely to feel comfortable speaking to someone of a different race; on the contrary, if they had a lower socioeconomic status, then they are more likely to disagree with the statement. Of the three groups, Latinx people had the strongest relationship at a value of -.124—it was also the only one that was statistically significant. In comparison, the groups that had a positive coefficient correlation were the: black, Native American, and white. For these groups, if someone had a higher socioeconomic status, then they would be more likely to disagree with the statement that they feel comfortable speaking to someone of a different race. Vice versa, if they had a lower socioeconomic status, then they would be more likely to agree that they feel comfortable speaking to someone of a different race.

7.12 | STATEMENT THREE BY RACE AND PARENT'S EDUCATION LEVEL

BREAKDOWN

In statement three: “I feel comfortable being in a relationship with someone of a different race/ethnicity,” I found that the Asian, Latino, and Middle Eastern groups all had a negative relation. Like the previous statement, this indicates that when someone of one of these races has

a higher socioeconomic status, then they are more likely to feel comfortable being in a relationship with someone of a different race/ethnicity. If they do not have a high socioeconomic status, then they are less likely to feel comfortable being in an interracial relationship. Once again, the Latinx group had the strongest relationship at $-.122$ and were the only group that was statistically significant. Of the remaining groups: black, Native American, and white, if someone has a higher socioeconomic status, then they are more likely to feel uncomfortable being in a relationship with someone of a different race/ethnicity, whereas if they have a lower socioeconomic status then the opposite effect may occur.

7.13 | STATEMENT FOUR BY RACE AND PARENT'S EDUCATION LEVEL

BREAKDOWN

I found that in statement four: “If there were more interracial relationships within society, I would feel more inclined to participate in an interracial relationship,” only the Asian and white group had a negative correlation. This illustrates that if someone has a higher socioeconomic status, then they will be more influenced by other people participating in interracial dating; if they have a lower socioeconomic status, then they will be less influenced by others. On the other hand, the black, Latinx, Middle Eastern, and Native American groups all had positive coefficient correlations; if they come from a higher socioeconomic background, then they are less likely to participate in interracial relationships as a result of others doing it. Of the groups, Latinx people had the strongest relationship with a coefficient of $.206$.

7.14 | STATEMENT FIVE BY RACE AND PARENT'S EDUCATION LEVEL

BREAKDOWN

For statement five: “My behavior or attitude changes when I communicate with someone from a different racial/ethnic group,” the Asian and Native American had positive correlations. This meant that if someone has a higher socioeconomic status, then they are likely to believe that their behavior/attitude does not change as a result of communicating with someone of a different race. Contrarily, if they come from a lower socioeconomic status, then they will believe that their behavior/attitude will change when speaking to someone of a different race. However, the black, Latinx, Middle Eastern, and white groups all had negative correlations, illustrating that with a higher socioeconomic status, their behavior/attitude will likely change as a result of speaking to different people of various race. Of these groups, the white group had the highest coefficient at -.112, and was the only one that was statistically significant.

7.15 | STATEMENT SIX BY RACE AND PARENT’S EDUCATION LEVEL

BREAKDOWN

In statement six: “I feel more attracted to a different racial/ethnic group,” the black, Latinx, Native American, and white group had positive coefficients. This indicates that the higher socioeconomic status, then the more likely they will not feel attracted to people of a different racial/ethnic group. However, for the Asian and Middle Eastern groups, they had negative coefficients. The opposite effect takes place—the higher the socioeconomic status, then they are more likely to be attracted to other races; whereas if someone had a lower socioeconomic status, then they are less likely to be attracted to other races. The strongest coefficient belonged to the Middle Eastern group, with a value of -.142.

7.16 | STATEMENT SEVEN BY RACE AND PARENT’S EDUCATION LEVEL

BREAKDOWN

In statement seven: “I believe that there are societal expectations when it comes to dating within my own racial/ethnic group,” the black and white groups had a negative correlation. The higher their socioeconomic status is, the more likely they are to believe that they have societal expectations of dating—the lower their socioeconomic status is, the more likely to believe that they do not have societal expectations of dating. Alternatively, the Asian, Latino, Middle Eastern, and Native American groups all had positive correlations—indicating that the higher their socioeconomic status, the less likely they are to believe that there are societal expectations of dating. The lower their socioeconomic status, then the more likely that they believe that there are societal expectations. Although the Middle Eastern group has the strongest value at .277, the Latinx group is the only one that is statistically significant.

7.17 | STATEMENT EIGHT BY RACE AND PARENT’S EDUCATION LEVEL **BREAKDOWN**

Lastly, for statement eight: “I believe that, in general, other people of my race/ethnicity expect me to date someone within my racial/ethnic group,” only the black group had a negative coefficient at -.203. This means that the higher their socioeconomic status, then more likely are they to feel that other peers in the same racial category as them expect them to date intra-rationally. For the Asian, Latinx, Middle Eastern, and Native American group, they all had positive coefficients, meaning that the opposite would occur. The higher their socioeconomic status, then they would be more likely to feel that their peers do not expect them to date intra-rationally. The Latinx group was found to be statistically significant with the highest coefficient at .238. Furthermore, the white group stood out the most because their coefficient value was at 0—meaning that socioeconomic status plays no role in their decision for this statement.

TABLE 2

Pearson's Coefficient Correlation

	Asian	Black	Latinx	Middle Eastern	Native American	White
Statement 1: "I feel comfortable communicating with someone of the same racial/ethnic group" by parent's education	.042	-.348	.147	-.081	.079	-.034
Approximate Significance	.390	.007**	.013**	.610	.677	.448
Statement 2: "I feel comfortable communicating with someone of a different racial/ethnic group" by parent's education	-.055	.181	-.124	-.098	.004	.030
Approximate Significance	.259	.169	.036**	.539	.984	.506
Statement 3: "I feel comfortable being in a relationship with someone of a different race/ethnicity" by parent's education	-.052	.130	-.122	-.024	.212	.136
Approximate Significance	.286	.326	.040**	.882	.262	.066
Statement 4: "If there were more interracial relationships within society, I would feel more inclined to participate in an interracial relationship" by parent's education	-.016	.032	.043	.206	.015	-.045
Approximate Significance	.735	.810	.466	.190	.939	.311
Statement 5: "My behavior or attitude changes when I communicate with someone from a different racial/ethnic group" by parent's education	.017	-.038	-.043	-.042	.032	-.112
Approximate Significance	.723	.775	.471	.794	.868	.011**
Statement 6: "I feel more attracted to a different racial/ethnic group" by parent's education	-.041	.099	.050	-.142	.169	.027
Approximate Significance	.397	.456	.401	.370	.371	.551
Statement 7: "I believe that there are societal expectations when it comes to dating within my own racial/ethnic group" by parent's education	.005	-.101	.159	.277	.050	-.031
Approximate Significance	.923	.444	.007**	.075	.794	.483

TABLE 2

Pearson's Coefficient Correlation

	Asian	Black	Latinx	Middle Eastern	Native American	White
Statement 8: "I believe that, in general, other people of my race/ethnicity expect me to date someone within my racial/ethnic group" by parent's education.	.030	-.203	.238	.144	.160	.000
Approximate Significance	.540	.122	.000**	.364	.397	.991

Note: The statements from 1-8 are coded by a 5-point Likert scale from (1) Strongly Agree (2) Somewhat Agree (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree (4) Somewhat Disagree (5) Strongly Disagree

Note 2: Education is coded: (1) Less than Highschool (2) Highschool diploma (3) Some college (4) 4-year college degree (5) Post-graduate college degree

** = $p < .05$

7.18 | MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS FOR STATEMENT ONE

In the data table, the following independent variables: Asian, black, Latinx, White, male, and female, all had a negative value on the slope of statement one: “I feel comfortable communicating with someone of the same racial/ethnic group.” Based upon the 5-point Likert scale, where I coded the value of “1” as “strongly agree,” and “5” as “strongly disagree,” the average slope was 1.690—in between the “strongly agree” and the “somewhat agree” option. For the groups that had a negative value, this means that the average slope will get closer to “1.” In comparison, only the Middle Eastern and education variable had positive effects—meaning that on the Likert scale, those values increased the value of the average slope and would push the average slope to “2,” or more closely to the “somewhat agree” option. Of the groups that had the largest value, the male group, followed by the female group, had the largest value. In addition, the white, male, and female variables were found to be statistically significant.

7.19 | MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS FOR STATEMENT TWO

For statement two: “I feel comfortable communicating with someone of the same racial/ethnic group,” the following variables had negative values on the average slope: Middle Eastern, education, male, and female. With an average slope of 1.684, the majority of responses resided between “strongly agree” and “somewhat agree.” On the other hand, the Asian, black, Latinx, and white variables all had positive effects. When comparing statement one with statement two, nearly all of the variables had swapped from negative to positive, or from positive to negative, except for the male and female categories. Of all of the independent variables, the Asian (.226), followed by the male (-.203), female (-.187), and Latinx (.191) group all had a larger value compared to the other variables. However, of that group, only the Asian, Latinx, and male variables were statistically significant.

7.20 | MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS FOR STATEMENT THREE

I found that for statement three: “I feel comfortable being in a relationship with someone of a different race/ethnicity,” the black, Middle Eastern, and education variables had negative values. While the average slope was 1.340—between “strongly agree” and “somewhat agree,” these groups had a very small influence on the slope because their values were less than .01. However, the Asian, Latinx, white, male, and female variables had positive effects—with Asian (.283), male (1.69), and female (.111) being the largest. However, of all the groups, the only one that was statistically significant was the Asian group.

7.21 | MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS FOR STATEMENT FOUR

In statement four: “If there were more interracial relationships within society, I would feel more inclined to participate in an interracial relationship,” the Asian, Latinx, Middle Eastern, education, and female variables all had negative values. With a slope of 2.804, which is in between “somewhat agree” and “neither agree nor disagree,” I found that the variables above would decrease the slope value, indicating that the responses under those categories would be pushed more towards agree when applied. However, for the black, white, and male variables, they all had a positive value. This indicates the opposite; that these variables push the average slope to disagree with the statement. Of the groups, the Asian group had the largest value at -.181.

7.22 | MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS FOR STATEMENT FIVE

For statement five: “My behavior or attitude changes when I communicate with someone from a different racial/ethnic group,” the variables had the largest value in the dataset for regression. While the slope was at a value of 3.358, which is in between “neither agree nor disagree” and “somewhat disagree,” there was a lot of discrepancy in the data. The following variables all had a negative value: Asian (-.625), black (-.493), Latinx (-.573), Middle Eastern (-

.216), and education (-.055). Of the groups, primarily the Asian, black, and Latinx groups had a much larger value. In other words, people of color were more likely to agree with the statement that their attitude changes when talking to people of a different race. On the other hand, the variables white, male, and female all had positive values—indicating that those variables indicated a pattern of disagreement. Comparing people of color with whites, the data indicates the same trends which were discussed in the table that broke down gender and race—that people of color more likely agreed with the statement than their white counterparts. Furthermore, the Asian, black, Latinx, and education variables were all statistically significant.

7.23 | MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS FOR STATEMENT SIX

I found for statement six: “I feel more attracted to a different racial/ethnic group,” the slope was almost exactly 3, which is the option “neither agree nor disagree.” The Asian, black, Latinx, Middle Eastern, male, and female variables all had negative values. Of the groups, the Middle Eastern (-.378) female (-.343), and male (-.282) variables had the most impact on the slope—indicating that the people of those groups were more likely to agree that they feel attracted to people of different racial backgrounds. On the other hand, the only two categories that were positive in value were the white and education variables. In other words, the positive value indicates that the statement would be pushed closer to the value of 4— “somewhat disagree.” Compared to the previous tables, the data remains consistent, in that white people do not feel as attracted to people of different races in comparison to other groups. Of the variables, the white and female factor were statistically significant.

7.23 | MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS FOR STATEMENT SEVEN

For statement seven: “I believe that there are societal expectations when it comes to dating within my own racial/ethnic group,” the only negative values came from people of color.

While the slope value was at a 2.165, very close to “somewhat agree,” the Asian, black, Latinx, and Middle Eastern groups, all had values that would push the slope closer to “2.” In other words, people of color felt that there were societal expectations when it comes to data. In contrast, white, education, female, and male variables all had positive values, which indicated the opposite: that they believe that there are no societal expectations when it comes to dating intra-racially. In addition, while the Asian variable had a value of $-.377$, the white group had a variable of $.463$, indicating that the strength of the relationship is a lot higher. Of the groups, only the Asian and white group reflected statistically significant data.

7.23 | MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS FOR STATEMENT EIGHT

Like statement seven, statement eight: “I believe that, in general, other people of my race/ethnicity expect me to date someone within my racial/ethnic group,” reflects similar patterns from people of color. In similar fashion, the Asian, black, Latinx, and Middle Eastern, male, and female variables all had negative variables, with Middle Eastern at $-.525$ and Asian at $-.341$. With a total slope of 2.257, this indicates that although the average response was held close to “somewhat agree,” the addition of these variables would push people from these categories to a higher degree of acceptance. In comparison, the white ($.311$) and education ($.076$) variables were positive. In other words, white people do not feel as pressured to date within their own racial group, whereas their people of color counterparts do. Furthermore, the Asian, Middle Eastern, and white variables were all statistically significant.

TABLE 3

MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS

	Asian	Black	Latinx	Middle Eastern	White	Education	Gender		Slope
							Male	Female	
Statement 1: I feel comfortable communicating with someone of the same racial/ethnic group.	-.068	-.085	-.146	.030	-.167	.013	-.266	-.238	1.690
Approximate Significance	.448	.487	.114	.823	.058*	.429	.019**	.033**	
Statement 2: I feel comfortable communicating with someone of a different racial/ethnic group.	.226	.103	.191	-.062	.017	-.025	-.203	-.187	1.684
Approximate Significance	.016**	.425	.049**	.661	.854	.162	.088*	.110	
Statement 3: I feel comfortable being in a relationship with someone of a different race/ethnicity.	.283	-.004	.065	-.019	.047	-.006	.169	.111	1.340
Approximate Significance	.010***	.980	.568	.908	.665	.770	.225	.415	
Statement 4: If there were more interracial relationships within society, I would feel more inclined to participate in an interracial relationship.	-.181	.039	-.112	-.007	.061	-.005	.078	-.064	2.804
Approximate Significance	.166	.825	.407	.971	.638	.849	.639	.693	
Statement 5: My behavior or attitude changes when I communicate with someone from a different racial/ethnic group.	-.625	-.493	-.573	-.216	.051	-.055	.055	.260	3.358
Approximate Significance	.000*****	.021**	.000*****	.360	.740	.060**	.781	.182	
Statement 6: I feel more attracted to a different racial/ethnic group.	-.135	-.134	-.127	-.378	.136	.015	-.282	-.343	3.071
Approximate Significance	.345	.493	.394	.081*	.339	.574	.121	.055*	

TABLE 3

MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS

	Asian	Black	Latinx	Middle Eastern	White	Education	Gender		Slope
							Male	Female	
Statement 7: I believe that there are societal expectations when it comes to dating within my own racial/ethnic group.	-.377	-.055	-.144	-.179	.463	.031	.139	.089	2.165
Approximate Significance	.010***	.782	.339	.417	.001****	.250	.453	.623	
Statement 8: I believe that, in general, other people of my race/ethnicity expect me to date someone within my racial/ethnic group.	-.341	-.152	-.048	-.525	.311	.076	-.003	-.109	2.257
Approximate Significance	.026**	.466	.759	.023**	.040**	.008	.988	.566	

Note: The statements from 1-8 are coded by a 5-point Likert scale from (1) Strongly Agree (2) Somewhat Agree (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree (4) Somewhat Disagree (5) Strongly Disagree

Note 2: Education is coded: (1) Less than Highschool (2) Highschool diploma (3) Some college (4) 4-year college degree (5) Post-graduate college degree

* = $p < .10$ ** = $p < .05$ *** = $p < .01$ **** = $p < .001$

7.26 | SUMMARY OF QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

In summary, my findings do not show exact coherent trends throughout the entire quantitative data, but they do indicate large differences depending on race, gender, and socioeconomic status. I acknowledge that ultimately, different questions obtain different responses, but overall, here are some of the major trends that I did find: (1) the black men group had the highest outliers in comparison to each group for most of the questions—they were more attracted and had a strong desire to date people of other races, (2) people of color believed that there were social and cultural pressure in dating intra-racially, but many felt like that pressure would not affect their partner-making decisions, (3) white people had the largest percentages of disagreement for most questions—indicating that they believe that their behavior/attitude is static no matter who they are talking to, do not feel attracted to people of a different race, and feel less societal and cultural pressure to date intra-racially, and (4) gender did not play a fundamental role as many of the responses were very comparable to the opposite gender.

8 | ANALYSIS OF QUALITATIVE OPEN-ENDED

QUESTION

At the end of my survey, I asked an open-ended question: “If you have other comments, then please state them below.” Since the question is broad and does not ask for any particular experiences, anecdotes, or ideas, I coded the responses based off of similar comments. Of the ones that had a lot of repeating ideas, the three categories below are what I comprised the comments into. In addition, I found that these categories were the most important, and had relatively interesting ideas that I may not have included into my survey.

8.1 | RELIGIOUS INFLUENCE ON DATING COMMENTS

For the first group, I had about 30 different responses that spoke under this topic. When conducting the quantitative aspect of my data, I did ask for responses to statement seven: “I believe that there are societal expectations when it comes to dating within my own racial/ethnic group,” and statement eight: “I believe that, in general, other people of my race/ethnicity expect me to date someone within my racial/ethnic group.” Doing so may have swayed some comments to feel the need to discuss their personal anecdote on the situation.

Of the responses, I had a few discuss religion, and the way their familial background also influences their dating pool. For example, in the following comment:

My Pakistani parents got an arranged marriage. Though it was a disastrous pairing that resulted in my mom becoming a single parent and going through numerous hardships to get us where we now are, she still has the strong traditional views on marriage. This includes that we cannot date anyone who is not "marriage material," more explicitly a Pakistani Muslim.

This woman’s Muslim heritage limits her to only Pakistani Muslims. Although this woman reflects that arranged marriages were bad in her mother’s case, in addition with religion, her pool of people whom she can take part in is smaller, if she decides to agree with the same sentiment as her mother—that she cannot date anyone who is not “marriage material.” Similarly to people who are Muslim, I had a few comments discuss how their Jewish background also creates limitations on potential partners. An individual stated:

Though I am white, I am from a Jewish cultural background. It’s customary to only date within your race, but I haven’t been doing so and I find myself conflicted with my family’s values. My partner is very Catholic and I would never want them to change themselves for me, but I am afraid there is no future because of my family’s expectations.

In this example, this woman is struggling between her parent’s expectations, and her own desire to stay with someone who is not Jewish. Ultimately, as a result of this conflict of interest, her

primary fear is that there will be family tensions. While many of the other comments did not discuss religion in the slightest, the influence that religion may have, has the potential to influence interracial relationships as well.

8.2 | FAMILIAL INFLUENCE ON DATING COMMENTS

Aside from religion, one of the bigger topics deals with family and their expectations of resemblance in culture. For mostly people of color, many of them had mentioned how their parents had an influence on their partner selection. To illustrate, one of the comments was the following:

My parents are immigrants from the strict traditional generation that fled the Vietnam war. They have very limited world views and tolerate that my boyfriend of 4 years is white. They've specifically demanded of me not to date black people or Hispanic people. Not that I haven't. I just haven't told them. They would prefer if I dated Chinese or Vietnamese so they could communicate with them, but would hate if I dated Korean (because they have the twisted idea that Korean men beat their wives). I was lucky that I can keep the peace just because the love of my life happens to be a race they'll accept. However, the wedding probably won't be peaceful because they have super high expectations and still see him as an incompetent bum.

Embedded within this loaded comment, many ideas and preferences are being demonstrated. To begin with, she specified that for her parents, they selectively did not like certain ethnic groups; because of the history, biases against Koreans developed. Additionally, her parents also have a hierarchical racial categorization, where they are against people of black or Hispanic descent, but are tolerant of white people. Lastly, she points out that her parents have a preference of two ethnic groups, Chinese or Vietnamese, because they may be able to communicate with them.

Of these preferences and ideals, the major idea that was expressed constantly in the comment section dealt with culture and language. Briefly introduced above, cultural and language barriers play a major role in accepting people of a different background into their

family. On the other hand, if someone dates intra-racially, then it would be easier to preserve their culture and heritage. Echoed by others, this sentiment minimizes cultural differences, whereas dating interracially would do the opposite. For many people of color, and especially those who are a first generation, maintaining family custom is important for their parents; if there are cultural differences, then parents may see that as a roadblock in continuing tradition and certain practices. Through the practice of marriage across different cultures, the premise of its relevancy is significant and does impact decisions of partner selection. Despite having only a fraction of people respond to the open-ended question, I found that the responses to statement eight do reflect the comments of people, where they do believe that their same race peers/family expect them to date intra-racially.

Although I did not exactly measure familial pressure in my quantitative portion, a few individuals mentioned family's role in understanding race and different expectations for dating. In one instance, a woman mentioned how her parents, who are Filipino immigrants, encourage interracial relationships, on the condition that it is with a white man because they are seen as a "sign of success." For what I believe to be the best example of this, an Asian man stated:

I am racist to black people. I could never see myself dating them and I have some bias towards them. It stems from having a bad parent that was racist and taught me to hate blacks and Hispanics. No idea why. In the end I still don't like blacks but love Hispanics more because I had several good experiences with them in the past few years. Haven't been exposed to good experiences with blacks though.

In all three examples, some type of prejudice occurred where certain races were put either higher or lower. Furthermore, in all of three examples, the people were all instructed from their parents of this mindset. For the two examples, they acknowledged discriminatory remarks from their parents. However, the point is that they have been socialized to believe negative or positive ideas regarding people of another race. In all examples, certain groups of people are ranked higher

over others—however, in the second comment, the ability to change is important. Based off of individual experiences, groundless assumptions became negated and original ideas from parents become disjointed and falter. Regardless of the effects, my research indicates that family ties may have a stronger impact that goes beyond dating.

Despite having cultural differences, many individuals did not shy away from the thought of participating in interracial dating—rather, one white woman said:

Part of the reason I'm hesitant to date interracial is due to my family's ignorance/racism. I've dated men who are Asian, which wasn't an issue, but when I dated a Latino, it was uncomfortable for everyone. I know I don't have to adhere to any of my family's morals/values, and I don't, but I don't want to subject anyone to racist comments when I'm sure they already deal with inequality. It's a struggle!

Acknowledged by many, family ideals are not inclusive of any possible individual—some families have expectations that adhere to certain races. However, addressed by the woman above, she understands the complexity in dating someone whom her family would disapprove. The familial pressure varies by family, but regardless, the feelings of discomfort and disapproval are shared by many respondents. Ultimately, one of the biggest takeaways that best summarizes this idea of familial pressure is the following: “I'm in an interracial relationship right now and people often ask me if it's 'actually my long-term goal to get married to a person of a different race.’” Although I have a small sample size regarding people who discussed their family's acceptance of certain race groups, the theme of holding certain races above others is prevalent in my study.

8.3 | SOCIETAL INFLUENCE ON DATING COMMENTS

While I have covered just a fraction of the comments regarding direct family ties, other comments mentioned how society can stigmatize and restrict interracial dating. In one comment, an Asian woman stated:

I feel that in my culture, traditionally, it has in the past been expected to date someone that has the same race/ethnicity as you. However, being in America and with it being a melting pot and such, my view on our society is that people do not really care, and push to encourage diversity and inclusivity. My significant other is a different race from me, and that's okay. However, I have some other friends that tell me stories that their parents push them to date someone that is the same race as them, though I am not sure how strict those expectations are.

Similar to what this individual had mentioned, the essence of a “melting pot” in America is false in actuality. Contrary to popular belief, this idea is not reflective of the experiences people have, according to my comments. Mentioned by many comments, in interracial relationships people pointed out how often they received “weird looks” when in public with their partner. To quote a couple of experiences:

I [unidentified race woman] dated a guy whose family immigrated from Mexico for 3 years. It took my family nearly a whole year to realize he is an amazing guy. My family did not want to say that they weren't necessarily happy about it the entire time but I could tell. His family was also hesitant to accept me but did so faster than mine. Also, don't even try to go out into public! I am from Sacramento and goodness, the stares and awkward eye contact!! We eventually found humor in those who stared because they need help. But there were some major cultural differences that we had to learn to navigate from the length of dinner, food (his dad only speaks Spanish), language, religion, family styles, respect, holidays, and traditions. Once we had one year down, it became much easier. But I fully believe that there are some major societal expectations to date within your racial group.

I [white woman] am currently in an interracial relationship, and while most times I don't even consider it, there are moments I can feel the judgement of other groups in public spaces. These groups are not specific to any one race.

Although I [white woman] see myself dating or hooking up with people from various ethnicities, As I have done before, I cannot see myself marrying someone from a different ethnicity. This is probably why I consistently have dated within my race. I'm partially scared based on society and also my family to have kids mixed with another race. And it just seems crazy in my mind. I feel like their background would be so different from mine. That being said, their background would bring a very well-developed world view to our child, and also myself. I would love to date with other ethnicities, but alas, I am scared.

In all of these comments, people reiterated the same point—that their relationship was being judged. Whether it was accepted or not, many believed that they stood out—one even stated “If I

have children with anyone but white women, they will not look very much like me.” For some people, the idea of interracial relationships are so unconventional, that they would never consider the thought of interracial dating because their child would be different. Regardless of background, the qualitative data that people left matches well with statement seven in that the influence of society on dating was a prevalent comment being left.

8.4 | SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS’ EFFECT IN DATING COMMENTS

While many expressed societal norms hindering their ability to take part in interracial dating, others believed that their surroundings had a much bigger influence—surroundings include but are not limited to: economic class, environment, and neighborhoods. To name a few examples, one had mentioned how being an immigrant played a role in their perspective, another mentioned that physical proximity to other races impacts their decisions, and several others discussed growing up in a diverse area helped their ability to feel no societal pressure to date intra-rationally. In particular, a Latina woman stated the following:

I'd feel comfortable being in a relationship with someone of any race (since a connection is implied) however I do admit I am mostly attracted to Latino men (that includes any Latino including Afro-Latinos) because they're who I have been around most and I do experience minor discomfort with white men (the only white guy who has ever asked for my number did it for a prank lol and the only white guy I've been attracted to/liked also intimidated me at the same time). There are societal expectations of me to be with a Mexican (there is prejudice against central Americans) however I'm also expected to be with a white man because he's "rich" and comes from a good family or whatever.

Part of socioeconomic status and environments depends on where that individual resides in. In the example, this individual was mostly exposed to only a Latinx population of men. Exposure to certain racial/ethnic groups will most likely have a larger effect, for if it did not, then how can someone have more attraction to a certain race if they had never seen people of that race? In essence, socioeconomic status influences where people can live, and the communities that people belong in influence who they are exposed to. Put in a different way, if someone is from a

working-class family, their community may reflect working-class people, inherently exposing that family to only working-class people. In another comment, someone writes:

I am white British and dated a half Jamaican, half white British man for 5 years. The only person who has seemed to have a problem is my grandmother who just never speaks about him. We are both from a very white middle-class town about 15 miles from one of the UK's most multi-cultural cities, Leicester. Perhaps this helps. We have both since moved to Bristol which we have seen to be even more liberal and relaxed about inter racial-relationships.

While there will be instances where people of varying socioeconomic classes do meet, in the example above, growing up in very similar white middle-class areas influences whom people interact with. It also helps that they were relatively close to a diverse city, but amongst it all, socioeconomic status has played a role in how people may come together. In one final example, an Indian woman states the following:

I'm of Indian descent but grew up here. In my personal experience, I've found that the Indian men I've encountered (specifically men who are actually from India, not ethnically Indian men who grew up in America) feel a sense of ownership over me that makes for some really problematic interactions (long stares, lewd comments, even when I was a child). India can be quite traditional and misogynistic and that fact has put a negative light on almost all the interactions I have had with Indian men. Having grown up here, I was mostly surrounded by white people my whole life anyway, and therefore have only been in relationships with white men so far, though that's not by design and I would be open to dating people of other ethnicities. I think that a survey with a scope this broad would need to factor in the various sociopolitical reasons why someone, for example, would be turned off from dating within their own race.

Expressed in the comment above, the actual geopolitical location of different people influences the types of actions and preferences that people have. In this case, from this woman's perspective, she believed that Indian men have a "sense of ownership," whereas she found that the men here in the United States do not act accordingly like that. In addition, by growing up in a predominantly white environment, her dating preferences have been molded by her surroundings. For dating, a Latina woman made a point that to say that differences go beyond race and ethnicity. As stated,

More than race/ethnicity, I find that my behavior/attitude changes a bit with socioeconomic standing of partner. I try not to act different but if they're "upper" class, then I find that they don't really understand certain aspects of my life so I sometimes avoid bringing up those aspects of my life.

I found that comment interesting because although this person does, to some degree, believe that race impacts how they behave, they see socioeconomic status and class difference as more important, and play a bigger role in dating. This idea was only expressed by this one individual—all other comments had a focus on cultural difference.

8.5 | COLORBLINDNESS IN DATING COMMENTS

For this category, 10 people had mentioned how they did believe that other factors were more important, or that race itself was not important as a factor. Although this is not a big pool of people, the idea of it was expressed numerous times. Beyond common "race doesn't matter" comments, some mentioned how other traits or qualities are more important—similar to how friendships go beyond race. In the statement above that discussed socioeconomic standing having a bigger impact than race—although that may be true for that individual, other factors can be seen to have a bigger effect on dating. Despite such differences occurring, the point is that for many, race just didn't play a role in the way people see each other romantically.

Of the responses, some of them discussed this romanticized notion of love, and how love between people goes beyond race. Some of the responses are the following:

Although I [Middle Eastern woman] am strongly for a society that accepts and is open to multi-racial relationships, I would not let it get in the way of whom I love. Whether I live in such a society or not, I am not afraid to be in a relationship with someone of another race whom I love. Moreover, in regarding to change of behavior when communicating with people from other racial backgrounds, I only change my behavior such that I am sure to be respectful and open to better understand the other person's racial background. So there's not much a drastic behavior change, and I put the effort to be as transparent as possible.

I [unidentified race woman] don't believe in race/ethnicity. We are all people of the Earth and should not be put in boxes based on skin color. I understand there will always be differences in culture and opinions but we should all love and respect each other no matter what.

Dubbed under “colorblindness,” the concept that I am addressing is the way of which people desire to disavow race as a potential component of dating. Although dependent on the person, comments like these seem to have that common theme of downplaying the role of race. In light of this, another comment discussed the desire to prevent baseless conclusions of others simply by race or skin color, and that there are deeper things in understanding other people. Of the responses under this category, an Asian man commented:

The representation of interracial relationships in society does not affect whether or not I would participate in one. I see past race when it comes to relationships, and hold higher value on their values and attitudes. Being from different cultures/race is just a unique aspect of the relationship, just like personality and lifestyle.

As I discussed in my literature review, excusing race as a factor, and simply claiming that it is “preference”—like aesthetic preferences can lead to problematic and potent ways of seeing other people. Although this was the only comment to elaborate on how they don't see race in dating, as I mentioned prior as well, this idea can lead to the exoticization of certain racial groups.

9 | DISCUSSION

As presented earlier in my study, I seek to answer the following question: in what ways does ethnicity/race and economic status affect the thoughts behind romantic/sexual relationships. Responding to previous literature, my study will 1) test if those previous findings are still accurate, and 2) to develop a better understanding of where those potential biases come from.

To first evaluate where potential biases may exist, the current study makes note of a difference in comfortability in communication versus dating. Generally speaking, people felt

comfortable communicating, but when it came to dating, people become more hesitant—especially white people. While comfortability in communication was common, people of color generally felt that their attitude or behavior does in fact change when around people of different backgrounds. Compared to previous findings, in a Q-sort study, people ended up acting passively when interacting with someone of a different race—taking a more defensive approach to not accidentally offend or insult the other person (Harris 2010). In the current study, people of color’s responses reflect this idea of acting differently to decrease the possibility of mishap, and to simply respect another person’s heritage. Furthermore, dating usually implies certain levels of comfort in communication. However, in the data presented here, people generally felt more comfortable communicating to someone of a different race, as opposed to dating someone of a different race.

One of the primary justifications that explains why people felt more comfortable communicating as opposed to dating interracially is because of language and cultural differences. Although race and culture are distinct social categories, overlap between identities is common. Amongst people of various races and cultures, cultural language and skin color remain as the primary mediums for commonality between people. Despite feelings of solidarity, exhibited above, people of color believed that certain biases and prejudices were instilled from their parents’ teachings. While generational gaps may explain the various types of reactions regarding interracial dating, the lack of solidarity in cultural language and skin tone radiates feelings of discomfort for parents. With the primary exception being white people to this trend, many parents of color dissuaded the practice of interracial marriage. Essentially affirming Fishman’s previous research, nearly all people of color felt some societal or cultural pressure to date within their own race; of the groups, Asian people demonstrated the highest percentages (2008).

Amongst the statements that revolved around communication (statement 1, 2, 5), the biggest discrepancy belonged to the white people. Based upon Omi and Winant's racial formation theory, one of their key components was that white people were the only group to not go through the process of racialization; rather they were often the dominant group that established the racialization of other groups (1986). Once synonymous with freedom, whiteness had the highest esteem, whereas people of color all lacked the same privileges and rights. In comparison, people of color understand race to have real world detriments that has a history of disenfranchisement. Reflected in the current study, the results suggest that white people, regardless of gender, tend to take on a privileged colorblind approach to interracial dating—in that they do not believe that they have racial preferences. Indicated by open-ended responses, some people of color believe that race does not affect their decision making; however, the percentages indicate that white people were the overwhelming majority for not “seeing” race—or using it as a determinant for dating. In addition, speaking to their privilege, previous research indicated that white men and women have always been favorable by other people of color (Tessler 2015). With the addition of being not just the historically dominant but also most favorable group, white people display a privileged colorblind attitude in their partner-decision making.

While white people took a predominantly colorblind approach, black men had a strong color-consciousness approach for interracial dating. In short, the black male respondents in the current study indicated that they were the most open to interracial dating, and strongly preferred women outside of their racial group despite social and cultural expectations to date within their race. According to previous research, the feelings of preference between black men and women were not mutual; while black women favored black men, black men did not favor black women.

Previous scholars have argued that the reasoning behind the phenomena is due to stereotypical imagery that negatively portrays them as being angry, loud, or aggressive (Harris 2000 and Fishman 2008). In line with previous literature, regardless of race, black women were the least preferred among all men (Rudder 2014; Chow and Hu 2013; Yancey 2002, 2009). Ultimately, the same narrative is being demonstrated: that black men do not prefer women of the same race.

Although language and culture do play large roles in dating, socioeconomic status measured in parent's educational level, can also play a subconscious role in dating. In short, propinquity affects who people are around, and thus limits their options for partner-decision making. While some of the respondents left comments discussing how their exposure to different racial groups affected their perspectives, few had mentioned their experience growing up in certain communities. In a past study done by Fujino, the main conclusion was that exposure to different people was limited to proximity of others (1997). In other words, the experiences of being around certain groups of people, or not being around certain groups of people, builds likeness or dissimilarity towards them. Similarly, in Raymond Fishman's study, the tolerance of different ethnic or racial groups was credited to having higher education, or residing in a more diverse community (2008).

In comparison to the current study's data, the Latinx group in particular was directly affected by socioeconomic status. While it is impossible to determine the type of community that the respondents live in, the general assumption is that if their parent's educational level is higher, then they are going to have a high-status occupation and socioeconomic status, thus living in a community that reflects that socioeconomic status. As a result, the children of said parents will be in an environment that embodies the social class of their family—often culminating in obtaining a higher education themselves. Surprisingly, for the Latinx people who had a high

socioeconomic status, they did not believe that they had societal or familial pressure to date intra-rationally. To understand this phenomenon, two possible explanations can be made. The first is the notion of proximity, which explains that by being in a more diverse neighborhood, exposure to different people of color is more likely to occur, thus shaping racial preferences depending on who people are in direct interaction with (Fujino 1997; Wang 2007). The second possible explanation is the status-caste exchange theory. Introduced by various researchers, since the Latinx racial group is considered a “minority” group, people whom belong to that group can essentially date someone who is of a “higher” racial group. In theory, having a higher socioeconomic status can equalize the scale for which people date (Wang 2007). Under the condition that this exchange theory is correct, then high socioeconomic status Latinx people may not feel the need to date intra-rationally simply because they come from a wealthier background. In short, the effect of socioeconomic status can be large, but is ultimately dependent on the context and situation of each particular interracial relationship.

To summarize, two main points are made: (1) the findings here validate and carry forward many of the previous findings and research on interracial relationships, and (2) there are racial differences between the connections of communication and dating. Despite many people feeling comfortable communicating, dating may not always be a viable option due to family pressure and cultural differences. While people of color feel comfortable intra-rationally dating, white people on the other hand generally do not see race as a factor when it comes to dating. Taking a more colorblind approach, this privilege is mostly reflected in white people. Compared to a socioeconomic status as a variable, upbringing and location have also allowed for biases to occur. Depending on location, exposure to different groups of people can limit who people can meet, resulting in attraction toward one group over another. Although the influence of race seems

to be a much bigger attributing factor when it comes to dating, socioeconomic status directly influences whom people can interact with on a social level. Each playing their own role, they both contribute to influencing interracial dating.

10 | CONCLUSION

To sum up, although the study was overall effective in affirming previous research, I also acknowledge some limitations. First, the study conducted had 1350 total respondents. In obtaining responses, the study was able to reach a large variety of participants from various backgrounds. Within that regard, the study was successful; however, of the data being used, I chose to only include the data from men and women. In the study, those who identified as “Other” for gender and race were excluded because of limitations on what could be concluded under the broad category of “Other.” Second, for the following groups: black men, Middle Eastern men and women, and Native American men and women, there were limitations on the total number of responses that could be collected. However, there was a lot of data collected from Asian, Latinx, and white people. Despite it being difficult to compare the results based off of sheer number alone, some of the findings from groups who had a smaller number of participants still proved to be beneficial. Shared with some of the bigger groups as well, some findings proved to be statistically significant and demonstrate the same findings conducted by previous research. Third, socioeconomic status can be measured in a multitude of ways; for the sake of simplifying the data collection process however, I only asked about parent’s education level. Lastly, I only asked a total of eight statements that discussed communication, the comfortability in taking part in interracial dating, and where potential biases may lie. While this is a limitation, it also is an advantage because I was able to obtain a fairly good response rate. In a lengthier survey, the amount of data available would far surpass this study.

Amidst these limitations, if another study is conducted on this topic, future research can help fix and explain, in greater detail, the complexities of interracial dating. To begin with, being more inclusive and looking at people whom are not heterosexual could provide insight on specific patterns depending on sexual identity. Evaluating common stereotypes may prove useful in understanding interracial relationships between certain groups of people, such as black/white relationships versus Latinx/white. Also, having a more flushed out and longer list of races/ethnicities as opposed to simply putting “Other” would allow for the inclusion of many of people. One of the factors that I failed to mention is religion. Using religion as a factor can provide insight to the overall process of dating and how it is not race that dictates preference, but rather religion that influences the decisions people make. Although I had the data to conduct a study on age as well, I chose not to. For most of the participants, the age group most selected was between 18-24. Seeking information about generational differences in their attitude for interracial dating may prove insightful, especially if the older participants grew up prior to *Loving v. Virginia* (1967). Beyond everything else however, despite conducting a predominantly quantitative study, attaching more qualitative based responses provides more information to explain discrepancies. Providing trends and examples through the questionnaire was helpful, but in attempting to understand where certain biases and preferences occur, doing lengthy interviews could allow for a deeper understanding of how and why people make their decisions on dating.

In conclusion, the point being made is that race is seen through all facets of social life. The phenomenon of dating is no exception; following certain patterns and trends demonstrate that race is a factor, and should not be doubted as such. Given the relatively new legalization of interracial marriage, studies such as this have become of increasing interest. Despite collecting data from 1350 different people, the means to this study are not the end, but rather the beginning.

There are many different perspectives that future researchers can take when evaluating this topic, and in doing so, the need to build off of this data will provide even greater insight to explain the theoretical framework that people may have when choosing a partner. Finally, it is hoped that with a study such as this, the consciousness of race can be surfaced into even the most intimate parts of life.

APPENDIX A

2/25/2019

Interracial Dating Questionnaire

Interracial Dating Questionnaire

Interracial Relationship Questionnaire

* Required

1. 1. What is your age? *

Mark only one oval.

- 17 or younger
- 18 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- Prefer not to answer

2. 2. What is your gender? *

Mark only one oval.

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to say

3. 3. What is the highest level of education your parent(s) have received? *

Mark only one oval.

- Less than Highschool
- Highschool diploma
- Some college
- 4-year college degree
- Post-graduate college degree

APPENDIX A

2/25/2019

Interracial Dating Questionnaire

4. What is your race/ethnicity? [Check all that apply] *

Check all that apply.

- Black, Afro-Caribbean, or African American
- Native American or Alaskan Native
- Asian
- Latino or Hispanic
- Middle Eastern or Arab-Muslim
- Non-Hispanic White
- Other

5. I feel comfortable communicating with someone of the same racial/ethnic group. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

6. I feel comfortable communicating with someone of a different racial/ethnic group. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

7. I feel comfortable being in a relationship with someone of a different race/ethnicity. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

APPENDIX A

2/25/2019

Interracial Dating Questionnaire

8. **If there were more interracial relationships within society, I would feel more inclined to participate in an interracial relationship.***

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

9. **My behavior or attitude changes when I communicate with someone from a different racial/ethnic group.***

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

10. **I feel more attracted to a different racial/ethnic group.***

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

11. **I believe that there are societal expectations when it comes to dating within my own racial/ethnic group.***

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

APPENDIX A

2/25/2019


Interracial Dating Questionnaire

12. 12. I believe that, in general, other people of my race/ethnicity expect me to date someone within my racial/ethnic group. *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

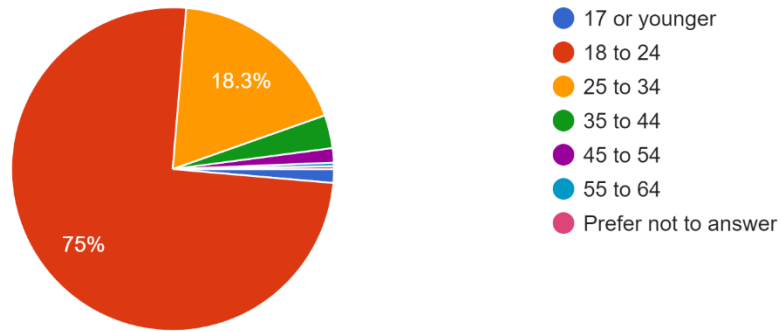
13. 13. If you have other comments, then please state them below.

Powered by
 Google Forms

APPEXDIX B

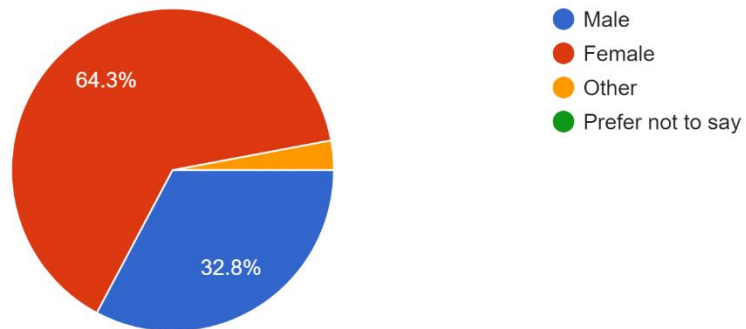
1. What is your age?

1,391 responses



2. What is your gender?

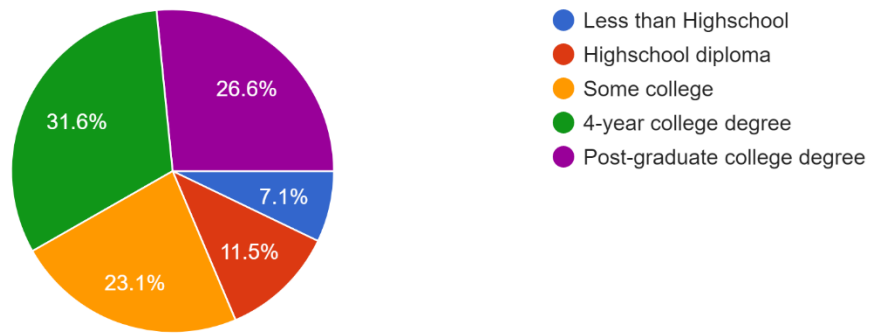
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APPEXDIX B

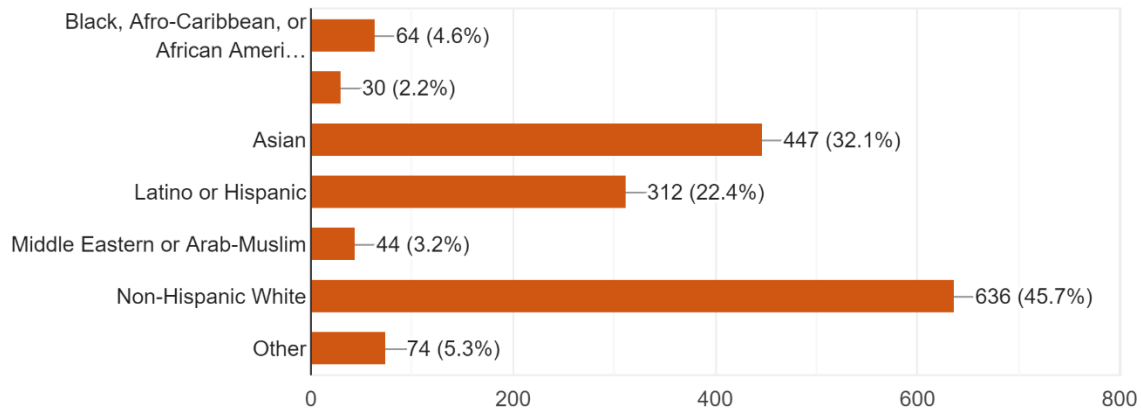
3. What is the highest level of education your parent(s) have received?

1,391 responses



4. What is your race/ethnicity? [Check all that apply]

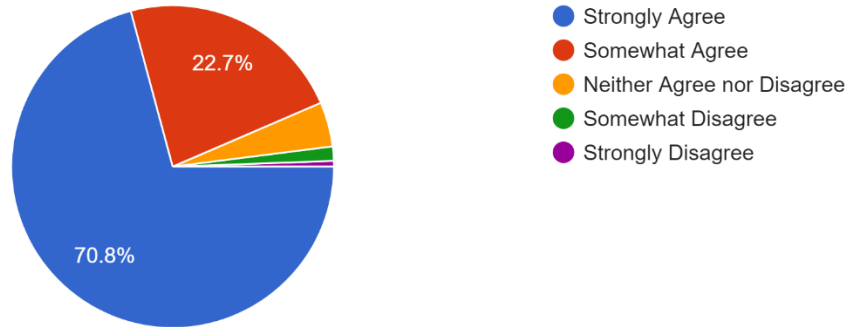
1,391 responses



APPEXDIX B

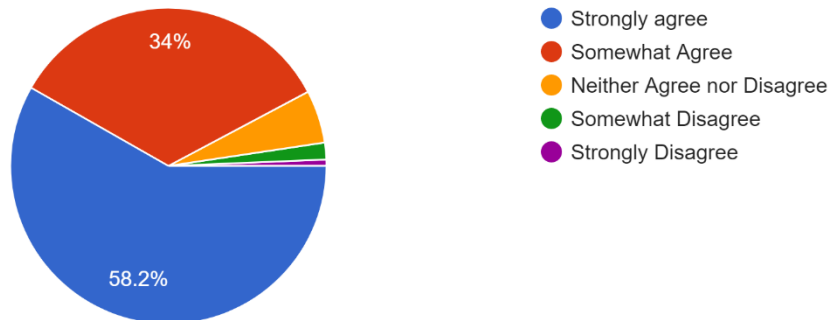
5. I feel comfortable communicating with someone of the same racial/ethnic group.

1,391 responses



6. I feel comfortable communicating with someone of a different racial/ethnic group.

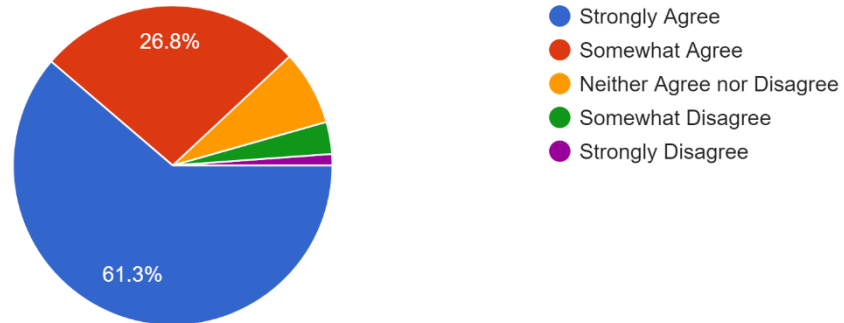
1,391 responses



APPEXDIX B

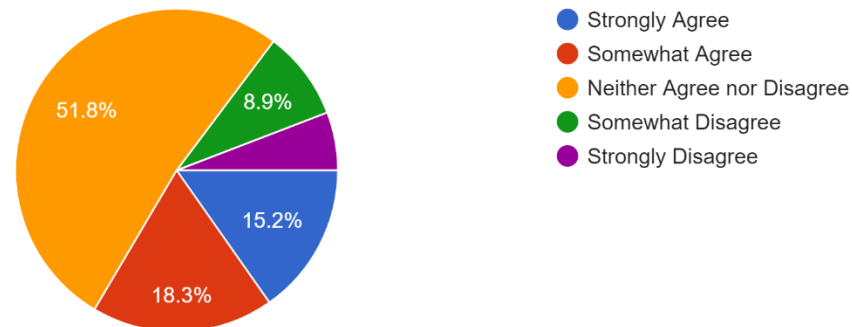
7. I feel comfortable being in a relationship with someone of a different race/ethnicity.

1,391 responses



8. If there were more interracial relationships within society, I would feel more inclined to participate in an interracial relationship.

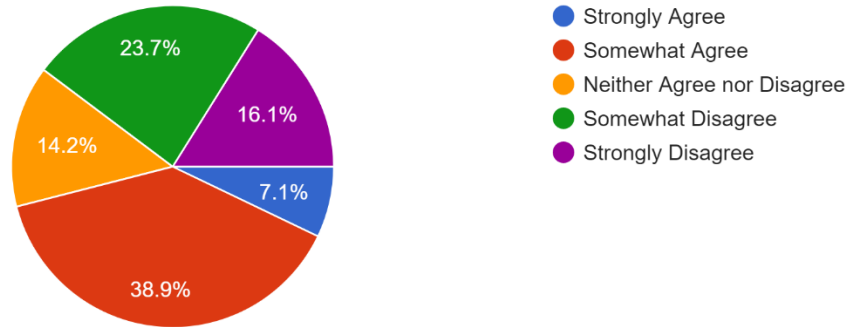
1,391 responses



APPEXDIX B

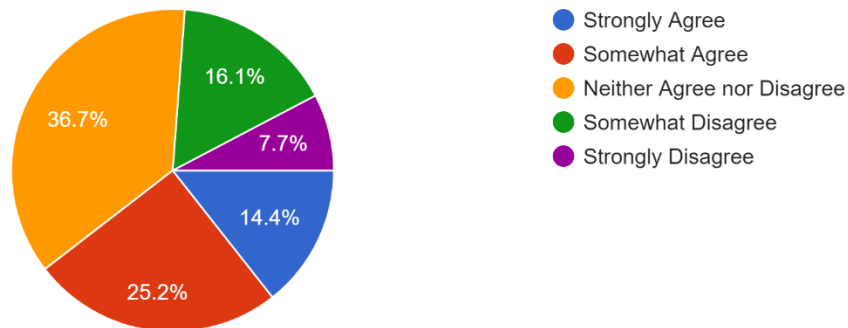
9. My behavior or attitude changes when I communicate with someone from a different racial/ethnic group.

1,391 responses



10. I feel more attracted to a different racial/ethnic group.

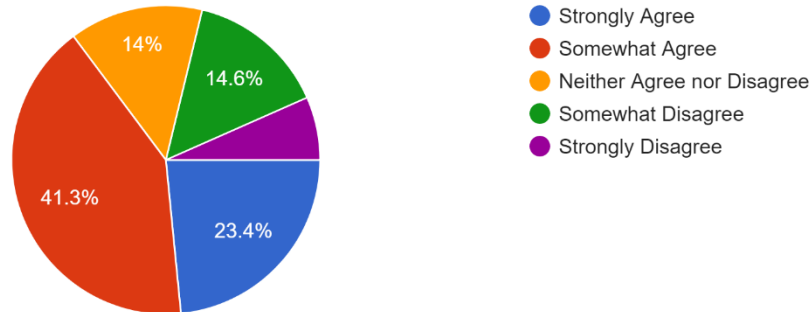
1,391 responses



APPEXDIX B

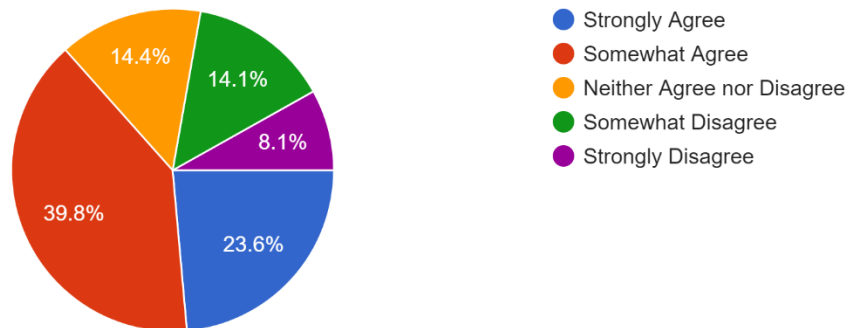
11. I believe that there are societal expectations when it comes to dating within my own racial/ethnic group.

1,391 responses



12. I believe that, in general, other people of my race/ethnicity expect me to date someone within my racial/ethnic group.

1,391 responses



APPENDIX C

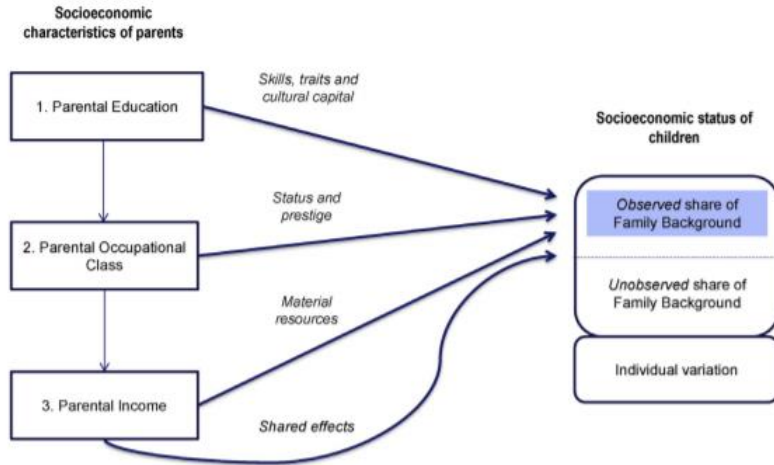


Fig. 1. Effect of parental resources on socioeconomic status of children.

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