

Validation of the Subtle and Blatant Racism Scale for Asian American College Students (SABR-A²)

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This investigation describes the validation of a measure of perceived racism developed to assess racial experiences of Asian American college students. In three studies across two different regions of the United States, there was strong evidence for the validation of the 8-item Subtle and Blatant Racism Scale for Asian American College Students (SABR-A²). The subtle racism subscale refers to instances of discrimination attributable implicitly to racial bias or stereotype, whereas the blatant racism subscale refers to instances of discrimination attributable explicitly to racial bias or stereotype. The two-subscale structure of the SABR-A² was supported by exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses and demonstrated discriminant, convergent, and incremental validity, as well as internal reliability and stability over 2 weeks.

Keywords: subtle racism, blatant racism, discrimination, measure, Asian American

Racial discourse in the United States is commonly polarized as a “Black and White” issue that consequently minimizes the racism experienced by other racial minorities, including Asian Americans (Kim, 1999; Wu, 2002). Yet there is clear historical and contemporary evidence of racism against Asian Americans (Committee of 100, 2001, 2009 2001, 2009; McQueen, 1991; Takaki, 1993). In psychology, there is a similar lack of empirical work examining unique experiences of racism and its psychological correlates among Asian Americans. The present study addresses this gap in the research literature with the validation of a measure focusing on experiences of racism among Asian American college students.

Societal Views of Racism Faced by Asian Americans

National polls indicate that most Americans believe racism is not a pressing issue for Asian Americans (Committee of 100, 2001, 2009 2001, 2009; McQueen, 1991). There are several theories that may explain why Asian Americans’ experiences of racism are overlooked by the American public. First, the tendency for racial discourse in the United States to be reduced to a binary “Black and White” issue in the United States relegates all other racial minorities’ experiences to the margins (Kim, 1999; Wu, 2002). Second, dictionary definitions and public connotations of racism center on “the attitudes or the behaviors in response to one racial group feeling superior to another” (e.g., Merriam-Webster, 2003; Ran-

dom House, 2006). Racism, however, is a much more complex, multifaceted phenomenon in our society. It manifests itself through actions that are blatant and subtle (Dovidio, 2001), negative and positive (Wu, 2002), intentional and unintentional (Dovidio, Kawakami, Johnson, Johnson, & Howard, 1997; Sue, 2005), and on personal and group levels (Jones, 1997). Third, there is a distorted perception of all Asian Americans as representing the *model minority*, that is, a group who has overcome structural barriers to become successful because of their strong values emphasizing achievement and hard work (Lee, 1996; Yoo, Castro, & Steger, in press).

Despite the persistent popular beliefs that Asian Americans are not affected by racism, there has been a long-standing history of racism in the United States experienced by Asian Americans (see Young & Takeuchi, 1998, for review). Since Filipinos deserted a Spanish ship in New Orleans to establish the first Asian American community in the Louisiana bayou in 1763, there have been countless reports documenting unfair practices, violence, and multiple racist exclusionary laws directed toward Asian Americans (Takaki, 1993). Today, Asian Americans are continually objects of racism by individuals, institutions, and the larger culture (Fong & Shinagawa, 2000; National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium, 1999, 2002; U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1992; Woo, 2000).

Psychological Views of Racism Faced by Asian Americans

Stress theories posit racism can be stressful and can lead to deleterious health and poor psychological well-being (Clark, Anderson, Clark, & Williams, 1999; Harrell, 2000; Myers, Lewis, & Parker-Dominguez, 2003). Consistent with this viewpoint, empirical studies, although limited, suggest that racism may have

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negative psychological consequences for Asian Americans. For instance, correlational studies have found perceived racial discrimination is negatively linked to a wide range of health and adjustment outcomes, including self-esteem (Barry & Grillo, 2003; Liang & Fassinger, 2008), sense of coherence (Lam, 2007; Ying, Lee, & Tsai, 2000), physical self-perception (Asamen & Berry, 1987), negative affect (Yoo & Lee, 2008), depression and anxiety (Gee, Spencer, Chen, Yip, & Takeuchi, 2007a; Lam, 2007; Lee, 2003, 2005), interpersonal problems (Liang & Fassinger, 2008), and chronic health conditions (Gee, Spencer, Chen, Yip, & Takeuchi, 2007b; Yoo, Gee, & Takeuchi, 2009).

The progression in this area of research, however, is hampered by the limited availability of psychometrically valid and reliable measures that directly tap into racial discriminatory experiences of Asian Americans. Often, studies have used a single item to measure perceived racism (Goto, Gee, & Takeuchi, 2002; Mossakowski, 2003; Noh, Beiser, Kaspar, Hou, & Rummens, 1999; Ying et al., 2000), have modified other measures of discrimination without properly testing its validity and reliability in samples of Asian American populations (Cassidy, O'Connor, Howe, & Warden, 2004; R. M. Lee, 2003, 2005), or have used measures that were based on African American experiences (e.g., Gee, Delva, & Takeuchi, 2006; Gee et al., 2007a, 2007b; Utsey, Chae, Brown, & Kelly, 2002). Consequently, there is an element of uncertainty regarding the link between racism and adjustment in these studies because of the unknown impact of measurement error, method variance, or poor construct validity (i.e., racism based on African American experiences, rather than intended Asian American experiences).

Some existing measures have been designed specifically to assess Asian American experiences of racism, such as the *Race-Related Stressor Scale* for Asian American Vietnam veterans (RRSS; Loo et al., 2001) and the *Asian American Racism-Related Stress Inventory* (AARSI; Liang, Li, & Kim, 2004). These measures significantly contribute to the advancement in understanding psychological consequences of racism among Asian Americans. However, there are some noteworthy concerns with these measures that suggest a need for improved measurement. The RRSS, for instance, is limited to exposure of race-related stressors for only Asian American veterans who served in the Vietnam War. The AARSI's 5-point scale combines both frequency and stressfulness of the event. Respondents are asked to rate items ranging from a "1" if they have *never experienced the event* to a "5" if they *experienced the event and found it to be extremely upsetting*. Although authors noted the response scale was consistent with other racism-related stress measures, this ratings approach still confounds the *frequency* of events with the perceived *stressfulness* of the events. Also, there are mixed results in the predictive validity of the AARSI with adjustment measures. The AARSI did not correlate with adjustment measures as hypothesized in the original validation study (Liang et al., 2004), although relationships were found with self-esteem and interpersonal problems in a recent study (Liang & Fassinger, 2008). Furthermore, both measures do not differentiate between classic blatant forms of racism and modern subtle forms of racism, the latter form being more prevalent in the 21st century (Dovidio, 2001; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1986; Jones, 1997; Sears, Sidanius, & Bobo, 2000; Sue, 2005; Wu, 2002).

Subtle and Blatant Racism

In the last 40 years, racism has evolved from more easily identifiable blatant racism (e.g., Jim Crow segregation laws, anti-immigration exclusionary laws) into more difficult to pinpoint subtle racism (see Dovidio, Kawakami, Smoak, & Gaertner, 2008, for review). Social psychologists believe experiences of subtle racism are difficult to identify because they operate automatically, implicitly, unconsciously, and unintentionally (Devine, 1989; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1986; Sue, 2005). Subtle racism often involves omissions, inactions, or failure to help, rather than a conscious desire to hurt. For instance, Saucier, Miller, and Doucet (2005) found in a meta-analysis of helping studies that, even though Whites expressed no racist attitudes toward Blacks, Whites were more likely to rationalize their decision to not help Blacks (e.g., if helping involved more time, risk, or effort) compared with helping other Whites.

Although experiences of subtle racism may be more prevalent than blatant racism, it is important to recognize that blatant racism still occurs (National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium, 1999, 2002). These two forms of racism may have differential psychological effects on individuals of color. For instance, guided by attribution theories, Major and colleagues' experimental work found that subtle racism is more harmful to self-esteem than blatant racism because subtle racism is more difficult to discount via participants' negative feedback to racism (Crocker & Major, 1989; Major, Kaiser, & McCoy, 2003; Major, Quinton, & Schmader, 2003). Therefore, perceived subtle racism can damage self-esteem by increasing internal attributions of failure ("Is there something wrong with me?"), whereas perceived blatant racism is less likely to damage self-esteem by increasing external attributions of failure ("That person is so racist!"). Efforts to understand the more nuanced experiences and differentially effects of racism and subtypes (in particular, subtle and blatant racism) faced by Asian Americans is greatly needed to advance the research in this area.

New Measure of Racism for Asian Americans

Yoo and Lee (2005) developed a new measure of perceived subtle and blatant racism for Asian Americans to address these limitations. Although it demonstrated good initial predictive validity as it correlated with well-being measures, the study used the measure of racism as a single, omnibus factor. Additional factor analyses are required to examine the stability and validity of the two factor structure of perceived subtle and blatant racism.

Several considerations guided the development of this new instrument. First, they wanted to develop a measure of racism that was shared by all Asian American individuals rather than a particular Asian ethnic group. Asian Americans are targets of racism because of their shared phenotypic characteristics as Asians, and not because of their ethnic group membership. Even when racism seems to be ethnic-specific ("Gook" originally used as a racial slur against Koreans), it is indiscriminately applied to anyone who looks Asian. Second, they wanted to develop a measure of subtle and blatant types of racism unique to the racialized experiences of Asian Americans. Consequently, incidents related to perceptions of being a model minority (e.g., expectations of academic excellence), perpetual foreigner (e.g., comments related to English

proficiency), and yellow perils (e.g., called names such as “chinks” and “gooks”) were included, which is consistent with literature (Fong & Shinagawa, 2000; Kim, 1999; Lee, 1996; Sue, Bucceri, Lin, Nadal, & Torino, 2007; Takaki, 1993; Wu, 2002). Third, their intent was to develop a perceived individual and behavioral racism measure that was based on frequency of events (5-point scale ranging from, 1 = *almost never* to 5 = *almost always*), comparable to other popular perceived racism measures used with African American samples (Landrine & Klonoff, 1996; McNeilly et al., 1996). Fourth, to stimulate research in this needed area, they wanted to develop a short scale that was easy and quick to administer. Finally, they focused on Asian American college students because late adolescence—early adulthood is often the developmental period where individuals of color are most racially aware and explore the meaning and consequences of race and racism (Garcia Coll et al., 1996; Lee & Yoo, 2004; Phinney, 1992).

Drawings upon the literature on racism in general and specific toward Asian Americans, personal and behavioral forms of subtle and blatant racism were differentiated. The primary difference between subtle and blatant racism was operationalized by the degree to which instances of discrimination was due to implicit or explicit racial bias and stereotypes. Therefore, *subtle racism* refers to experiences of discrimination attributable implicitly to racial bias or stereotype. (e.g., “In America, I am overlooked because of I’m Asian”). In contrast, *blatant racism* refers to experiences of discrimination due explicitly to racial bias or stereotype (e.g., “In America, I am called names such as ‘chink, gook, etc.’ because I’m Asian”). This difference in the perceived subtle and blatant racism based on implicit and explicit attributions of racial discrimination is consistent with body of literature in modern racism (Dovidio et al., 2008; Sue, 2005).

Study Purpose

The purpose of the present investigation is to further validate and refine the racism measure developed by Yoo and Lee (2005). In Study 1, reanalyzing the discrimination items used by Yoo and Lee (2005), we used exploratory factor analysis to identify the dimensionality of the data. Then, we used confirmatory factor analysis to provide objective fit indices and comparison with alternative models. In Study 2, using an independent new sample, we replicated the factor structure and fit. Finally, in Study 3, we examined the factor stability of the instrument over time.

Study 1

The purpose of Study 1 was to reanalyze the Yoo and Lee’s (2005) data set examining a two-factor structure of the discrimination items. Specifically, we conducted an exploratory factor analysis to examine the initial factor structure of the items followed by a confirmatory factor analysis to examine the fit of factor structure against competing models. Finally, we assessed for additional evidence of reliability and validity. We hypothesized the mean of perceived subtle racism would be higher than the mean of perceived blatant racism since blatant racism is less socially acceptable (Sue, 2005; Wu, 2002). In assessment of convergent validity, we hypothesized perceived racism would negatively correlate with self-esteem, although we expected this relationship to be stronger for subtle racism than blatant racism (Crocker & Major, 1989;

Major, Kaiser, & McCoy, 2003; Major, Quinton, & Schmader, 2003).

Method and Measures

Participants and procedure. Data for Study 1 were part of a larger survey study on the mental health of Asian Americans. The measure of perceived racism was used in a previously published study by Yoo and Lee (2005), but its psychometric properties were not investigated. After weighing the costs and benefits of reusing the sample of the 10 items of perceived racism, we believed the continual refinement and validation of a psychometrically sound instrument was clearly warranted—especially given the lack of research attention and poor measurement in this body of literature. Participants in this study consisted of 155 self-identified Asian American undergraduate students from a large, public Midwestern university (see Yoo & Lee, 2005, for details of participants and procedure).

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES). The RSES (Rosenberg, 1965) is a 10-item self-report measure of personal self-esteem. It is rated on a 4-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 4 (*strongly agree*), with higher scores representing higher self-esteem. The measure has been used in the past with Asian American samples and has demonstrated good validity and reliability estimates (e.g., Barry & Grilo, 2003; Lee, 2003, 2005; Liang et al., 2004). For this study, the mean item score was 3.19 ($SD = 0.56$) with an internal reliability estimate of .88.

Results

Exploratory factor analysis. An exploratory factor analysis (principal axis factor analysis with promax rotation, $\kappa = 4$) was conducted on the initial 10 items of perceived racism. PFA was chosen over principal-components analysis because the latter introduces more spurious common variance into solutions (Comrey, 1988) and is less appropriate for latent variable identification (Floyd & Widaman, 1995; Steger, 2006). We chose an oblique rotation on the assumption that any additional factors beyond a single factor solution would be correlated and people who have experienced one type of racism are likely to experience another type. However, results using oblique and orthogonal rotations were comparable. Two factors had eigenvalues greater than one, and the screeplot indicated a clear “elbow” after the second factor. We also employed a parallel analysis with 1,000 randomly permuted data sets (O’Connor, 2000). The mean, randomized eigenvalue from the second factor was exactly the same as the actual eigenvalue (1.28). At the 95th percentile of randomized datasets, the second eigenvalue was 1.36, which suggested the possibility of a one factor model—inconsistent with our other indicators (i.e., Kaiser rule and scree plot). There is conceptual and empirical support that suggest overextraction and underextraction introduce substantial error that can affect results, although specifying too few of factors is traditionally considered more severe (Hayton, Allen, & Scarpello, 2004). In light of this evidence, along with contradicting indicators supporting two factors and guiding theory of two distinct but related factors of subtle and blatant racism, we believed it was more prudent and appropriate to test the two-factor model further rather than discarding it based on parallel analysis alone.

Based on recommendations of Guadagnoli and Velicer (1988), we next evaluated each item with a pattern matrix factor loading

greater than .40. Two items were deleted in accordance with these criteria. Four remaining items on the first factor addressed more implicit and subtle experiences of racism accounting for 42% of the variance. In particular, subtle items included instances of “suspicion, overlooked, barriers, and treated differently,” which were all inferences made by the subject based on the implied behavior of other people. We named this factor subtle racism. Four remaining items on the second factor addressed more explicit and blatant experiences of racism accounting for 12% of the variance. Blatant items included instances of “called names, made fun of, told speak English well, and physically assaulted,” which were all explicit verbal or physical threats and assaults that were clearly racist. We named this factor Blatant Racism (see Table 1). Subtle and blatant racism subscales were correlated with a large effect size ($r = .56, p < .05$).

Confirmatory factor analysis. Given the discrepancy of factor structure based on different indicators (i.e., variance accounted for and screeplot vs. parallel analysis), we further tested the overall fit between the two factor model against competing models, including the one factor model. We used the structural equation modeling software AMOS 6.0 (Arbuckle, 2005) to conduct confirmatory factor analysis of the fit of the two-factor solution to the data. We specified a model in which a second-order factor, labeled Total Racism, loaded on two first-order factors, labeled subtle racism and blatant racism. Subtle racism loaded on four items, and blatant racism loaded on four items. Thus, this model specified that Asian Americans’ experience of racism fell into two categories, subtle and blatant. Hu and Bentler (1999) derived the following criteria for good model fitting from an extensive Monte Carlo study: Confirmatory Fit Index (CFI) and Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI) close to or greater than .95 and standardized root mean squared residual (SRMR) and root mean square approximation of error (RMSEA) close to or less than .05. According to most of these criteria, this model fit the data very closely, with the RMSEA indicating an adequate fit ($< .10$; see Table 2).

We tested this two correlated factors model against two competing models: the single factor solution suggested by the parallel analysis and a model positing two orthogonal factors. We used the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) to determine which model fit the data best (see Table 2). The two-factor solution we tested fit best (AIC = 64.85), with a model positing orthogonal factors

fitting and a model positing a single factor for all eight items both fitting poorly (AIC = 118.42 and 107.46, respectively). Therefore, we accepted the two correlated factors solution for the composition and named our scale accordingly—the Subtle and Blatant Racism Scale for Asian Americans (SABR-A²).

Descriptive and internal reliability. Mean scores for total racism (all 8 items combined) and its subscales, subtle racism and blatant racism, were 2.47 ($SD = .73$), 2.79 ($SD = .88$), and 2.14 ($SD = .78$), respectively. As hypothesized, the mean score of subtle racism was significantly higher than the mean score of blatant racism, $t(150) = 10.38, p < .05$. The internal consistency reliability of the total racism ($\alpha = .84$) and its subscales, subtle racism ($\alpha = .83$) and blatant racism ($\alpha = .72$), were acceptable.

Within-group demographic analyses. Although no a priori hypotheses were made, we explored possible demographic differences (i.e., age, gender, and nativity status) in our SABR-A² total and subscales. Participant age was correlated with blatant racism ($r = .22, p < .05$), but not subtle racism ($r = .04, p = .66$) or total racism ($r = .14, p = .10$). We performed a 2 (gender; male vs. female) \times 2 (nativity status; foreign-born vs. U.S.-born) analysis of variance (ANOVA), with total racism as the dependent variable. No significant multivariate main effects detected for gender or nativity status. We also performed a 2 (gender; male vs. female) \times 2 (nativity status; foreign-born vs. U.S.-born) multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), with subtle racism and blatant racism as dependent variables. No significant multivariate main effects detected for gender or nativity status.

Convergent validity. Correlations between SABR-A² total and subscales and personal self-esteem were examined to assess convergent validity. In support of convergent validity, there was a significant negative relationship between total racism and personal self-esteem ($r = -.20, p < .05$) and subtle racism and personal self-esteem ($r = -.23, p < .05$); although there was no significant correlation between blatant racism and personal self-esteem ($r = -.13, p = .12$).

Study 2

The purpose of Study 2 was to replicate the two-factor structure and fit of the SABR-A² on an independent sample. Moreover, we tested internal reliability, convergent validity, discriminant valid-

Table 1
Subtle and Blatant Racism Scale for Asian American College Students (SABR-A²) Items, Factor Loadings, Means and SDs
From Study 1

Item	Factor 1 loading	Factor 2 loading	M	SD
2. In America, I am viewed with suspicion because I’m Asian.	.84	-.20	2.44	1.14
7. In America, I am overlooked because I’m Asian.	.79	.08	2.77	1.08
10. In America, I am faced with barriers in society because I’m Asian.	.61	.16	2.92	1.12
1. In America, I am treated differently because I’m Asian.	.60	.24	3.01	.95
4. In America, I find it difficult to date some people because I’m Asian.	.37	.06	2.71	1.23
5. In America, I am called names such as, “chink, gook, etc.” because I’m Asian.	-.12	.91	2.18	1.13
9. In America, I am made fun of because I’m Asian.	.03	.73	2.36	.98
6. In America, I am told “you speak English so well” because I’m Asian.	.13	.45	2.58	1.31
8. In America, I have been physically assaulted because I’m Asian.	.03	.44	1.41	.77
3. In America, I am expected to excel in academics because I’m Asian.	.11	.27	3.61	1.11

Note. Pattern matrix factor loadings $> .40$ are in bold. The response format for the measure was a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 (*almost never*) to 5 (*almost always*), with higher scores representing greater perceived racism.

Table 2

Summary of Fit Indices From Confirmatory Factor Analyses of the Subtle and Blatant Racism Scale for Asian American College Students (SABR-A²) From Studies 1 and 2

Study	Model	N	χ^2	df	CFI	NNFI	SRMR	RMSEA	90% CI RMSEA	AIC
1	Two-factor	149	30.85*	19	.97	.95	.05	.07	.01, .11	64.85
	Orthogonal		86.42***	20	.84	.78	.23	.15	.12, .18	118.42
	Single		75.46***	20	.87	.81	.08	.14	.11, .17	107.46
2	Two-factor	190	37.03**	19	.97	.96	.04	.07	.04, .11	71.03

Note. CFI = Confirmatory Fit Index; NNFI = Non-Normed Fit Index; SRMR = standardized root mean squared residual; RMSEA = root mean square approximation of error; CI = confidence interval; AIC = Akaike Information Criterion.

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

ity, and incremental validity of SABR-A² total and subscales. As in Study 1, we hypothesized the mean of subtle racism would be higher than the mean of blatant racism. To test convergent validity, we hypothesized SABR-A² total and subscales would positively correlate with psychological distress (in particular, depression, anxiety, and stress). Also, we hypothesized SABR-A² total and subscales would positively correlate with another general measure of perceived racial discrimination and its subscales (in particular, exclusion/rejection, stigmatization/disvaluation, work/school discrimination, and treatment/aggression). We expected SABR-A² to be related with this other measure of perceived racial discrimination, but also distinct from it since we were measuring the unique experiences of racism faced by Asian Americans. To test discriminant validity, we hypothesized SABR-A² total and subscales would not correlate with color-blind racial attitudes or unawareness to general, pervasive racial discrimination in the United States. Because our measure has a behavioral focus, we expected an individual's report of racial discrimination experienced should be independent from his or her attitude or (un)awareness in the existence and pervasiveness of racism. A person therefore may report instances of personal racial discrimination, while still believing general, pervasive racism is not an issue in the United States. This is consistent with Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, and Browne's (2000) theory that suggests color-blind racial attitudes and racism are different. To test incremental validity, we hypothesized SABR-A² subscales would positively correlate with psychological distress, above and beyond effects from another general measure of perceived racial discrimination and its subscales.

Method and Measures

Participants. Participants in Study 2 consisted of 193 self-identified Asian American undergraduate students from a large, public Southwestern university. Their mean age was 20 ($SD = 2.1$) with 88 women and 105 men. Nativity status included 125 U.S.-born and 68 foreign-born individuals. Self-identified ethnic groups included 58 Chinese, 30 Vietnamese, 29 Filipino, 19 Korean, 8 Japanese, 6 Asian Indian, 3 Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 2 Cambodian, 2 Taiwanese, 1 Thai, 1 Bengali, 30 multiracial/multiethnic (at least one of their groups identified as an Asian ethnic group), and four did not respond. There was a discrepancy of five individuals who self-identified as one Asian ethnic group (e.g., Chinese) (and not multiracial/multiethnic) and then proceeded to report their multiracial/multiethnic backgrounds (e.g., Japanese, Filipino, and Mexican). Academic year included 60 first-year college students,

46 second-year college students, 49 third-year college students, 25 fourth-year college students, 7 fifth-year college students, 3 sixth-year or beyond college students, and three individuals who did not report their academic year.

Procedure. Participants were recruited from Asian American student organizations and Asian American studies and psychology classes from a large, public Southwestern university. Self-identified Asian American students who agreed to participate received a consent form and a survey packet. Participants completed survey packets either in groups (e.g., during the organizational meeting) or individually outside of class. In the latter case, a research assistant picked up the survey packet at a later time. Surveys took roughly 30 min to complete. Participants were paid \$5.00 for the completion of their survey packet. Written debriefing about the purpose of the study was reviewed and given to each participant.

Depression Anxiety Stress Scales—Short-Form (DASS-21). The DASS-21 (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995) is a 21-item self-report brief measure of psychological distress with 3 subscales: depression (7 items), anxiety (7 items), and stress (7 items). It is rated on a 4-point scale ranging from 1 (*did not apply to me at all*) to 4 (*applied to me very much, or most of the time*), with higher scores representing higher depression, anxiety, or stress. Participants were asked how much each item applied to them over the past week. This popular, commonly used measure was originally validated based on a large, general adult population in the United Kingdom. However, the DASS-21 has been used with Asian immigrant samples suggesting good validity and reliability estimates (e.g., Norton, 2007; Oei, Lin, & Raylu, 2008; Southam-Gerow, Chorpita, Miller, & Gleacher, 2008). For this study, the mean item score of Depression was 1.67 ($SD = 0.62$) with an internal reliability estimate of .88. The mean item score of Anxiety was 1.68 ($SD = 0.63$) with an internal reliability estimate of .86. The mean item score of Stress was 1.86 ($SD = 0.62$) with an internal reliability estimate of .85.

Brief Perceived Ethnic Discrimination Questionnaire—Community Version (Brief PEDQ-CV). The PEDQ-CV (Brondolo et al., 2005) is a 16-item self-report brief measure of racial discrimination with 4 subscales: exclusion/rejection (4 items; e.g., "Have others ignored you or not paid attention to you?"), stigmatization/disvaluation (4 items; e.g., "Have people not trusted you?"), work/school Discrimination (4 items; e.g., "Have you been treated unfairly by coworkers or classmates?"), and treatment/aggression (4 items; e.g., "Have others actually hurt

you or tried to hurt you?”). It is rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*almost never*) to 5 (*almost always*), with higher scores representing higher exposures to discrimination. The PEDQ-CV is a measure of more general racial discrimination that can be used across ethnic groups; however, the instrument was primarily developed and validated using Black and Latino samples. There is limited published psychometric information on the PEDQ-CV among Asian Americans. For this study, the mean item score of Exclusion/Rejection was 2.32 ($SD = 0.98$) with an internal reliability estimate of .80. The mean item score of Stigmatization/Disvaluation was 1.71 ($SD = 0.97$) with an internal reliability estimate of .90. The mean item score of Work/School Discrimination was 1.80 ($SD = 0.82$) with an internal reliability estimate of .82. The mean item score of Treatment/Aggression was 1.50 ($SD = 0.86$) with an internal reliability estimate of .92.

Color-Blind Racial Attitude Scale (CoBRAS). The CoBRAS (Neville et al., 2000) is a 20-item self-report measure of awareness of racism with 3 subscales: Unawareness of Racial Privilege, Institutional Discrimination, and Blatant Racial Issues. It is rated on a 6-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*), with higher scores representing greater denial of the existence of racism. For the purpose of this study, the Blatant Racial Issues (6 items; e.g., “Racial problems in the United States are rare, isolated situations”) was the only subscale used since we were primarily interested in colorblind racial attitudes as it referred to a participant’s unawareness to general, pervasive racial discrimination, rather than unawareness to White privilege or institutional racism. CoBRAS original scale development was based on a diverse sample with a small proportion of Asian Americans (3% in Study 1, 2% in Study 2, 1% in Study 3). However, other studies demonstrated good validity and reliability estimates for Asian American samples (e.g., Chen, LePhuoc, Guzman, Rude, & Dodd, 2006). For this study, the mean item score of Blatant Racial Issues (hereinafter referred to as color-blind attitudes) was 2.80 ($SD = 0.91$) with an internal reliability estimate of .71.

Results

Confirmatory factor analysis. We tested the structure and fit of the revised 8-item SABR-A² in the data from Study 2. According to Hu and Bentler’s (1999) criteria, the model once again fit the data well (see Table 2). These results support the structural validity of the SABR-A² as a measure of subtle and blatant experiences with racism.

Descriptive and internal reliability. Mean scores for total racism and its subscales, subtle racism and blatant racism, were 2.08 ($SD = .80$), 2.15 ($SD = .86$) and 2.03 ($SD = .86$), respectively. As hypothesized, the mean score of subtle racism was significantly higher than the mean score of blatant racism, $t(189) = 2.65, p < .05$. The internal consistency reliability of total racism ($\alpha = .88$) and its subscales, subtle racism ($\alpha = .82$) and blatant racism ($\alpha = .77$), were acceptable.

Within-group demographic analyses. We explored possible demographic differences (i.e., age, gender, and nativity status) in our SABR-A² total and its subscales. Participant age was correlated with subtle racism ($r = .16, p < .05$), but not blatant racism ($r = .09, p = .21$) or total racism ($r = .14, p = .06$). We performed a 2 (gender; male vs. female) \times 2 (nativity status; foreign-born vs. U.S.-born) ANOVA, with total racism as the dependent variable.

A significant main effect was detected for gender, $F(1, 180) = 4.01, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .02$, and nativity status, $F(1, 180) = 6.90, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .04$. Men reported higher total racism than women ($M = 2.24$ vs. 2.00), and foreign-born students reported higher total racism than U.S.-born students ($M = 2.28$ vs. 1.96). We also performed a 2 (gender; male vs. female) \times 2 (nativity status; foreign-born vs. U.S.-born) MANOVA, with subtle racism and blatant racism as dependent variables. A significant multivariate main effect was detected for gender (Wilks’s lambda), $F(2, 185) = 3.85, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .04$. A test of between-subjects comparison found a significant gender difference on subtle racism, $F(1, 186) = 6.33, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .03$, and not blatant racism, $F(1, 186) = 1.07, p = .30, \eta_p^2 = .01$. Men reported higher subtle racism than women ($M = 2.35$ vs. 2.03). Also, a significant multivariate main effect was detected for nativity status (Wilks’s lambda), $F(2, 185) = 4.18, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .04$. A test of between-subjects comparison found a significant nativity status difference on subtle racism, $F(1, 186) = 7.92, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .04$, and blatant racism, $F(1, 186) = 6.45, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .03$. Foreign-born students reported higher subtle racism ($M = 2.37$ vs. 2.02) and blatant racism ($M = 2.24$ vs. 1.92) than U.S.-born students.

Convergent and discriminant validity. Correlations between SABR-A² total and subscales, psychological distress (i.e., depression, anxiety, and stress), perceived racial discrimination (i.e., exclusion/rejection, stigmatization/disvaluation, work/school discrimination, and treatment/aggression), and color-blind attitudes were examined to assess convergent and discriminant validity (see Table 3). In support of convergent validity, as hypothesized, there was significant positive relationship between total racism and its subscales, subtle racism and blatant racism, with depression, anxiety, and stress. Similarly, as hypothesized, there was significant positive relationship between total racism and its subscales, subtle racism and blatant racism, with exclusion/rejection, stigmatization/disvaluation, work/school discrimination, and treatment/aggression. In support of discriminant validity, there was no relationship between total racism and its subscales, subtle racism and blatant racism, with color-blind attitudes.

Incremental validity. To assess for incremental validity, three hierarchical multiple regression analyses were performed to examine correlations between SABR-A² subscales (i.e., subtle racism and blatant racism) and psychological distress (i.e., depression, anxiety, and stress), after controlling for another general measure of perceived racial discrimination and its subscales (i.e., exclusion/rejection, stigmatization/disvaluation, work/school discrimination, and treatment/aggression). In Step 1, exclusion/rejection, stigmatization/disvaluation, work/school discrimination, and treatment/aggression were entered as a covariate. In Step 2, SABR-A² subscales, subtle racism and blatant racism, were entered to examine its unique contribution to psychological distress above and beyond effects from a general measure of perceived racial discrimination and its subscales (see Table 4).

One of three hierarchical multiple regression analyses were significant, partially supporting the incremental validity of SABR-A² subscales. The incremental effect of SABR-A² subscales on Anxiety was statistically significant, $R^2 = .29; +R^2 = .04; F(2, 166) = 4.12, p < .05$, although it was not statistically significant on depression, $R^2 = .23; +R^2 = .01; F(2, 167) = 1.01, p = .37$, and Stress, $R^2 = .21; +R^2 = .01; F(2, 163) = 1.35, p = .26$. Specifically, blatant racism was positively associated with

Table 3
Correlations Between Subtle and Blatant Racism Scale for Asian American College Students (SABR-A²), Psychological Distress, Discrimination, and Color-Blind Scales From Study 2

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Total racism	—									
2. Subtle racism	.94**	—								
3. Blatant racism	.94**	.76**	—							
4. Depression	.37**	.33**	.37**	—						
5. Anxiety	.38**	.30**	.42**	.76**	—					
6. Stress	.32**	.26**	.34**	.76**	.80**	—				
7. Exclusion/rejection	.52**	.53**	.46**	.28**	.26**	.30**	—			
8. Stigmatization/disvaluation	.60**	.58**	.54**	.41**	.36**	.29**	.57**	—		
9. Work/school discrimination	.73**	.72**	.65**	.36**	.34**	.27**	.59**	.74**	—	
10. Treatment/aggression	.64**	.55**	.65**	.49**	.49**	.40**	.42**	.73**	.76**	—
11. Color-blind attitudes	.06	.04	.08	.18*	.17*	.05	-.08	.24**	.20*	.27**

Note. N = 165 after listwise deletion.
 * p < .05. ** p < .01.

anxiety, controlling for another general measure of perceived racial discrimination and its subscales (see Table 4).

Post hoc analyses. Although there were no a priori hypotheses, we did notice some intuitive similarities and differences in the magnitude of relationships between SABR-A² subscales and PEDQ-CV subscales (Brondolo et al., 2005) that would further support construct validity and differentiation of subtle Racism and blatant Racism. In particular, we examined differences in four pairs of correlation (i.e., subtle—exclusion/rejection compared to blatant—exclusion/rejection; subtle—stigmatization/disvaluation compared with blatant—stigmatization/disvaluation; subtle—work/school discrimination compared with blatant—work/school discrimination; subtle—treatment/aggression compared with blatant—treatment/aggression). To assess whether there were actual statistical differences between these two correlations, we used Steiger’s (1980) modified z statistic produced by the DEPCOR program (Silver, Hittner, & May, 2006). This method is considered more appropriate than the common Fisher’s test of correlational difference given our correlations are dependent and from the same sample. There was only one statistical difference found. The correlation between subtle racism and treatment/aggression (r = .55) was statistically smaller than the correlation between blatant racism and treatment/aggression (r = .65), *t*(165) = 2.38, *p* < .05. This difference made conceptual sense given that the experience of

treatment/aggression (“Have others actually hurt you or tried to hurt you?”) is more blatant than subtle. These post hoc analyses seem to suggest some meaningful differences between subtle and blatant experiences of racism.

Study 3

The purpose of Study 3 was to conduct a 2-week test–retest reliability of SABR-A². We hypothesized SABR-A² subscales would be stable over time.

Method

Participants. Participants in Study 3 consisted of 38 self-identified Asian American undergraduate students from a large Southwestern university. Their mean age was 22 (*SD* = 3.1), with 22 women and 16 men. Nativity status included 27 U.S.-born and 11 foreign-born individuals. Self-identified ethnic groups included 26 Chinese, 5 Korean, 2 Filipino, 1 Vietnamese, 1 Japanese, and 3 multiracial/multiethnic (at least one of their groups identified as an Asian ethnic group). Academic year included 3 first-year college students, 5 second-year college students, 3 third-year college students, 10 fourth-year college students, 2 fifth-year college students, 3 sixth-year or beyond college students, and 12 individuals who did not report their academic year.

Table 4
Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analyses Testing Incremental Validity of Subtle and Blatant Racism Scale for Asian American College Students (SABR-A²) Subscales on Psychological Distress in Study 2

Variable	Depression				Anxiety				Stress			
	B	SE B	β	sr ²	B	SE B	β	sr ²	B	SE B	β	sr ²
Constant	1.02	.13			.97	.12			1.22	.13		
Exclusion/rejection	.03	.06	.05	0.00	.06	.06	.09	0.00	.12*	.06	.20	0.02
Stigmatization/disvaluation	.10	.08	.14	0.01	.04	.08	.05	0.00	-.01	.08	-.01	0.00
Work/school discrimination	-.15	.11	-.19	0.01	-.12	.10	-.15	0.01	-.17	.11	-.22	0.01
Treatment/aggression	.29**	.09	.39	0.05	.29**	.09	.40	0.05	.30**	.09	.41	0.05
Subtle racism	.07	.09	.09	0.00	-.09	.08	-.13	0.01	-.02	.09	-.03	0.00
Blatant racism	.04	.09	.06	0.00	.23**	.08	.31	0.03	.13	.09	.18	0.01

* p < .05. ** p < .01.

Procedure. The recruitment and procedure in data collection for Study 3 was the same as Study 1 and Study 2. Participants in Study 3 were recruited from a large, public Southwestern university. After the first administration, participants received \$5 and the opportunity to complete a second administration of SABR-A² for an additional \$10 2 weeks following. Thirty-seven out of 38 completing the first administration completed the second administration.

Results

Two-week test–retest reliability. Two-week test–retest reliability estimates for total racism and its subscales, subtle racism and blatant racism, were adequate (.71, .63, and .77, respectively) and comparable to other measures of racial discrimination (Loo et al., 2001; Utsey & Ponterotto, 1996).

Descriptive and internal reliability. At Time 1, mean scores for total racism and its subscales, subtle racism and blatant racism, were 1.96 ($SD = .82$), 2.10 ($SD = .87$), and 1.82 ($SD = .91$), respectively. The internal consistency reliability of the total racism ($\alpha = .90$) and its subscales, subtle racism ($\alpha = .81$) and blatant racism ($\alpha = .86$), were acceptable. At Time 2, mean scores for total racism and its subscales, subtle racism and blatant racism, were 1.85 ($SD = .64$), 1.91 ($SD = .68$), and 1.78 ($SD = .77$), respectively. The internal consistency reliability of the total racism ($\alpha = .84$) and its subscales, subtle racism ($\alpha = .76$) and blatant racism ($\alpha = .82$), were acceptable.

Summary and General Discussion

The purpose of the current investigation was to validate and refine the racism measure developed by Yoo and Lee (2005). In three studies using one published and two new datasets across two different regions of the United States, we provided strong evidence for the validation of the 8-item SABR-A². Our subtle racism scale referred to instances of discrimination due implicitly to racial bias or stereotype (i.e., treated differently, viewed with suspicion, overlooked, and faced barriers), whereas blatant racism scale referred to instances of discrimination due explicitly to racial bias or stereotype (i.e., called names, commented about English proficiency, physically assaulted, and made fun of). The two-subscale structure of the SABR-A² was supported by a combination of exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses with evidence of good internal reliability and stability over 2 weeks. We modeled the subscales to be first-order factors within a second-order total racism factor, meaning that the subscales can be used either independently or summed to form a brief indicator of overall experienced racism. In addition, there was support for convergent, discriminant, and incremental validity of the SABR-A² subscales.

Our measures of subtle and blatant racism differentiated consistent with theory and research in this area. Several authors suggested subtle racism is more common today than blatant racism because blatant racism is no longer publically tolerated (Dovidio, 2001; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1986; Dovidio et al., 2008; Jones, 1997; Sue, 1995). We found support of this as the mean score of perceived subtle racism was significantly higher than the mean score of perceived blatant racism across all three studies.

In support of convergent validity, we expected SABR-A² to correlate with self-esteem, psychological distress, and another

measure of racial discrimination. First, subtle racism was negatively associated with personal self-esteem, but not blatant racism. This is consistent with Major and colleagues' theory that suggests subtle racism may be more harmful than blatant racism on self-esteem because subtle racism is more difficult to discount individuals' negative feedback to racism (Crocker & Major, 1989; Major, Kaiser, & McCoy, 2003; Major, Quinton, & Schmader, 2003). Second, both subtle and blatant racism were positively associated with depression, anxiety, and stress consistent with stress-and-adjustment theories (e.g., Clark et al., 1999; Harrell, 2000; Myers et al., 2003) and past findings using other measures of racism (e.g., Gee et al., 2007a, 2007b; Lam, 2007; R. M. Lee, 2003, 2005). Third, both subtle and blatant racism were positively associated with four different types of perceived racial discrimination: exclusion/rejection, stigmatization/disvaluation, work/school discrimination, and treatment/aggression. Correlations ranged from .46 to .72 suggesting measurement of similar construct of perceived racism, but also distinct as SABR-A² subscales tapped into more unique racialized experiences of Asian Americans. Post hoc analyses also indicated further meaningful difference between subtle and blatant racism. In particular, the correlation between blatant racism and treatment/aggression was significantly larger than the correlation between subtle racism and treatment/aggression. This is expected given Brondolo et al.'s (2005) treatment/aggression subscale measures overt types of racial discrimination experienced (e.g., "threatened/actually hurt you, threatened/actually damaged your property").

In support of discriminant validity, we expected SABR-A² subscales would not correlate with color-blind racial attitudes. Both subtle and blatant racism were not significantly associated with color-blind racial attitudes. This is consistent with Neville and colleagues' (2000) theory that suggests color-blind racial attitude (i.e., unawareness to general, pervasive racial discrimination in the United States) is independent from racial discriminatory behaviors. Moreover, this result suggests our measure of perceived behavioral experiences of subtle and blatant racism is not a function of the individual's belief or attitude in the pervasiveness of racism in the United States. This seems particularly important since many Asian Americans tend to minimize and underreport the significance of pervasive racism in the United States (New American Media, 2007; U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2007)—in part, internalizing the more positive tenor of racism faced by Asian Americans.

In partial support of incremental validity, there was a significant positive relation between Blatant Racism and Anxiety, above and beyond the effect from another general measure of racial discrimination and its subscales. This partially supports the unique contribution and significance of SABR-A² (in particular, blatant racism) on psychological distress for Asian Americans. The pattern of results with a significant effect of blatant racism and not subtle racism on psychological distress may be because of the differential impact of subtle and blatant racism on different types of psychological outcome. Blatant racism may have a more significant impact on psychological outcome measures that are more short-term, situational-based, because our measure of psychological distress was based on "past-week" experiences in Study 2. In contrast, subtle racism may have a more significant impact on psychological outcome measures that are more long-term, dispositional-based, as observed by significant relations of subtle

racism, and not blatant racism, on personal self-esteem in Study 1. Thus, individuals experiencing blatant and explicit instances of racial discrimination may be quicker to attribute stressors to racism (e.g., "That was so racist!"), leading them to experience more immediate and temporary distress symptoms; whereas, individuals experiencing subtle and implicit instances of racial discrimination may be slower to attribute stressors to racism (e.g., "Was that racism or am I paranoid?") leading them to experience more enduring and sustained psychological effects.

There are a number of limitations that are noteworthy and therefore should be addressed in future research. First, the original scale began with only 10 items, and it may not represent the full spectrum of unique discriminatory experiences faced by Asian Americans; although, the two factors that were identified match with the prevailing literature that differentiates between themes of subtle and blatant racism.

Second, the support of incremental validity of SABR-A² subscales was not as consistent or strong using psychological distress as outcome variables. This may be a function of restricted range or floor effect as our sample of Asian American college students in Study 2 experienced low psychological distress (as indicated by an average of 1.5 on a 4-point scale for depression, anxiety, and stress). Future studies should sample from a more diverse group of Asian Americans with a broader range in levels of distress. In addition, the incremental validity of SABR-A² subscales may be better supported by inclusion of outcome measures that are more proximal to the experience of Asian Americans such as familial and intergenerational stress or acculturative stress (Inman & Yeh, 2007).

Third, the 2-week test-retest reliability estimate for subtle racism was .63, typically smaller than the acceptable greater than .70 criterion. Subtle perceptions of racism may vary over time given the more ambiguous nature of the experience, or participants may have been distracted while taking the test and retest, which coincidentally happened to be during finals period. Future studies should further investigate the temporal stability of the SABR-A² paying close attention to the subtle racism subscale.

Fourth, we found some inconsistent differences in age, nativity status, and gender within our subscales across the first two studies. Despite the small effect sizes in these studies, future studies should clarify whether true and consistent effects are found in these relationships. For instance, age was positively correlated with blatant racism in Study 1 and subtle racism in Study 2. These relationships may be spurious, or a discrepancy between the demography of our two samples from the Midwest and Southwest regions of the United States. Alternatively, it may suggest awareness and exposure to both subtle and blatant racism increases with age and psychological development in children of color (Garcia Coll et al., 1996; Quintana & Segurara-Herrera, 2003). Also, foreign-born students in Study 2 reported higher subtle and blatant racism than U.S.-born students. There are studies that indicate foreign-born Asian American individuals are more likely to report perceived racism than U.S.-born Asian American individuals because foreign-born immigrants are less familiar and acclimated to the U.S. culture, which makes them more vulnerable to experiences of racism (Brondolo et al., 2005; Ogbu, 2002; Sadowksi, Lai, & Flake, 1991; Ying et al., 2000). Also, men in Study 2 reported higher subtle racism than women. This is consistent with some studies that find men report higher levels of racism than

women (Alvarez, Juan, & Liang, 2006; Lee, 2005; Liang, Alvarez, Juan, & Liang, 2007; Mak & Nesdale, 2001) and inconsistent with other studies that find no gender difference (Goto et al., 2002; Greene, Way, & Pahl, 2006; Lam, 2007; Liang & Fassinger, 2008; Ying, 1996). Our goal was to develop items of subtle and blatant racism that applied to both men and women, consequently suggesting a limitation if this small gender effect found was true and not spurious. Future studies need to clarify the generalizability of this measure with both men and women. However, we also concede the juxtaposed link between racism and sexism (along with other forms of oppressions) such that Asian American men are often "de-masculinized," while Asian American women are "hyper-sexualized" (Espiritu, 1997; Sue et al., 2007). Therefore, future studies should also investigate these unique sexualized forms of racism and their psychological consequences among Asian American men and women.

Fifth, generalizability of our measure is limited to a diverse sample of Asian American college students. College campuses, on the one hand, may be more liberal in terms of racial attitudes, leading to less experience of racism in our samples. On the other hand, college students live in closer quarters than many other segments of the population, which might cause experiences of racism to occur more frequently or carry greater emotional damage. Therefore, it is not clear to what degree the SABR-A² would capture experiences of Asian American outside of higher education, in the community. Future studies should examine the two-factor fit with this population.

Sixth, our blatant racism subscale primarily focused on "negative" discrimination (i.e., called names, made fun of, or physically assaulted), rather than including both "negative" and "positive" discrimination. This latter type of "positive" discrimination may be more appropriate for Asian Americans who are often mischaracterized as all being successful simply because of their race. One item that can be characterized as a more "positive" discrimination in our study (i.e., "In America, I am expected to excel in academics because I'm Asian") was removed because it did not meet the selection criteria. However, it is important to note that the mean of this item was higher than the mean of all other items. Future studies may want to explore the psychological consequences of a "positive" type of racism among Asian American.

Despite these limitations, SABR-A² greatly contributes to the burgeoning literature that recognizes racism as an important facet of Asian American lives. Most notably, our psychometrically valid and reliable measure facilitates more rigorous and emic research to be investigated in this area—a sorely needed discourse as its progression is hampered by single-item and mismeasurement of construct that fails to capture unique racialized experiences of Asian Americans. SABR-A² has a wide range of implications in research and counseling. In research, studies can now examine how and when differential effects of subtle and blatant racism relates to identity, health, and well-being of Asian American individuals. Research can also examine to what extent these relationships are shaped by the individual's ecology (i.e., individual, family, community, and society). For instance, Operario and Fiske (2001) found, in an experimental study, high-identified minorities showed stronger reactions to subtle prejudice than low-identified minorities, who tended to overlook subtle prejudice. In counseling, therapists may want to broaden their understanding of racism and asses for the more nuanced difference in the types of racism that

may be impacting their Asian American clients and presenting problems. In addition, the impact of both perceived subtle and blatant racism on the relationship between therapist and client needs to be carefully evaluated and discussed.

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