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## ORIGINAL ARTICLE

# Navigating diversity: Maternal ideologies and associations with child interethnic prejudice in the Netherlands

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**Abstract**

Parental diversity ideologies are linked to their own interethnic prejudice, but how do they relate to children's prejudice? This study examined self-reported endorsement of colorblind ideology and multiculturalism among mothers (138 White Dutch, 65 Turkish-Dutch, and 45 Afro-Dutch) of 6-to 10-year old children (55% girls), and its association with child interethnic prejudice. Endorsement of multiculturalism was lowest among White Dutch mothers, and endorsement of colorblind ideology was lowest among Afro-Dutch mothers. Maternal endorsement of multiculturalism was negatively related to child outgroup prejudice among White Dutch families and among Turkish-Dutch families in the context of underrepresented outgroups, and results suggest no or opposite associations for colorblind ideology. Future research should explore what parenting based on these ideologies looks like, but the present study points parents in the direction of a multicultural, rather than colorblind, approach.

**KEYWORDS**

children, colorblind ideology, diversity ideologies, interethnic prejudice, multiculturalism, parents

## 1 | INTRODUCTION

Although one frequently made suggestion to reduce bias in children is parent-child discussions about race and racism (Scott et al., 2020), parents, especially from dominant ethnic groups, are often reluctant to engage in these

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discussions (Pahlke et al., 2012; Vittrup & Holden, 2011). Parents might differ in their willingness to discuss these topics based on their diversity ideologies, such as colorblind ideology and multiculturalism, advocating different approaches regarding the emphasis that should be put on differences between ethnic groups (Rattan & Ambady, 2013). Within adults, multiculturalism seems to be more strongly related to lower levels of ethnic prejudice than colorblind ideology (Leslie et al., 2020; Whitley & Webster, 2019), but few studies have focused on the transfer effects of parental ideologies to interethnic prejudice in children. In addition, national context and group status are important factors related to diversity ideologies and associations with interethnic prejudice (e.g., Leslie et al., 2020; Whitley & Webster, 2019), highlighting the need for research in previously left-out populations. Whereas there is some research in the Netherlands on diversity ideologies among native Dutch and Turkish-Dutch people (e.g., Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2003; Verkuyten, 2005), the Afro-Dutch community and parent-child transfer effects have not yet been studied. Therefore, the present study examines endorsement of colorblind ideology and multiculturalism in White Dutch, Turkish-Dutch, and Afro-Dutch mothers, and its association to child interethnic prejudice.

## 1.1 | Colorblind ideology, multiculturalism, and intergroup relations

Colorblind ideology and multiculturalism are two commonly studied diversity ideologies (i.e., beliefs about how diversity and demographic differences in society should be approached, Leslie et al., 2020; Rattan & Ambady, 2013). Colorblind ideology refers to beliefs that prejudice stems from emphasis on social categories like ethnicity or race, and that racial bias can be prevented by not noticing race and either stressing similarities or individual uniqueness (Apfelbaum et al., 2012; Rosenthal & Levy, 2010). Others describe colorblind attitudes as denial or unawareness of racial dynamics (Neville et al., 2000), and a form of racism in itself (Neville et al., 2013). Multiculturalism refers to beliefs that differences in ethnicity and skin color deserve attention and should be valued (Rattan & Ambady, 2013), and that creating knowledge and appreciation for differences improves interethnic attitudes (Rosenthal & Levy, 2010). Others describe multicultural ideology as endorsement of cultural diversity in society, while maintaining and sharing cultures (Berry & Kalin, 1995). Stronger endorsement of multiculturalism is found in members of underrepresented than dominant ethnic groups (e.g., Berry & Kalin, 1995; Ryan et al., 2007, 2010; Wolsko et al., 2006). Opposite patterns are sometimes found for endorsement of colorblind ideology (i.e., when comparing White and Black Americans; Ryan et al., 2007), but not always (i.e., when comparing White and Latin Americans; Ryan et al., 2010). Specific experiences of underrepresented ethnic groups as well as different conceptualizations and forms of colorblind ideology might impact patterns across ethnic groups.

Although both colorblind ideology and multiculturalism are based on arguments to improve interethnic relations, colorblind ideology is associated with more negative behaviors of members of dominant ethnic groups in interethnic interactions (Apfelbaum et al., 2008b; Holoien & Shelton, 2012; Norton et al., 2006; Vorauer et al., 2009), and more negative effects on members of underrepresented ethnic groups than multiculturalism (e.g., on academic outcomes, cognitive functioning, and psychological engagement; Birnbaum et al., 2020; Holoien & Shelton, 2012; Plaut et al., 2009). Specifically if combined with low representation of underrepresented groups, colorblind ideology can have negative effects on trust and identity (Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2008). In contrast, multiculturalism can also have negative effects: it is associated with increased stereotyping (Wolsko et al., 2000), and racial essentialism, that is, beliefs that group differences are biologically based and fixed (Wilton et al., 2019). Furthermore, the effects of diversity ideologies can differ based on the situation, for example on the degree of conflict (Correll et al., 2008). More specifically, it seems that in high conflict situations, colorblind ideology has some very short-term positive effects, although multiculturalism has more beneficial effects after a delay (Correll et al., 2008). Meta-analytic results on the association between diversity ideologies and prejudice, the affective component of interethnic relations referring to negative attitudes towards or evaluations of (a member of) a group (Stangor, 2016), show that both multiculturalism and colorblind ideology are negatively related to explicit prejudice, but that the association with multiculturalism is stronger (Leslie et al., 2020; Whitley & Webster, 2019). The association between multiculturalism and prejudice generally is stronger for the dominant than underrepresented ethnic group, while there are no group differences for the association between prejudice and colorblind ideology (Leslie et al., 2020).

## 1.2 | Diversity ideologies and children

Exposure to diversity ideologies might also affect interethnic attitudes of children. At school, for example, being exposed to a colorblind as compared to multiculturalist ideology results in children being less aware of discrimination (Apfelbaum et al., 2010), and multi-cultural education is related to more positive interethnic attitudes (Verkuyten & Thijs, 2013). Parents can additionally expose their children to diversity ideologies through socialization and engagement in explicit discussions about race, which in comparison to colorblind parental behaviors seem to have positive effects on outgroup attitudes of White children (Katz, 2003; Perry, Skinner-Dorkenoo, Abaied, Waters, & Osnaya, 2021; Perry, Skinner-Dorkenoo, Abaied, & Waters, 2021; Vittrup & Holden, 2011). Parental diversity ideologies might also affect children in more implicit and subtle ways. For example, colorblind ideology is related to more negative behaviors from dominant ethnic group members in interactions with members from underrepresented groups (Apfelbaum et al., 2008b; Holoien & Shelton, 2012; Norton et al., 2006; Vorauer, et al., 2009). Children might notice this as they seem sensitive to these nonverbal behaviors of adults in interracial interactions (Castelli et al., 2008). Children also seem sensitive to normative pressure, although evidence mostly comes from the United States. These studies demonstrate that both White children (Apfelbaum et al., 2008a) and children of color (Pauker et al., 2015) between 9 and 12 years old show the behavioral tendency not to acknowledge race, in line with colorblind behavior as frequently observed in adults (Apfelbaum et al., 2008a; Norton et al., 2006). This line of thought matches with the social learning branch of theories explaining the development of interethnic prejudice, focusing specifically on the role of other people from whom children learn (see Levy & Hughes, 2009). Together the available research suggests that parental endorsement of the multicultural as compared to colorblind ideology is associated with less prejudice among children, yet direct examinations of these associations are scarce and diversity in samples is limited.

## 1.3 | Prejudice in children

Children already notice differences between people with different ethnic appearances and develop a preference for faces from their own ethnic group as very young infants (i.e., 3 months old; Kelly et al., 2005; Kelly et al., 2007). Differences in explicit attitudes towards ethnic in- and outgroups and levels of implicit, less consciously activated, bias towards outgroups are found in White children in young age groups (e.g., 3–6 years old, Dunham et al., 2008; Ramsey, 1991). Although there is less research on children from underrepresented groups, similar reports of explicit and implicit bias towards other underrepresented groups have been found (Dunham et al., 2007). Meta-analytic results show a developmental path consisting of an increase in prejudice against lower status outgroups between early (2–4 years) and middle childhood (5–7 years), followed by a slight decrease towards late childhood (8–10 years), while prejudice against higher status outgroups stays equal between early and middle childhood, and increases towards late childhood (Raabe & Beelmann, 2011). Specifically between middle and late childhood developmental paths show most variance (Raabe & Beelmann, 2011), suggesting that social and environmental influences such as parental diversity ideologies are particularly important in this age group.

## 1.4 | The Dutch context

The association between colorblind ideology and prejudice has been predominantly studied in the U.S., while the association between multiculturalism and prejudice is stronger outside the U.S. (Whitley & Webster, 2019). In addition, as diversity ideologies may be differently associated with prejudice between various groups within a population (Leslie et al., 2020), investigations in other populations and groups are needed. The Netherlands provides an interesting

context for this type of research, as ethnic diversity is increasing (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2021a), and interpersonal and institutionalized racism are identified, yet argued to be ignored or even denied (Sociaal Cultureel Planbureau, 2020; Weiner, 2014). Although behavioral colorblind ideology has been described as a common societal pattern (Hondius, 2014; Weiner, 2014), empirical studies on the endorsement of colorblind ideology in individuals in the Netherlands are lacking.

Previous studies on multiculturalism in the Netherlands showed that this ideology is more strongly endorsed among members of underrepresented ethnic groups (Turkish- and Moroccan-Dutch, Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2003; Verkuyten, 2005; Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2006), and that, consistent with meta-analytic conclusions (Leslie et al., 2020), multiculturalism is negatively associated with negative intergroup attitudes and prejudice in the dominant ethnic group (e.g., Vedder et al., 2016; Velasco González et al., 2008; Verkuyten, 2005). In contrast to meta-analytic results (Leslie et al., 2020), no significant associations between multiculturalism and outgroup attitudes were found in underrepresented ethnic groups (Vedder et al., 2016; Verkuyten, 2005). The positive association with in-group evaluations among Turkish-Dutch participants suggests that multiculturalism is associated with improved attitudes towards underrepresented groups only (Verkuyten, 2005). Other underrepresented ethnic groups, specifically the Black Dutch population (referred to as Afro-Dutch in the present study), however, have received little attention in previous research. While 2.4% of the Dutch population is Turkish-Dutch, 3.1% has a Surinamese or Antillean background (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2021b), highlighting the need for inclusion of Afro-Dutch people in research on diversity and interethnic relations. In addition, whereas there is evidence of interethnic prejudice among children in the Netherlands (de Bruijn et al., 2020; Verkuyten & Kinket, 2000), no research has previously linked these to parental diversity ideologies.

## 1.5 | The present study

The present study examines endorsement of colorblind ideology and multiculturalism among mothers in the Netherlands and its association with child outgroup prejudice in three ethnic groups: White Dutch (representing the dominant ethnic group), Turkish-Dutch (representing the largest predominantly Muslim underrepresented groups), and Afro-Dutch (representing the Black underrepresented group). It is expected that (1) endorsement of multiculturalism is higher among Turkish- and Afro-Dutch mothers than White Dutch mothers. The difference in endorsement of colorblind ideology and differences between mothers from the underrepresented ethnic groups will be explored. In addition, it is expected that (2) maternal colorblind ideology and (3) multiculturalism are negatively related to child outgroup prejudice, that (4) multiculturalism is more strongly negatively related to child outgroup prejudice than colorblind ideology, and that (5) ethnicity moderates the association between multiculturalism and child outgroup prejudice, so that the association is strongest for the dominant ethnic group. Results will provide insights in the current endorsement of diversity ideologies among mothers in different ethnic groups in the Netherlands, and how endorsement of these ideologies relates to interethnic prejudice of their children.

## 2 | METHOD

### 2.1 | Sample

Families were recruited at locations, events, or through organizations aimed at children or the included ethnic groups, through social media, through the network of researchers, and with the snowball procedure. Parents were informed that the research focuses on how children view diversity in society, and that we were interested in the perspectives of families with different ethnic backgrounds. Participation of mothers was a criterion, participation of fathers was optional. Other inclusion criteria were: (1) the child was between 6 and 10 years old, (2) parents were the

**TABLE 1** Descriptives of socio-demographic and main variables

|                                |                       | White Dutch<br>N = 138    | Turkish-Dutch<br>N = 65   | Afro-Dutch<br>N = 45      |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Child gender                   | % female              | 54%                       | 49%                       | 67%                       |
| Child age                      | M (SD)                | 7.37 (.88)                | 7.66 (1.08)               | 7.76 (1.08)               |
| Maternal age                   | M (SD)                | 39.93 (4.09) <sup>a</sup> | 36.18 (4.45) <sup>b</sup> | 39.74 (6.36) <sup>a</sup> |
| Maternal education             | % higher level        | 83% <sup>a</sup>          | 28% <sup>b</sup>          | 64% <sup>c</sup>          |
| Maternal religion              | % yes                 | 29% <sup>a†</sup>         | 100%                      | 76% <sup>b</sup>          |
| Maternal marital status        | % living with partner | 92% <sup>a</sup>          | 95% <sup>a</sup>          | 60% <sup>b</sup>          |
| Maternal colorblind ideology   | M (SD)                | 2.73 (.52) <sup>a</sup>   | 2.87 (.46) <sup>a</sup>   | 2.14 (.53) <sup>b</sup>   |
| Maternal multiculturalism      | M (SD)                | 4.77 (.83) <sup>a</sup>   | 5.07 (.78) <sup>b</sup>   | 5.49 (.79) <sup>c</sup>   |
| Child White prejudice          | M (SD)                |                           | −1.60 (2.00)              | −2.13 (2.09)              |
| Child Black prejudice          | M (SD)                | −.36 (2.57) <sup>a</sup>  | .68 (2.49) <sup>b</sup>   |                           |
| Child Middle Eastern prejudice | M (SD)                | −.74 (2.22)               |                           | −.52 (2.41)               |

Note. Descriptives of the sample after exclusion of multivariate outliers. Different superscript letters refer to significant between-group comparisons. <sup>†</sup> there was one missing data point on this variable in this group.

biological parents, (3) participating parents lived with the child, (4) parents did not have severe mental or physical illnesses, (5) children did not have severe developmental disorders such as autism, and (6) families lived in the urban Western region of the Netherlands. Other inclusion criteria were: (1) White Dutch families: parents and their parents were born in a North-Western European country, (2) Turkish-Dutch families: parents were born in Turkey or in a North-Western European country if their parents were born in Turkey, (3) Afro-Dutch families: the mother, or at least one of her parents, was born in Surinam, Aruba, the Dutch Antilles, Ghana or Cape Verde. Background of the father was not a criterion for Afro-Dutch families, because interethnic romantic relationships are common among Afro-Dutch women (Kalmijn and Van Tubergen, 2006). Exceptions for White Dutch families were made if (grand)parents were born in another country during a temporary stay, did not identify with that cultural background, and the ethnic appearance of parents was White.

The sample originally consisted of 273 families, yet data from mother and child were complete in 252 families (138 White Dutch, 66 Turkish-Dutch, and 48 Afro-Dutch). Because data from fathers were missing in most families (62%), fathers are not included in the present study. Most of the White Dutch parents were born in the Netherlands (94% of mothers and fathers), whereas most of the Turkish-Dutch parents were born in Turkey (59% of mothers and 65% of fathers). Almost half of the Afro-Dutch mothers were born in the Netherlands (48%), others were born in Suriname (29%), the former Dutch Antilles (21%), or Cape Verde (2%). Most of the fathers in the Afro-Dutch families were born in the Netherlands (33%), Suriname (28%), or the former Dutch Antilles (11%). The 252 participating children (56% female) aged between 6 and 10 years old ( $M = 7.53$ ,  $SD = .99$ ), mothers aged between 25 and 52 years old ( $M = 38.86$ ,  $SD = 5.01$ ). Demographics per ethnic group can be found in Table 1. Most of the mothers were living with a partner (86%), were highly educated (bachelor's degree/higher vocational education or higher, 65%), and were religious (57%).

## 2.2 | Procedure

Two researchers visited the participating families at home for 1.5 to 2 hr, during which several standardized parent-child interaction and child tasks were conducted and videotaped to allow for post hoc coding, computer tasks were done, and questionnaires were answered. More specifically, the home visit started with a parent-child interaction

block (counter balanced whether mother or father started), during which one parent and child played a version of the Guess Who? Game, were asked to cooperate building with Kapla blocks, and read a picture book designed for the study. The other parent (if both parents participated) at the same time performed two Implicit Association Tests (IATs) and answered some questionnaires with the other researcher. Next was a child block, during which the first researcher did several tasks with the child: two IATs, the social attribution task (see below), a social preference task (order all counterbalanced), the Preschool Occupations Activities Traits task, and a story stem task. Parents were requested to not interrupt during the child tasks and to remain at a distance, so that parental influence on child behavior during these tasks was limited. Afterwards another parent-child block followed with roles of parents reversed. The visit always ended with a mother-child interaction task, during which mothers and children linked names to characters from the picture book. The child received a small gift at the end of the visit. Parents received a gift card of 20 Euros, after they filled out an online questionnaire that was sent to them after the visit. Turkish-Dutch parents had the option to answer all questionnaires and receive instructions in Dutch or Turkish. The tasks used in the study were designed to be game-like, in order to make the visit more fun and interesting for the participating children. The variety of doing games with one of their parents or the researcher in addition kept children attentive. Children in this age group in the Netherlands already have several years of experience with formal education and completing assignments, and children and parents could take breaks during the visit if needed. The study's procedures and methods were approved by an Ethics committee.

## 2.3 | Measures

### 2.3.1 | Maternal endorsement of colorblind ideology

Mothers completed a selection of items from the Color-Blind Racial Attitude Scale in the online questionnaire after the visit (Neville et al., 2000). Items that loaded above .60 on one of the three factors (unawareness of racial privilege, institutional discrimination, and blatant racial issues) reported by Neville et al. (2000) were selected for the questionnaire. To better fit the Dutch context, one item was excluded ("Race plays a major role in the type of social services (such as type of health care or day care) that people receive"), and one item was adapted ("Dutch should be the only spoken language," rather than official language). This resulted in a total of 12 items, with answer options ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Six reverse items were recoded, with higher scores reflecting stronger endorsement of colorblind ideology. Based on negative inter-item correlations and Cronbach's alpha statistics, three items were excluded, resulting in nine items in total (four on racial privilege, three on institutional discrimination, and two on blatant racial issues). Scores were summed and averaged, so that scores could range from 1 to 5. Reliability was acceptable overall, and for White Dutch and Afro-Dutch mothers (Cronbach's  $\alpha > .75$ ). For Turkish-Dutch mothers, reliability was somewhat lower (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .64$ ). The three factors of colorblind ideology were positively correlated ( $r = .27$  -  $.40$ ,  $ps < .001$ ).

### 2.3.2 | Maternal endorsement of multiculturalism

Mothers completed the Dutch Multiculturalism Ideology Scale in the online questionnaire after the visit (Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2003), which is based on the Canadian Multiculturalism Ideology Scale measuring support for a culturally diverse society (Berry & Kalin, 1995). Eight items were selected in accordance with the scale analysis among Dutch and Turkish-Dutch participants (Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2003), including for example the item "A society that has a variety of cultural groups is more able to tackle new problems as they occur." Answer option ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Three reverse items were recoded, with higher scores reflecting stronger endorsement of multiculturalism. Based on negative inter-item correlations and Cronbach's alpha statistics, one item was excluded.

Scores on the remaining seven items were summed and averaged, so that scores could range from 1 to 7. Reliability was acceptable overall, and for White Dutch and Afro-Dutch mothers (Cronbach's  $\alpha > .75$ ). Reliability was somewhat lower for Turkish-Dutch mothers (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .66$ ).

### 2.3.3 | Child outgroup prejudice

Children completed a social attributions task, adapted from the Multi-Response Racial Attitude Measure (MRA; Doyle & Aboud, 1995). Children were presented with six envelopes with pictures of children (three boys and three girls, White, Black, and Middle Eastern) and one with a picture of a trash bin. Children in the pictures wore white t-shirts, were placed against a white background, smiled, and faced the camera straight. Results from a pilot among 74 adults (39% male), aged 18 to 53 ( $M = 26.96$ ,  $SD = 6.91$ ) of diverse ethnic backgrounds (31 White Dutch, 23 Turkish-Dutch, 20 Afro-Dutch), demonstrated that the Black children in the pictures were classified as Surinamese or Caribbean by 92%–96% of the participants. The children of Middle Eastern descent were classified as Turkish or Moroccan by 95%–96%, and the White children were classified as Dutch by all (100%) of the participants. No differences between the ethnic groups of the children in the pictures were found in terms of rated attractiveness ( $p > .05$ ), but the children of Middle Eastern descent were rated less cute ( $M = 6.09$ ,  $SD = 1.70$ ) than the Black ( $M = 6.51$ ,  $SD = 1.39$ ,  $t(72) = 3.56$ ,  $p = .001$ ) and White children ( $M = 6.72$ ,  $SD = 1.38$ ,  $t(72) = -4.42$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

Participating children put cards with attributes in the envelopes of the children they applied to according to them, and remaining cards in the trash bin-envelope. Ten attributes were included: five positive and five negative (e.g., sweet, kind, stupid, annoying). Children received six cards of each attribute and could give it to as few or many children as they wanted (ranging from nobody to all). For each ethnic group in the pictures, a prejudice score was calculated by subtracting the number of positive from the number of negative attributes, similar to procedures by Rutland et al. (2005), and dividing the score by 2 (as there were two pictures of children in each ethnic group). Outgroup prejudice was determined for the two included ethnic outgroup: Black and Middle Eastern prejudice scores for the White Dutch participating children, Black and White prejudice scores for the Turkish-Dutch participating children, and Middle Eastern and White prejudice scores for the Afro-Dutch participating children. Outgroup prejudice scores could range from –5 (very favorable) to 5 (very unfavorable).

## 2.4 | Sociodemographic variables

Parents reported on sociodemographic variables in the screening, questionnaire during the visit and online questionnaire. Gender of child was dichotomized as (0) male or (1) female (no parents reported differently), maternal level of education as (0) lower or (1) higher (bachelor or master's degree at higher vocational education or university, or PhD), maternal marital status as (1) living with a partner or (0) not, and religion as (1) being religious or (0) not. Child gender, child age, maternal age, and maternal level of education were selected to potentially include as control variables based on their previously established or theorized link to prejudice and diversity ideologies (Henry & Sears, 2009; Raabe & Beelmann, 2011; Sidanius et al., 2018; Wagner & Zick, 1995). Maternal religion was included as potential control variables based on the religious differences between the ethnic groups included.

## 2.5 | Analyses

Main variables were examined for outliers in the three ethnic groups separately. Two outliers on maternal multiculturalism, defined as 3.29 SD above or below the mean (Field, 2005), were winsorized (i.e., brought closer to the rest of the distribution), after which the main variables had a normal distribution and there were no more outliers. Four



multivariate outliers were identified based on Mahalanobis distances, and excluded from further analyses, resulting in a total sample of  $N = 248$  (138 White Dutch, 65 Turkish-Dutch, 45 Afro-Dutch). Preliminary analyses to examine group differences include Kruskal Wallis tests (for sociodemographic variables due to skewness) and independent  $t$ -tests (for child prejudice scores). Furthermore, bivariate correlations between main variables (Pearson), and bivariate correlations between socio-demographic variables and main variables (Spearman) are examined. In addition, we examine correlations between maternal endorsement of diversity ideologies and paternal endorsement of diversity ideologies in families from which father data is available.

Main analyses include a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) to examine group differences on maternal colorblind ideology and multiculturalism. A multivariate analysis of covariance is run to control for covariates based on associations between socio-demographic and dependent variables. Similar analyses are run to explore group differences on the separate factors of maternal colorblind ideology. Hierarchical multiple regression analyses are conducted to examine associations between maternal ideologies and child outgroup prejudice (separate analyses per outgroup), and the moderating effect of ethnicity. Dummy variables for ethnicity were created, predictors were centered and interaction terms between dummy variables and maternal multiculturalism were created. Child prejudice was entered as dependent variable, and independent variables were entered in steps: maternal colorblind ideology and maternal multiculturalism (step 1), dummy variable for ethnicity (step 2), interaction term (step 3). Similar hierarchical multiple regression analyses are conducted while including covariates in a preceding step. Regression coefficients from analyses with and without covariates are compared using the following formula (Clogg et al., 1995; Paternoster et al., 1998):

$$Z = \frac{b1 - b2}{\sqrt{SEb1^2 + SEb2^2}}$$

Lastly, the main hierarchical multiple regression analyses are repeated examining the separate factors of colorblind ideology rather than the total score of maternal endorsement of colorblind ideology as predictors.

A priori power analyses using G\*Power 3.1 (Faul et al., 2007) showed that a sample size of at least  $N = 99$  (MANOVA) and  $N = 85$  (multiple regression analysis) was needed to detect medium effects with a power of .80 and  $\alpha$  set at .05. Our total sample size ( $N = 248$ ) and smallest subsample for the regression analyses ( $n = 110$ ) was thus sufficient.

### 3 | RESULTS

#### 3.1 | Preliminary analyses

Table 1 shows socio-demographic statistics and descriptive statistics of the main variables. Child age and gender did not differ significantly between the ethnic groups. There were significant differences in maternal age ( $H(2) = 29.53, p < .001$ ), maternal level of education ( $H(2) = 60.17, p < .001$ ), maternal marital status ( $H(2) = 36.21, p < .001$ ), maternal religion ( $H(2) = 97.73, p < .001$ ), and child Black prejudice ( $t(201) = -2.70, p = .007$ ). Turkish-Dutch children showed more prejudice towards the Black outgroup than White Dutch children.

Table 2 shows bivariate correlations between main variables. Endorsement of colorblind ideology was negatively correlated to endorsement of multiculturalism overall and in all ethnic groups. In Turkish-Dutch families and overall, endorsement of colorblind ideology was positively related to child Black prejudice. In White Dutch families and overall, endorsement of multiculturalism was negatively related to child Black prejudice. This was also the case for child Middle Eastern prejudice in White Dutch families. Child prejudice towards different outgroups was positively correlated in the total sample, in the Turkish-Dutch group and in the White Dutch group.

Of the socio-demographic variables, maternal level of education ( $\rho = -.27, p < .001$ ), marital status ( $\rho = .18, p = .004$ ), and maternal age ( $\rho = -.16, p = .011$ ) were related to endorsement of colorblind ideology, whereas child

**TABLE 2** Bivariate correlates between main variables

| Total sample (N = 248) <sup>b</sup> /White Dutch (N = 138) <sup>a</sup> | 1      | 2      | 3      | 4     | 5    |
|---|--------|--------|--------|-------|------|
| 1. Maternal colorblind ideology   |        | -.44** | .11    | .06   | N.A. |
| 2. Maternal multiculturalism  | -.48** |        | -.27** | -.18* | N.A. |
| 3. Child Black prejudice  | .21**  | -.17** |        | .56** | N.A. |
| 4. Child Middle Eastern prejudice                                       | <.01   | -.08   | .45**  |       | N.A. |
| 5. Child White prejudice  | .08    | -.04   | .24**  | .15*  |      |
| Turkish-Dutch (N = 65) <sup>b</sup> /Afro-Dutch (N = 45) <sup>a</sup>   | 1      | 2      | 3      | 4     | 5    |
| 1. Maternal colorblind ideology   |        | -.53** | N.A.   | -.17  | .14  |
| 2. Maternal multiculturalism  | -.36** |        | N.A.   | .28   | .03  |
| 3. Child Black prejudice  | .25*   | -.09   |        | N.A.  | N.A. |
| 4. Child Middle Eastern prejudice                                       | N.A.   | N.A.   | N.A.   |       | .01  |
| 5. Child White prejudice  | .15    | -.23   | .25*   | N.A.  |      |

<sup>a</sup>Above diagonal.

<sup>b</sup>Below diagonal.

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ .

age was related to endorsement of multiculturalism ( $\rho = .13$ ,  $p = .043$ ). Furthermore, child White prejudice was significantly related to maternal education ( $\rho = -.22$ ,  $p = .020$ ), child Middle Eastern prejudice was related to ages (child  $\rho = -.24$ ,  $p = .001$ , mother  $\rho = -.19$ ,  $p = .0012$ ), and child Black prejudice was related to gender of the child ( $\rho = -.29$ ,  $p < .001$ ), maternal age ( $\rho = -.19$ ,  $p = .008$ ) and religion ( $\rho = -.19$ ,  $p = .006$ ).

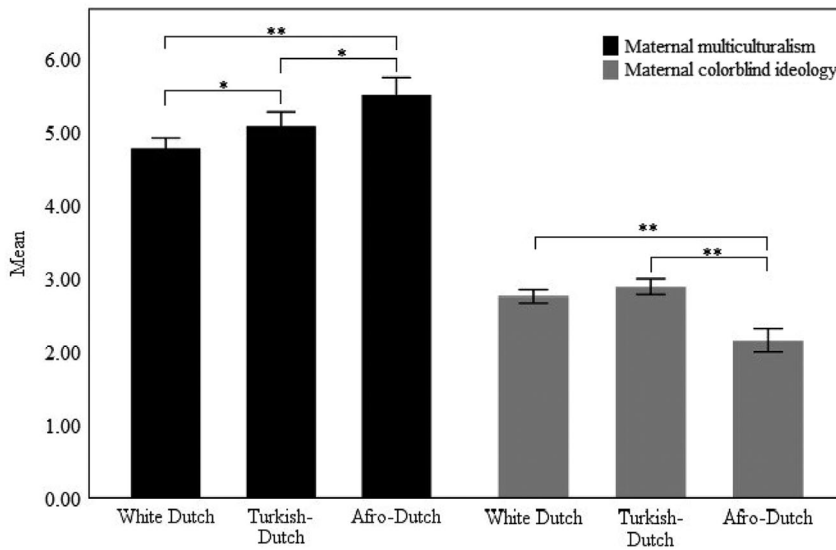
We explored the correlation between maternal and paternal endorsement of colorblind ideology for the fathers that did participate, and found a medium correlation ( $n = 97$ ,  $r = .39$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Similarly, a medium correlation was found between maternal and paternal endorsement of multiculturalism ( $n = 96$ ,  $r = .44$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

### 3.2 | Main analyses

Significant differences in diversity ideologies between the ethnic groups were found ( $F(2, 488) = 18.54$ ,  $p < .001$ , Wilk's  $\lambda = .75$ , Figure 1): there was a significant difference for both maternal colorblind ideology ( $F(2, 245) = 30.63$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\omega^2 = .19$ ) and maternal multiculturalism ( $F(2, 245) = 14.20$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\omega^2 = .10$ ). Bonferroni post-hoc comparisons showed that endorsement of colorblind ideology was lower among Afro-Dutch than White Dutch and Turkish-Dutch mothers ( $ps < .001$ ). Endorsement of multiculturalism was higher among Afro-Dutch than White Dutch ( $p < .001$ ) and Turkish-Dutch mothers ( $p = .022$ ), and higher among Turkish-Dutch than White Dutch mothers ( $p = .041$ ).

After including sociodemographic variables significantly correlated to diversity ideologies, most results were similar, yet the pairwise comparison between Afro-Dutch and Turkish-Dutch mothers on multiculturalism no longer was significant ( $p = .301$ ). Exploratory analyses showed that specifically after entering maternal level of education, the difference did not remain significant. Moreover, we explored group differences on the separate factors of colorblind ideology. Results showed a similar pattern on all factors, with the exception that the difference in maternal colorblind ideology in the form of unawareness of institutional discrimination between Afro- and Turkish-Dutch mothers was no longer significant after including covariates ( $p = .198$ ).

Tables 3–5 show the results from the hierarchical multiple regression analyses predicting child prejudice towards the three different outgroups. For child White rejection, there was no interaction effect between maternal multiculturalism and ethnicity, nor were there any main effects of maternal colorblind ideology or multiculturalism (Table 3).



**FIGURE 1** Group differences in maternal multiculturalism and colorblind ideology

**TABLE 3** Hierarchical multiple regression predicting child White prejudice ( $n = 110$ )

| Variable                       | Model 1 |     |         | Model 2 |     |         | Model 3 |     |         |
|--------------------------------|---------|-----|---------|---------|-----|---------|---------|-----|---------|
|                                | B       | SE  | $\beta$ | B       | SE  | $\beta$ | B       | SE  | $\beta$ |
| M colorblind ideology          | .52     | .37 | .16     | .47     | .44 | .14     | .55     | .44 | .16     |
| M multiculturalism             | -.19    | .27 | -.08    | -.19    | .27 | -.08    | -.33    | .29 | -.13    |
| Ethnicity                      |         |     |         | -.11    | .49 | -.03    | -.32    | .51 | -.08    |
| M multiculturalism x ethnicity |         |     |         |         |     |         | .75     | .51 | .17     |
| $R^2$                          | .04     |     |         | .04     |     |         | .06     |     |         |
| F change for $R^2$             | 2.29    |     |         | .05     |     |         | 2.17    |     |         |

Note: M, maternal. Ethnicity is coded as 1 = Afro-Dutch.

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ .

**TABLE 4** Hierarchical multiple regression predicting child Middle Eastern prejudice ( $n = 183$ )

| Variable                       | Model 1 |     |         | Model 2 |     |         | Model 3 |     |         |
|--------------------------------|---------|-----|---------|---------|-----|---------|---------|-----|---------|
|                                | B       | SE  | $\beta$ | B       | SE  | $\beta$ | B       | SE  | $\beta$ |
| M colorblind ideology          | -.24    | .34 | -.06    | -.16    | .36 | -.04    | -.10    | .36 | -.03    |
| M multiculturalism             | -.21    | .23 | -.08    | -.23    | .23 | -.09    | -.26    | .23 | -.10    |
| Ethnicity                      |         |     |         | .29     | .44 | .06     | -.17    | .46 | -.03    |
| M multiculturalism x ethnicity |         |     |         |         |     |         | 1.34    | .48 | .22**   |
| $R^2$                          | .01     |     |         | .01     |     |         | .05     |     |         |
| F change for $R^2$             | .43     |     |         | .43     |     |         | 7.73**  |     |         |

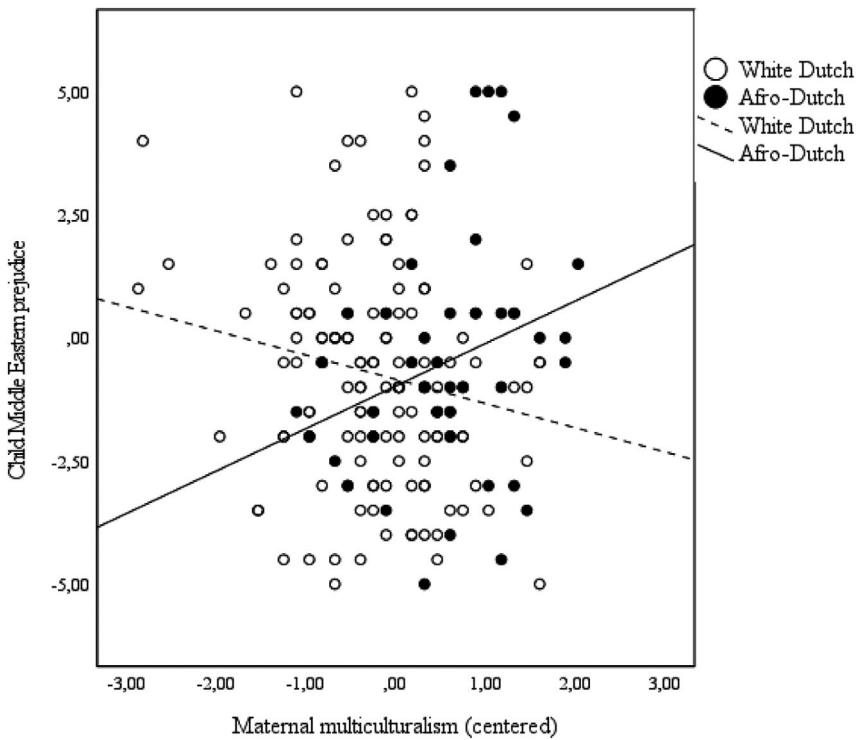
Note. M = maternal. Ethnicity is coded as 1 = Afro-Dutch.

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ .

**TABLE 5** Hierarchical multiple regression predicting child Black prejudice (*n* = 203)

| Variable                                  | Model 1  |           |         | Model 2  |           |         | Model 3  |           |          |
|---|----------|-----------|---------|----------|-----------|---------|----------|-----------|----------|
|   | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | $\beta$ | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | $\beta$ | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | <i>B</i> |
| M colorblind ideology                     | .62      | .38       | .12     | .39      | .38       | .08     | .37      | .38       | .07      |
| M multiculturalism                        | −.40     | .24       | −.13    | −.57     | .24       | −.18*   | −.49     | .25       | −.16     |
| Ethnicity                                 |          |           |         | −1.16    | .39       | −.21**  | −1.15    | .39       | −.21**   |
| M multiculturalism x ethnicity            |          |           |         |          |           |         | −.53     | .48       | −.08     |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>                     | .04      |           |         | .08      |           |         | .09      |           |          |
| <i>F</i> change for <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> | 4.47*    |           |         | 8.82**   |           |         | 1.24     |           |          |

Note. \**p* < .05, \*\**p* < .01. M = maternal. Ethnicity is coded as 1 = White Dutch.



**FIGURE 2** Simple correlations between maternal multiculturalism and child Middle Eastern prejudice

For child Middle Eastern rejection, similarly no main effects of maternal colorblind ideology and multiculturalism were found, but there was a significant interaction effect between maternal multiculturalism and ethnicity (Table 4, model 3). This interaction effect shows that the association between maternal multiculturalism and child Middle Eastern prejudice was significantly different for the White Dutch group as compared to the Afro-Dutch group. Running the model for the two ethnic groups separately revealed that there was a significant negative association in White Dutch families ( $\beta = -.19, p = .042$ ), and a non-significant positive association in Afro-Dutch families ( $\beta = .27, p = .128$ , see Figure 2 for a plot of the simple correlations to illustrate). For child Black rejection, no significant interaction between maternal multiculturalism and ethnicity, nor a main effect of colorblind ideology was found (Table 5, model 3). However, there was a main effect of ethnicity, showing that Black rejection was lower for White Dutch children than for Turkish-Dutch

children, and of multiculturalism, showing that higher maternal endorsement of multiculturalism was related to less child Black prejudice (Table 5, model 2).

Z-tests to compare coefficients between models with and without sociodemographic variables that were significantly correlated to the dependent variables revealed that none of the coefficients changed significantly (Z range [.07 – .94]). Exploratory analyses including the separate factors of colorblind ideology rather than the total colorblind ideology score revealed that similar to the overall colorblind ideology measure, none of the sub-factors of colorblind ideology had a main effect on child Middle Eastern and Black rejection. However, a significant association between one of the factors of colorblind ideology and child White rejection was found ( $\beta = .23, p = .039$ ): higher unawareness of racial privilege was related to more child White rejection among Turkish- and Afro-Dutch families.

## 4 | DISCUSSION

The present study examined levels of endorsement of multiculturalist and colorblind ideologies among White Dutch (representing the dominant ethnic population), Turkish- (representing the underrepresented Muslim population), and Afro-Dutch mothers (representing the underrepresented Black population), and its association with child outgroup prejudice. Results show that endorsement of multiculturalism is higher among mothers from both underrepresented groups than mothers from the dominant ethnic group, and that endorsement of colorblind ideology was highest among White Dutch and Turkish-Dutch mothers. Furthermore, whereas maternal endorsement of colorblind ideology was not related to child outgroup prejudice, a negative association was found between maternal endorsement of multiculturalism and child outgroup prejudice in White Dutch and Turkish-Dutch families in the context of underrepresented ethnic outgroups, suggesting that parental multiculturalism has more positive effects on child interethnic attitudes than parental colorblind ideology.

### 4.1 | Maternal endorsement of diversity ideologies

The identified ethnic group differences in multiculturalism are in line with expectations based on previous research (e.g., Berry & Kalin, 1995; Ryan et al., 2007, 2010; Wolsko et al., 2006). The results replicate findings of stronger endorsement of multiculturalism among Turkish-Dutch than White Dutch participants (e.g., Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2003; Verkuyten, 2005), and extend this by showing stronger endorsement among Afro-Dutch than White Dutch mothers. Group interests might explain these differences: multiculturalism is thought to be more beneficial for underrepresented ethnic groups (as it implies maintaining their culture and rising in status) than for dominant ethnic groups (as it implies a threat to their dominant status, Berry & Kalin, 1995). In all ethnic groups, however, mean scores were above the midpoint, indicating a relatively positive view on multiculturalism. Afro-Dutch mothers scored higher on multiculturalism than Turkish-Dutch mothers, but this contrast was non-significant after controlling for maternal level of education, the most important demographic predictor of endorsement of multiculturalism (Van de Vijver et al., 2008). The difference in education between Turkish- and Afro-Dutch mothers in the present study resembles the pattern in the general population, suggesting that patterns of endorsement of multiculturalism might also reflect the general population. However, the Afro-Dutch mothers were more highly educated than the general Afro-Dutch female population (64% had a higher level of education in the study as compared to 27%–33% of women with a Surinamese or Antillean background, Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2021c).

As previous studies on ethnic group differences in endorsement of colorblind ideology were mixed (Ryan et al., 2007; Ryan et al., 2010), these were explored. Results showed lower levels of colorblind ideology among Afro-Dutch (just below midpoint) than White Dutch mothers (just above midpoint), in line with previous work in the U.S. (Ryan et al., 2007). The difference between Afro- and Turkish-Dutch and similarity between White Dutch and Turkish-Dutch mothers is more surprising. Colorblind ideology was measured as unawareness of racial privilege, institutional

discrimination, and blatant racial issues. The high levels of experienced discrimination based on ethnicity and religion among Turkish-Dutch people (Sociaal Cultureel Planbureau, 2020) would suggest more awareness of racism (less colorblind ideology) among Turkish-Dutch than White Dutch mothers. The recruitment methods might explain the present results: Turkish-Dutch mothers were more often recruited through the network of the researchers and snowballing whereas White Dutch mothers were more often recruited in more general ways (e.g., online or at playgrounds). The White Dutch mothers therefore may have participated primarily because they felt that the subject was important, and thus possibly were more aware of ethnic inequalities than the general White population. The Turkish-Dutch mothers may have participated mainly because of social reasons, for example, wanting to help researchers involved. Afro-Dutch mothers may have lower levels of colorblind ideology than Turkish-Dutch mothers because of more contact with the dominant ethnic group (Koops et al., 2018; Martinović, 2013), potentially exposing them to a higher frequency of interpersonal discrimination experiences. The fact that anti-Black racism in the form of Black Pete has played a large role in the public debate on racism (Rodenberg & Wagenaar, 2016), and that Black activism has a long history in the Netherlands (Esajas & de Abreu, 2019) might also play a role. Future research will need to further examine colorblind ideology among various ethnic groups in the Netherlands and what drives and explains this endorsement, while distinguishing between the different dimensions (i.e., color-evasion and power-evasion, Neville et al., 2013) and forms of colorblind ideology (i.e., focus on similarities or uniqueness, Rosenthal & Levy, 2010) in detail.

## 4.2 | Maternal diversity ideologies and child prejudice

As expected, stronger maternal endorsement of multiculturalism was related to less child outgroup prejudice in the White Dutch families. Although we expected associations to be weaker in the Afro- and Turkish-Dutch families based on meta-analytic research within adults (Leslie et al., 2020), the associations were absent in Afro-Dutch families, and only significant for the Black outgroup among Turkish-Dutch families. Our results, however, are similar to previous studies in the Netherlands finding negative associations within the dominant, but not in an underrepresented ethnic group (Vedder et al., 2016; Verkuyten, 2005; Velasco González et al., 2008). It has been suggested that multiculturalism is associated with attitudes towards underrepresented groups only (Verkuyten, 2005), and our results support this idea for Turkish-Dutch, but not for Afro-Dutch families. The lack of association between maternal multiculturalism and child outgroup prejudice could be explained by ceiling effects in the Afro-Dutch families specifically (Leslie et al., 2020). The relatively small Afro-Dutch sample ( $N = 45$ ) and the limited variability in their endorsement of multiculturalism (i.e., 76% between 5 and 7 on a 7-point scale) might have hampered finding significant associations with other constructs. In addition, effects of endorsement of multiculturalism on prejudice depend on national policies and perceived norms on diversity, which can differ between ethnic groups (Guimond et al., 2013). Future research needs to disentangle the influence of different societal contexts such as the school environment and the family, as multicultural education can simultaneously impact children's interethnic attitudes (Verkuyten & Thijs, 2013), and might decrease the (added) impact of parental ideologies.

Maternal endorsement of colorblind ideology was also expected to be negatively associated with child outgroup prejudice, but this association was not significant when both ideologies were taken into account. Bivariate correlational results suggest that higher levels of maternal colorblind ideology were associated with more child prejudice towards Black people overall and in Turkish-Dutch families. Whereas within adults, colorblind ideology is negatively related to interethnic prejudice meta-analytically (Leslie et al., 2020; Whitley & Webster, 2019), transfer effects from parents to children thus do not seem beneficial for intergroup relations. Children are unable to not notice race, which is the hypothesized prejudice-reducing component of colorblind ideology by its proponents. In fact, they already perceive racial differences in infancy (Bar-Haim et al., 2006), and are able to categorize based on race by 3- to 4-years of age (Pauker et al., 2017). As children are also aware of societal inequalities at a young age (Bigler et al., 2003; Olson et al., 2012), colorblind messages reflecting unawareness or denial of racism and racial privilege might tell children that these inequalities can be attributed to people themselves, resulting in negative perceptions of ethnic groups that are

on the downside of inequality. Moreover, previous studies show that mothers who more strongly endorse colorblind ideology demonstrated more negative nonverbal behaviors in interethnic contact (Apfelbaum et al., 2008b; Norton et al., 2006), which could have been picked up by their children (Castelli et al., 2008).

The present findings do support the hypothesis that maternal endorsement of multiculturalism is more strongly related to lower child outgroup prejudice than maternal endorsement of colorblind ideology. These results are in line with the more positive effects of a value-diversity ideology at school as compared to a colorblind ideology (Apfelbaum et al., 2010) and with research suggesting that having ethnicity- or race-related discussions results in more positive child interethnic attitudes than not having these discussions in White families (Katz, 2003; Perry, Skinner-Dorkenoo, Abaied, Waters, & Osnaya, 2021; Perry, Skinner-Dorkenoo, Abaied, & Waters, 2021; Vittrup & Holden, 2011). It thus seems that multiculturalism “works” specifically for children in the dominant ethnic group, but it is less clear what diversity approach benefits interethnic attitudes of children in underrepresented ethnic groups. From the present results, it is unclear how mothers transfer their diversity ideology to their children and thus what related socialization practices look like. Applications of multiculturalism and colorblind ideology can take many forms (Rosenthal & Levy, 2010), highlighting the need for detailed studies on socialization in the family context, to examine the operationalization and content of messages related to parental diversity ideologies and their effects on child interethnic attitudes.

### 4.3 | Limitations

There are some limitations to take into account. Firstly, unfortunately data on fathers were limited and thus were not included. Although there were medium correlations between maternal and paternal endorsement of the two diversity ideologies, the separate and combined effects of ideologies of both parents on child prejudice remain unknown. Secondly, although colorblind ideology and multiculturalism are two very prominent diversity ideologies, the current instruments did not allow for examinations of emphasizing similarities or individual uniqueness (colorblind ideology) and a focus on learning about differences, on appreciating contributions, or on maintaining cultures (multiculturalism, Rosenthal & Levy, 2010). Future research could examine diversity ideologies in the Netherlands in more detail to take into account various forms, and include additional diversity ideologies such as polyculturalism or interculturalism (Rosenthal & Levy, 2010; Verkuyten et al., 2020). Attention should also be paid to the validation of measures on diversity ideologies in various populations, as in the present study reliability of the questionnaires was somewhat lower in the Turkish-Dutch group (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .64-.66$ ). Thirdly, generalizability of the present results are somewhat hampered by relatively high levels of maternal education as compared to the Dutch population.

## 5 | Conclusion

The current study adds to previous research on diversity ideologies by examining levels of endorsement in three large ethnic groups in the Netherlands, and by focusing on the transfer effects of endorsement on children's outgroup prejudice. Results indicate that higher maternal endorsement of multiculturalism is related to lower child outgroup prejudice among White Dutch and Turkish-Dutch families in the context of underrepresented ethnic outgroups, and suggest that maternal colorblind ideology might actually have opposite effects, especially in Turkish-Dutch families. Future research therefore will need to look more closely at different components of parental ideologies and child outgroup prejudice in underrepresented families specifically. Furthermore, future research is needed to explore what parenting approaches based on diversity ideologies look like, and how they shape socialization processes and child interethnic attitudes. The present study implies that, in order to foster more inclusive child interethnic attitudes, parents should move in the direction of multicultural, rather than colorblind, approaches.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors have no conflict of interest.

## DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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