OPINIONS OF A MUNCIE SAMPLING REGARDING ADOPTION

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Opinions of a Muncie Sampling

Regarding Adoption

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One purpose of this study was to investigate the opinions of the Muncie people on the subject of adoption. A questionnaire was constructed which tested for subjects' opinions on nine factors related to adoption. Then a random sample group consisting of 185 people was picked from the Muncie population; a 50 percent response rate occurred.

Results showed that people who already had children were less willing to adopt. Other results revealed respondents were unwilling to adopt a physically handicapped child. It was also found that people against single-parent adoptions were a significantly smaller group than those favoring single-parent adoptions. More than half the respondents felt environment was the primary determinate in an adopted child's life. Finally, less than one-half of the respondents were against orphanages as a source for an adoptive child.
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Chapter I

Introduction

Historically, the adoptive parents felt they were performing a big service to the adopted child by offering him a home and a healthy environment. Today, however, child placement agencies hope that adoptive parents view the experience as an enrichment to their own lives (Reid, 1971). It would seem that the perspective has been changed from the examination of the adoptive parents' benefits, to that of the adoptees' benefits.

Perhaps because of the larger amount of illegitimate births (Hauser, 1977) the number of completed nonrelated adoptions has been increasing. In 1945 there were 23,000 cases completed, while in 1967 there were 83,700 completed (Kadushin, 1970).

It might be easy to assume that because there has been such a growth of interest in adoption, there has been a corresponding increase of knowledge on the subject. This assumption does not seem to be the case. Much of what has been written about adoption is either speculative or opinionated (Chestang, 1972; McEwan, 1973; Bass, 1975). Unfortunately, the research investigations that have been performed on the subject have produced conflicting results (Kadushin, 1970; Jaffee & Fanshel, 1970).
Most of these conflicting results and opinionated articles refer to the three parties typically involved in an adoption transaction: natural parents, adoptive parents and adoptees. This study attempts to involve an important fourth group, the general public.

The general public may have a larger part in adoptive transactions than they have been previously credited. It is from outsiders that the child might learn his/her identity or self (Sullivan, 1953). In addition, the average citizen is in a position to influence legislation on adoption policies (Fisher, 1973). Thus, it may be essential to view the public opinion to understand how their views may affect the life of an adopted child.

Purpose

The basic purposes of this project are to:

1. test the average person's knowledge on the subject of adoption,

2. inquire about their opinions on adoption,

3. quantify the above data to discover what the prevalent beliefs are,

4. make a comparative analysis between this study's findings and past studies' and

5. concentrate the analysis on the following areas:
   (a) effects of previous environments on the adoptee,
   (b) influence of racial factors on adoptee and adoptive parents,
(c) effects of age at time of adoption and future development,
(d) effects of family counseling on the adoptive family unit,
(e) effects of single-parent adoptions on the family unit,
(f) effects of knowledge about natural parents on adoptee, adoptive parents and natural parents,
(g) outcomes and acceptance of handicapped, both physically and emotionally, adopted children,
(h) effects of "own" children on the adoptee,
(i) effects of adoptive home environments versus effects of heredity on the outcome of the adoption.

Hypotheses

This study utilized an eighteen item questionnaire to test the following hypotheses:

$H_1$: One-half of those responding to sex of child for adoption will request males.

$H_2$: One-half of those responding negatively to item 2 (knowledge of an unsuccessful adoption) will also respond negatively to item 3 (consideration of adopting a child).

$H_3$: One-half of the respondents with children will be willing to adopt.

$H_4$: One-half of the respondents will answer negatively to the adoption of emotionally handicapped children.
H_{4b}: One-half of the respondents will answer negatively to the adoption of physically handicapped children.

H_{4c}: One-half of the respondents will answer negatively to interracial adoptions.

H_5: One-half of the respondents will be negative to single-parent adoptions.

H_6: One-half of the respondents will answer positively to the environmental effects of adoption.

H_7: One-half of the respondents will respond negatively to an orphanage as the source of an adopted child.

H_8: Of the younger respondents (20-45 years), and the older respondents (46-99 years), one-half will answer favorably to questions 6, 13, 14; which test for opinions on interracial adoptions, single-parents adoptions and knowledge of natural parents, respectively.

H_9: There is no relationship between responses on item 15 (environmental effects) and item 6 (age at adoption).

**Definition of Terms**

**Adoptive.** A descriptive term for the transaction between parent(s) and the law which makes a nonbiological child legally, socially and psychologically their own.

**Foster.** It is differentiated from adopted in that it carries only a temporary status. The child may remain in a foster home for a few weeks or a few years, depending on the situation.
Heredity. It is made up of the sum total of genes that are transmitted to the child by his/her two parents at conception.

Environment. It is made up of all stimuli to which the child is exposed to and surrounded by.

Natural parents. Another term for biological parents.

Institution/orphanage. These terms may be used interchangeably to mean a place where either parentless or parent-neglected children are located. These children may or may not be available for adoption, depending on their legal status.

Adoptive parents. Individuals who legally adopt a child either through agencies or their own private lawyer.

"Own" children. Naturally conceived children.

Adoptive agencies. Organizations that consist of professionals or social workers that aid the family in matching and placement of a child.

Physically handicapped. Children who have a birth defect or acquired physical ailment. Examples would be mental retardation, cerebral palsy, etc.

Emotionally handicapped. Children who have emotional difficulties usually due to severe deprivation in early years. Examples are children who are unresponsive to outside stimuli, unable to show love, etc.

Single-parent families. In very rare instances adoptees may be placed in a family with a single parent. Thus, the child's adoptive mother or father have never been married.
Limitations of the Study

1. The results of this study can only be generalized to midwestern communities comparable to Muncie, Indiana, population approximately 80,000.

2. As with most questionnaires, a problem exists with acquiescence on the part of the respondents. It is impossible to estimate how much social desirability influenced the responses.

3. Also pertinent to the questionnaire method, is the problem of response set. Although respondents were encouraged to vary their answers along the scale, a problem could still exist.

4. Finally, there is a problem regarding the other 50 percent of the sample that did not respond. They may have represented a certain opinion that could not be measured.

Overview of the Study

Chapter I includes an introduction to the study that consists of the purposes, hypotheses, definition of terms, limitations of the study and an overview of the study.

Chapter II contains a review of the literature related to the nine factors that were tested on the questionnaire and a summary of this information.

Chapter III consists of the methodology of the research and presents the questionnaire construction, sampling and demographic information on subjects. Also included is a
Chapter IV presents the results of the statistical analysis of each hypothesis.

Chapter V includes a discussion of the findings.

In Chapter VI recommendations are stated for the improvement of the study.

The final sections contain appendices and references.

Chapter II

Review Of Related Literature

Effects of previous environments on adoptee. Basically previous environments pertained to two types of conditions, that of orphanage/institution or home situations. The length of time in either of these conditions can vary considerably.

Anastasi (1965) felt that even prenatal and natal factors should be taken into consideration when examining the effects on the adoptive child. She believed that mothers with lower education or lower socioeconomic backgrounds would be prone to poor medical care. Prenatal care was rarely a consideration in an examination of previous environments but would seem to pertain to the ultimate development of the child.

Anastasi cites Spitz and Ribble who made the first investigations into the personalities of institutionalized children. Spitz coined the term "hospitalism." Persons who exhibit "hospitalism" are depressed, withdrawn and are retarded in development. Spitz and Ribble found this behavior tended to
occur in children separated from their mother during the first year. The problem seemed to be resolved by restoring contact with a maternal figure (p. 308).

A finding supportive of hospitalism was discovered by Brodbeck and Irwin (1946) who studied speech behavior in orphanage infants. They compared the crying and noncrying sounds of groups of infants from zero to six months of age. Results showed that the mean crying scores for orphanage children fell below the mean crying scores for family children. The study concluded that the orphanage infant was not able to identify with any of the maternal replacements around him and had no desire to do so. Because of the inability to be close to a maternal figure, the child remained retarded in all functions which depended on social forms of imitation and communication.

Perhaps the cause of the retardation on the part of orphanage children can be better explained by Dennis (1973) in his description of the case in a home for children in Lebanon. They [the caretakers, who at one time were themselves unadopted orphans] could bathe a baby... when it was lying naked on a pad on a high table from which it could roll off, they often left it unattended. In this instance it was fortunate the babies were not exploratory.

They were unresponsive to infant cries, having
spent their infancy where little or no attention was
given to the childrens' protests or desires. . . .

Because of their exclusively institutional
background these girls [the caretakers] were
almost nonverbal. Not only did they have very
little verbal skill, but they seldom used what
verbal facility they had. They did not talk to
a child whom they were dressing, changing, feeding,
or bathing, and did not respond to the infrequent
vocalization of the child. . . .

They were not cruel, they were only indiffer-
ent, ignorant and apathetic (pp. 18-19).

Anastasi (1965) stated that differences in overall
orphanage design, equipment, staffing and funding may account
for inconsistent results found at different institutions.
These differences in overall institutional makeup may have
been operating on the findings of Tizard and Rees (1974) who
were skeptical toward the idea that all institutions were
detrimental to child development. The subjects of their
study were three British residential orphanages with high
staff-child ratio, many books, toys and in general a stimulating
supply of equipment. It was found that improvement of develop-
mental retardation could occur even within the institution.

The other group of adoptees, children who resided with
their parents before adoption, all came from similar home
backgrounds. Most of them lived on the edge of poverty with
only nine percent of the natural mothers and two percent of
the natural fathers completing high school. Occupational levels are therefore clustered in the unskilled and semiskilled categories. It would seem that the older the child was when placed for adoption, the greater the deprivation. In most cases, 52 percent, the families from which these children came had five or more children. In 70 percent of the cases, the mothers were physically neglectful, child was not clothed, fed, etc., and/or emotionally neglectful, parent indifferent, showed no affection, recognition, approval of child (Kadushin, 1970, p. 23).

If the statement by Anastasi is considered, the child's experiences begin at the time of conception. It would thus appear that children may come into the adoption with a variety of background experiences even if adopted as an infant.

Influence of racial factors on adoptee and adoptive parent. Basically there seemed to be two sides to the issue of interracial adoption. Many authors argued against it and some argued for it. It appeared from empirical findings, that the data supported the argument supporting interracial adoptions.

Fanshel (1972) stated that the future for transracial adoptions in the United States is unpredictable. While minority groups may be less favorable to the adoptive placement of their children across racial lines, it seems that more people are interested in undertaking such adoptions. He feels interest in interracial adoptions in the U.S. may grow even further if the increased availability of legal abortions result
in fewer white children being born out-of-wedlock, thus lessening the number of available white adoptees. Fanshel continued by questioning the acceptability of multi-racial families. He readily admits it has been proven possible in Hawaii, but is doubtful about other locations.

Kribs (1972) made a comparison between women who stated a willingness to adopt a black child and women who were unwilling to adopt a black child. She attempted to find their differing characteristics by utilizing the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale. It was found that women who were willing to adopt a black child differed from those unwilling to adopt in that they were less anxious. Moreover, they seemed to feel less of a need to exaggerate and were less threatened by their environment. These women cared less about what others thought of them and were less concerned with power and status. Finally, they were more open to new ideas and more tolerant of people with whom they disagreed.

While most authors who are opposed to biracial adoption admit that permanent homes are needed for minority children, few will submit that a placement with white families is the answer. Chestnap (1972) cited the problem of providing an optimal environment for the black adopted child. He concluded that the "prevailing social attitudes toward blacks" preclude the opportunity for total growth, development and identification for the child. Ultimately, he believed the adoptee would have
no one with which to identify or to run to for solace. Chestang also suspected the motives behind the adoptive parents' decision to accept a child across racial lines. He felt they should not complete the adoption simply to show openmindedness because of the burden it placed on the child. Finally, he says that "unusual psychological armaments are required to shield oneself from the behavioral and emotional onslaught. . . ."

He did not believe a white family could provide the necessary coping skills for a black child (Chestang, 1972, p. 105). Chimezie (1975) agreed with Chestang on this point, stating that his "objections. . . are based on the belief that the white family cannot equip the black child with the necessary psychosocial tools to develop an appropriate identity and deal appropriately with an oppressively racist society." He does not assume that ". . . possible ultimate rejection by both the white and the black worlds. . . are a fair price to pay for satisfying physical needs" (Chimezie, 1975, p. 298).

Perhaps one of the major problems of biracial adoption is that the child has been defined as hard to place. Aldridge (1974) felt that there has been too little involvement between the predominantly white placement agency and the black community. Consequently, black families are not being chosen by black norms. Lawder (1971) performed an investigation that took into consideration black norms, comparing two groups of black families. One group had all been selected for placement through the traditional method and the other group was nontrad-
itional in that they were older, less economically secure, had less education and fewer job skills. The children placed with the nontraditional black families had experienced more abuse and neglect. Despite this fact, the final findings showed no significant differences in the functioning of the two groups of black parents or in the two groups of black children. Thus, utilizing black norms for placement of minority children may have some merit.

At the same time, however, research has been ongoing to discover the status of transracial adoption today and the impact it has had on both child and family. Grow and Shapiro (1975) conducted a thorough follow-up study into the experiences of both parents and social agencies who had previously been involved in a transracial adoption. In the study, parents expressed reasons for adopting transracially. The most popular reason was a desire to provide for a needy child or because an addition of a black child would benefit the entire family. The second reason chosen was because there were no white children available. Almost all adoptive parents believed their child would encounter difficulties due to racial backgrounds. In these problem areas they cited peer relationships, dating, and marriage as specific difficulties. Social workers in this study revealed three most important factors in the placement decision. These were: what the adoptive family had to offer, family's positive motivation for trans-
racial adoption, and the family's sincere desire to give a child a home. These workers felt that because the families had admitted that the child was their second choice, it revealed their acceptance of racial differences and therefore made them better equipped to show a child his or her racial identity. In general, the social workers admitted that transracial adoptions were risky, requiring more exploration than inracial placements. However, they also agreed that it was a better alternative than indeterminate long-term foster care. Every social worker felt that the black child's identity could still be maintained in a white adoptive family. It should be noted however, that the sample was made up of white females. Thus, the identity question might still remain a problem.

Simon (1974) attempted an assessment of racial awareness, preference and self identity among adopted non-white children and their white siblings. Her method of experimentation was by interview, utilizing dolls, puzzles and pictures as instruments. The major finding was that black children reared in the multi-racial families were found not to have the ambivalence toward their own race that had been previously reported in other studies of black children. Also, the white children, or siblings, preferred white to a lesser degree than other white children. Finally, there were no significant differences in racial attitudes of any of the categories of children. According
to this study then, the actual self identity of a black child may improve by placement with a white family. Unfortunately, Simon felt, "...the attitudes and prevailing tones of the larger society..." may have a powerful counteracting effect that can confuse the identity and attitudes formed in the unique setting of the multi-racial family (Simon, 1974, p. 56).

Fanshel (1972) felt that an interracial adoptive family was a significant addition to society. In these instances, the desire for a child outweighed the risks of being singled-out as a family different from its neighbors. While Fanshel's statement may be true, it would seem that the future of interracial adoptions remains uncertain, despite the favorable empirical findings.

Effects of age at time of adoption and future development. Children whose first years are unsettled would logically seem to have more difficulty in trusting others during their later years (Stone, 1972). This factor would have a large bearing on the age of placement in an adoption. Skodak and Skeels (1949) conducted a study on mental development of 100 children and found their data supported early placement "...in adoptive homes offering emotional warmth and security in an above average educational and social setting" (Skodak & Skeels, 1949, p. 117).

Because of such findings by Stone and Skodak and Skeels, placement agencies now attempt a placement for all infants within three months after birth (Reid, 1971). Some children
however, cannot or have not been placed in homes. Their
development and special problems have been researched by
several investigators. In the Creche, an institution for
children in Lebanon, it was found that children were behaviorally
normal from one to two months of age, but soon became retarded
in the rate of their development. By age one, both boys and
girls had a mean behavioral quotient of about 50, which was
maintained if they stayed at the institution. Adoption had
a very large impact. Children adopted within the first two
years of life improved rapidly in behavior and by age four
sometimes had reached an IQ of 100. Test scores of children
adopted from the Creche after they were two years of age
increased beyond the mean score of 50 which they had at
adoption. However, they retained the permanent deficiency in
mental age which they had when they left the Creche. Thus,
while their intelligence was greatly improved by adoption,
their retardation at the time of adoption if they were older
than two, left a permanent impairment (Dennis, 1973). These
findings suggest that experiential deprivation is irremediable
beyond a certain time. It would seem then that if a child came
from an institution, age would definitely be a developmental
factor to consider.

More often, however, the older child, five years and over,
is typically available as a result of court action terminating
parental rights for neglect or inability to care for the child.
The disadvantage to this background is that the child has been
previously molded by someone else. Further, children living under stress come to the adoption with some emotional difficulty. It is also difficult to understand the child when one has only limited knowledge of his past (Kadushin, 1970).

To help the older child come to an inner peace and understanding with his past, several social workers have suggested innovative ways of helping the child deal with his memories. Ultimately, these are ways of aiding the child get over his past and look forward to the future (Muhlberger, 1964; Bass, 1975; Neilson, 1972).

Bell (1959) felt that placement of an older child should be compared to a relationship more like a marriage than a birth. She felt that the people involved have already formed memories and patterns of thought that cannot be erased. Despite these problems, Kadushin (1970) has found that older children can be placed for adoption with the expectation that the placement will work out to the satisfaction of the adoptive parents. The finding suggests an immense power on the part of human beings to grow and adapt. There are probably tremendous latent powers within an individual awaiting development, and that under favorable conditions these powers may be developed and directed toward accomplishment.

Roe and Burks (1945) did a follow-up study of 36 young adults who were adopted as older children. They concluded, "...no one who has read the records of some of these lives and pondered on them can escape a profound sense of awe at the
biological toughness of the human species" (p. 213).

The effects of institutionalized children as it relates to adult adjustment was studied by Boston, Denny and Pauley (1966). Hospital, school, police and armed forces service records were used in addition to personal interview and MMPI. The general conclusion was that the long range effects of childhood institutional care was much less drastic than previously thought. The factor clearly related to the effects of this early care was the corrective experience of family living.

To evaluate these studies so far would not be to say that deprivation is unharmed. If these older adopted children are compared to children with less pathological backgrounds, the ones with a calm history fare better in adoptions. Thus, these older adopted children may be adjusted, but not realizing their full developmental potentials. These investigations then reveal a brighter future for the later-placed child.

Effects of family counseling on the adoptive family unit. Most social workers feel that counseling is a necessary part of the adoption process both for the parents and the child. They vary in the amount of counseling suggested and the counseling methods to be used. Stone (1972) believes that counseling is needed for all three parties involved in the adoption process. He sees the theme of loss as being centrally involved on the part of the natural mother, in signing the consent forms; the child, in his loss of the natural parent;
and the adoptive parents in the mourning of the child they could not have because of infertility.

Kadushin (1970) underscores this idea of the effects of sterility on the adoptive parents. His studies revealed that where a woman had experienced miscarriages or where reason for infertility was not clearly established, the likelihood was that the outcome of the adoption would be less favorable. This finding suggests that counseling of the adoptive parent might be helpful for their adjustment as an adoptive family unit.

A type of counseling that is becoming widely used is the group method. Sandgrund (1962) felt that group meetings were very helpful to the participants. She cited two major factors that contributed to their helpfulness. The first factor was the agencies' recognition that the demands and pressures of parenthood were especially demanding for adoptive parents. The second factor was the agencies' willingness to make an acceptable form of aid available to adoptive parents.

McWhinnie (1968) supports this attitude from her experiences. She felt that group counselling could be a valuable supportive service and a learning experience, even after placement. She believed the groups would be even more beneficial if matched for certain common situations. Both McWhinnie and Sandgrund suggested that these groups meet every few years in the child's development, with adolescence a prime problem target.
On the practical side however, these groups may prove to have an economic drawback in that more experienced social workers would be needed. Further, group methods would probably be unhelpful to those who need the most help, because according to McWhinnie, these are the couples who cease to attend meetings. Despite these post-adoptive group drawbacks, Wiehe (1973) found the group method to be very effective as a means of preparation for adoptive parenthood. In these groups, personality variables emerged, such as personal adjustment, defensiveness and anxiety. He saw these as not only important to the clients' later functioning as adoptive parents but also relevant to the process of the adoptive study. He did find however, that couples had difficulty relating their attitudes toward infertility, which he saw as a critical variable in relation to the outcome of adoptive placements. His speculation was that the difficulty was due to the highly personal nature of the subject.

Thus, while the popular group method of counseling may be helpful in many areas of both pre and post adoptive placement, it may not overcome the central problem of infertility. Perhaps a compromise is needed between the group method and the traditional single couple counseling method. The solution may lie in utilizing the single couple method first to solve or discuss personal problems, then utilizing the effective group method.

Effects of single-parent adoptions on the family unit.

There has been very little written about single-parent adoptions.
Journal literature has a marked absence of information on the subject, supposedly because the practice of letting an unmarried person adopt a child is very limited. It has been estimated that children being raised by a single parent, through divorce or death, makeup 17 percent of all children. In the instances involving adoption by a single parent, statistics were not available. While public legal and administration policy still favor traditional families, an increasing number of unmarried men and women are being permitted to adopt children. The practice is especially found among the hard to place children. Coleman and Hamm (1974) felt that the child's development depends on many factors besides the marital status of the parent.

Effects of knowledge about natural parents on adoptee, adoptive parents and natural parents. The movement to obtain the sealed records of adoptees was pioneered over 20 years ago by Jean M. Paton, an adopted social worker, who eventually found her mother. Since that time groups such as Orphan Voyage and the Adoptees' Liberty Movement Association have been formed to help other adoptees search for their real identities.

The current practice of sealing the adoptees' records was formed in the 1940's. It was passed in most states and kept identifying information of the natural parents secret and only obtainable by special court order. As of 1974, the only states that had unsealed records were Alabama, South Dakota and Virginia. In Scotland and Finland if a person is 17 or older, he
may write to or visit the Register House in Edinburgh to get evidence of his true parentage. Between 1961-70 an average of 42 persons inquired per year. This amounted to 1.5 per 1,000 adoptees.

The original intent of the sealed records was to protect the illegitimate child from the stigma of his status. Birth certificates with the adoptive parents' names are used but presently some states add a special notation to the document in order to signify its altered state. In the event an adoptee wishes to view his records, the case must be taken to court. Rulings have proven to be conservative and seem to be only successful in unusual cases where health, property inheritance or other practical issues were at stake (Waran, Lanner & Sorosky, 1974).

Lawton and Gross (1964) formulated a two part "pam" which they titled "family romance." Part I occurs when the child is small and his parents are the only source of authority. As he grows older, he receives the chance to compare his parents with others. He comes to doubt their "incomparable and unique quality which he has attributed to them... his sense that his own affection is not being fully reciprocated then finds a vent in the idea... of being a step-child or adopted child..." Part II refers to the fantasy engaged in as the child dreams of who his "real" parents are. In this way, the child goes back to his earlier experiences as he was growing up, going toward the parents he knew in his earlier years of Part I, and turning
away from the parents he knows today (pp. 636-638). For the adopted child, this game is real. It would be easy to see that in certain families, this game could be reinforced constantly by words or actions. Behind this game may lie the motivation for the adoptees' search for his natural parentage.

Costin (1954) believes that the child needs a satisfying image of his natural parents if he is to attain the stage of emotional maturity which is needed. A more conservative approach to the identification problem is taken by Burgess (1960). She felt that information about the natural parents should be disclosed, barring identification, to the adoptive parents. In this way she felt that as the child grew older, he could take pride in knowing something about his personal relationship with his natural parents. She felt this may be an answer to the adoptees' search for identity.

In an unpublished study done by Pannor and Klickstein, which was cited by Peran, et al. (1973), it was disclosed that most of the adoptive parents, 50 percent, needed more information about the child's natural mother. The other 25 percent were pleased with the information, while another 25 percent felt too much knowledge could be harmful. In this group most parents, 66 percent, had a sympathetic attitude toward the natural mother. In regard to the natural fathers however, the feelings were quite different. Twenty-five percent were satisfied with the information, while 75 percent felt they needed more background. At the same time 75 percent expressed varying degrees
of negative or indifferent feelings. These findings were felt to be important because the adoptive parents' feelings toward the natural parents affected the way they dealt with the adopted child's questions. From two separate meetings between the researchers and the adoptive parents, it was generalized that most adoptive parents' attitudes about opening records was protective and restrictive.

A new light was placed upon the subject when a newspaper article, pertaining to the authors' research, was printed in the Los Angeles' Times. Reaction came in the form of letters. They were received from the three parties involved: adoptees, adoptive parents and the natural parents who made up the largest respondent group. Of the hidden natural parents, two-thirds felt a need to be available for a reunion but did not feel it their place to intervene in the adoptive family. However, they did not feel that once they had given the child away it was a closed matter. They felt that the issue had stayed with them a long time. The remaining third preferred to remain anonymous, but a feeling for the child was expressed.

The adoptees revealed various reasons for wanting to know their true parents; not all wanted reunions, some merely wanted information on ethnicity, genealogy and medical background. Others felt they could not hurt their adoptive parents and would not pursue the matter until their adoptive parents were no longer living.
Adoptive parents letters were divided into three groups: those who felt no need for this type of investigation because their children were happy; those that felt their children should have access to the records once they were adults, but strongly pointed out it should not extend to the natural parent; and those who were the most dogmatic group, who felt no party should have access to the records. The authors concluded from their study that the adoptive parents must be subjected to alot of turmoil from the outset. In the beginning they are unable to have children and may view themselves as failures; then when the child begins to seek his origins, they revert back to the feeling of failing the child. Parent, et al. (1974) suggest that these adoptive parents need help to let them see the true reason behind the adoptees' quest for information. The authors feel the quest for knowledge is something a nonadopted person has a difficult time understanding. Finally, it is felt that the sealed record issue must be reevaluated. Although it was originally meant as a safeguard, it has now become a hindrance.

Outcomes and acceptance of handicapped, both physically and emotionally, adopted children. Historically, agencies felt that if the child was imperfect because of physical defects or emotional difficulties, he was basically unadoptable and it was better for him to be raised in a form of foster care other than adoption (Reid, 1971). Today, while it is recognized that
not all babies are perfect, few show a willingness to adopt a child with a noncorrectable handicap or a child with a mental illness in his or her immediate background (Grow and Shapiro, 1975). Several techniques for successful placement have been tried however. Goodridge (1971) attempted to prepare the adoptive parents to the special needs of the child through four, two-hour sessions. Attendance was mandatory and thus served as a type of screening device for those who dropped out. The agency concluded that the group interaction permitted a deep honesty and communication.

Once the handicapped children are placed in a home the relationship does not always work out. McEwan (1973) cites a case of an emotionally handicapped child that was placed with a family. The child, a boy, had frequent catatonic-like states, irregular bowel movements, slept long hours and did not participate in games or activities. He was fifteen months old and stayed with this family for fifteen more months. Finally, he was placed with a second family when he was two and one-half years old because the first family could not cope with his problem. McEwan states the transferral was gradual in order that the experience not be a painful shock for the child. The child progressed rapidly under the second family's supportive care. The outcome led the social worker to conclude that removal and replacement can be a growth experience for everyone concerned.
Jane Rowe (1969) relates the experiences of a male infant adopted by a doctor and his family. It had been discovered that the boy had a deformed leg. Over the course of several years, he was treated with a series of corrective surgeries, which led to his complete recovery and adjustment. Not all handicapped adoptees are fortunate enough to have a correctable problem. Rowe feels that the qualities necessary to adopt a handicapped child successfully are love and support without sentimental pity, maintenance of the best medical care without making him feel like an invalid, security along with confidence, and finally the ability to see beyond present problems to future satisfactions.

Perhaps the problems related to these types of adoptees will be aided by the present trend toward acceptance of the general public to the special needs and problems of the handicapped individual. When there is acceptance of the handicapped person, there may be more of an understanding attitude toward handicapped adoptees as well.

Effects of "own" children on the adoptee. Very few studies have been conducted on the topic of "own" children's effects on the adopted child. This may be due to the fact that if couples adopt they are usually infertile or sterile, thus ruling out biological children. Skodak (1950) found that out of a sample of 98 families, only 13 were makeup of both adopted and biological children. In nine of these cases the biological children arrived after the adoptees' placement.
Jaffee and Fanshel (1970) investigated family compositions and discovered no relationship between adoptees' adjustment and the arrival of other children after placement of the adoptees. They did find, however, that adoptees who entered homes already having one or more children tended to fare better than did adoptees with childless couples. It was speculated that a practice effect might have been operating in such instances.

Interestingly, Skodak (1950) found that adopted siblings were similar in intelligence as are biological siblings. However, looking at a small sample of adopted children and own children, she found that adopted and own siblings resemble each other less in intelligence than do either adopted pairs or natural pairs of siblings. This finding is interesting in that both adopted siblings and own-adopted siblings are non-related, yet their correlations in intelligence are very dissimilar. The adopted siblings compare to natural siblings in intelligence correlations. This may indicate a difference in method of child rearing or treatment. It would be interesting to pursue this topic in the future. There is definitely an absence of information in regard to the interactions between own and adopted children.

**Effects of adoptive home environment versus effects of heredity on the outcome of adoptions.** The bulk of the research that has been performed on the subject of environment versus heredity, has been in the area of intelligence. Anastasi (1965) states that "...after careful consideration... it is apparent
that heredity and environmental factors cannot be sorted out... nor can behavior be divided into that which is inherited and that which is acquired" (p. 68). Some investigators have looked at the relationship in terms of "additive contribution" meaning that both heredity and environment give to all behavior development. The behavior characteristics become the summation of both influences. This idea can be represented as:

\[
\text{environment} + \text{heredity} = \text{behavior characteristics}
\]

\[
75\% \quad 25\% \quad 100\%
\]

Anastasi refutes this idea because she feels it is not possible to assign exact proportional figures (p. 68). She feels the answer lies in "interaction." It is believed that

... the nature and extent of the influence of each type of factor depends upon the contribution of the other. So any environmental factor will have a different effect because of the difference in the heredity factors it operates on. (p. 68).

Thus, she emphasizes the interdependence of both.

Skodak and Skeels (1946) in a final follow-up study of 100 adopted children, found that the adopted children were consistently superior to their natural parents and followed and improved upon the pattern of mental development found among own children. Thus, while a predisposition exists for superior intellectual development in many adoptees' inheritance, it must be able to develop in a nurturant environment. It could be that
the superior pattern of intellectual development that was found in this study was due to the more stimulating environments which the adoptive families were able to provide.

Wittenborn in 1956 discovered that infant intelligence tests were useless as a basis for predicting subsequent development of adopted children. The study suggested that many aspects of the development of children, especially personal or social, emerge partially as a result of differences in the child's environment. Yet, other findings contradict the environmental influences on intelligence. Ransinger (1975) found a strong correlation between the biological parents' social-education index and their child's intelligence. It was concluded that adopting parents have little influence on either the average level or the relative ranking of their adopted children's intelligence scores. Thus, in regard to intelligence, investigators are still unsure of the effects of environment or heredity. Perhaps it is safest to support Anastasi's interactional theory.

Jaffee and Ranshel (1970) investigated the two factors in the adoptive home and its effects on the adoptee, religion and discipline. They found that the more religiously involved families had better adjusted adopted children. The child had less personality problems, less difficulty with social relationships, and an overall less stressful relationship with the adoptive parents. However, the authors caution that much of this finding may have been due to socioeconomic status.
In regard to discipline, it was found that where the mothers perceived themselves as the major disciplinarian, the adoptees had a better overall adjustment rating. This rating was determined by fewer problems in the educational area, more chance to display an outstanding talent and being more likely to have better relationships with both adoptive parents and people in general. Contrary to this finding were the less favorable outcomes associated with adoptive fathers who designated themselves as strict disciplinarians. Authority on the part of the adoptive father was linked with less favorable relationships with adoptive parents and an absence of outstanding talents. These highly different outcomes may have been due to differing interpretations of the concept "strict disciplinarian" (p. 277).

Jane Rowe (1969) feels that a child does not inherit specific skills, habits or kinds of behavior, but that they are learned. She believes that adoptive parents who continually fear their child will develop some undesirable characteristic may surround the child with so much tension that he actually develops the symptom they were dreading. To conclude this section on heredity versus environmental effects on the growth of the adoptee is difficult. There seems to be no definitive answer to the question. It would seem that this topic should be further investigated.

Summary of Related Literature

It would appear so far that a few surprising findings have
been developed in the previous sections. Supportive evidence states that a child can be exposed to deprivation for a long period of time and if brought to an enriched environment become adjusted once more. The resiliency of the human is the outstanding factor in both the effects of previous environments and age at adoption.

Another interesting finding occurs in interracial adoptions. It appears that the child becomes better adjusted about himself and others when he is placed in a mixed racial family. It is only through society that he learns there is something different or wrong about his family. Thus, Simon feels these types of adoptions are not as successful as they could be.

It was also shown that the search for natural parents may be an unresolved fantasy for the adoptee. Finally, the conflicting results between Skodak and Skeels and Hunsinger was also examined in regard to intelligence as affected by environmental or inherited influences.

Chapter III

Methodology

Questionnaire construction. Nine psychological variables and six demographic variables were first stated for inclusion in the questionnaire. The nine psychological variables were attitudes and beliefs regarding:

1. adoptees' previous environments,
2. heredity's effects on adoptees,
3. interracial adoptions
4. age at adoption
5. family counseling
6. single family adoptions
7. adoptees' knowledge of their true parents
8. handicapped adoptees
9. "own" children raised with adoptees

The six demographic variables questioned were:
1. sex
2. age
3. marital status
4. number of natural children
5. respondent having adopted children
6. adopted respondent

In order to test these variables, eighteen items were developed for the psychological variables and six were constructed for the demographic variables.

The entire survey was titled, "Questionnaire Regarding Opinions About Adoptions." The questionnaire was two pages long and was dittoed in blue ink on white paper.

Respondents were requested to check the answer that corresponded to their choice. Six of the items, numbers 7 through 12, had Lickert-style response formats ranging from "Definitely Would" to "Definitely Not." These six items were action oriented. Questions 13 through 17 had responses of "Strongly Disagree," to "Strongly Agree," and were basically opinionated statements. Items 4 and 18 were open-ended questions
requiring extra information. Items 1, 2, 3 and 5 were basically "Yes" or "No" and item 6 was a selection of categories. For a complete questionnaire, see Appendix A.

**Sampling.** In order to obtain a random sampling of the Muncie area, the 1976 phone directory was utilized. Each listed phone number in the Muncie-Yorktown white pages was assigned its own number which ranged from 1 to 35,034. These assigned numbers were then given to the computer RANXPL program yielding 200 random selections, uniformly distributed. The names and addresses which corresponded to the selected number became part of the sample. In the event the selected number belonged to a business or person with no address, the next person in the phone book column was used.

Due to incorrect addresses and absence of addresses, 15 questionnaires were returned. These 15 returns out of the 200 originally sent, were never considered part of the sampling; no questionnaires were sent to replace them.

**Subjects and Demographic Information.** The subjects in this study consisted of 185 randomly chosen Muncie residents. Of these 185 people, 94 voluntarily chose to participate by returning their questionnaires. This represented approximately a 50 percent return rate. The final data was based on 92 responses, since two questionnaires had to be rejected. The participants consisted of 53 males and 38 females with one questionnaire missing this information. This response represented 58 percent male and 42 percent female. The ages of the subjects
ranged from 20 years to 88 years. The largest percentage was found at ages 27 and 45, both separately including almost six percent of the respondents. The largest group of subjects were married, representing 69.6 percent, while an equal amount of people were either single or widowed with 15.2 percent in both categories. The number of children ranged from zero to seven, with the largest group, 29.3 percent having no children. The second largest group, 23.9 percent had one child and the third group, 22.8 percent had three children. Of the 92 respondents only one had an adopted child, while 87 had none and two people did not respond to this item.

Participation in the investigation was completely voluntary. The subjects were informed that the nature of the study was gathering their opinions on adoption.

Procedure

Included with the two page questionnaire was a face letter identifying the investigation and sponsor of the project. The purpose of the survey was clearly stated and a plea for cooperation was also included.

A motivational incentive for completing the questionnaire was introduced by making the results of the study available for those requesting it. A complete face letter may be found in Appendix B.

The face letter was one page and was also dittoed. Included with the questionnaire and face letter was a stamped, addressed envelope. These three items were all mailed in a
business envelope, first class, on March 1, 1977.

Each questionnaire response was coded and the results were key punched on IBM cards. The statistical tests were then ready to be run.

Chapter IV

Results

H1: One-half of those responding to sex of child for adoption will request males. (item 5)

An absolute frequency was found for number of males and females requested for adoption. Some respondents wrote-in "no preference" and these were coded as missing. (See Table 1). In a two-tailed t test, the finding was not significant, \( z = -0.119, p > .05 \). The null hypothesis in this instance is supported and cannot be rejected.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex Preference for Adoptees</th>
<th>absolute freq</th>
<th>adjusted ( \hat{z} )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>male</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>49.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>50.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no info</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no preference</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>missing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

H2: One-half of those responding negatively to item 2 will also respond negatively to item 3.

Item 2 referred to knowledge of a successful or unsuccessful
adoption. Item 3 stated willingness or unwillingness to adopt. Nine respondents knew of nonsuccessful adoptions and also stated an unwillingness to adopt as opposed to five respondents who knew of an unsuccessful adoption but were still willing to adopt themselves. After a two-tailed $t$ test, it was found these two groups did not differ significantly, $z = 1.07, p > .05$. The null hypothesis is supported. (See Table 2).

Table 2
Knowledge of Other Adoptions
And Willingness to Adopt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge of:</th>
<th>Successful Adoptions</th>
<th>Unsuccessful Adoptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Willing</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwilling</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$H_3$: One-half of the respondents with children will be willing to adopt. (item 3 and number of children)

Twenty-four respondents with children out of a total of 65 stated a willingness to adopt. The remaining 41 were not willing to adopt. A one-tailed $t$ test was performed and it was found that these two groups differed significantly, $z = -2.11, p < .05$. Thus, the proportion of respondents with children who stated a willingness to adopt was significantly less than
one-half and the null hypothesis can be rejected.

\( H_{4a} \): One-half of the respondents will answer negatively to the adoption of emotionally handicapped children. (item 11)

Forty responded negatively to the question out of the 89 subjects. (See Table 3). A one-tailed \( t \) test was performed and a nonsignificant finding was computed, \( z = .955 \), \( p > .05 \).

Thus, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected and the negative responses are not significantly different from one-half. Therefore, the respondents seemed willing to adopt emotionally handicapped children.

Table 3
Adoption of Emotionally Handicapped Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Def Would</th>
<th>Consider</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
<th>Prob Not</th>
<th>Def Not</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( H_{4b} \): One-half of the respondents will answer negatively to the adoption of physically handicapped children. (item 10)

Sixty-one responded negatively to this type of adoption out of a total of 89 respondents. (See Table 4). A one-tailed \( t \) test was run and it was found that this group was significantly larger than those responding favorably and those unsure, \( z = 3.50 \), \( p < .05 \). It can be stated then that more than half of the respondents did not want to adopt a physically handicapped child.
Table 4
Adoption of Physically Handicapped Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Def Would</th>
<th>Consider</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
<th>Prob Not</th>
<th>Def Not</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

H4c: One-half of the respondents will answer negatively to interracial adoption. (item 8)

Forty-three answered with negative responses out of 89 subjects. (See Table 5). After performing a one-tailed t test, a nonsignificant finding of $z = -.319$ was found, $p > .05$. The null hypothesis is supported. Therefore, the positive respondents did not differ significantly from the negative respondents.

Table 5
Interracial Adoption

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Def Would</th>
<th>Consider</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
<th>Prob Not</th>
<th>Def Not</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

H5: One-half of the respondents will be negative to single-parent adoptions. (item 13)

Out of 89 respondents to this question, 31 answered negatively. (See Table 6). After performing a one-tailed t test a significant finding of $z = -2.86$ was found, $p < .05$. 
The null hypothesis may be rejected. From this finding it can be seen that the negative respondents differed significantly less than those with positive responses.

Table 6
Single-Parent Adoptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

H₆: One-half of the respondents will answer positively to the environmental effects of adoption. (item 15)

From the 38 people responding to this item, 58 answered favorably. (See Table 7). After analysis utilizing a two-tailed t test there was a significant finding of \( z = 2.98 \), \( p < .05 \). Thus, respondents who felt environment was more important than heredity were significantly greater than half. The null hypothesis can be rejected.

Table 7
Adoptees Shaped By Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

H₇: One-half of the respondents will respond negatively to an orphanage as a source for an adopted child. (item 16)
Twelve out of 80 respondents answered negatively on this item. (See Table 8). A one-tailed $t$ test found a significant difference of $z = -6.02$, $p < .05$. Rejection of the null hypothesis is possible. It can be seen that the negative respondents differed significantly less than the expected proportion of .5. However, it should be noted that the "don't know" response was quite large.

Table 8
Respondents Preferring Orphanage
As a Source of Adoptee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$H_0$: Of the younger respondents (20-45 years) and the older respondents (46-99 years) one-half will answer favorably to questions 6, 13, 14.

This hypothesis actually involves three statistical tests but are combined here for analysis. Item 8 involved adoption of a child from another race, number 13 pertained to single-parent families, and item 14 pertained to adoptees knowing their true parents. In item 8, twenty-eight out of the 48 young subjects responded favorably to adoption of a child from another race. Only nine out of thirty-nine older people answered favorably to this question. A significant finding in a two-tailed $t$ test of $z = 3.56$, $p < .05$, allows rejection of the
null hypothesis. The finding shows that the younger group was significantly more favorable to interracial adoption than the older group.

In item 13, 31 of the younger respondents out of a total of 48 responded favorably to single-parent adoptions. Twenty of the thirty-nine older respondents answered in favor of the single-parent type of adoption. A two-tailed t test revealed that there was no significant difference in the groups' answers, $z = 1.245$, $p > .05$. Thus, a segment of the null hypothesis is supported.

For item 14, 24 out of 44 young respondents answered favorably to adoptees having knowledge of their true parents. From the older group, 25 out of 44 responded positively to the item. After performing a two-tailed t test no significance was found, $z = -.2155$, $p > .05$. Again, in this instance a segment of the null hypothesis is supported.

In $H_0$, three statistical tests were performed on three items from the questionnaire. The three tests were grouped together in an attempt to compare age and responses. In two of the three tests the null hypothesis was supported. There were no significant differences in the age groups when their opinions were compared on the items regarding single-parent adoptions and knowledge of natural parents. Only one segment rejected the null hypothesis; the finding was that younger respondents were significantly more favorable to interracial adoptions than the older respondents. However, because in two
out of three instances the null hypothesis was supported; the entire hypothesis cannot be rejected.

\( H_0 \): There is no relationship between responses in item 15 and the responses in item 6.

Item 15 had to do with attitudes on environmental influences and item 6 reported age at which an adopted child would be chosen. The original chi-square was a 4 x 5 design but this large design did not include any respondents in some of the squares and it enlarged the degrees of freedom which would have over-estimated the findings. Because of this problem, the design was collapsed to a 2 x 4 design. This procedure necessitated excluding the last two age groups in item six and combining the negative responses in item 15. (See Table 9 for the 2 x 4 design).

Table 9

Age Groups versus Opinions
On Environmental Effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>0-1 year</th>
<th>1-5 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree (item 15) Environ. Effects</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't Know</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After analyzing the data utilizing the chi-square correlational equation, a significant relationship could only be found at the .10-.20 level; \( r = 5, df = 3, p \leq .05 \). Thus, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected; there is no relationship between attitudes about environment and age requested at adoption.

Chapter V
Discussion of Findings

Originally this study began with eleven basic null hypotheses. After statistical analysis, five of these hypotheses may be rejected in favor of the empirical hypotheses. In six cases however, the null hypotheses could not be rejected.

It was found in \( H_3 \) that the proportion of respondents with children who stated a willingness to adopt was significantly less than the one-half that could be expected. This finding is probably due to the fact that these families already had the desired amount of children or were biologically able to have more children if they wished. Also, the respondents with children who stated an unwillingness to adopt may have been considering their age as a deterrent to the adoption process.

Interestingly, a significantly large number of respondents stated an unwillingness to adopt a physically handicapped child. Yet, there was no significant difference, from the expected one-half proportion, in the number of respondents who stated an unwillingness to adopt emotionally handicapped children. This finding may show a better coping ability with
inward problems on the part of the public. Or perhaps it reflects the feelings of the people about the seriousness of each affliction. It is interesting that the respondents showed more of an acceptance toward disability than toward physical problems.

In $H_5$, it was found that respondents were significantly less negative to single-parent adoptions than the expected proportion of .5. Perhaps this reveals a greater acceptance of families parented by one person. There are many parents raising children by themselves today and the public may have felt that adoption is able to function just as well with only one parent.

Surprisingly, in $H_6$ a significantly greater proportion of respondents felt that environment played the major role in the adoptees' development. They felt it to be an even greater determinant than heredity. This finding is interesting in view of the controversy discussed in Chapter II that surrounds the topic of environment versus heredity. Yet, despite this significant finding, there was no relationship between opinions about environmental effects and age at which the parent would wish to adopt. It would be logical to postulate that if the respondent felt environment played such a large role in the child's life, he would answer "infant" for age requested at adoption. But, in $H_9$, there was no correlation found between opinions about environmental effects and age requested. Perhaps
respondents felt that a change in a neglectful environment could produce growth at any age.

Orphanages as sources of adopted children, received significantly fewer negative responses than the .5 expected. However, this finding may be exaggerated by the fact that 50 people out of 88 placed "don't know" as an answer. The uncertain responses may represent a clash of mental images of the word "orphanage." Some respondents may have mixed emotions about orphanages based on past hearsay or antiquated knowledge. It may also reveal a sophistication of knowledge in that the public may have realized that the major factor is the quality of the facilities, which differs from institution to institution.

H3 was partially rejected because item 8 had a significantly positive response on the part of young people to interracial adoptions. This finding quite definitely shows a changing level of acceptance of different races on the part of the people surveyed and perhaps people in general.

There were no significant findings in preference for sex of child. Also, there were no significant findings between those willing to adopt who knew of unsuccessful adoptions and those unwilling to adopt who knew of unsuccessful adoptions.

Thus, the hypotheses which were rejected were:

H3: One-half of the respondents with children will be willing to adopt, in favor of the statement, respondents with
children stated a willingness to adopt fewer than one-half of the time.

**H4b:** One-half of the respondents will answer negatively to the adoption of physically handicapped children, in favor of the statement, more than half of the respondents did not want to adopt a physically handicapped child.

**H5:** One-half of the respondents will be negative to single-parent adoptions, in favor of the statement, respondents against single-parent adoptions were significantly less than respondents who favored single-parent adoptions or were unsure.

**H6:** One-half of the respondents will answer positively to the environmental effects of adoption, in favor of the statement, more than half the respondents felt environment was the primary influence on the adopted child.

**H7:** One-half of the respondents will respond negatively to an orphanage as a source of an adopted child, in favor of the statement, less than half the respondents were against orphanages as a source for an adoptee.

**Chapter VI**

**Recommendations for Improvement of this Study**

As with any type of investigation, this project may have been improved in several ways. The sampling of the Muncie populace was biased in that it used the phone book as its source for randomness. This procedure obviously excluded some parts
of the population due to socioeconomic status. The lower class might not have had telephones and the upper class might have been willing to pay extra fees for unlisted numbers. This problem could be eliminated by the use of a census or another type of source that includes all citizens of the population.

There were also several problems in the questionnaire construction upon which improvement could be made. They are:

1. Two errors in actual appearance of the survey; the items were too crowded on the page and the method of reproduction did not aid in the attempt at professionalism. These problems could be solved by utilizing a professional printer. In this way the spacing of items could be improved and may be more impressive overall.

2. Some of the questions were action-oriented and some were opinion-oriented. If a person felt against adoption in the first place he/she did not feel comfortable answering the action-oriented questions which included items 5 through 12. This might have been alleviated by only including opinion-oriented statements which could have been answered comfortably by all respondents, either in favor of or against adoption.

3. The open-ended questions, such as items 4 and 18 proved fruitless. Although responses were interesting to read, they could not be statistically evaluated. Perhaps this problem could have been solved by utilizing a categorical response list with a blank left for "other, please specify." In this
say responses could have been easily analyzed.

4. The factors on the questionnaire could have been more limited in amount in order to ensure adequate testing in each area. As it was in this instance, there were so many factors that only one or two questions could be used to test the opinions of the respondents. This may be solved by cutting down the number of factors, from nine to perhaps four, and constructing several different items for each factor.
APPENDIX A

Questionnaire Regarding Opinions About Adoptions

Information on Respondent: Male ___ Female ___
Age ____ Married ____ Single ____ Widowed ____
Number of Children ____ Were you an adopted child? Yes ____ No ____

Please answer the following questions in the most truthful way possible by checking the appropriate box.

1. Do you personally know anyone who has adopted a child?
   Yes ____ No ____

2. If the answer to question 1 is yes, Do you consider the adoption a success?
   Yes ____ No ____ Don't Know ____

3. Would you consider adopting a child? Yes ____ No ____

4. If the answer to question 3 is no, please briefly state your primary reason:

5. If you were to adopt a child, what sex would you prefer?
   Male ____ Female ____

6. Suppose you were going to adopt a child. From what age group would you most likely pick?

   | Infant (0-1 yr) | Child (1-5 yrs) | Pre-adolescent (5-10 yrs) | Adolescent (10-16 yrs) |

7. If you were to adopt an older child (from 5-16 years old) would you be willing to take part in family counseling to assist you and the child adapt to the new family situation?

   Definitely Might Would Consider it Don't Know Probably Definitely

   Definitely Might Would Consider it Don't Know Probably Definitely

8. Would you consider adopting a child of another race?

   Definitely Might Would Consider it Don't Know Probably Definitely

   Definitely Might Would Consider it Don't Know Probably Definitely
9. If you would consider adopting a child from another race, would you try to teach him about his cultural background?

| Definitely Would | Might Consider it | Don't Know | Probably Not | Definitely Not |

10. Would you adopt a physically handicapped child? (such as mentally retarded, cerebral palsied, etc.)

| Definitely Would | Might Consider it | Don't Know | Probably Not | Definitely Not |

11. Would you adopt an emotionally handicapped child? (such as a child that is withdrawn, untrusting, etc.)

| Definitely Would | Might Consider it | Don't Know | Probably Not | Definitely Not |

12. If you already had children of your own, would you adopt others?

| Definitely Would | Might Consider it | Don't Know | Probably Not | Definitely Not |

Please give your opinions on the following statements:

13. A single man or woman should be able to adopt a child.

| Strongly Agree | Agree | Don't Know | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

14. An adopted child should have the right to know his true parents.

| Strongly Agree | Agree | Don't Know | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

15. When a child is adopted as an infant (0-1 yr), his final adult personality is a result of his environment, rather than his inborn characteristics.

| Strongly Agree | Agree | Don't Know | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
16. If you adopted a child more than a year old, you would prefer he/she come from an orphanage, rather than the natural home.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

17. If the child had been in the natural home, you would need information about the natural parents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

18. If you wanted to adopt a child in Muncie, who would you contact?
APPENDIX B

Face Letter

February 28, 1977

Hello:

My name is Valerie Dull and I am a senior at Ball State University. I am working on an honors project having to do with people's opinions about adoption. I am hoping to find out what people in Muncie think about adopting children. In order to do this research work, I really need your help.

You will find enclosed with this letter, a questionnaire asking you for some information on the subject of adoption. Please answer as truthfully as possible, giving one answer for each question. Your answers will be kept totally private. There are no wrong answers.

If you wish, I can send you the results of my questionnaire as soon as they have been completed. Write to the address given below.

This study is very important for my education. I hope you will be kind enough to contribute your information by March 18. For your convenience, you will find a stamped return envelope with the questionnaire.

Thank you so much for your time.

Sincerely,

Valerie T. Dull

For information and results of my research, please write:

Adoption Questionnaire

c/o Dr. C. Palmer
Dept. of Educational Psychology
Ball State University
Muncie, IN 47306
References


