Indiana Adoption Agencies:

A Closer Look at the Transracial Resources They Provide

An Honors Thesis (Honrs 499)

By

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Abstract

This analysis of transracial adoption is broken down into three parts which presents the basis for the topic, my individual project, and how I was able to present it. The first paper explores the research supporting the idea that transracial adoption can be positive for a child and his development. The second paper explains the research I have conducted in the previous semester modified into a format fit for publication. A brief review of current research is given and then the paper is focused solely on my specific project. The third part contains documentation from the Butler Undergraduate Research Conference of which I attended and gave a brief lecture over my research. The purpose behind the work was to create awareness of a situation and the Butler Conference was a great opportunity to do so.
Special THANKS goes to Dr. Heather Adams for accepting to be my advisor and pushing me to achieve the high standards she has set. I believe with confidence this project has prepared me for the "real" world far beyond any class could.
The Adjustment of Transracially Adopted Children

Ball State University
Abstract

This analysis of transracial adoption and covers the controversial issue of whether it harmfully affects the adjustment of children. It first covers the history of the situation and how it came about to be a controversial issue. The analysis then explains the maladjustment that is believed to occur. Current research is then presented to refute this idea. The analysis then looks at evidence to support that placement history has greater influence and a potentially harmful effect on adopted children. The paper concludes by explaining future implications.
Transracial Adoption

America's diverse background and ever changing demographics have fostered continuous support for our nickname of the "Melting Pot." We have become one of the most diverse countries consisting of a countless number of ethnicities, which can be attributed to numerous personal and economic reasons. This blending of culture has not always been an easy process and has raised many concerns over controversial issues such as transracial adoption. Although a relatively small reason for our diversity, transracial adoption has substantially increased in the past few years. Recent media attention has brought light to the subject of this long fought controversial issue. Several celebrities have attracted paparazzi and captured headline news for their adoption of children of different races. Critics of the issue argue over whether the adjustment of an adopted child will be harmed if the parent is of a different race. Some believe transracial adoption should be prohibited while others promote the benefits and harmless effects. Due to the increasing popularity of both adoptions in general and interracial adoption the final outcome of the issue can have major effects on our society.

In 1999, it was estimated that 568,000 children were in foster care; 239,500 of which were black children (Carter-Black, 2002). More recent statistics indicate about 59% of children waiting for adoption are of color (Haymes & Simon, 2003). This is a huge group of children whose future might depend on the outcome of this issue. Leaning to one side or the other might also dramatically change what we view as the "traditional" family. Serious consideration of transracial adoption is necessary in order to progress and benefit society. To fully comprehend the situation, the history of the issue must be understood and relevant research evaluated. Using the empirical evidence that I have
researched, I believe transracial adoption is not developmentally harmful to the child, but instead might be foster care placement issues that need to be reassessed.

**History of Transracial Adoption**

The debate came about 30 years ago when adoption became more widely spread among Americans. Transracial adoption was not illegal and therefore, also became more common. A whirlwind of debate was created, yet nothing could permanently sway the issue to one side or the other. The federal government began to realize the large numbers of children who were waiting to be adopted and the number of adopting parents who were white. Attempting to alleviate the discrepancy between foster children and adopting parents, federal legislation was passed. The Multiethnic Placement Act (MEPA) was passed in 1994, which placed emphasis on achieving earlier placements for foster children (Brooks & Barth, 1999). In 1996, the Removal of Barriers to Interethnic Adoption Provisions was mandated. This provision prohibits agencies from delaying or denying the adoption of any child on the basis of race, color, or national origin (Haymes & Simon, 2003). As adoption became increasingly federally controlled, both sides became more involved than ever, creating national awareness and research interest.

**Maladjustment of Transracial Adoption**

The main opponents of transracial adoption have been the National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW) who has upheld the same position since 1972. Their major stance is that the requirement of having black parents to raise a developmentally healthy black child. One major fear is the concern over losing Black heritage. In order to preserve African Ancestry, the organization continues to emphasize the termination of unnecessary out of home placements, the unification of children with parents, the
placement of children with relatives or same race, and the avoidance of transracial adoption unless utterly necessary (Preserving, 2007). The NABSW views the adoption process as a barrier; they believe black families willing to adopt have been eliminated from the process by such factors as high income, educational achievement, and residential status. Their position also holds that transracial adoption is an expedient for white families (NABSW & Hayes, 1993).

I would like to note how extremely difficult it was in finding empirical research to oppose transracial adoption. I was only able to find a few articles that covered the opposition of transracial adoption and all of these did not include empirical studies. Most of them covered the NABSW’s position on the situation and as to how it can affect African American Heritage. However, no studies of research were mentioned. Opponents of transracial adoption criticize research that supports this issue yet they do include any to support their own position.

Current Research

Although critics of transracial adoption vehemently oppose this practice, current research has shown no significant differences in adjustment between same race adoption and transracial adoption. Each study I analyzed has taken different approaches to studying the effects of transracial adoption in order to counteract variables of methodology. The variety of research has created a broad range of ideas that underline the same results. In 2005, a study investigated how beneficial cultural exposure would be to transracially-adopted children (Lee & Quintana, 2005). Lee and Quintana interviewed fifty Korean children to see if they progressed through and attained the same levels of development as non-adopted children specifically focusing on their perspective taking
ability. Perspective taking ability is a cognitive ability that is measured as part of a child’s adjustment. Results found that children develop their perspective taking ability similarly to their non-adopted counterparts (Lee & Quintana, 2005) suggesting adjustment is also similar. Brooks and Barth (1999) extended their research to study multiple adjustment variables on a diverse group of transracial adoptees. They collected data over a period of 17 years by surveying a sample group of 224 people three times. The survey measured educational performance, problem adjustment, and ethnoracial discrimination. Results found that the majority of those surveyed developed into well-adjusted adults. Over 70 percent of females, 67 percent of Asians, and 53 percent of African Americans were classified as having good adjustment (Brooks & Barth, 1999). Burrow and Finley (2004) attempted to take a multi-measure approach of adolescent adjustment; several of their variables had not been previously tested. They combined factors of academics, family relationships, psychological adjustment, and physical health. The study surveyed a group of 609 participants ranging in age from 12 to 19 years. Results found transracially adopted participants adjusted “about the same” as same race adopted participants. Transracially adopted participants also had significantly higher grades and academic expectations.

By compiling this research together, one can cover all methodological flaws that might be possible. As mentioned earlier, each type of research focuses on a different aspect of transracial adoption and the effects on children. The studies covered multiple measures of adjustment to give a complete analysis of an individual’s development. Critics of this type of research emphasize small sample sizes, poor comparison groups, and inadequate outcome measures (As cited in Burrow & Finley, 2004). Small samples
sizes will be the norm because of the nature of the issue; there is not a large population of transracial adoptees that can be followed and assessed. However, the study of Burrow and Finley’s (2004) had a sample size of over 600 people. The studies also ranged from a one time interview to a span of 17 years. This gives researchers the benefit of being able to examine how development changed from childhood to adulthood and any lasting effects. Overall, the research gave evidence that transracial adoption does not harm a child’s development.

Placement History

Although critics of transracial adoption focus on the actual adoption, development problems that do arise may be attributed to the placement history of the adoptee. Statistics show that more than 187,000 children will remain in the foster care system longer than three years (Carter-Black, 2002). This is an extremely long time for a child to not have a “real” family. Placement issues such as remaining in foster care for long periods of time could affect the child later on after they have been adopted. Brooks and Barth (1999) were interested specifically how placement history affected adjustment outcomes. Results found an association between children’s age at adoption and their adjustment. Children who were placed as infants were less problem prone than those who were placed when older (Brooks & Barth, 1999). Many children who are placed when older have been in foster care for longer periods of time and are more likely to have the cognitive ability to understand they don’t have a permanent home yet. Importance of attachment style also raises issues in this difference between younger and older adoptees. A secure and close attachment to a primary care giver has been regarded as the most important early social relationship (As cited in Andersson, 2005). It might be difficult for
a child to form a secure relationship with one person if they are continuously moving around from foster home, back "home", then to foster home again. A study by Andersson (2005) researched this aspect and found children to be grouped in three subtypes: good, moderate, or poor adjustment. Andersson interviewed and surveyed 26 children who were placed in a children's home for at least four weeks. All of the children in the poor adjustment group had more than one foster home placement, more frequent experiences of breakdowns in out-of-home placements, and had been excluded from schooling for long periods of time. These factors are continuously disruptive to a child's life and seem to interfere with attachment style.

Implications

The findings from the combination of these studies imply that transracial adoption does not harm a child's adjustment. In fact, research suggests that the placement history of a foster child might have the most influential effect on a child's development. This can have some heavy implication for our society's adoption policies and what needs to happen now in order to change the future. A need for research in the area of placement history is necessary to find what factors can be changed in our society. Foster parents and parents of transracial adopted children need more support from adoption agencies and our society as a whole. They can feel the pressure from both sides of the argument, which just adds to the stress of raising children. Haymes and Simon (2003) suggest to educate social workers to see transracial adoption as a viable option, provide families with parenting class that specifically address raising a child of a different race, provide resources for classes, books, films, toys, and art that include transracial adoption or the child's race, and develop a forum for parents to come together to share and grow in the raising of a
transracially adopted child. Small steps such as those mentioned can have a great impact on families who transracially adopt. If agencies can fully support these families, hopefully society can follow and do the same. Our world is becoming ever more diverse and this could be a step of progress in universal acceptance.
References


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Indiana Adoption Agencies: A Closer Look at the Transracial Resources They Provide

In our society today, adoption can still be viewed as a controversial issue due to the decision of removing children from their parents and home. Although few agree that it should never happen unless under extreme circumstances, it is still argued on a case-by-case basis. Much of the argument that stands for never removing children from the home is founded on the idea that the break-up of children and parent will cause the child harm and create attachment difficulties. These attachment difficulties can lead to a concern for major adjustment issues. However, adoption can hold many benefits for a child especially when the child is removed from a dangerous or neglectful situation. Adoption can provide a loving home and a better opportunity in education and social situations. Although potentially beneficial, it is still a drastic change in a child’s life. Children who have been adopted might face some confusion over their background, family history, and whom they should trust. Adoption usually takes place at a time when children do not fully understand the reasoning behind moving from home to home. Critics of adoption believe the broken attachment between parent and child can encourage maladjusted behavior such as acting out at school, drug usage, or even criminal activity (Courtney et al, 2005 as cited in Farruggia, Greenburger, Chen & Heckhausen, 2006). According to current research this is not usually the case; the majority of adopted children have a positive experience and become well-adjusted individuals (Farruggia, Greenburger, Chen & Heckhausen, 2006).

In order to promote a positive adoption research there are specific criteria that when present can foster a trustworthy environment. A crucial factor in positive adoption is the focus on creating a strong connection between child and important nonparental adults. This comes primarily from a study by Farruggia, Greenberger, Chen, and Heckhausen (2006) which found that important nonparental adults are labeled as “VIPs”. The study found that a strong bond
formed between children and their “VIPs” helped ease the transition from family to family. These adults could be anyone from a relative, family friend, or caseworker. Children who reported to having these VIPs had a stronger support system and are “generally doing well” (Farruggia, Greenberger, Chen, & Heckhausen, 2006). Another influential factor is the amount of time for adoption placement. Andersson (2005) found that all but one of the children categorized in the study’s poor social adjustment group had more than one foster home placement. This could either indicate that the child had been in the system for a long period of time or had behavioral problems with the foster family. The greater length of time spent can lead to an increase of out-of-home placement breakdowns, problems at school, drug use, or criminal activity (Andersson, 2005). Andersson’s (2005) good and moderate adjustment groups did not face multiple foster home placements. The longer the system takes to place a child, the older the child becomes and more developmentally mature. It might be difficult for the child to realize he or she does not have a stable home. This gives support for the idea that age at the time of placement is also an important variable. Feigelman and Silverman (1983) found the most significant factor of the adjustment of the child was placement age. (Feigelman & Silverman, As cited in Silverman, 1993). The older age of adoption and placement into a home was associated with a greater degree of maladjustment. The younger a child is the less cognitively aware he or she is of the situation. If these three variables are accounted for the quality of the adoption experience can be positive and successful.

Although the adoption process has been reviewed and found to be a positive experience, critics view transracial adoption differently. The effect of differing races might impact the child and many are afraid of not only developmental problems but identity confusion issues as well (“Preserving”, 2007). Even though our society views transracial adoption a controversial issue,
the awareness has substantially increased in the past few years. Recent media attention has brought light to the situation by focusing on several celebrities who have adopted children of different races. In 1999, it was estimated that 568,000 children were in foster care; 42 percent of which were black children (Carter-Black, 2002). More recent statistics indicate about 59% of children waiting for adoptions are of color (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001). This is an extensive group of children without a permanent home. As mentioned previously, the longer children are in the foster care system, the more problems they might be prone to (Andersson, 2005). Home provides physical and emotional security and a sense of belongingness. However, critics of transracial adoption emphasize that this type of adoption can be even more harmful to a child’s development. Not only does the child face the same issues of any adoptee, they also face the confusion of racial identity.

Since the early 1970s, the National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW) has publicly advocated the elimination of transracial adoption. Part of the NABSW’s platform is the emphasis on the preservation of African ancestry. The NABSW believes that the integration of black children into white families can disengage children from their identity, cultural background, and development (Preserving, 2007). However, current research supports that transracial adoption is not harmful to a child and can actually present certain benefits to that child. {research} Implications from this research has slowly moved concern from adoption to the actual process of adoption and what agencies can do to promote a positive transracial adoption.

Adoption agencies can be the most influential resource of information and guidance to parents who are adopting transracially. They are naturally the primary source that parents will turn to because the length of interaction between the two parties. Although adoption agencies
and adoptive parents have strong connections with each other, they do not always have the best communication. Haymes and Simon (2003) found that transracially adopting parents did not have access to needed resources or were not particularly looked in favor by agency workers. Many of the parents they interviewed expressed their frustration at resources that were inadequate or the complete lack of information and parenting workshops. The study interviewed 20 children and their adoptive parents with differing questionnaires to understand what each experienced as to transracial adoption. The study closely examined the reaction of parents to policies that the social agencies adhered to. Given their insight the study was able to list multiple resources that might help parents in the future. These resources included pairing families with “cultural” mentors, providing a newsletter to families, providing parenting classes that specifically address how to raise transracial children, providing lists of local or national events, or giving parents lists of media resources that address transracial issues (Haymes & Simon, 2003). Providing a cultural mentor could assist in providing an important adult for the foster child to ask questions and give the child stability. As in the study by Faruggia, Greenburger, Chen, and Heckhausen (2006), this would represent a “VIP.” Because one criteria of a positive adoption is having a dependable adult, this resource could potentially be the most beneficial to families in transition (Faruggia, Greenburger, Chen, & Heckhausenm, 2006). It is also important to note that it would be beneficial if the cultural mentor was the same race as the child. This would provide a valuable resource for the child to identify with someone of their own race. The remaining resources were to provide information about anything that could assist in learning about transracial adoption and the specific factors that pertain to it.

This study looked at three questions that addressed what transracial adoption resources are provided specifically by Indiana adoption agencies. They are as follows:
1. Are Indiana adoption agencies providing adequate resources for families of transracial adoption?

2. Are the resources Indiana adoption agencies' do provide easy to find, understandable, and easily accessible?

3. What changes can be made to improve the resources used for a positive transracial adoption?

Method

Participants

The participants of this study consisted of major adoption agencies in Indiana. An exhaustive search of all Indiana agencies revealed fourteen agencies that were reviewed. The original search found seventeen agencies; however, two did not have an accessible website while the other one no longer existed. Conducting a paper material review was planned for a secondary source of information. The final sample came solely from the online information from each adoption agency. Due to a poor response rate of paper materials from the agencies, this information was not analyzed. The online information was significantly more helpful in identifying resources that agencies provided. From the five agencies that responded, paper materials were found to lack specific resources and in most cases were not helpful.

Materials

Materials consisted of a transracial adoption resource checklist (See Appendix A). This study used (a) agency's websites and (b) printed materials each agency would provide for adoptive parents interested in transracial adoption. In order to obtain printed materials from each agency, a letter (See Appendix B) was sent informing each agency of the study and background
information. These were the most efficient outlets for information for this type of data collection.

All data was organized and stored in InQsit, an online data collection system.

Data Collection

Data collection was from the perspective of a prospective adopter and reviewed seventeen Indiana adoption agencies (See Appendix C). The first source of information was collected from each agency's website. The website for each agency was searched by using the positive factor criteria checklist. Using the checklist, each Indiana adoption agency was assessed for providing the necessary resources to promote a positive transracial adoption. The integration of positive factors and the resources adoption agencies can provide formed one part of the checklist. The primary researcher searched each agency's website and compared given information with the resource checklist. As each item was located on the website, the findings were entered into the InQsit site. The second part of the checklist will address the ability to acquire information from an agency's records and the ease of which a parent would find similar information. This was measured by the number of links it takes to find each criterion. As a secondary source of information, the director of each agency was contacted through a letter. The letter briefly explained the study and asked the agency to send information for further assistance in the study. The letter specified that the packet of information should only pertain to prospective parents of transracial adoption. Once this informational packet was obtained it was analyzed using the same criteria checklist. The ease of finding information was adapted and measured by the number of printed materials the item is mentioned on. Findings will be recorded into the InQsit site.
**Data Analysis**

A frequency distribution chart was created in order to view what resources were most common across all agencies and what agency provided the most resources. As the data was examined, an independent t-test was conducted in order to find a statistically significant correlation between religious-affiliated agencies and nonreligious-affiliated agencies.

**Results**

Moving through the criteria checklist (See Figure 1) will accurately assess how Indiana’s adoption agencies provide resources to individuals interested in transracial adoption. The first criterion of providing a mentor for either the child or family was fulfilled by zero of the adoption agencies. Other criteria that were not indicated on any of the organizations’ website included multiethnic movies, magazines, and artwork, and the transracial education of agency workers. Forty-two percent provided a transracial newsletter, support group, and list of multiethnic events. Eight percent provided multiethnic toys and clothing resources. One-third of the agencies provided multiethnic book resources. The most frequent criterion completed was Internet resources with a total of fifty percent of agencies providing the resource. Internet resources included any link that a website included that would redirect interested parents to any type of transracial resource.

By examining the frequency distribution of resources a pattern emerged among the religious-affiliated agencies and the nonreligious-affiliated agencies (See Figure 2). As a group, the religious-affiliated agencies (N = 6) seemed to provide less information about transracial adoption. An independent t-test was performed comparing the religious-affiliated agencies (\( M = .833, SD = 1.60 \)) with the nonreligious-affiliated (\( M = 5.50, SD = 2.35 \)). The alpha level was .05. This test was found to be statistically significant, \( t(12), = .002, p < .05 \).
Discussion

In order to understand the research, the data must be connected to the original questions the study presented. Limitations and strengths will also be discussed as well as directions for future research.

1. Are Indiana adoption agencies providing adequate resources for families of transracial adoption?

Indiana adoption agencies are providing a minimal amount of positive transracial adoption resources for families and there is large room for improvement. The agency with the most resources reported only nine out of a possible eighteen resources. Thus, fifty percent of resources is the highest level of resources available in the state of Indiana and only if families work through one of the fourteen agencies. The most influential resource, the cultural mentor was not reported by any of the agencies. This could have the greatest impact on the transracially adopted child and yet, there is a complete reported absence of the resource.

2. Are the resources Indiana adoption agencies’ do provide easy to find, understandable, and easily accessible?

Yes, the websites were easy to navigate and find understandable resources. Most resources were only one link from the home page meaning all information was shown on the home page. All the websites were designed to be simple and easy to navigate. Most were not cluttered with pictures or excessive designs. The websites were very effective in laying out information for anyone with varying computer skills to work around.

3. What changes can be made to improve the resources used for a positive transracial adoption?
Several changes could be made to improve this situation. The most effective strategy could be to update their website and include more information about transracial adoption. It could be as simple as adding more links to other information websites or online stores offering transracial learning materials. This would be minimal costs with maximum benefits. Another change would be to provide a cultural mentor for the child. As research is supported, this could be the most influential factor in promoting a transracial adoption (Faruuggia, Greenburger, Chen, & Heckhausen, 2006). In order to make this the most cost effective, one mentor could be hired for district or several agencies. They could travel around, visiting families, and be available for questions via email or phone when not in the area.

Strengths & Limitations

The study included a small sample size, which might hinder the ability to generalize to other agencies. Since all analyzed agencies were located in Indiana, applications might not be applied to other regions of the country or to the greater Midwest. The study also only examined online information that is provided on each agency’s website. The agency could potentially provide resources that were not located on the website. If the information was not public access though, it might not be beneficial to potential transracial adopters. Although still a weakness, looking at the website of an agency was also beneficial. The study viewed the same information any individual would when finding information about transracial adoption. There was no excess information given solely for the purpose of the study. The study also only looked at resources that could be viewed with Internet access. Individuals without Internet access would have to go directly to the agency themselves. This could be beneficial in receiving more information upfront or a disadvantage if the individual is not committed enough to go to the agency.
It was unexpected that there was such a great difference between the religious and nonreligious agencies. As the correlation was tested to be significantly significant, other options as to why this occurred were viewed. Although the religious-affiliated agencies did not provide as many transracial adoption resources as the nonreligious-affiliated agencies, they did provide resources for many other issues. Some provided general counseling, resources to resolve spiritual issues, and drug addiction recovery support programs. Other programs focused on other issues related to adoption such as infertility information and support, foster care, embryo services, and orphan care. With as many services as they provide, the little information they provided specifically about transracial adoption might turn away potential adopters. Parents want to feel as prepared as possible for this type of transition and might want to find an agency with the most information.

Directions for Future Research

Much of this data was only a starting block for what could be looked at in terms of positive transracial adoption. Research could focus on how agencies have changed from previous years to understand if there is a trend on improvement. Research could extend into other regions of the country to understand how the country stands as a whole. The study did not explore the social and political reasons for the minimal amount of resources Indiana adoption agencies reported. It would be interesting also to research the amount of funding each agency receives and how that could affect what resources they provide. It would be very beneficial to find if budgets could be reassessed and extra money allotted to positive transracial adoption resources. Much of the mentioned research would bring awareness to the situation, which is the main driving this research study. There are not many available resources and current research that focuses on transracial adoption, which needs to be looked at. With the rising statistics of transracial
adoption, this situation is something not to be ignored in our country. Transracial adoption must be addressed in order to promote the healthy development of the children who are in this situation.
References


Services. Administration for Children and Families. Available from

Appendix A

1. Agency still exists.

2. Option of having a mentor within adoption agency specifically for the child.
   a. Mentor is ethnicity or race of child _____.
   b. Amount of Working Links _____.

3. Option of having a mentor within adoption agency specifically for the family.
   a. Mentor is ethnicity or race of child _____.
   b. Amount of Working Links _____.

4. Newsletter for information exchange and support.
   a. Frequency
      i. A weekly basis ____.
      ii. A monthly basis ____.
      iii. Other ____.
   b. Method
      i. Via email ____.
      ii. Via postal mail ____.
      iii. Other ____.
   c. Amount of Working Links ____.

5. Provides lists of multiethnic resources.
   a. Toys ___. Amount of Working Links: ____
   b. Books ___.
   c. Clothing ___.
   d. Movies ___.
   e. Magazines ___.
   f. Art work ____.
   g. Events ____.
   h. Other ____.

6. Identifying places where families can access multiethnic resources.
   a. Public libraries ___. Amount of Working Links: ____
   b. Internet ____.
7. Parenting classes that specifically address transracial adoption.
   a. Connection with Provider ___.
   b. Length of Time ___.
   c. Content of Class ___.
   d. Other ___.
   e. Amount of Working Links ___.

8. Connection to other adoptive parents in same situation.
   a. Community access ___.
   b. Internet ___.
   c. Other ___.
   d. Amount of Working Links ___.

9. Support group for adoptive parents to discuss issues of transracial adoption.
   a. Type
      i. Connection with Provider ___.
      ii. Online ___.
      iii. Meet In-Person ___.
   b. Frequency
      i. A Weekly Basis ___.
      ii. A Monthly Basis ___.
   c. Other ___.
   d. Amount of Working Links ___.

10. Education of agency workers to support transracial adoption.
    a. Materials Used ___.
    b. Continuing Education Classes ___.
    c. Other ___.
    d. Amount of Working Links ___.
Appendix B

February 26, 2008

Adoptions of Indiana
1980 East 116th St. Suite 325
Carmel, IN 46032

To the Agency Director,

I am writing to ask for your assistance with a research study exploring transracial adoption in Indiana. I am an undergraduate at Ball State University currently working on a research project that will be the capstone of my undergraduate study for my Honors thesis. The study specifically looks at multiple adoption agencies throughout Indiana. The study is examining what resources adoption agencies can provide for potential transracial adopters.

All I need for assistance with this study is a packet of information your agency would give to a potential adopter who is specifically interested in transracial adoption. Enclosed is a postage paid envelope for your convenience.

If you have any questions about the study or would like more information please contact myself at narambeau@bsu.edu or (937)-524-9034, my faculty advisor, Dr. Heather Adams at hladams@bsu.edu or (765)-285-1710, or the Coordinator for Research Compliance, Melanie Morris at mlmorris@bsu.edu or (765)-285-1624.

Thank you greatly for your time and consideration of this project.

Nicole Rambeau

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Appendix C

Americans for African Adoptions, Inc.
Phone: 317-271-4567
Fax: 317-271-8739
8910 Timberwood Dr.
Indianapolis 46234-1952

Adoptions of Indiana
Toll free: 888-573-0122
Phone: 317-574-8950
Fax: 317-574-8971
1980 East 116th St.
Suite 325
Carmel 46032

Adoption Support Center
Toll free: 800-274-1084
Phone: 317-255-5916
Fax: 317-253-8838
6331 N. Carrollton Ave.
Indianapolis 46220

Bethany Christian Services
Toll free: 800-BETHANY
Phone: 317-568-1000
5650 Caito Dr.
Indianapolis

Childplace Christian Agency
Phone: 812-282-8248
Fax: 812-282-3291
2420 Hwy 62
Jeffersonville 47130

Children's Bureau
Phone: 317-264-2700
Fax: 317-264-2714
615 N. Alabama St.
Indianapolis 46204

Compassionate Care Christian Agency
Phone: 812-749-4152
Wilder Center Hwy 64 West
RR 3 Box 12B
Oakland City 47660

Dillon International, Inc.
Phone: 765-965-1195
3401 Glen Hills Dr.
Richmond 47374

Families Thru International Adoption
Toll free: 888-797-9900
Phone: 812-479-9900
Fax: 812-479-9901
400 Bentee Wes Court
Evansville 47715

Independent Adoption Center
Phone: 317-887-2015
Fax: 317-887-2088
5162 E. Stop 11 Rd.
Suite 1
Indianapolis 46237

Kids First Adoption Services
Phone: 317-843-2300
8580 Cedar Place Dr.
Suite 120
Indianapolis 46240

LDS Family Services
Toll free: 800-537-2229
Phone: 317-872-1749
Fax: 317-872-1756
3333 Founders Rd.
Suite 200
Indianapolis 46268-4932

Lutheran Child & Family Services
1525 N. Ritter Ave.
Indianapolis 46219

St. Elizabeth/Coleman Pregnancy & Adoption Services
Toll free: 800-499-9113
Phone: 317-787-3412
Fax: 317-787-0250 Churchman Ave.
Indianapolis 46203
Figure 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of Criteria</th>
<th>Amt. of Resources</th>
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<tr>
<td>Child Mentor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Mentor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newsletter</td>
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<td>Toys</td>
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<td>Books</td>
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Comparison of Religious and Nonreligious Agencies

Figure 2

List of Criteria

- Nonreligious Affiliated
- Religious Affiliated
A CLOSER LOOK AT INDIANA'S ADOPTION AGENCIES: THE ACCESSIBILITY TO RESOURCES PROMOTING A POSITIVE TRANSRACIAL ADOPTION

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Submission for Paper Presentation at 20th Annual Undergraduate Research Conference at Butler University
Equipment: PC Presenter – PowerPoint

Title: A Closer Look at Indiana’s Adoption Agencies: The Accessibility to Resources Promoting a Positive Transracial Adoption
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Transracial adoption has created much concern in our society today in concluding whether or not it could be detrimental to the adopted child’s development. Current research supports that transracial adoption is not harmful to the adjustment of a child but will include unique situations and circumstances. The study is specifically reviewing all major adoption agencies in Indiana and is examining the resources that adoption agencies provide for potential transracial adopters. The study is working with data that is obtained from each agency’s website and printed agency material for transracial adoption. The given information will be compared with a resource checklist that includes all major resources an agency could provide to potential transracial adopters. The accessibility of the resources will also be taken into account by such measures as length of time spent on each website and number of links to find certain criteria. The discussion will center around the actual resources Indiana’s agencies use and the ease of finding these resources. Results that could lead to multiple implications and change the way agencies interact with potential transracial adopters will also be discussed.
Indiana’s Adoption Agencies & Their Promotion of Positive Transracial Adoption

Nicole Rambeau
Ball State University
Dr. Heather Adams

Creating a Positive Adoption Experience

- Strong connection between child and nonparental adult
  - (Farruggia, Greenberger, Chen, & Heckhausen, 2006)
- Minimal waiting period for placement into a home
  - (Andersson, 2005)
- Younger age of child when placed into a home
  - (Feigelman & Silverman, 1993)

Transracial Adoption

- Increased media attention
  - Trend of celebrities for international adoption
- 1999 – 568,000 children in foster care in United States
  - 42% of these children were African American (Carter-Black, 2002)
- 2001 – 59% of children awaiting adoption are of color (U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services, 2001)

List of Positive Resources for Transracial Adoption

- “Cultural” mentor for family and child
- Newsletter
- Parenting classes
- Lists of multiethnic resources
- Support Groups
  - (Haymes & Simon, 2003)

Research Questions

- Are Indiana adoption agencies providing adequate resources for families of transracial adoption?
- Are the resources they do provide easily accessible and understandable?
- What changes can be made to improve the resources used for a positive transracial adoption?

Methodology

- Research Design
  - Quantitative analysis
- Participants –
  - 2 Agencies from Indiana
- Materials
  - Resource Checklist
  - Letter to Agency
  - Online InQsi Collection
- Data Collection
  - Website Review
  - Used Resource Checklist
  - Findings entered into InQsi database
  - Letter to Agency
  - Poor response rate
Results

- Compared Religious ($M = 5.5, SD = 2.35$) and Nonreligious Agencies ($M = 0.833, SD = 1.60$)
- Analyzed by an Independent $t$ test
- Found to be statistically significant
  - $t(12) = .002, p < .05$

Limitations

- Sample size
- Only viewed information on website
- Religiously affiliated agencies focused on several other issues as well
- No knowledge of previous trends

References

Transtacial Adoption

Questions?

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