Adoption Related Curiosity at Emerging Adulthood

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Method

Data used for this project came from a sub-sample of adoptees who participated at Wave 2 and Wave 3 of the Minnesota-Texas Adoption Research Project (MTARP) (Grotevant & McRoy, 1998).

Participants

• 169 adopted emerging adults (Wave 3) between the ages of 21 and 30 (mean = 25.0)
• 87 males and 82 females.

Procedure and Variables Coded

Participants were interviewed and completed the Adoption Dynamics Questionnaire.

• Information gap existence;
• Satisfaction with contact at Waves 2 and 3;
• Thinking about birth mother and birth father at Waves 2 and 3,
• Curiosity content at Wave 3
• Openness arrangement at Wave 3

Results

Logistic regression was used in order to predict the probability of a birth mother and birth father information gap at emerging adulthood based on satisfaction with contact in the adoption at Wave 2 and Wave 3, thinking about birth parent at Wave 3, age and sex.

The formation of an adoption information gap for both
• birth mothers [Nagelkerke R²=.344, χ² (4, N=123) =34.40, p=.0001] and
• birth fathers [Nagelkerke R²=.2220, χ² (4, N=114) =18.43, p=.002]

was more likely for those who were less satisfied with the amount of contact at both adolescence and emerging adulthood. Females were not more likely to have an information gap.

Discussion and Conclusion

• Reflection about one’s adoption continues from adolescence into emerging adulthood and can result in the formation of an adoption information gap.
• Satisfaction with contact was a predictor but thinking about the birth parent was not. Once you are satisfied with contact you might not think so much about your birth parents or if you are dissatisfied think about them more.
• Identification of content areas of curiosity are strikingly similar for males and females indicating adopted persons are curious about both birth parents.
• Curiosity content areas provide a starting place of discussion for adoptive parents, adoption professionals and counselors who can support adopted emerging adults in their information seeking and management of the complex relationships within the adoptive kinship network.

References