Specific Aims

Navigating romantic relationships.

Exists no published research on how lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ) adoptees experience romantic relationships. The goal of this study is to contribute to the growing body of research related to

Overview & Brief Review of the Literature

- Self-acceptance and same-sex orientation were among attachment security variables (Portnoy, 1999).
- There is a need for research looking specifically at the attachment styles and post-institutional children many years after adoption (Lancaster & Nelson, 2009).
- Eighty percent of children adapted from overseas began their lives in orphanages (Park Nelson, 2009).
- prevalence of attachment disorders, cognitive delays, and behavioral deficits among post-institutional children many years after adoption (Glennen, 2000; Zeanah, 2000).
- The largest cohort of adoptees (those born between 1989 – 1988) are now adults. There is a need for research looking specifically at the attachment styles and needs of adult adoptees (Finley, 1999).
- Adoptees are less likely to classify themselves as securely attached (Borders, Penny, & Portnoy, 2000; Feeney, Pasmore, & Peterson, 2007).
- Attachment avoidance and attachment anxiety were both associated with negative LGBTQ(+) identity variables (Wang, Schale, & Biroz, 2010).
- Self-acceptance and same-sex orientation were significantly associated with attachment security variables (Elizur & Mintzez, 2003).

The goal of this study is to contribute to the growing body of research related to adoption – more specifically, international adoption from South Korea. While attachment research with respect to adopted individuals is continuing to emerge, there currently exists no published research on how lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ) identities may impact an adoptee’s experience – even more specifically in terms of navigating romantic relationships.

Specific Aims

1. Provide insight into the unique attachment challenges adult LGBTQ(+) identified Korean adoptees may face in terms of romantic relationship establishment and functioning compared to their heterosexual counterparts.
2. Demonstrate how other demographic and developmental factors such as geographic region where the adoptee grew up, the race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, and socio-economic status of the adoptive parent(s), adoptive family environment, and enactment of the adoptee affect, and perhaps even exacerbate, attachment issues for LGBTQ(+) Korean adoptees.

Hypothesis:

LGBTQ(+) Korean adoptees will score higher in anxious and avoidant attachment than their heterosexual Korean adoptee counterparts.

Research Questions

1. Do adult Korean adoptees that identify as LGBTQ(+) score higher on measures of anxiety and avoidance with respect to romantic relationships than their heterosexual Korean adoptee counterparts?
2. What specific affects do LGBTQ(+) identities have on the overall attachment process for Korean adoptees?
3. To what extent do adoptive family characteristics and dynamics affect LGBTQ(+) Korean adoptees experiences in romantic relationships?

Design & Sample

- Cross-sectional survey design
- Data collected by way of non-probability snowball sampling
- National sample
- Adult heterosexual and LGBTQ(+) Korean adoptees between the ages of 23 – 42

Measures

- Revised Experiences in Close Relationships (ECR-R; Fraley et al., 2000; Sibley et al., 2005).
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Identity Scale (LGBIS; Mohr & Fassinger, 2000) adapted for adult adoptees.
- Demographic Information

Statistical Analyses

G*Power power analysis for Linear Multiple Regression:

- n = 107 (npers = 107 and nperp = 107)
- a = .05
- Power = .95. The distribution plot is as follows:

References