Race and Bicultural Socialization Practices in the Netherlands, Norway, and the United States with Children Adopted from India

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1. INTRODUCTION

- **Purpose:** Study of country-specific race and bicultural socialization (BCS) practices among white transracial, intercountry-adoptive (T-I) parents and their Indian children (N = 624 living in the Netherlands (n = 409), Norway (n = 146), and The United States (US) (n = 67).)
- **Goals:** Ethno-racial demography was found to influence BCS practices of T-I parents with Chinese daughters (Thomas & Tessler, 2007). Gaps existed as to whether results generalized to other U.S.-T-I family populations and how American BCS practices compared cross-nationally to White, Dutch, and Norwegian families with children from India.
- **Why countries?** Contrast with single-country interpretations; examine "country-of-residence" as contextual factor in BCS practices (i.e., Degrees of minority [US,Netherlands > Norway] and Indian populations [US > Norway > Netherlands])
- **Across these three countries:** RTQ: How did these T-I families differ in their BCS practices?
- **Differences:** How did parental reports of children's negative experiences with others about adoption, birth country, skin color, racial/positive discrimination, and parental worry differ in T-I families?

2. METHODS

- **Research Design/Sample:** Cross-sectional survey design; mailed surveys; Indian adoptees 4-16 years
- **Measures:** Cultural identity/discrimination survey items previously tested (Juffer & Tieman, 2009; Tiessen, Gamache, & Liu, 1999); psychometric properties for face validity only.
- **Importance of Bicultural Socialization Experiences (BCS-P):** Adoptees' Participation in Bicultural Socialization (APS); parents' & adult Indian friends' adoption experiences with others about adoption, birth country, skin color; racial/positive discrimination; parental worry; with whom adoptees had negative experiences
- **Procedure:** Human Subjects Approval; pilot; mailed surveys; follow-up 30-day
- **Statistical Analysis:** Factor analyses (oblimin rotation) for BCS-P/APS scale formation; bivariate analysis of categorical data Pearson's χ² analyses/Bonferroni correction (Table 1); interval level data (t-tests of independent samples); 1-way ANOVA/Tukey post hoc (Table 2-3).

3. RESULTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1.</th>
<th>Family Descriptive Statistics Comparing Countries' Samples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Characteristics</td>
<td>Netherlands (n = 409)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner of survey (mother)</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child's mean age (in years) (SD)</td>
<td>10.4 (3.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child's mean age (in years) (time of survey)</td>
<td>9.5 (3.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother's mean age (in years) (adoption)</td>
<td>36.9 (5.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father's mean age (in years) (adoption)</td>
<td>43.8 (4.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother's mean age (in years) (time of survey)</td>
<td>48.9 (6.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father's mean age (in years) (time of survey)</td>
<td>54.0 (6.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother completed survey</td>
<td>87.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father completed survey</td>
<td>82.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-parent families</td>
<td>89%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

4. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- **1. Norway and US (countries with > Indian populations) had most similar BCS practices (Norway/US) = Dutch for parental importance of BCS and children's BCS experiences**
- **2. US parents had > numbers of adult Indian friends than Norwegian/Dutch samples**
- **Dutch/US (countries with greater ethno-racial heterogeneity) > overall experiences of racial discrimination than Norwegian Indian adoptees**
- Yet, the Dutch parent sample worried < than Norwegian/US parents about children's negative experiences
- **With whom had negative experiences: Classmates about Adoption: US > than Norwegian/Dutch; Norwegian > Dutch; Classmates about Racial discrimination: Norwegian > US > Dutch; Neighborhood Peers about Adoption: Norwegian > US; Neighborhood Peers about Racial Discrimination: Norwegian > Dutch; Unknown People and Positive Discrimination: Norwegian > Dutch**
- The Dutch experienced the least negative reactions from others overall, even though they still encountered significant racial discrimination.

5. CONCLUSIONS/IMPLICATIONS

- **1. Norwegian families fell between USA/Dutch samples for BCS**
- **Norwegian/US samples most similar (75%) despite ethno-racial contrast; Dutch/US most different (88%) except for racial discrimination**
- **2. Dutch found it least important to expose children to BCS; children subsequently had < BCS activities. Validated link between parental BCS attitudes predicting activities (Lee, 1993; Thomas & Tessler, 2007)**
- **3. Dutch parents may worry < Norwegian/US parents about negative experiences due to cultural/political contextual factors:**
- a. Long-standing reputation of Dutch for liberal/tolerant views (Zick, Pettigrew, & Wagner, 2008)
- b. Adoptees resemble highly integrated Dutch Caribbean immigrants, the Surinamese (educated; professional)(Michon & Veerman, 2013)
- c. Shift in Dutch immigration practices/policies. Biculturalism seen as inhibiting integration into larger Dutch culture/economic success
- **4. US > negative adoption experiences with classmates than Norwegians**
- **Dutch—North American phenomenon of Adoptive Family Stigma**
- **5. Norwegian parents (vs. US) experienced > negative reactions from neighborhood peers. May relate to US child-rearing practice of socializing in community-at-large versus neighborhoods (Lareau, 2002).**

Femmie Juffer is supported by Welrerdikinderen.