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 = 621) living in the Netherlands (n = 409), Norway (n = 146), and The United States (US) (n = 67).

• Gaps: Ethno-racial demographic was found to influence BCS practices of T-I parents with Chinese daughters (Thomas & Teasley, 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 > Indian populations]).

• Across these three countries:

RQ1: How did T-I families differ in their BCS practices?

RQ2: 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; Teasley, Gachame, & Liu, 1999); psychometric properties for face validity only.

• Importance of Bicultural Socialization Experiences (BSC-E): Adoptees’ Participation in Bicultural Socialization (APS); parents’ adult Indian friends; adoptees’ negative 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 analysis (oblimin rotation) for BSC-E/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 1. Family Descriptive Statistics Comparing Countries’ Samples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Characteristics</th>
<th>Netherlands (n = 409)</th>
<th>Norway (n = 146)</th>
<th>US (n = 67)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child’s mean age (in years)</td>
<td>11.3 (4.3)</td>
<td>10.6 (4.0)</td>
<td>11.4 (4.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child’s mean age (in years) at time of Study</td>
<td>14.0 (3.5)</td>
<td>10.9 (3.6)</td>
<td>12.0 (4.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother’s mean age (in years) at adoption</td>
<td>35.9 (8.6)</td>
<td>38.0 (7.6)</td>
<td>36.0 (8.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father’s mean age (in years) at adoption</td>
<td>38.8 (7.4)</td>
<td>39.6 (7.4)</td>
<td>38.5 (8.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother’s mean age (in years) at time of Study</td>
<td>38.9 (7.4)</td>
<td>40.3 (7.8)</td>
<td>39.2 (7.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father’s mean age (in years) at time of Study</td>
<td>41.8 (8.7)</td>
<td>43.3 (9.2)</td>
<td>41.3 (8.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother completed survey</td>
<td>84.0%</td>
<td>95.0%</td>
<td>97.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father completed survey</td>
<td>84.0%</td>
<td>95.0%</td>
<td>97.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-parent families</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. Norwegian families fell between USA/Dutch samples for BCS
• Norwegian/US samples most similar (79%) despite ethno-racial contrast; Dutch/US most different (82%–89%) 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, 2003; Thomas & Teasley, 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) & Wagner, 2008)
   c. Shift in Dutch immigration practices/policies. Biculturalism seen as
5. CONCLUSIONS/IMPLICATIONS

1. 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 Wereldkinderen.