



University of
Massachusetts
Amherst

Adoption Related Curiosity in Emerging Adulthood

Item Type	event;event
Authors	Wrobel, Gretchen Miller;Grotevant, Harold D.
DOI	https://doi.org/10.7275/R5Z899NN
Download date	2025-04-19 20:49:38
Link to Item	https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.14394/43001

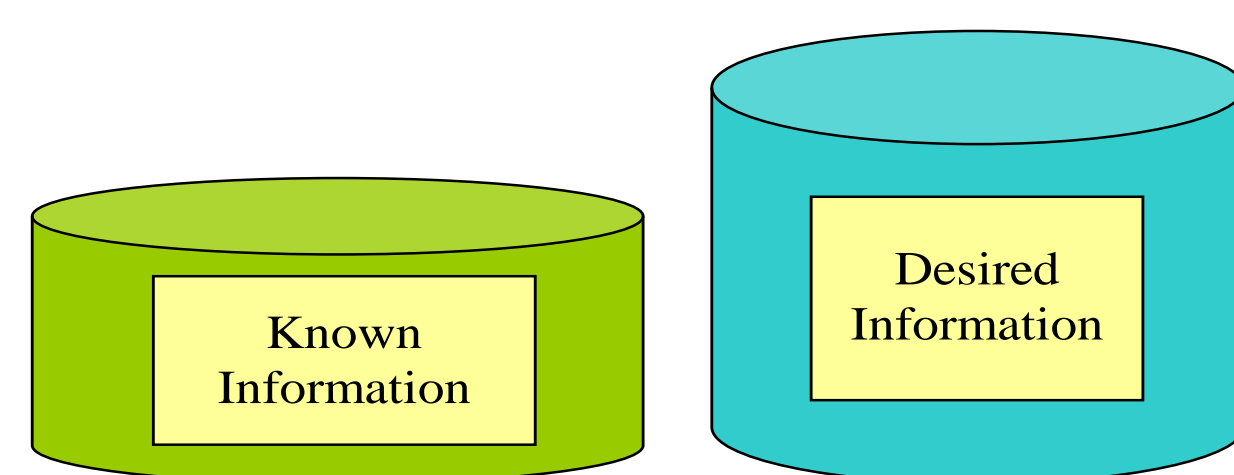
Background

Most adopted individuals consider, at some point, their desire for more information about their adoptions or birth families. As a result, some adopted persons are content with the information they have and do not identify any adoption-related curiosity (Wrobel & Dillon, 2009). Yet for others, adoption-related reflection results in the identification of desired yet unknown information. Adoption-related curiosity is focused on the unknown information and can provide the motivation to seek out that information (Wrobel, Grotevant, Samek & Von Korff, 2013).

The Adoption Curiosity Pathway (ACP)

The Adoption Curiosity Pathway (Wrobel & Dillon, 2009) is a process model that focuses on the identification of an adoption information gap and the expression of adoption-related curiosity. There are three steps in the model

- Identification of the gap = difference between what a person knows and what is desired knowledge



- Determine the intensity of curiosity
- Seeking desired information

Study Purpose

- To identify specific adoption-related content about which emerging adults are curious.
- Description of the formation of an adoption information gap in emerging adulthood.
- It is hypothesized that emerging adults most likely to identify an adoption information gap will think more frequently about their birth parents, will have less satisfaction with the amount of contact in their adoptions at W2 and W3 and will be female.

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 $R^2=.344$, χ^2 (4, N=123) =34.40, $p=.0001$] and
- birth fathers [Nagelkerke $R^2=.2220$, χ^2 (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.

References

- Grotevant, H. D., & McRoy, R. G. (1998). *Openness in adoption: Exploring family connections*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Wrobel, G.M. & Dillon, K. (2009). Adopted adolescents: Who and what are they curious about? In G.M. Wrobel and E. Neil (Eds.) *International advances in adoption research for practice* (pp. 217-244). London: Wiley.

Top Ranked Items of Curiosity Regarding Birth Parents

Content	Birth Mother N=111		Birth Father N=120	
	Rank	Percent Endorsement	Rank	Percent Endorsement
Medical Information/Health History	1	51.3	1	57.5
How Birth Parent is Doing	2	31.5	2	34.1
Appearance/Physical Characteristics	3	27.9	3	27.5
Other Children Parenting	4	26.1	4	22.5
Personality/Behaviors	5	25.2	6	20.8
Identifying Information	6	21.6	8	15.8
Reasons for Placing Child	7	20.7	7	15.8
Culture/Nationality/Genealogy	8	20.7	5	22.5
Location	9	19.8	9	15.8

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.
- Wrobel, G. M., Grotevant, H. G., Samek, D. R. & Von Korff, L. (2013) Adoptees' curiosity and information-seeking about birth parents in emerging adulthood: Context, motivation, and behavior. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 37, 441-450. doi: 10.1177/0165025413486420