

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

TRANSRACIAL ADOPTION: A STUDY OF THE PLACEMENT  
OF NATIVE INDIAN CHILDREN WITH CAUCASIAN COUPLES

by

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Ken Plett

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Transracial Adoption: A Study of the Placement  
of Native Indian Children with Caucasian Couples

ABSTRACT

This study considered the adoptive placement of Native Indian children with Caucasian couples in Manitoba during the years 1974-1978 inclusive, in three areas: characteristics of the couples, the personal and social adjustment of the children, and the services of the adoption agencies.

The couples came from a variety of backgrounds, with a wide range of traits, and no clear character typology could be determined. The overall adjustment of the children was found to be high, indicating the adopted children are doing well. There also appeared to be no direct relationship between the characteristics of the couples and the adjustment of the children.

Services of the agencies are crucial in determining the overall success of the adoption placement. There is a strong and direct relationship between all aspects of adoption services and the adjustment of the children as measured by the child adjustment scale. As well, parental adequacy was found to depend to a great extent on post-adoption services.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Adoption involves becoming a parent through a legal and social process rather than a biological one. Adoptions provide permanent substitute care for the child when his natural parents are unable or unwilling to care for him, and the parents have been legally freed of any ties to the child. A more formal definition is provided by Kadushin: (1967, p. 519)

Adoption entails the extinction of all present or future rights and obligations of the natural parents of the child and the transfer by administrative or legal authority, of all these rights and obligations to a married couple who have no blood relationship with the child.

Adoption services essentially have two aspects. On the one hand, services are directed toward the child in finding suitable permanent substitute parents who can provide a loving and secure family environment, and on the other hand, services are directed to the applicants for adoption, in placing with them a child to whom they can serve as parents. The intent is to bring about a healthy functioning family.

During the latter part of the 1960's, agencies began to experience a decrease in the availability of Caucasian children. The availability of contraceptive and abortion

reduced the number of unwanted children. The changing social climate, with less stigma attached to women who became pregnant out of wedlock, made it more acceptable than in the past for these mothers to keep their children. With the changing social climate came major changes in social work and adoption policy. Traditionally, blond blue-eyed Caucasian children could be adopted only by parents of similar appearance, and the child's denomination was a critical factor in the placement, but gradually these requirements were lifted. Agencies changed their focus to adoptive placements of children with special needs - the handicapped, the older child, siblings, groups and the minority child. In order to place these minority children, they frequently had to be adopted by parents of a race other than that of the child. This practice, known as "transracial adoption", appeared to be a viable alternative in the attempt to meet the needs of minority children.

Although at present, adoption across racial lines still seems to be the most adequate way of meeting some adoption needs, it is important to examine some of the issues and processes involved in transracial adoption with particular reference to Native Indian children. Given the current racial situation involving Native people in our country, it is imperative that this matter be addressed. The practice of removing the Indian child great distances from where he was

born frequently does not contribute to a healthy self-identity and pride as a race. I have personally been involved with the adoption placement of several Native infants with Caucasian and Native couples in Ontario, and have in my experience encountered people who insist that Native children must only be placed with Native families. Others feel that Native families do not meet agency criteria, more specifically, in terms of income, housing, education, etc.; and as long as there are sufficient numbers of "qualified" Caucasian families willing to adopt these children, the practice should be continued.

The climate for transracial adoptions is changing in that minority groups tend to see this as the ultimate indignity that has been inflicted on them. This opposition to transracial adoption is led and organized primarily by Black and Indian political organizations who label transracial adoption "genocide", and accuse white society of perpetuating its most malevolent scheme, seeking to deny the Indians and Blacks their future by taking away their children. In essence, the leaders of Black and Indian organizations argue that non-white children who are adopted by white parents are lost to the non-white community. (Simon, 1977, p. 2)

The practice of transracial adoption has consequently been reduced to some extent, but it has left unsolved the problem that gave rise to the practice in the first place,

namely the presence of large numbers of non-white children in the care of Child Welfare Agencies. This is certainly the case in Manitoba, where a disproportionately high number of Child Welfare services are received by children of Native origin, and a significant number of these children are available for adoption. (Ryant, 1975, p. 44)

Hepworth, (1978, p. 38) writing about the situation of Native children in care in Canada, notes that Native children are usually admitted to care because they need protection, and when they are in care, there is little likelihood they will be adopted by Native people, and consequently they remain in long-term care unless they are adopted by Caucasian families

#### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The practice of transracial adoption has a short but turbulent history. According to Simon, (1977, p. 10) transracial adoption in the U.S. and Canada began in the 1940's. It gained momentum in the mid 1950's. It diminished during the early sixties, rose again in the mid sixties, and began to wane by the mid 1970's.

The earliest reports of transracial adoption by Valk (1957), Graham (1957), Petiss (1959), Lyslo (1960), Gallay (1963), Ericke (1965), and Mitchell (1968) are primarily statistical in nature, insofar as they describe the numbers

of placements that had transpired, and express support in favour of the practice of transracial adoption. The late sixties saw the formation of a number of organizations devoted especially to the encouragement of adoption of Negro children by Caucasian parents, among which was the Open Door Society of Montreal. (Open Door Society, 1969) With the seventies came organized opposition to the practice, and the focus of researchers shifted to the placements that had already taken place in order to attempt to evaluate the advisability of placing children transracially. These follow-up studies will be presented comprehensively in the literature review in the next chapter.

It appears, however, that transracial adoptions are not new to several other cultures. These types of adoption are extensive and well accepted in Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Alaska, and have been for decades. According to Chevlin (1957), half of all adoptive placements in Alaska are non-Caucasian children placed with Caucasian families. The literature also makes reference to transracial adoption in the United Kingdom. One such account refers to the British Adoption Project, conducted in Great Britain from 1965-1969 by Lois Raynor. (Raynor, 1970)

As indicated previously, despite its recent history, the practice of transracial adoption has experienced a considerable degree of turbulence, with a number of trends and

countertrends emerging. One of the major issues that is reflected in the recent literature refers to the inherent dilemma associated with transracial adoption, namely; can children raised in a cross-cultural setting develop a healthy self-identity, and an appreciation for his/her cultural heritage, or do these children acquire ambivalence toward their own race. The National Association of Black Social Workers in the U.S. have been especially vocal in attacking the practice. (Simon, 1977, p. 2) The virtues of both positions in the argument have been clearly documented by Chimizie (1975), Vieni (1975), Johnson (1976), and Howard, Royse, and Skerl (1977).

A second area of concern focusses on the long-term mental health of these children. Dong Soo Kim (1977), and Colon (1978), provide evidence supporting the contention that uprooting children from their biological families and placing them transracially inevitably results in unresolved cut-offs which have disruptive consequences when the children reach adolescence. Additional questions have been raised that are related to the resolution of racial identification, i.e.: the child's affectional ties with the white world of his parents, which constitutes his reference group for socialization; however, the world outside the family responds to him in terms of his visible racial affiliation.

Despite the controversy about the ultimate desirability

of transracial adoption, and the valid concerns of knowledgeable individuals, it is generally regarded as more desirable than foster or institutional care. There appears to be a need for careful and conscientious placement of children across racial lines.

It is therefore our contention that the focus in transracial adoption studies should be on assessing the experiences of couples who have adopted a child of another race, and to examine the role of agencies, in order to determine what factors may contribute towards a healthy development of the adopted child.

#### PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study reported in this thesis was undertaken to assess the experiences and attitudes of couples who adopted a child of Indian racial background, and to examine if we do an adequate job in placing these children.

This study will attempt to determine the characteristics of couples who adopt transracially in Manitoba. Information regarding the personal and social attributes will be collected. In addition, the couples will be asked about their attitudes and degree of comfort toward/with Native people. It is important for Child Welfare practitioners to become more knowledgeable about the characteristics of couples who appear "best suited" for these types of placements, so

that they can be more "discriminating" in selecting adoptive parents for children who are ethnically different from themselves.

The present study will also attempt to determine if there is a relationship between certain characteristics of the couples and how they impact on the child's adjustment in the home. It is anticipated that the success of the parents in helping the child to settle into the family and to develop a sense of personal security and ease, would be reflected in the child's evolving personality and behaviour.

Thirdly, this study will address the matter of adoption services for adopting couples. The literature indicates that the existing range of adoption services frequently do not meet the specific need inherent in transracial placements, and that agencies tend to treat these adoptions virtually the same as traditional adoptions. Therefore, it is important to examine the experiences of couples who have adopted transracially and to explore their ideas about the preparation required in these adoptions.

This study will take a look at the existing adoption services (offered or lacking), information regarding the child (sufficient or lacking), and attempt to evaluate the quality of those services. Furthermore, it is anticipated that the degree of parental satisfaction with their adoption experience varies directly with the agency's handling of the adoption



process. This study will attempt to find out if parental satisfaction with the adoption, as determined by their own sense of adequacy as parents, and the general adjustment of the adopted child in the home is directly related to the quantity and quality of services provided by the agency.

It is the investigator's feeling that there is a need for evaluation of adoption policy and practice in the identified areas. Our basic assumptions about adoptive parents and children need to be continually tested. At the same time, new policies and attitudes, aimed at promoting the needs of children who must be placed transracially, must be encouraged.

## CHAPTER II

### A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A sizeable body of research has emerged during the last decade in the area of transracial adoption and the adoption of Korean and South Vietnamese children by North American families. Empirical studies of families who adopted American and Canadian children, and studies pertaining to the adjustment of these children, have begun to appear.

The review of the literature presented here will look at some of the follow-up studies of transracial adoptions with the focus being on three specific areas; the characteristics of the couples, the adjustment of the children, and the services of the adoption agencies. The attempt will be to provide a perspective on what has been done in these areas and to provide a theoretical base on which to proceed with the present study.

#### A SOCIAL PROFILE OF WHITE FAMILIES WHO ADOPTED TRANSRACIALLY

Ripple, writing in the late sixties, suggested that we know little about the elements of good parenting in adoptions and what characterizes such individuals or couples.

(Ripple, 1968) Since then, however, a significant amount of information has been accumulated, and researchers have attempted to identify the special characteristics of parents who accept a child of another race.

One of the first attempts at evaluating Caucasian applicants who adopted transracially was undertaken by Gallay in Montreal. She concluded: (Gallay, 1963, p. 248)

It is obvious that the same motivations are present in "matching" and "transracial" adoptions, that is, infertility, love of children, and desire to enlarge the family. The significant difference is the strong expression of the religious and humanitarian motivation by the people who wished to adopt a child of a racial background different from their own.

Harriet Fricke (1965) identified several common characteristics, but found that transracial adopters had an additional characteristic: they were tremendously secure people who did not need constant community or larger family to function satisfactorily. Lebo (1965) found that couples who adopt transracially display detachment from their communities, are isolated from the families of orientation, may interact more with friends, have been married longer, and experience limited difficulties with community members because of transracial adoption.

Pepper (1966) reports that parents who adopted a child of another race did so because they were aware of the needs of the child, despite the fact that the primary motivation to

adopt was related to the inability to have children. Motivation was therefore actually a combination of needing a child, and wanting a child.

As a result of numerous and extensive interviews with applicants, Sellers (1969) identified what he felt were the criteria essential to the selection of transracial adoptive parents. They were: 1. Compatible motivation; 2. Deep interest in family activity; 3. Intelligence; 4. Meaningful experience with various racial groups; 5. Education and awareness; 6. Ability to withstand community pressure; 7. High level of tolerance; 8. Ability to think independently; 9. Lack of financial strain; 10. Relatives who accept; 11. Non-radical politics; 12. Ability to allow a child to accept his racial identity; 13. Acceptance that the situation is different; 14. Positive attitude; 15. Adoption not the sole means of achieving parenthood.

A study regarding characteristics of adoptive couples was undertaken by Lawrence Falk in the U.S. in 1970. (Falk, 1970) He compared Caucasian couples who adopted within their own race with Caucasian couples who adopted Negro, Indian, and Oriental children. Falk found that the transracial adopters tend to be higher in educational categories than traditional adopters. They are more active in community voluntary associations and are more likely to adopt for humanitarian reasons. An interesting outcome of Falk's study

indicates a majority of transracial adopters believed it is more difficult to rear an adopted child of another race than of their own race and were less willing to recommend transracial adoption than inrace couples are to recommend inrace adoptions.

Priddy and Kirgan (1972) compared women who stated an unwillingness to adopt a child of another race with women who did so. Women who had adopted these children seemed more able to recognize general principles which link or underlie separate concepts. They seemed to feel less need to aggrandize, to be less anxious, less threatened by their environment, and less worried about what other people thought of them. These women also seemed less concerned with power and status and to be less authoritarian. They seemed more open to new ideas and more tolerant of ideas and people with which and whom they might disagree.

Raynor's study in England (1970) reported that applicants were much better educated than the general public, and that most of the adoptive mothers were employed at the time of application. Grow and Shapiro (1974) found most transracial adopters were college graduates, professionals, and had religious affiliation. Most of the parents made efforts to learn more about the child's culture and felt it was important for a child to have pride in his heritage. Nearly half reported concern about the extended family's

reaction, and half reported, as well, that relatives were supportive from the beginning. Beasley (1976) determined that adoptive parents of Native children were found to be college educated, in their first marriage, biological parents, homeowners, and were professionally employed. They preferred children of another race and were found to adopt because of humanitarian concern.

A study focussing on the factors affecting the adoption of minority children, conducted by Silverman and Feigelman (1977), reported positive feedback. Based on information obtained from 675 questionnaires, they found that those in the forefront in assuming more "contemporary lifestyles" are more amenable to parenting minority children. The authors concluded that the most immediate implication for social policy is in the adoptive placement of stigmatized children. Social agencies are often reluctant to believe there are families willing to adopt stigmatized children, yet the data suggest the number of families who would be receptive to the adoption of such children is likely to increase.

The varied theoretical approaches and methodologies in these studies have produced numerous findings, and raised many questions. The results of the studies also indicate a variety of opinion and in some cases contradict each other. The characteristics of couples that contribute to a well adjusted adopted child appear to vary with specific situations

and context. The findings, however, clearly point out that transracial adoptions differ from traditional adoptions, and are in some respects quite unique. The factors that appear crucial in determining the success of these placements, and applicable to all transracial placements, include the following: a positive attitude, deep interest in family activity, awareness, tolerance, ability to allow child to accept his racial identity, and the ability to withstand society's pressures in the form of negative attitudes. In summation, successful transracial adopters are tremendously secure people who do not need constant community or larger family support to survive.

It is anticipated that certain characteristics unique to transracial adopters in Manitoba will emerge from this study.

#### ADJUSTMENT OF CHILDREN ADOPTED TRANSRACIALLY BY CAUCASIAN PARENTS

As the debate regarding the advisability of transracial adoption heightened, the focus of researchers shifted to follow-up studies to find out how these children were faring.

Although the ideal model for evaluating psycho-social effects of transracial placements is itself fraught with problems, such as selection of a comparison group and the limited choice of measures of adjustment, useful attempts have

been made including several longitudinal studies. These studies are based on the notion that the success of the parents, in helping the child to settle into the family and to develop a sense of personal security and ease, would be reflected in the child's evolving personality and behaviour.

An extensive study of the transracial adoption of American Indian children, ranging in age from infancy to eleven, was conducted under the auspices of the Child Welfare League of America by David Fanshel from 1965-1970. (Fanshel, 1972) This descriptive study involved interviews with 250 adoptive families and attempted to witness the child's development as well as the family's adjustment to events as they unfolded. Fanshel concentrated on various aspects of the child's adjustment - his physical health, the evolution of his personality, his mode of relating to other children, the degree to which he was integrated within his adoptive family, his social adjustment, his sociability, and so forth. The study revealed that these children were doing well as a group. The information from the adoptive couples indicated the children were, by and large, very secure and obviously feeling loved and wanted in their adoptive homes.

However, Fanshel concludes his study by cautioning against encouragement of transracial adoption of Indian children. He suggests that only the Indian people have the right to determine whether their children can be placed in



white homes. Perhaps some children may have to be "saved" through adoption even though such placements are painful for Native people to bear. On the other hand, Indian leaders may rather see their children share the fate of their fellow Indians than lose them to the white world.

One of the most comprehensive follow-up studies was conducted by Grow and Shapiro. (1974) This study, also under the auspices of the Child Welfare League of America, was initiated due to the controversy surrounding the practice of transracial adoption. Some 227 subjects, whose adopted children ranged in age from six to twelve, were interviewed personally and then followed up a year later. Variables that were studied included the children, the school situation, the children's health, the social and emotional adjustment of the children, and the adoptive parents.

The outcome of the study showed that, in terms of general well-being, the large majority of the children in the sample were doing well and that the degree of success by this form of adoption compared favourably with that of other types of adoption that have been studied. Six variables were identified that tend to predict a somewhat greater degree of success in transracial adoption:

1. The adoptee is a girl;
2. The adoptee has been in placement at least five years;
3. The adoptive father is in a professional occupation;
4. An infertility problem provided the initial motivation

for adoption; 5. The adoptive family has frequent contact with relatives; (contrary to the findings of Fricke, 1965) 6. The agency met the family's preference with respect to the child's intellectual level.

Simon's research followed closely on the heels of the Grow and Shapiro study. (Simon, 1974) She attempted to study the effects of socialization patterns on black children placed with white couples. Her findings offer no evidence that black children reared by white parents are acquiring a preference of white over black. They showed only that black children perceive themselves as "black" as accurately as white children perceived themselves as "white", and that older black children have more positive attitudes toward black images than do younger black children or white children within the entire age range. In other words, she found that these black children raised by white families did not acquire ambivalence toward their own race.

Robertson (1977) focussed on the extent to which deliberate socialization was found in families who had adopted transracially. Out of a sample of seventy, a relatively small segment were engaged in deliberately teaching the child to think of himself as black. These individuals were more inclined to perceive the child as black in appearance, more willing to confront racial norms, and relatively pessimistic about the future course of integration. On the other hand,

the majority of the sample provided little emphasis on the child's blackness and were inclined to believe in the power of the individual. They also tended to reflect optimism about the future course of integration.

Dong Soo Kim (1977) followed up 451 American families who had adopted Korean children. Their ages, at the time of study, ranged from 12 to 16 years and they had been in their adoptive homes for at least one full year. In general, the Korean children had relatively little "Korean" identity, and on the whole the children's self-concept was remarkably similar to that of other Americans, as represented by a norm group in the Tennessee Self Concept Scale. Kim concludes that these children are doing well. This means that despite drastic changes in their life environment, they have made an impressively healthy normal developmental adjustment.

By and large, these studies seem to indicate that the children are doing well, and report no unusual incidence of behavioural maladjustment. It is, of course, too early to tell whether children placed transracially will develop "successfully", or whether the realities of our society will cause alterations in their attitudes; only time will determine transracial adoptions final evaluation.

#### ADOPTION SERVICES

More and more the literature reflects the significance and uniqueness of adoption services as they relate to the

practice of transracial adoptions.

A recent study regarding transracial adoptions and agency policy, conducted by Williams (1975), reported several significant findings. 1. There was a lack of education given to prospective parents; 2. The agencies treated these adoptions virtually the same as traditional adoptions; 3. There was very little or no follow-up done on the children who were adopted transracially. Williams pointed to a specific area that needed further exploration, namely, examining the prospective parents and their ideas about the preparation needed in these adoptions.

The Child Welfare League of America acknowledged the significance of the identified need and in 1975 sponsored Grow to obtain the views of adoptive parents, in regards to their perception of the services offered by the adoption agencies, when they adopted a child of another race. (Grow, 1975) Several couples indicated they had the feeling they must be "perfect" to adopt and felt the agency did not provide them with information for which they might anticipate a need. They also reported that the procedures and reasons for them were not explained. In terms of post placement contact, it appeared that many of the families received little they believed of practical value in coping with the problems that did arise and that many tended not to confide in their social worker. More than half the families viewed the post-placement

contact as a requirement rather than as a facilitating service.

A recent survey undertaken by the Children's Aid Society, District of Kenora, Ontario (1977), of all their adoption placements (both transracial and otherwise), identified the major area of difficulty to be the adoption of Indian children, and the services that go with it.

The literature, however, does suggest innovative ways of dealing with this problem. Recognizing the uniqueness of transracial placements, Ripple (1968) felt agency work should be focussed on deciding what help applicants need and can be given by the agency in preparing to be parents, and especially, in actually experiencing parenthood during the early months after the placement. Davis (1961) concurred. He felt that agency responsibility to the Indian child should not end with the selection of the most accepting parents who are available, nor with legal adoption. Adoption is an integration of child and family which cannot be governed by set periods of time. Parents will be faced with helping the child to understand his adoption at various periods of his growth, while having to deal with their own feelings at the same time. It is therefore crucial that the agency offer a continuing service at a time when parents are in the midst of coping with these questions relating to adoption.

According to Ward (1979), the caseworker's responsibility

does not end once the placement has occurred. Work with the parents and the child should continue to ensure that a sense of "entitlement" develops, a particular problem when the adopted child is older and when the family includes other siblings.

#### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The late fifties and the sixties were characterized by a "boom" in transracial placements. A number of organizations were formed devoted especially to the encouragement of the adoption of Negro children by Caucasian parents.

With increased opposition from Black and Indian political leaders in the seventies this practice was greatly reduced. A subsequent debate ensued, expounding the virtues of both positions.

The children placed transracially were getting older, and in order to determine the advisability of such placements, the focus of the late sixties and seventies was on follow-up studies. By and large, the children were doing well. Dong Soo Kim (1977) found that 451 Korean children placed with American families had made an impressively healthy normal developmental adjustment. Fanshel's (1972) study of 250 American Indian children revealed that these children were doing well as a group. Grow and Shapiro (1974) followed up 227 Black children placed with white families and the outcome

of the study showed that, in terms of general well-being, the majority of the children in the sample were adjusting adequately. Simon's (1975) findings offer no evidence that Black children reared by white parents acquire ambivalence toward their own race, and Robertson (1975) found that only a small segment of white parents were deliberately teaching their adopted child to think of himself as black.

The overall conclusion was that the children were doing remarkably well. Health and cognitive development were normal, and, in the words of Fanshel: (Fanshel, 1972, p. 323)

In personality and behaviour patterns there are more incipient signs of difficulties than in other areas, but this is true of only 30% of the children, and most of these are seen to have moderate rather than serious problems. The children appear to be well-imbedded within their adoptive families and the relationships appear to be as close and devoted as one would find in other kinds of adoptive families or in biological family units.

With follow-up came a variety of useful information, especially to agencies, in the selection of appropriate adoptive families. Falk (1970), Sellers (1969), Fanshel (1972), Pepper (1966), Priddy (1971), Raynor (1970), and Beasley (1976) found that such parents are likely to have higher occupational levels and higher educational attainment than adoptive parents generally; they are more likely to be fertile and to have had children in the family prior to adoption; their motive is more likely to be that of providing a home for a child who might not otherwise be adopted; they

tend to be somewhat more individualistic and inner-directed, and to have a higher self-concept. In addition, parents have been advised to learn something about the art, literature, history, and life style of the child's race, and to attempt to convey these to the child so that he can develop pride in his heritage.

The feedback from studying these placements points out the need for unique and special adoption services. Williams (1975) found that agencies tend to treat transracial adoptions virtually the same as traditional ones. Grow (1975) reported that social workers and applicants did not see eye to eye on all matters, and that applicants found the present range of existing services lacking in many areas. Some attempts have also been made to alleviate the situation by focussing on continuing support after the placement. Ward (1979) feels it is crucial that agencies continue to provide services at a time when parents are in the midst of coping with the inherent stresses of a transracial placement.

The recent literature in this area reveals the need that exists in the present range of adoption services, and proposes that significant changes be undertaken to upgrade services.

#### CONCLUSION

The practice of transracial adoption is likely to



continue, albeit at a somewhat reduced level. Kathleen Benet (1976) feels that due to the short supply of minority adoptive parents, for the immediate future at least, trans-racial adoption will continue to be necessary. Therefore, a fundamental re-examination of the existing adoption practice is essential. According to Benet, prejudice against other ways of doing things can only narrow the range of possibilities open to us, and to the detriment of our own children.

To our knowledge, no attempts in this area have been undertaken previously, in Manitoba, and in terms of Indian adoptions "per se", since the publication of "Far From the Reservation" in 1972, practically no additional information has appeared in the professional literature regarding the adoption of American Indian children. Some data may be found in the periodic newsletters, published by organizations concerned with both conventional and transracial adoption, such as the annual report of ARENA (ARENA News), but there definitely appears to be a need for extended research on this practice.

Although the present study re-examines findings of previous studies, it also examines aspects of transracial adoption not investigated previously. The majority of the studies reviewed in this chapter focus on a particular aspect of the subject area and research it in some detail. This study will attempt to explore three specific areas and attempt to "link" them as outlined in the first chapter. Of particular

significance is the matter of adoption services as emphasized by the review of the literature.

It is therefore our contention that information about couples who adopt, the children who are adopted, and the efforts of the agencies involved are/is of vital importance in formulating "contemporary" adoption policy and practice.

### HYPOTHESES

1. Caucasian couples who adopt Native Indian Children possess the following characteristics:
  - High educational levels
  - High occupational attainment
  - High degree of religious participation
  - Lack financial strain
  - Biological parents at the time of placement
  - Homeowners
  - Adopt due to humanitarian concern
  - Attempt to increase their own awareness of Indian culture, and pass on to their adopted child
  - Frequent contact with extended family
2. Successful development of Native Indian children adopted by Caucasian couples is associated with these couples possessing the above mentioned characteristics.

3. Successful development of Native Indian children adopted by Caucasian couples is associated with the a) quality and/or b) quantity of services provided to the adopting couple by the adoption agency.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### SAMPLING PROCEDURES

Subjects for this study were children of Indian and part-Indian racial ancestry (both male and female) placed with Caucasian couples as infants from 1974-1978, in the province of Manitoba. Only those children were selected who went directly from the hospital to the adoptive homes, or who had a short stay (a minimum of 3 months) in a foster home and then were placed for adoption. This was done to minimize other parenting influences. Adoption procedures and practices have changed considerably during the last decades, and therefore it was felt necessary to deal with recent placements in order to standardize the approach of the agencies as much as possible.

We chose to include in our study all Indian and part-Indian children placed with Caucasian couples for the period of 1974-1978. Their present ages ranged from two to five years of age. Since the annual number of such placements is approximately 50, the size of the population would be manageable.

The subjects were selected from records retained by

the Adoption Department, Department of Health and Community Services, Province of Manitoba. The agencies involved in placing the children included all the Government Regional Offices and the private Children's Aid Societies of Manitoba, with one exception. Permission was obtained from the Executive Directors of the Children's Aid Societies, as well as from the Director of Child Welfare for the province of Manitoba, to proceed with the study.

Once the names of the children were selected by the Adoption Department, they were forwarded to the appropriate agency. The agencies then addressed and mailed the questionnaire to each of the couples advising them of their approval of the study. They also assured the couples that the confidentiality of their identity would be protected and that their names had not and would not be disclosed to the investigator-researcher. They were asked to complete the questionnaire and return it anonymously to the researcher. The couples were also assured that the information they reported would be kept confidential. In addition, the couples were advised that a summary of the results of the study would be available to them upon request.

#### THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The actual research vehicle consisted of a mailed questionnaire developed to obtain information in four areas.

(See Appendix B) Section I was designed to obtain demographic data which included educational attainment, employment, religious preference, income levels, and household composition. Secondly, information about the characteristics of the couples was collected, i.e.: contact with relatives and the extent of community involvement. In addition, the couples were asked about their motivation to adopt.

In Section II of the questionnaire a Likert-type scale was used to examine the couples' degree of comfort with trans-racial adoption and their adequacy as parents. The questions used in this study were similar to the ones used by Fanshel (1968), and Lois Raynor (1970), in previous studies.

Section III of the questionnaire dealt with information regarding the adjustment of the children in the adoptive homes. The instrument used here was the Child Behaviour Characteristics Form, a rating scale developed by Borgatta and Fanshel (1970). The scales were based on a number of factor analytic studies. Cronbach alpha coefficients have been reported for all component scales; 90% of these are .70 or over. Inter-judge reliability coefficients are reported for each scale. Regarding validity, Fanshel (1975) reported correlations with scores achieved by children in a variety of other tests. Stability of scores over time have also been reported. (See Appendix B for the items used in this scale.)

The fourth Section deals with the services of the

adoption agency. The questions in this section were developed in consultation with couples who had adopted minority children, with adoption workers, and based on information obtained from the literature. The questions related to pre-placement contact, placement contact, post-placement contact, and post-legal contact.

The questionnaire was pre-tested by several couples and parents who have adopted minority children in recent years. Ambiguous items were revised.

#### LIMITATIONS ON THE RESEARCH

The degree to which problems encountered were not completely overcome places some limits on the validity of the research. Although these limitations are ones common to most pieces of social research, it is necessary to identify them so the reader can make his own judgement about this particular study.

The study of the placement of Indian children with Caucasian parents shares the common problem of all adoption studies - that of identifying a valid, operational definition of "success". In an ideal society, all adopted children, like their biological peers, would have a happy childhood and develop into well-adjusted, well-functioning adults. In a much less than ideal society, it is evident that many will not. Since they do not all become successful adults, a series of

difficult usually unanswerable questions are raised. Is the failure necessarily related to the fact of adoption? Is the rate of failure any different from that observed in the rearing of children by their biological parents? Are the problems of rearing adopted children essentially those inherent in the child-rearing process and subject to the same risks or are they greater?

Child-rearing studies also face the dilemma of how to acquire sufficient information to make assessment possible. It is usually not until well into adolescence that children can give valid information about themselves. The parents then are the only source of information, because they are best informed about the child's behaviour, but, they are also the most emotionally involved and the most biased in their favour.

An additional problem, related to the sample, is the matter of "recall". However, because this study only "reaches back" for a maximum period of five years, it is felt that this problem is minimized.

From a research point of view, an obvious limitation is the absence of a control group. It appears though, that this type of follow-up does not lend itself to a "purer" experimental design. The intention of this study was primarily descriptive and exploratory, and the format chosen seemed to be the most appropriate in terms of the intent of



the study.

The limitations of the research were pointed out, not so much to cast doubts on the validity of the research, but rather to indicate that the results were prevented from being as useful as they might have been. Generally, it is felt that the study was worthwhile, both in terms of its content and the research approach.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

Of the 210 questionnaires mailed out, 75 were returned. Several were returned unopened, indicating the couples had moved, and a dozen or so were returned by the agencies due to the fact that these couples could not be located. The response rate for the study was approximately 35-40%, which is considered good for a mailed questionnaire format.

#### DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

As indicated, the sample consisted of 75 couples, whose ages at the time of placement were fairly evenly distributed between 20 and 50 years. Table I summarizes the age of the respondents.

TABLE I: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY AGE

AGE	HUSBAND		WIFE	
	NO.	PCT.	NO.	PCT.
20-24	1	1.3	8	10.6
25-29	20	27.8	28	37.4
30-34	33	44.0	28	37.4
35-39	13	17.4	7	9.6
40-49	4	5.2	2	2.6
50 or more	2	2.6	-	-
No Response	2	2.7	2	2.6
TOTAL	75	100.0	75	100.0

Three quarters of the sample of the husbands were under 35 years of age, with nearly half the sample between 30 and 34 years. The median age of the husband population was 32.0, with standard deviation of 11.95. For the wives, more than four-fifths of the sample were between 25 and 35 years. The median age of the wife population was 29.7 years, with standard deviation of 12.08.

Table II illustrates the household composition of these families.

TABLE II                    DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS  
                                  BY HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>NO.</u>	<u>PCT.</u>
Natural Children	43	57.3
Grandparents	-	-
Other Adopted	19	25.3
No One	10	13.4
Other	3	4.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The household composition of the majority of these families was that of the typical nuclear family, consisting of mother, father and one or more children. Over 50% of the families had biological children at the time of placement, and about one-quarter of the families already had one or more adopted children.

#### SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

The adoptive parents were fairly evenly distributed in terms of education levels. Approximately one-third of the husbands had some university education or were university graduates, while approximately one-half of the wives fell into this category, indicating the education levels of the wives

was slightly higher. See Table III.

TABLE III                      DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS  
    BY EDUCATION

EDUCATION	HUSBAND		WIFE	
	NO.	PCT.	NO.	PCT.
Less than High School	30	40.0	14	18.7
High School	16	21.3	27	36.0
Some University	8	10.7	16	21.3
University Graduate	11	14.7	9	12.0
Post Graduate	9	12.0	7	9.3
No Response	1	1.3	2	2.7
TOTAL	75	100.0	75	100.0

TABLE IV                      DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS  
BY EMPLOYMENT

EMPLOYMENT	HUSBAND		WIFE	
	NO.	PCT.	NO.	PCT.
Professional, technical	36	48.0	11	14.7
Owner of a business	7	9.3	5	6.7
Farmer	9	12.0	1	1.3
Manager	7	9.3	-	-
Clerical and sales	1	1.3	2	2.7
Skilled labour	9	12.0	-	-
Semiskilled labour	6	8.0	2	2.7
Not employed	-	-	48	64.0
Other	-	-	6	8.0
TOTAL	75	100.0	75	100.0

Almost one-half of the husbands were employed in professional or technical occupations, and the rest were evenly distributed over the remaining categories. About 15% of the wives were professionally employed while well over one-half of the wives were not employed outside the home.

TABLE V                    DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS  
    BY ANNUAL INCOME

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>NO.</u>	<u>PCT.</u>
Under 5,000	1	1.3
5,000 - 9,999	4	5.3
10,000 - 14,999	13	17.3
15,000 - 24,999	12	16.0
25,000 and over	23	30.7
No response	3	4.0
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>100.0</u>

The average annual family income was approximately \$20,000. Almost 7% of the families had incomes under \$10,000 but more than one-third had incomes of \$25,000 or more.

TABLE VI                    DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS  
    BY TYPE OF ACCOMMODATION

<u>ACCOMMODATION</u>	<u>NO.</u>	<u>PCT.</u>
Own home	68	90.7
Rent house	5	6.7
Rent apartment	1	1.3
No response	1	1.3
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Over 90% of the sample own their own home, while 7% rent a home.

Table VII shows that the religious preference of the respondents was categorized into three broad categories: Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant. Seventy-five percent of the respondents were Protestant and 17% were Catholic.

TABLE VII DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS  
BY RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE

RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE	NO.	PCT.
Catholic	13	17.3
Jewish	1	1.3
Protestant	57	76.0
Other	1	1.4
None	3	4.0
TOTAL	75	100.0

In terms of the extent of the respondents participation in religious activities, the sample was again evenly distributed over all four categories, with over one-third reporting active participation.



TABLE VIII                    DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS  
BY EXTENT OF RELIGIOUS PARTICIPATION

<u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>NO.</u>	<u>PCT.</u>
Active	26	34.7
Regular	13	17.3
Occasional	24	32.0
Never	12	16.0
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>100.0</u>

COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

As can be seen from Table IX, nearly one-half of the families lived in communities of under 5,000 population, while one-third of the sample lived in Winnipeg. Two-thirds of the families lived in cities or towns with an Indian population of less than 5%, and 25% lived in communities with an Indian population of 10% or more.

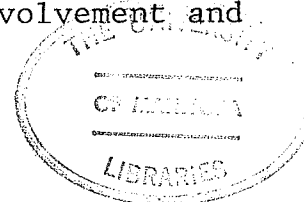
TABLE IX                    DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS  
BY SIZE, AND INDIAN POPULATION OF COMMUNITY

<u>POPULATION</u>	<u>NO.</u>	<u>PCT.</u>	<u>INDIAN POP.</u>	<u>NO.</u>	<u>PCT.</u>
Under 5,000	34	45.3	Under 5%	45	60.0
5,000 - 9,999	6	8.0	5 - 24%	23	30.6
10,000 - 14,999	5	6.7	25 - 49%	3	4.0
25,000 - 100,000	6	8.0	50 - 100%	2	2.7
100,000 - 500,000	24	32.0	No response	2	2.7
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>100.0</u>

#### LIFESTYLE OF PARENTS

In the main, these appear to be rather self-contained families whose lives center pretty much on the nuclear family unit. As already indicated, over 90% of the parents reported religious affiliation (See Table VII), and over 50% of these said they attend religious services regularly. About one-half of the families had relatives living in the same town or district. The majority of these parents maintain contact with relatives, 60% indicating they see their relatives every week, and another 30% report seeing their relatives every month.

These families also appear to be fairly involved in community activities such as sports, dances, etc. Approximately two-fifth of the sample reported frequent involvement and



another two-fifth reported occasional involvement in these types of activities.

#### MOTIVATION FOR ADOPTION

The parents were asked to think back to the period prior to their adopting, and to tell us why they considered adopting in the first place. The reason most commonly given was infertility or fear of another pregnancy, but almost as many families seemed to have considered adoption out of societal concern, particularly concern about children not having homes. More than 20% wanted larger families, but did not want to contribute to an increase in the world population. Over 10% had a variety of other reasons which could be labelled circumstantial or personal.

Table X represents the distribution.

TABLE X                    DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS  
BY MOTIVATION FOR ADOPTION

<u>REASON</u>	<u>NO.</u>	<u>PCT.</u>
Infertility	26	34.7
Wanted larger family	16	21.3
Provide home	17	22.7
Other	13	17.3
No response	3	4.0
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>100.0</u>

When asked about their main reason for adopting an Indian child, the parents provided a number of responses. About one-third indicated they adopted an Indian child due to the lack of, or availability of, Caucasian children. Only four families indicated they had been prompted mainly by their interest in furthering the cause of integration, by adopting a child of another race. A large percentage (60%) reported a variety of unspecified reasons which were more directly concerned with their individual needs or personal experiences. Some families just "wanted a child", while others felt it was the right thing to do at the time.

TABLE XI                      DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS  
BY MOTIVATION TO ADOPT AN INDIAN CHILD

<u>REASON</u>	<u>NO.</u>	<u>PCT.</u>
Lack of Caucasian children	21	28.0
Knew of families who had adopted an Indian child	2	2.7
Had relatives who adopted an Indian child	1	1.3
Further cause of integration	4	5.3
Other	45	60.0
No response	2	2.7
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>100.0</u>

RACIAL ORIENTATION

When asked about their contact with Indian people prior to this adoption, approximately one-quarter (26.6%) reported they had had significant contact, while the rest reported little or no contact at all. Interestingly, when asked about the extent of their contact with Indian people after the adoption, the percentage of respondents that reported significant amounts of contact prior to the adoption decreased. (From 26.6% to 20.0%)

How important do parents think it is for a child to know about his or her racial background? In the case of the present study, a small percentage of the children sampled would be too young to understand, but of the remaining numbers the response was as follows: nearly 20% reported never talking to their adopted child about their background; another 40% did so occasionally; and approximately 25% reported discussing their child's background with him/her on a fairly regular, ongoing basis.

How aware are parents about the problems their child might encounter because of being Indian? Do parents attempt to increase their own awareness of Indian culture? According to the parents sampled in the present study, 15% make no effort to increase their awareness, 50% say they do so infrequently, and 25% indicate they make a considerable effort to expand their own sensitivity and awareness.

PARENTAL ADEQUACY AND SATISFACTION

To explore parental perceptions regarding their feelings about adopting an Indian child, and parenting in general, the parents were asked to respond to a number of questions which were developed into several sub-scales, whose items each scored from one to five.

The parents were asked about the child's appearance and the extent to which they were aware of people staring at them, as well as their feelings about the "differentness" of their child. The response indicated that parents were very comfortable with their feelings regarding the appearance of the child. Over 75% reported they were not at all uncomfortable when people stared at them and their child, or made comments about their child's looking different. An additional 10% reported feeling "very little" in terms of discomfort. Three items made up the "appearance" scale with the lowest score on the scale indicating the least amount of discomfort. The scores ranged from 3 to 27 with a mean of 4.21 and a standard deviation of 3.51, which indicates on the average a great deal of comfort with the appearance of the child.

The parents were also asked about their satisfaction with the adoption and whether they would encourage someone else to adopt an Indian child. Some 70% reported they would adopt an Indian child again (depending on the circumstances), and nearly 75% said they would encourage others to adopt an

Indian child. The scores on the "satisfaction" sub-scale, comprised of three items, ranged from 3 to 27 as well, but in this instance a high score indicated a greater degree of satisfaction. The mean score was 13.53 with standard deviation of 3.28. Nearly 60% of the respondents scored between 13 and 15 on the scale, indicating the couples are generally very satisfied with the adoption of Indian children.

The adopters were also asked about their sense of adequacy as parents and whether they felt they were able to provide the parental care their child required. The response here again revealed a high degree of a sense of adequacy. Some 95% responded that they got a sense of worth out of parenting. In terms of the "adequacy" sub-scale, the scores ranged from 5 to 15 on the three item scale, with a high score indicating a greater sense of adequacy. The mean was 13.78 with standard deviation of 1.57. Almost 75% of the couples' scores on this sub-scale totalled 14-15.

### Discussion

The demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the adoptive parents, as well as characteristics relating to parental lifestyles, racial orientation, and motivation to adopt, have been reviewed in order to determine if they in fact coincide with the ones identified in previous studies and outlined in the literature review. We hypothesized that the

couples would possess certain specific characteristics. (See HYPOTHESIS, p. 26)

Falk (1970), Fanshel (1972), Raynor (1970), and Beasley (1976) found transracial adopters to have higher educational levels and higher occupational attainment than adoptive parents generally. This appears to be the case, to an extent, in the present study where 36.7% of the husbands and 42.6% of the wives had some university education. However, over 50% of the husbands had not completed high school and the present study would seem to indicate that the education level of the adopters is not consistent with previous findings. Nearly 50% of the husbands indicated they were employed in professional or technical positions, which appears quite high, and in line with what literature suggests. In addition, well over 25% of the adopters reported annual incomes (combined husband and wife) of \$23,000 or more, supporting Seller's (1969) contention that transracial adopters lack financial strain.

In terms of religion, the present study found that 50% of the parents were regular participants in religious activities, and 15% indicated no religious participation. These statistics are similar to the ones Grow and Shapiro (1974) report, revealing that transracial adopters are higher, according to Grow and Shapiro, than the average in terms of religious participation.



Beasley (1976) found them to be biological parents, homeowners, and professionals. The present study found that 57% of the couples were biological parents at the time of adoption and that 90% owned their own homes.

In terms of lifestyle, the parents interviewed in the present study disclosed that one-half had relatives living in the same district and that 60% were in contact with these relatives at least once a week. Approximately 50% were actively involved in community activities. Fricke (1965) found trans-racial adopters to be secure people who do not need constant family or community support to survive. Lebo (1965) found them to isolated from their family's orientation. It would appear, however, that the results of the present study do not indicate detachment, but in fact show the opposite, more in line with what Grow and Shapiro (1974) found. Transracial adopters in Manitoba appear to be quite close to family and are quite active in their respective communities. It should, however, be pointed out that the adopters may in fact be very secure people despite their frequent contact with relatives and friends.

In considering racial orientation, some obvious divergence of opinion emerged. Grow and Shapiro (1974) found most transracial adopters make efforts to learn more about their adopted child's culture and felt it was important for a child to have pride in his heritage. Kadushin (1975) further

recommends that the family develop social and professional contacts with people of the child's racial background. The present study reports an almost neutral attitude toward Indian people generally. (Mean of 3.12 on a scale of 1 to 5) There are, however differences in the way individual couples view this matter. For instance, several couples indicate they have no contact with Indian people or culture, never have and never will, and are essentially treating their adopted child as white. Others report being very involved in Indian cultural activities, take their children to the Friendship Centre (see footnote) regularly, and talk to them about their background in order to help them develop pride in their heritage. The parents in the final category are in the minority, as indicated by the results of the study. Only 25% of the respondents regularly talked to their child about his background and only 25% make a real effort to increase their awareness of Indian culture. Also, as indicated previously, the amount of contact with Indian people reported by the respondents actually decreased from before the adoption to after the adoption. This is in direct contrast to the findings reported by Grow and Shapiro (1974). The evidence from the present study would therefore not support the contention that

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Friendship Centres are located in towns and cities in Manitoba, and are designed to help Indian and Metis people adjust to urban lifestyles. Counselling services and cultural activities are provided.

transracial adopters are active in helping the child to develop an awareness of his/her cultural background.

According to previous studies, transracial adopters are motivated to adopt due to humanitarian concern. Pepper (1966) reports that parents who adopted a child of another race did so because they were aware of the needs of the child, and not solely due to infertility. The present study points out, however, that infertility is still a major reason (36.7%). In addition, reasons such as wanting a larger family, lack of available Caucasian children, becoming attached to foster children, and other personal reasons seemed to characterize adopters. However, nearly 25% reported adopting because they wanted to provide a home for a homeless child, which would support to an extent, the findings of previous studies in terms of motivation to adopt.

#### ADJUSTMENT OF THE CHILDREN

The adoptive parents were required to complete a rating form to determine the "success" of the child in adjusting to his/her home. The areas, or indicators, of success utilized in the test included: learning difficulty, alertness, motivation, cooperativeness, defiance, likeability, withdrawal, and appetite. The scores on each item of success were then combined to make an overall index of "adjustment" on a scale of 1 to 5. with the high scores indicating greater

adjustment. The scale was made up of 52 items, permitting the scores to range from a low of 52 to a high of 260.

The response scores on the child adjustment scale ranged from 116 to 219, with a mean of 183.63 and a standard deviation of 19.22. Some 20% scored between 170 and 180, nearly 25% between 190 and 200, and the remaining 55% were evenly distributed over the whole range. Taking into consideration the mean score and the distribution, the results would seem to indicate that there are few "low" adjusters, and few "high" adjusters, but that the majority are in the medium range. This would, further, seem to indicate that the children are making a satisfactory adjustment. There were no reports of children faring poorly and only one family reported having difficulties with their adopted child, but it appeared to be related to lack of help from the appropriate agency.

The findings of the present study concur with studies reviewed in previous chapters showing that, in terms of general well-being, the majority of transracially placed children are doing well, at least according to the parents.

#### CHARACTERISTICS AND CHILD ADJUSTMENT

As indicated in the second chapter, we hypothesized that there is a relationship between certain selected characteristics of the couples and the adjustment of the adopted children. All characteristics were correlated with the child

adjustment scale using regression analysis and cross-tabulation. (See Appendix C) The analysis did not show any statistically significant relationship between any particular characteristic and child adjustment. Several of the variables demonstrated weak relationships, (i.e.: type of accommodation, extent of contact with relatives, distance from relatives, and motivation to adopt), but generally speaking, there appeared to be no association between successful development of Indian children adopted by Caucasian couples and those couples possessing certain characteristics. This would seem to imply that the overall adjustment of the adopted children in their adoptive homes is not necessarily contingent on the adoptive parents possessing or manifesting certain specific characteristics.

#### SERVICES OF THE AGENCY

The adoptive parents were asked to recall their experiences with the agency and their social worker. The questions were divided into three groupings: one dealing with pre-placement, a second with placement and a third with post-placement services.

#### Pre-placement Services

When asked about the homestudy in general, 80% reported

satisfaction, 14.7% reported they were somewhat satisfied, and only one respondent reported being unsatisfied. Regarding pre-placement contact, the parents were asked about their ability to communicate with the worker, whether their preferences in terms of a child were taken into consideration, and whether they were satisfied with the preparation they received before they got their child. The pre-placement items were combined into a scale based on scores of 1 to 5, with a high score indicating a positive response. The pre-placement scale was comprised of nine items, with scores ranging from 17-61. The mean was 34.73 with standard deviation of 6.29. Nearly half of the scored items were in the 35-40 category.

#### Placement Services

The respondents were asked about the counselling they received regarding parenting of their child. Some 60% reported they had received no such counselling, but the majority of these did not feel this was a serious omission on the part of the agency. Over three-quarters of the couples indicated they had discussed possible adjustment problems and the handling of future issues that might arise, to their satisfaction. The remaining 25% indicated these issues had not been discussed. As well, 65% reported they were satisfied with the information they received about their children, an additional 10% were reasonably satisfied and almost 10% advised

they lacked information. When asked whether future contact with natural parents of the child had been discussed, 37.7% said yes, and 62.7% said no. However, more than 75% of the couples appeared satisfied with this arrangement.

### Post-placement Services

The couples were queried about the support they received from the agency after the placement. More than one-quarter (28.0%) reported they received no support from the agency after the placement and they also expressed dissatisfaction with this situation. Again, however, nearly 90% of the parents mentioned they felt free to contact the agency when they were experiencing problems, and they received help when they asked for it.

Further, the parents were asked about post-legal contact and their feelings about the existing probationary period. The response to post-legal contact was divided, with 44.0% viewing it favourably and 56.0% negatively. One-half (50.7%) felt post-legal contact would be helpful to them, while 28.0% felt it would be a nuisance. In terms of the probationary period, 90% indicated that it was just right, and only a few suggested it should be extended.

When asked about their interest in post-adoption discussion groups with other couples who have adopted an Indian child, 60% said they were interested and 40% said they were

not. Several qualified their response with phrases such as "it depends on the group, etc."

Finally, the parents were asked about what areas of information they would find useful at this point in the adoption. Nearly one-third (28.0%) felt that none was needed, while the rest responded as represented by Table XII. The 10% that responded under the heading "other" mentioned a variety of matters including very specific details relating to their own adoption experience.

TABLE XII                    DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS  
BY DESIRED AREAS OF INFORMATION

<u>AREAS OF INFORMATION</u>	<u>NO.</u>	<u>PCT.</u>
Review of medical history	16	21.3
Discussing a child's background	16	21.3
Developmental problems	12	16.0
Specific details overlooked	1	1.4
None needed	21	28.0
Other	6	8.0
No response	3	4.0
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>100.0</u>



## Discussion

Were the parents satisfied with the agency contact? Generally speaking, it appears they were; nearly 80% of the parents were satisfied with the homestudy and with the pre-placement contact. Well over 90% of the parents reported they had discussed why children come into care, and to their satisfaction.

In terms of counselling in preparation for the child, nearly 60% of the parents indicated they received no such service, and 25% reported there had been no discussion around possible adjustment problems. This finding would correspond with the Williams (1975) study that showed there was a lack of education given to prospective transracial adopters.

Williams also reported there was very little or no follow-up done on transracial placements. The present study determined that 30% of the parents received no follow-up services unless they initiated contact themselves. The literature also pointed out the need for ongoing contact with the adoptive placement after the adoption has been finalized, and it appears that this ongoing follow-up is what distinguishes adoption services designed for transracial adoptions from services for "regular" adoptions. The present study revealed that half of the parents would favour post-legal contact and half would not. Also, 60% felt post adoption discussion groups would be of value to them, depending on the nature of

such an endeavour.

In addition to responding directly to questions on the questionnaire, many couples volunteered additional information, outlining their own particular adoption and passing on knowledge that might be of value to others. The general tone was very positive and in most cases the couples described their adopted child in "glowing" terms. The agencies were frequently praised as well, and considering the overall response, one would conclude the adoption agencies are doing an adequate job in meeting the needs of Manitoba's transracial adopters.

#### AGENCY SERVICE AND CHILD ADJUSTMENT

We hypothesized that there is a relationship between adjustment of the adopted children and the quantity/quality of services provided to the adopting couple by the adoption agency. The questions comprising Section IV of the questionnaire dealing with the services of the agency were divided into three sub-scales: pre-placement services, placement services, and post-placement services. These sub-scales were then divided into High and Low services, with the mean score of the scale determining the cutting point. Each scale was then correlated individually with the child adjustment scale (High and Low). It was determined that it was not necessary to do partial correlations (describing the relationship between

two variables while controlling for the effects of one or more additional variables) because the variables were found to be reasonably independent, as indicated by their correlation coefficients: pre-placement and placement services ( $\underline{r} = .28$ ,  $\underline{p} = 0.008$ ), pre-placement and post-placement services ( $\underline{r} = .08$ ,  $\underline{p} = 0.26$ ), placement and post-placement services ( $\underline{r} = .44$ ,  $\underline{p} = 0.000$ ).

The results of the correlations were as follows:

In terms of pre-placement contact, the Pearson Correlation showed a statistically significant relationship in two areas: High adjustment with High services, and Low adjustment with Low services. Meanwhile, there was no association between Low services and High adjustment providing evidence that high adjustment is closely linked with good pre-placement services. This strong relationship between child adjustment and pre-placement services suggests the significance of this initial period of contact by the agency.

TABLE XIII      PRE-PLACEMENT SERVICES AND  
CHILD ADJUSTMENT

		<u>CHILD ADJUSTMENT</u>	
		HIGH	LOW
<u>PRE-PLACEMENT</u> <u>SERVICES</u>	HIGH	$\underline{r} = .48$ $\underline{n} = 20$ $\underline{p} = 0.007$	$\underline{r} = .33$ $\underline{n} = 20$ $\underline{p} = 0.08$
	LOW	$-\underline{r} = .037$ $\underline{n} = 15$ $\underline{p} = 0.45$	$\underline{r} = .42$ $\underline{n} = 15$ $\underline{p} = 0.06$

Placement services and child adjustment also showed an association, but in a somewhat different manner. See Table XIV.

TABLE XIV PLACEMENT SERVICES AND  
CHILD ADJUSTMENT

		<u>CHILD ADJUSTMENT</u>	
		HIGH	LOW
<u>PLACEMENT</u> <u>SERVICES</u>	HIGH	$\underline{r} = .24$ $\underline{n} = 24$ $\underline{p} = 0.13$	$\underline{r} = .18$ $\underline{n} = 17$ $\underline{p} = 0.24$
	LOW	$\underline{r} = .47$ $\underline{n} = 16$ $\underline{p} = 0.04$	$\underline{r} = .62$ $\underline{n} = 18$ $\underline{p} = 0.003$

Statistically significant relationships emerged between Low adjustment and Low services, and between High adjustment and Low services, however, the correlation between Low adjustment and Low services is stronger. This may suggest that inadequate services at the time of placement are related to poor adjustment of the adopted child. As we would expect a strong and significant correlation between High placement services and High adjustment, it may be that placement services bear little relationship to child

adjustment; however, if these services are removed or are inadequate, the possibility of having a less well adjusted child may be increased. It should be pointed out, as reported earlier, that nearly 60% of the respondents in this study indicated they did not receive any counselling at the time of placement.

Thirdly, child adjustment was correlated with post-placement services.

TABLE XV POST-PLACEMENT SERVICES AND  
CHILD ADJUSTMENT

		<u>CHILD ADJUSTMENT</u>	
		HIGH	LOW
<u>POST-PLACEMENT</u> <u>SERVICES</u>	HIGH	$\underline{r} = .67$ $\underline{n} = 18$ $\underline{p} = 0.001$	$-\underline{r} = .36$ $\underline{n} = 13$ $\underline{p} = 0.11$
	LOW	$\underline{r} = .37$ $\underline{n} = 22$ $\underline{p} = 0.05$	$\underline{r} = .56$ $\underline{n} = 22$ $\underline{p} = 0.004$

The strong relationship between Low adjustment and Low services and the high relationship between High adjustment and High services suggests that post-adoption services may be important in contributing to a successful

transracial placement. However, the fairly strong relationship between Low services and High adjustment would seem to question this conclusion. Again, however, as was the case in terms of placement services, this relationship is not as strong as the other two. It appears that if post-placement services are lacking or inadequate, it may affect the adjustment of the child. These findings endorse the notion that adoption services for transracial adoptions should focus on continuing support after the placement, in order to help parents cope with the inherent stresses of such a placement.

All three phases of the adoption process correlated significantly with the child adjustment scale. This would seem to clearly suggest that services at all junctures of the adoption process may significantly contribute to the eventual overall adjustment of the adopted child in his home.

In addition, as suggested earlier, parental adequacy is directly related to the services provided as well, and this study attempted to find out if that was the case. The parental adequacy sub-scale was correlated with the three adoption services sub-scales (pre-placement, placement, post-placement). No significant relationships were found between pre-placement and placement and parental adequacy variables. (Pre-placement services with parental adequacy ( $r = .15$ ,  $p = 0.09$ ); placement services with parental adequacy ( $r = .16$ ,  $p = 0.08$ ). However, post-placement services correlated

moderately and significantly ( $r = .33$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ). This would seem to indicate that post-placement services may be of greater importance in ensuring that a sense of adequacy develops in the minds of the adopting parents than the pre- or placement services.

Finally, adequacy was correlated with the child adjustment scale. Again, a low to moderate, but significant association was discovered ( $r = .29$ ,  $p = 0.005$ ), once more giving support to an earlier suggestion that a parental sense of adequacy will demonstrate itself in the adjustment of the children.

The findings would seem to suggest that when parents are satisfied with the agency's handling of the adoption, and perceive themselves as adequate parents, the chances of the child making an adequate adjustment in the home are high. Furthermore, the strong correlations between all three phases of the adoption process and child adjustment points out the critical nature of the agencies' responsibility in ensuring the personal and social adjustment of the children in their adoptive homes.



## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

It has been found that Caucasian couples sampled in this study, who have adopted Native Indian children in Manitoba during the years 1974-1978, inclusive, possess the following characteristics:

1. They are fairly young in terms of their age. The mean age of the husbands was 34, and for the wives was 31.5. Three-quarters of the husbands were under 35 years of age, and over 80% of the wives were found to be under 35 years of age at the time of placement.
2. The majority of the couples were biological parents at the time of adoption. It is no longer the case that the majority of couples adopt due to infertility and their seeking a child who would take the place of the biological child they are unable to have.
3. In terms of education, 37% of the husbands had at least some university education, while approximately half of the wives fell into that category. However, more than half of the husbands did not receive an education past the high school level.
4. Nearly 50% of the husbands were employed at the highest level of the occupational scale. The large majority of

- the wives (64%) were not employed outside the home and it is assumed that they would be full-time housewives.
5. Well over 90% of the couples owned their own home.
  6. The couples were fairly involved in religious activities with more than 50% reporting active participation.
  7. Approximately 5% of the couples live within close proximity of their relatives and 60% get together with them regularly.
  8. The income levels of the couples is high, with more than two-thirds reporting incomes of \$25,000 or more.
  9. The couples adopted more out of societal concern (40%) than infertility (34%). They adopted an Indian child for a variety of reasons that seemed concerned with their individual needs or personal experiences.
  10. The couples as a whole, taking into consideration the age of the children, did not increase their awareness of Indian culture. Only 25% reported doing so regularly, while another 25% reported never talking to their child about their background.

The typology presented here deviated in several instances from the one that is proposed in the review of the relevant literature. The areas of deviation include: lower educational levels, greater involvement with family and community, and less emphasis on expanding one's awareness of Indian culture.

The typology described here also carries some implications for recruitment. The tendency to decide on a couples' eligibility for a transracial placement, based on the above information, might imply that such adoptions should be undertaken only by persons with these characteristics. It may be that certain characteristics should be prerequisites, however, the relative success of the adoptions in the current study drew from a cross-section of couples with a variety of traits and backgrounds, and it appears that not too much emphasis should be placed on the couples possessing certain "specific" characteristics in order to qualify for a transracial placement.

Native Indian children placed with Caucasian couples, sampled in this study, in Manitoba during the years 1974-1978, inclusive, are making a satisfactory adjustment, as measured in this study. This finding would coincide with previous studies of transracial placements conducted elsewhere.

It has been found that there is no relationship between Caucasian couples sampled in this study possessing certain specific characteristics and the degree of adjustment of the adopted Indian child in their home. All the previously identified characteristics were correlated with the child adjustment scale, and no statistically significant associations were found. These results again show that the characteristics of the couples in this study are not the crucial factors in

determining the successful outcome of the placement.

It has been found that Caucasian couples sampled in this study, who have adopted Native Indian children in Manitoba during the years 1974-1978, inclusive, have experienced the following in terms of adoption services.

Couples were satisfied with their homestudy and with the pre-placement contact. They reported being able to communicate with their social worker, and that their preferences were taken into consideration.

There were, however, several areas where some divergence of opinion emerged. Some 60% of the couples reported receiving no counselling in regards to parenting their particular child. Approximately one-quarter reported not having discussed the handling of future issues that might arise. Well over one-half of the sample reported not having discussed possible future contact with the natural parents of the child. This may be due to, as one parent observed, "the newness of the idea", and that it has only recently come to be an important issue. Approximately one-quarter reported receiving no support after the placement, and in conjunction with post-placement services, half the sample viewed post-legal contact as something they would like to experience. Well over half of the couples stated they would like to become involved in post-adoption discussion groups with other couples who had adopted an Indian child.

It appears that several of the ideas or concepts raised in the questionnaire may be "alien" to the adopters and would require considerable clarification and explanation before the couples would find them acceptable. The findings seem to indicate, though, a need to move more in the direction of dealing with transracial adoptions in a "unique" way (as defined by the literature), especially in the areas of post-legal services and post-adoption discussion groups.

The families were generally well satisfied with their agency experience, and one would conclude that the agencies are doing an adequate job in meeting the basic needs of transracial adopters in Manitoba.

It has been found that there is a relationship between the services provided by the agency, the parental satisfaction of the couples, as measured by their sense of adequacy, and the adjustment of the children in their adoptive homes.

A strong correlation existed between all three aspects of the adoption process (pre-placement services, placement services, and post-placement services) and the adjustment of the children on the child adjustment scale. Moreover, a strong association also came to the fore between post-placement services and parental adequacy. Likewise, a statistically significant relationship was found to exist between parental adequacy and child adjustment. These findings emphasize the importance of adoption services in the whole adoption process,

and lend support to the notion that recognizes the importance of post-adoption services in transracial adoptions.

### CONCLUSION

Should this study be followed up in any way, several matters should be addressed. First of all, it would be interesting to see how the parents would perceive the child's adjustment at a later point in life, especially at adolescence when a whole new set of problems arise. Secondly, the significance of the cultural background of the child will increase in importance as the children grow older, and how parents deal with this matter would be worth looking into. It is anticipated that as the children grow older the services of the agency will no longer be an important factor.

The results of the study thus far support the view that the placement of Indian children in white homes appears to represent a low level of risk for the children, and even if the adjustment of the children proves to be somewhat problematic as they get older, the overall prospect of their future based on the enthusiastic response of the couples can be termed "optimistic".

Given that the children appear to be doing well in their adoptive homes, that the parents appear to be satisfied, and that there continues to be a need for permanent homes for Indian children, transracial adoption of Indian children

remains an adequate way of meeting some adoption needs. Obviously, whether Indian children will be placed in any significant number in white homes in the future will and should depend on the attitudes of Indian people themselves.

Transracial adoption may be experiencing a decline and rightly so, but if transracial adoptions are generally successful and the need still exists, it is a question whether the practice should be totally discontinued. There appears to be a need for careful and conscientious placement of Native Indian children across racial lines, at the same time Indian families must be encouraged to adopt.

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APPENDIX A

LETTERS OF INTRODUCTION TO  
PARTICIPANTS IN THE STUDY

DRAFT LETTER TO BE TYPED ON YOUR AGENCY'S LETTERHEAD

Dear Mr. and Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_:

A few years ago we had the pleasure and satisfaction of placing a child with you for adoption. We are writing now to ask you to consider participating in a research project to be conducted by Mr. Ken Plett, a Master's Degree Student of the Manitoba School of Social Work. We hope and believe the findings of this study may help all adoption agencies in Manitoba to improve their services to children and their adoptive families.

Our agency is directly involved in this study only in introducing the study to you and mailing the enclosed questionnaire and letter of explanation from Mr. Plett. In this way no names have been or will be provided to Mr. Plett. The questionnaire is simply to be completed and returned unsigned to Mr. Plett.

If you do have any concern about the study, and wish to discuss it with our agency, please contact \_\_\_\_\_ (name of your agency's adoption co-ordinator and address of agency) \_\_\_\_\_.

Sincerely yours,

Regional or Executive Director



School of Social Work  
University of Manitoba  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R3T 2N2

April, 1979

Dear Parents:

This letter is addressed to you because you are one of many families in Manitoba who have in recent years adopted a child of part Indian ancestry. As a student at the School of Social Work, I have chosen for my Masters Degree thesis, a study of adoption services provided to families and children such as yours. My choice of study grew out of my previous experience as a social worker in an Ontario Children's Aid Society.

In planning this study, I discussed it with the agencies, the Children's Aid Societies and the Department of Health and Community Services, who provide adoption services in Manitoba. They have agreed that such a study may be helpful to them in improving their services to children and their adoptive families. The agencies are assisting me by addressing and mailing the enclosed questionnaire to you, so that confidentiality of your identity would be protected. Your names have not and will not be disclosed to me.

I hope you will help me by completing the questionnaire and returning it to me in the enclosed stamped and addressed envelope. The questions can be answered by either parent individually or jointly. The questionnaire is divided into four sections with instructions provided in each section. The questions were selected with great care, and you will find working on the questionnaire an interesting and worthwhile experience. It should take only about a half hour to complete. Please do not sign your name. All replies are both anonymous and confidential. As you already know, your Adoption Agency is most concerned in protecting the confidentiality of all adoption records and communications, and I want to assure you that the information you provide will be held completely confidential.

The individual questionnaires will not be returned to the agencies, but a summary of the results of the study will be available to them. It is hoped that the findings of the study will assist agencies to make their adoption services increasingly helpful to a growing number of families and children.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Sincerely yours,

APPENDIX B

THE RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION I

The questions in this section deal with general information about ourselves, and your reasons for adopting. Read the questions carefully and place a check-mark in the blank space next to the answer that best answers the question in your opinion.

Your present age? Husband \_\_\_ Wife \_\_\_

Your age at placement of the child was? Husband \_\_\_ Wife \_\_\_

{(Col.5-6) \_\_\_  
{(Col.7-8) \_\_\_  
{(Col.9-10) \_\_\_  
{(Col.11-12) \_\_\_

The level of education you have attained?

Husband: Wife:

- \_\_\_ 1. less than high school
- \_\_\_ 2. high school graduate
- \_\_\_ 3. some university or community college
- \_\_\_ 4. graduate of university or community college
- \_\_\_ 5. post graduate

(Col.13-14) \_\_\_

Are there other people in your household?

- 1. \_\_\_ natural(biological) children How many \_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_ grandparents How many \_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_ other adopted(than Indian child) How many \_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_ other Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

(Col.15-16) \_\_\_

What type of employment are you involved in?

Husband: Wife:

- \_\_\_ 1. professional, technical
- \_\_\_ 2. owner of a business
- \_\_\_ 3. farmer
- \_\_\_ 4. manager
- \_\_\_ 5. clerical and sales
- \_\_\_ 6. skilled labour
- \_\_\_ 7. semi-skilled labour
- \_\_\_ 8. not employed
- \_\_\_ 9. other, Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

(Col.17-18) \_\_\_  
(Col.19-20) \_\_\_

What is your total annual family income? (approximately)

(Col.21) \_\_\_

Your accommodation?

- \_\_\_ own own home
- \_\_\_ rent a house
- \_\_\_ own own apartment
- 4. \_\_\_ rent an apartment
- 5. \_\_\_ other, Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

(Col.22-23) \_\_\_

8. What is the approximate population of the place where you live?

1. \_\_\_ under 5000
2. \_\_\_ 5,000-10,000
3. \_\_\_ 10,000-25,000
4. \_\_\_ 25,000-100,000
5. \_\_\_ 100,000-500,000

(Col.24)\_\_\_

9. What percentage of this population is Indian? (estimate)

1. \_\_\_ under 5%
2. \_\_\_ 5-25%
3. \_\_\_ 25-50%
4. \_\_\_ 50-100%

(Col.25)\_\_\_

10. What is your religious affiliation?

1. \_\_\_ Protestant
2. \_\_\_ Catholic
3. \_\_\_ Jewish
4. \_\_\_ other, Please specify \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_ none

(Col.26-27)\_\_\_

11. What is the extent of your participation in religious activities?

1. \_\_\_ active in church related activities
2. \_\_\_ regular church attendance
3. \_\_\_ occasional church attendance
4. \_\_\_ never attend church

(Col.28)\_\_\_

12. How far do you live from your relatives?

1. \_\_\_ same town or district
2. \_\_\_ same province
3. \_\_\_ same country

(Col.29)\_\_\_

13. How often are you in contact with your relatives?

1. \_\_\_ every week
2. \_\_\_ every month
3. \_\_\_ every year
4. \_\_\_ never

(Col.30)\_\_\_

14. How involved are you in community activities? I.E.: sports, dances, etc.

1. \_\_\_ frequently
2. \_\_\_ occasionally
3. \_\_\_ hardly ever
4. \_\_\_ never

(Col.31)\_\_\_

15. What was your main reason for adopting? ( check only one )
1. \_\_\_ infertility
  2. \_\_\_ wanted a larger family
  3. \_\_\_ wanted to provide a home for a homeless child (Col.32-33)\_\_\_
  4. \_\_\_ other, Please specify \_\_\_\_\_
16. What was your main reason for adopting an Indian child? ( check only one )
1. \_\_\_ lack of availibility of white children
  2. \_\_\_ knew of families who had adopted an Indian child
  3. \_\_\_ had relatives who adopted an Indian child
  4. \_\_\_ wanted to further the cause of integration (Col.34-35)\_\_\_
  5. \_\_\_ other, Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

## SECTION II

The questions in this section deal with your feelings about adopting an Indian child, and parenting in general. Each question allows for several choices, and we want you to circle the number of the answer that best answers the question in your opinion.

1. In general, do you consider Indian people to be as responsible and capable as Non-Indians? (Col.36)\_\_\_  
 1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent
2. Did you have contact with Indian people prior to adoption? (Col.37)\_\_\_  
 1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent
3. Did you have contact with Indian people after adoption? (Col.38)\_\_\_  
 1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent
4. Do you talk to your adopted child about his,her cultural background? (Col.39)\_\_\_  
 1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent
5. Do you make an effort to increase your awareness of Indian culture? (Col.40)\_\_\_  
 1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent
6. Does it make you feel uncomfortable when other children make comments about your child's appearance? (Col.41)\_\_\_  
 1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent

7. Does it make you feel uncomfortable when people in general comment about your child's appearance or his, her looking different from you? (Col.42)\_\_\_\_  
 1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent
8. Does it make you feel uncomfortable when you are in a public place and people stare at you and your child? (Col.43)\_\_\_\_  
 1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent
9. Considering your child's background, do you have an optimistic outlook with respect to your child's future? (Col.44)\_\_\_\_  
 1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent
10. Would you encourage someone else to adopt an Indian child? (Col.45)\_\_\_\_  
 1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent
11. Would you consider adopting another Indian child? (Col.46)\_\_\_\_  
 1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent
12. Do you get a sense of worth out of parenting? (Col.47)\_\_\_\_  
 1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent
13. Do you feel yourselves able to provide the parental care your child (children) require? (Col.48)\_\_\_\_  
 1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent
14. Do you feel you are able to deal with difficult situations most of the time? (Col.49)\_\_\_\_  
 1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Has your confidence in yourselves as parents changed since you adopted? In what way? Could you identify reasons for this, or contribute it to any particular factors? Please feel free to provide additional information if you wish.



	Never	Rarely	Some- times	Often	Almost Always
12. Is fearful and anxious	_____	_____	_____	_____	(Col.6)_____
13. Rejects strangers	_____	_____	_____	_____	(Col.7)_____
14. Is stubborn	_____	_____	_____	_____	(Col.8)_____
15. Does not warm up to people	_____	_____	_____	_____	(Col.9)_____
16. Gets distracted easily	_____	_____	_____	_____	(Col.10)_____
17. Is slow to understand people	_____	_____	_____	_____	(Col.11)_____
18. Is overly emotional	_____	_____	_____	_____	(Col.12)_____
19. Is cooperative	_____	_____	_____	_____	(Col.13)_____
20. Withdraws from people	_____	_____	_____	_____	(Col.14)_____
21. Is very tense	_____	_____	_____	_____	(Col.15)_____
22. Is defiant	_____	_____	_____	_____	(Col.16)_____
23. Is cautious with strangers	_____	_____	_____	_____	(Col.17)_____
24. Is overly nervous	_____	_____	_____	_____	(Col.18)_____
25. Is easy to train	_____	_____	_____	_____	(Col.19)_____
26. Is moody	_____	_____	_____	_____	(Col.20)_____
27. Is resistant	_____	_____	_____	_____	(Col.21)_____
28. Is smart (intelligence)	_____	_____	_____	_____	(Col.22)_____
29. Loses interest in things easily	_____	_____	_____	_____	(Col.23)_____
30. Does what people want him to	_____	_____	_____	_____	(Col.24)_____
31. Has difficulty in learning things	_____	_____	_____	_____	(Col.25)_____
32. Is patient	_____	_____	_____	_____	(Col.26)_____

## SECTION IV

The questions in this section deal with the Adoption Agency and your experience with it when you adopted your child. Please be assured that your responses will be kept confidential. Again, circle the number of the answer that best answers the question in your opinion.

1. How do you in general consider your homestudy? (Col.27)\_\_\_\_\_
1. very satisfactory 2. satisfactory 3. somewhat satisfactory  
4. unsatisfactory 5. very unsatisfactory
2. Did the homestudy help you understand your own strengths and weaknesses as adoptive parents? (Col.28)\_\_\_\_\_
1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent
3. In your opinion, did the social worker have a better knowledge of you as adoptive parents after the homestudy was completed? (Col.29)\_\_\_\_\_
1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent



- 4. Did you feel you were able to communicate with the social worker?  
1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent (Col.30)\_\_\_
- 5. Were you able to confide in the worker?  
1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent (Col.31)\_\_\_
- 6. Was the worker warm, friendly, and genuinely interested?  
1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent (Col.32)\_\_\_
- 7. Did the homestudy leave you with a feeling that you were being judged or investigated?  
1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent (Col.33)\_\_\_
- 8. Were you satisfied with the number of times the social worker visited you while you were working on the homestudy?  
1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent (Col.34)\_\_\_
- 9. Were your preferences in terms of a child taken into consideration?  
1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent (Col.35)\_\_\_
- 10. Did you feel you were working in partnership with the Agency in finding the best child for your home?  
1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent (Col.36)\_\_\_
- 11. Did you feel you were adequately prepared for adoption before you got your child?  
1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent (Col.37)\_\_\_
- 12. Were you counselled regarding parenting of this child?  
\_\_\_yes \_\_\_no (Col.38-39)\_\_\_  
Was this counselling adequate?  
1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent

13. Were you given information about why children come into care?  
yes no (Col.40-41)\_\_\_\_  
 Was this information adequate?  
 1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent
14. Did you discuss possible adjustment problems?  
yes no (Col.42-43)\_\_\_\_  
 Was it discussed to your satisfaction?  
 1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent
15. Did you discuss the handling of issues that might arise in the future?  
yes no (Col.44-45)\_\_\_\_  
 Was it discussed to your satisfaction?  
 1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent
16. Were you given enough general information about your child?  
 1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent (Col.46)\_\_\_\_
17. Was the waiting time:  
 1. \_\_\_ too long  
 2. \_\_\_ just right (Col.47)\_\_\_\_  
 3. \_\_\_ not long enough
18. Was possible future contact with natural parents discussed?  
yes no  
 Was it discussed to your satisfaction? (Col.48-49)\_\_\_\_  
 1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent
19. Did you receive support from the Agency after the placement?  
yes no (Col.50-51)\_\_\_\_  
 Was this support adequate?  
 1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent
20. Did you feel free to contact the Agency when you were experiencing problems?  
 1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent (Col.52)\_\_\_\_

21. Did you receive the service when you asked for it?  
 yes  no (Col.53-54)\_\_\_\_  
 Was this service adequate?  
 1. not at all 2. very little 3. somewhat 4. quite a bit 5. to a great extent
22. Do you feel the length of the probationary period is:  
 1.  too long (Col.55)\_\_\_\_  
 2.  just right  
 3.  not long enough
23. Did you maintain contact with the Agency after the adoption had been finalized?  
 yes  no (Col.56)\_\_\_\_
24. Would you consider post-legal contact (after the adoption has been finalized):  
 1.  helpful (Col.57)\_\_\_\_  
 2.  a nuisance  
 3.  the agency sitting in judgement
25. If you answered "helpful" to question 24, how long should it be maintained?  
 1.  one year 4.  other, Please specify \_\_\_\_\_ (Col.58-59)\_\_\_\_  
 2.  two years  
 3.  five years
26. Would you be interested in post adoption discussion groups with other couples who have adopted an Indian child?  
 yes  no (Col.60)\_\_\_\_
27. What areas of information would you find helpful at this point?  
 1.  review of medical history  
 2.  how to discuss a child's background  
 3.  developmental problems  
 4.  specific details overlooked  
 5.  none needed (Col.61-62)\_\_\_\_  
 6.  other, Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Again, if you would like to provide additional information regarding services that you feel was not covered in the questions, please do so.

Please indicate who completed the form:  Husband,  Wife,  Together

(Col.63)\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX C

REGRESSION ANALYSIS:  
CHARACTERISTICS AND CHILD ADJUSTMENT

CHARACTERISTICS

RSQ CHANGE

EDUCATION (Husbands)

Less than high school . . . . .	0.006
High school . . . . .	0.188
Some university . . . . .	0.025
University graduate . . . . .	0.006
Post graduate . . . . .	0.010

EDUCATION (Wives)

Less than high school . . . . .	0.005
High school . . . . .	0.012
Some university . . . . .	0.008
University graduate . . . . .	0.001
Post graduate . . . . .	-

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

Natural children . . . . .	0.067
Grandparents . . . . .	-
Other adopted . . . . .	0.027
Other . . . . .	-

EMPLOYMENT (Husbands)

Professional, technical . . . . .	0.021
Owner of a business . . . . .	0.006
Farmer . . . . .	-
Manager . . . . .	-
Clerical . . . . .	0.001
Skilled labour . . . . .	0.000

<u>CHARACTERISTICS</u>	<u>RSQ CHANGE</u>
Semi-skilled labour . . . . .	0.003
Not employed . . . . .	-
EMPLOYMENT (Wives)	
Professional, technical . . . . .	0.005
Owner of a business . . . . .	0.032
Farmer . . . . .	0.012
Manager . . . . .	-
Clerical . . . . .	0.037
Skilled labour . . . . .	-
Semi-skilled labour . . . . .	0.004
Not employed . . . . .	0.001
INCOME	
Under \$5,000 . . . . .	0.012
5,000 - 9,999 . . . . .	0.006
10,000 - 14,999 . . . . .	0.003
15,000 - 19,999 . . . . .	0.012
20,000 - 24,999 . . . . .	0.002
25,000 and over . . . . .	0.051
ACCOMMODATION	
Own home . . . . .	0.013
Rent house . . . . .	0.052
Own apartment . . . . .	-
Rent apartment . . . . .	0.035

CHARACTERISTICS

RSQ CHANGE

POPULATION

Under 5,000 . . . . .	0.026
5,000 - 9,999 . . . . .	0.024
10,000 - 24,999 . . . . .	-
25,000 and over . . . . .	0.006

INDIAN POPULATION

Under 5% . . . . .	0.015
5 - 25% . . . . .	0.007
25 - 50% . . . . .	0.002
50 - 100% . . . . .	0.017

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

Protestant . . . . .	0.023
Catholic . . . . .	0.004
Jewish . . . . .	0.011
Other . . . . .	0.002

RELIGIOUS PARTICIPATION

Active . . . . .	0.006
Regular . . . . .	0.026
Occasional . . . . .	-
Never . . . . .	0.062

DISTANCE

Same town or district . . . . .	-
Same province . . . . .	0.001
Same country . . . . .	0.034

CHARACTERISTICS

RSQ CHANGE

CONTACT WITH RELATIVES

Every week . . . . .	0.031
Every month . . . . .	0.003
Every year . . . . .	0.001
Never . . . . .	-

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Frequent . . . . .	0.008
Occasional . . . . .	0.002
Hardly ever . . . . .	0.033
Never . . . . .	0.004

MOTIVATION TO ADOPT

Infertility . . . . .	0.007
Wanted larger family . . . . .	0.031
Provide home . . . . .	0.002
Other . . . . .	0.001

MOTIVATION TO ADOPT AN INDIAN CHILD

Lack of Caucasian infants . . . . .	0.002
Knew of families who had adopted . . . . .	0.046
Had relatives who had adopted . . . . .	-
Further integration . . . . .	0.029
Other . . . . .	0.144