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An Application of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model

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Amanda L. Baden

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Robbie J. Steward
Major professor

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By

Amanda L. Baden

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ABSTRACT

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ADJUSTMENT OF TRANSRACIAL ADOPTEES:

AN APPLICATION OF THE CULTURAL-RACIAL IDENTITY MODEL

By Amanda L. Baden

In response to the need for increased understanding of the identity process of transracial adoptees, the Cultural-Racial Identity Model (Baden & Steward, 1995) was developed; however, the model has yet to be empirically validated. The model allows distinctions to be made between racial identity and cultural identity. These distinctions comprise 16 proposed identities of transracial adoptees and are made up of the degrees to which individuals: (1) have knowledge of, awareness of, competence within, and comfort with their own racial group's culture, their parents' racial group's culture, and multiple cultures, and (2) are comfortable with their racial group membership and with those belonging to their own racial group, their parents' racial group, and multiple racial groups. These distinctions are comprised of dimensions: the Adoptee Culture Dimension, the Parental Culture Dimension, the Adoptee Race Dimension, and the Parental Race Dimension. The distinctions made by the model can aid in understanding the counseling needs of transracial adoptees as they are affected by the identification with racial groups other than their own. In this study, the Cultural-Racial Identity of transracial adoptees was determined using the Cultural-Racial Identity Questionnaire (CRIQ; as developed for this study) and a modified version of the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM; Phinney, 1992). Psychological adjustment was assessed by the Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI; Derogatis & Cleary, 1977) and self-esteem was assessed by Rosenberg's Self-Esteem

Scale (SES; Rosenberg, 1965). The sample consisted of 51 transracial adoptees who completed mail survey questionnaires. The exploratory findings supported the Cultural-Racial Identity Model by demonstrating that the modified version of the MEIM successfully yielded variation in the potential Cultural-Racial Identities that the transracial adoptees reported. Findings did not yield support for differences in psychological adjustment among transracial adoptees having different Cultural-Racial Identities but did support a relationship where the Parental Race Dimension and the Adoptee Race Dimension predict the self-esteem of transracial adoptees. The implications that the results have for counseling practice and social policy were discussed.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my family without whom I would not have had the experiences, perspective, strength, and support to engage in a project on transracial adoption. I would like to thank my incredible parents for being available, supportive, fun, and loving throughout the ups, downs, and in-betweens. My sister, Rebecca Baden, has been a constant source of support and friendship throughout my life and my educational pursuits. She also gave me the invaluable gift of allowing me to draw upon her life and experiences as a transracial adoptee for this project. Thanks also to my best friend, Gretchen Van Wye, who is like a sister to me who supported me throughout the process and who, with my family, helped me believe in myself.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Adoption, as traditionally practiced, is a way to pair children without families with married couples wanting children. Typically, Caucasian couples wanted to adopt healthy Caucasian babies. Thus, adoption originated as a means for providing children to "childless white couples" (McRoy, 1989, p. 147), but it was not meant to provide a means for caring for dependent children. However, after World War II, many European children had survived the war but their families had not (Kim, Hong, & Kim, 1979). To accommodate these children, adoption practices were expanded to include intercountry adoptions (i.e., adoptions of children born in countries other than the country of the adoptive parents). Subsequent international conflicts such as the Korean War and the Vietnam War also resulted in children needing families, so the first intercountry-transracial adoptions were practiced. By the 1960s, contraception, legalized abortion, and increased social acceptance of single/unwed parenting decreased the number of available White infants for adoption. Also in the 1960s transracial adoptions (i.e., adoptions of children of different racial groups than the adoptive parents) within the United States became a relatively common phenomenon, and Caucasian couples began to adopt American racial minority children as well.

However, strong opposition to transracial adoption was voiced by the National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW), other organizations, and community leaders in 1972. Throughout the ensuing years, fewer transracial adoptions involving

African American children and Caucasian families took place. Adoption agencies were designed specifically to place African American children with African American families. These agencies gave preference to African American families. Organizations such as the North American Council on Adoptable Children and the National Committee for Adoption issued statements regarding their preference for same-race placements (McRoy, 1989). They advocated transracial placements only when same-race placements were unavailable. Since that time, those transracial adoptions that have taken place have been primarily intercountry adoptions (e.g., Vietnamese, Korean, Latin American, and Chinese children adopted by Caucasian parents), but adoptions of African American children by Caucasian parents continue to be controversial and occasionally take place. Caucasian families then began to complain that adoption policies giving preference to African American families were discriminatory (McRoy, 1989).

As the transracial adoption literature demonstrates, terms used to describe racial designations do not follow current practices of using "Caucasian" and "African American" for individuals belonging to those groups. For simplification and for the sake of consistency, Caucasian Americans will, hereafter, be referred to as "Whites" or "White" and African Americans or Black Americans having ancestry from African countries will be referred to as "Blacks" or "Black." Many of the studies and quotations to be included describe samples as "White" or "Black" and include these terms as racial descriptors. To ensure accuracy and consistency, these terms were utilized as racial descriptors throughout this paper as well.

Today, estimates of the number of transracial adoptions that have taken place in America are difficult to determine. Simon, Alstein, and Melli (1994) noted that the U.S. government has failed to implement a law--the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980--making the tracking of children who were adopted impossible. Based on statistics found through the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA), the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), the National Committee for Adoption (NCFA), and the North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC), Simon et al. (1994) reported that interracial/transracial adoptions account for approximately eight percent of all adoptions and these adoptions are by Caucasian adoptive mothers. Of this eight percent, five percent were adoptions of children who were neither Caucasian nor African American/Black, one percent consisted of Black children adopted by White mothers, and two percent were adoptions of White children by mothers of other races. In a 1989 report, the CLWA (Simon et al., 1994) estimated that approximately 51% of the children who are waiting to be adopted are from minority racial ethnic groups.

Although Simon et al. (1994) did not report the percentages of Americans who wish to adopt intraracially and those who wish to adopt transracially, the statistic would have been quite relevant. Furthermore, statistics which made comparisons based on racial group membership could have assisted in providing a basis for understanding the prevalence of families wishing to adopt transracially versus intraracially. Given the small percentage of transracial placements that do occur, it is reasonable to assume that very few Whites wish to adopt transracially. However, despite the small numbers, transracial

adoptees and transracially adopting White parents are still held under suspicion. Many minority professionals such as those belonging to the NABSW have protested the practice of transracial adoption whereas White potential parents have protested the restrictions placed on transracial adoption. These differing views as well as other views that follow clearly demonstrate the controversy and its mirroring of the identity crisis in practice.

In reviewing the opposition to transracial adoption that has been expressed, criticisms and concerns have been targeted at both intracountry and intercountry adoptions and have been based primarily on questions regarding identity development and psychological adjustment (Griffith & Duby, 1991; Ryan, 1983; Silverman & Feigelman, 1981; Tizard, 1991). However, criticisms of transracial adoption have not been limited to the NABSW. Third-world countries from which Americans have adopted many children and racial ethnic groups such as Native Americans (Ryan, 1983; Tizard, 1991) also have voiced concerns about the effects of transracial and intercountry adoption. Transracial adoption has been referred to as "cultural genocide," as "the ultimate expression of American Imperialism," and as leading to "poor" identity development and psychological maladjustment (Tizard, 1991). Moreover, Gill and Jackson (1983) grouped the criticisms against transracial adoption as belonging to two categories, "1 Criticisms based on discrimination against the black community; 2 Criticisms based on the anticipated experiences of a black child in a white family" (p. 4).

With respect to the criticisms described by Gill and Jackson (1983), some of the more salient criticisms involved the identity confusion and inability to relate to members

of their racial communities that transracial adoptees will face. The criticisms in the second category that they specified were summarized as follows:

> --Because of the child's obvious difference of racial and physical background the parents and other members of the family will come to see the child as 'not belonging to this family'. Close and intimate family relations will not develop between the child and other family members.
> --Because of obvious differences of racial and physical background the child will have a self-perception of 'not belonging to this family'. The result of this will be a deep sense of personal isolation.
> --Because the child is adopted by white parents contact outside the home is primarily white. Although over time, racial background may be insignificant in the family, it will continue to be crucially significant outside the family. The child will be unable to relate effectively in the outside world and will retreat into the family world.
> --Identity confusion. Children placed transracially will come to face major problems of who they are, black or white. The confusion will be experienced as so central that they will have a poor self-concept and low self-esteem.
> --Because the children are black, growing up in white families, they will not be taught the necessary coping mechanisms for dealing with the hostility and rejection of white society. These coping mechanisms can only be taught in the black family.
> --Because of being brought up in white families, transracially adopted children will not be able to relate to members of the black community. They will be rejected not only by the white community, but also by the black community. (p. 4-5)

These predictions regarding the effects of transracial adoption have affected the frequency and ease with which transracial adoption placements have been made. However, transracial adoption continues to be practiced. Unfortunately, the actual numbers of transracial adoption placements are difficult to determine. McRoy (1989) reported that the number of transracial adoptions dropped from a high of 2,500 in 1971 to 1,100 in 1987. She also reported that in 1984, researchers estimated that 20,000 Black children had been transracially adopted by White couples in America since the commencement of

transracial placements.

The continued practice of transracial adoption and the legislation that could be used to support transracial placements necessitated the identification of responses to several critical questions. Are transracial adoptees a monolithic group in terms of psychological adjustment and self-esteem? Are the predictions of low self-esteem, rejection of transracial adoptees, and identity confusion true? If so, how can we continue to engage in this detrimental practice? Are there some transracial adoptees who fair better than others? All of these questions must be answered for a fully informed decision about the practice of transracial adoption. Thus, over the years many researchers have investigated the validity of these claims.

Critiques of Transracial Adoption Policies

Hayes (1993) reviewed the literature on transracial adoption and the policies and practices surrounding transracial adoption. He noted that despite the research on the success of transracial placements, White parents are only considered "suitable" for transracial placements if they will commit to providing the adoptees information about their cultural heritage and encouraging a strong sense of "positive racial identity" (p. 302) in the adoptees.

Furthermore, Hayes identified that the central professional debate regarding the ethics of transracial adoption involves the ability or inability of White parents to provide the support that is required for transracial adoptees to develop their ethnic identity and gain information about their cultural heritage. This debate has been immersed in rhetoric

proclaiming the "need" or "right" of transracial adoptees to have a sense of ethnic identity and a cultural heritage. However, as Hayes pointed out and as the author agrees, the opponents to transracial adoption and the policies limiting or prohibiting transracial placements are essentially advocating a "correct" way to be a racial ethnic minority individual. This correct way entails having a "positive ethnic identity" (Andujo, 1988) as defined by some members of that racial ethnic group. This also implies a single way of identifying as an ethnic minority. Hayes argued that this viewpoint ignores the "legitimacy of a plurality of approaches to raising minority children" (p. 304) and that "the promotion of ethnic identity and cultural heritage is not the *only* reasonable way to bring up a minority child" (p. 304). Hayes (1994) also noted problematic assumptions in the claim that racial ethnic minority communities, especially African Americans, need "survival strategies" to combat "endemic societal racism" (p. 306). The need for such strategies makes transracial placements inadequate for meeting this need. For this claim to be legitimate, however, requires homogeneous values within racial ethnic communities and ubiquitous racism in modern society, but because it fails to account for the diversity of society, it is refutable.

Despite the evidence supporting the adequate psychological adjustment of transracial adoptees, Hayes (1993) reported that some researchers continue to foretell of the "inevitable" problems that transracial adoptees will have. These predictions have even taken the following form: "Transracially adopted children are never normal but only 'apparently normal.' Beneath the facade of happy well-integrated children lie various

neuroses" (p. 308). To resolve the contradictions between the evidence on transracial adoption and the predictions about it, further research must be conducted. However, the unsupported assumptions of these researchers and opponents to transracial adoption may actually be based on political ideology as Hayes (1993) suggested rather than on the purported aim: the best interests of the child.

On the other hand, the concerns of the NABSW and other opponents of transracial adoption raise vital issues in this controversy, especially given the history of America and racial minorities in America. One such issue is the concern regarding the "motives" expressed by those wishing to adopt transracially. Virtually no empirical research has been conducted addressing the impact of varying reasons for adopting on transracial adoptees' adjustment. Opponents to transracial adoption also question White parents' ability to competently prepare children and provide essential coping skills to transracial adoptees, especially given that many biological parents experience difficulty in this area as well. Finally, a realistic threat exists in the potential resocialization of minority children by White parents resulting in minority children who may be uncomfortable unskilled when among those from their own racial group.

As a result of these concerns, alternatives to transracial placements for the large number of minority children available for adoption have been on the increase over the past 25 years. The NABSW encouraged shifts in recruitment efforts for adoptive families by reexamining the criteria for adoption eligibility and by exerting greater efforts in recruiting Black families for adoptive placements. Kinship care where relatives,

especially grandparents, informally adopt children needing homes has historically been practiced. Unfortunately, legislation does not allow for those providing kinship care to receive funding to assist in the rearing of these children. Large, urban adoption agencies have also attempted to blur the boundaries between foster care and adoption to allow greater numbers of children to have more permanent placements. Native American organizations have also been vocal in their disapproval of transracial adoption and have worked to find similar alternatives for their children. Although these efforts are timely and have been largely successful, the alternatives to transracial adoption have been primarily focused on finding Black families to adopt Black and biracial children having one Black birth parent or Native American families to adoptive Native American children. Thus, alternatives have yet to be found for the vast numbers of children who are both non-White, non-Black, and non-Native American.

The cultural beliefs of and economic hardships within many Asian countries (e.g., China and Korea) have resulted in large numbers of Asian children available for adoption. However, childless couples from these cultures/countries rarely adopt, thereby resulting in children who will be difficult to place in same-race families. Furthermore, members of these countries have voiced fewer objections to transracial placements. For several years, the vast majority of transracial adoptees were from Korea. Not until the mid 1990s did the Korean government begin to change their policies regarding the availability of Korean children for adoption. Although some of these countries have made intercountry adoption more rigorous, children from these countries continue to be adopted

in great numbers. Thus, transracial adoption continues to be practiced and many transracial adoptees already exist in the U.S.

In response to criticisms of transracial adoption placements and to predictions about the outcomes of such placements, social workers and child developmental researchers began to study the effects of transracial adoption. Their findings have yet to allow practitioners, researchers, policy makers, and communities to reach a consensus. As the literature review will demonstrate, very little evidence has been found to support the predictions of opponents to transracial adoption. However, as noted by Alexander and Curtis (1996), professionals investigating these claims have not been representative of all of groups involved in the controversy. In fact, Alexander and Curtis noted that many of the opponents to transracial adoption, such as the NABSW and other African American researchers and professionals, have failed to empirically demonstrate support for their views and criticisms. Therefore, the findings of proponents of transracial adoption have been uncontested. Similarly, a recent publication by Project 21(1995), reported that the group, Project 21 (an African-American leadership group) "agreed that transracial adoption should be encouraged as a means to provide stable homes for black children currently in foster care" (p. 1). In their statement, one group member stated, "Isn't it ironic that the racism groups like this one claim to loath is the same racism that is practiced with such self-righteousness" (p. 1). This controversy surrounding transracial adoption has forced individual researchers to "take sides" and to continue to find empirical support for that position. Unfortunately, in this scramble among professionals, the policy purporting

to seek the "best interests of the child" (Hayes, 1993) seems to have been forgotten.

The controversy continues to be debated. In a relatively recent issue of the Journal of Black Psychology, Alexander and Curtis (1996) critically evaluated the empirical transracial adoption literature and noted several concerns regarding the methodology and conclusions that the many of the researchers made. They critiqued the sampling, measurement, validity, and methodology of several key studies, but noted that "opponents of transracial adoption, such as NABSW and other African American professionals had no empirical support for their positions" (p. 232). Because no evidence has been shown to "support their contention of psychological damage to African American children" (p. 232) who were transracially adopted, Alexander and Curtis cautioned against ruling out transracial placements as an option for children.

Reactions to Alexander and Curtis' (1996) paper were also included in the Journal of Black Psychology. These reactions ranged from praise for their work and their conclusions (e.g., Gopaul-McNicol, 1996) to admonitions for their viewpoints and conclusions (e.g., Abdullah, 1996; Goddard, 1996). In between the more extreme reactions were cogent examinations of the status, practice, and potential outcomes of transracial adoption (e.g., Taylor & Thornton, 1996). Overall, the reactions to Alexander and Curtis' (1996) paper suggested that the history of racism, discrimination, and oppression in the United States has validly lead to professionals' concern for the impact of transracial adoption on the adoptees, especially African American transracial adoptees. However, extreme positions from both proponents and opponents to transracial adoption

may frequently forget the children involved in this controversy.

In a critique of transracial adoption practices in Britain, Cohen reviewed issues related to identity theory in transracial adoption. Cohen (1994) identified a "genealogical model of identity as a birthright or inheritance" (p. 58). This identity was described as an "authentic sense of selfhood" (pp. 58-59) such that lacking an identity means lacking a core personality or sense of roots. When related to transracial adoption, the concept of identity was redirected to involve a sense of "roots within a collective ancestry. . .the assumption of a black identity was made to mean more than being proud of one's own immediate origins. It meant actively locating an individual life history within the collective memory of a 'race'" (p. 59). Cohen further delineated his view of how the psychological theories of Erikson, Maslow, Piaget and others were used to formulate a common concept of "positive black identities." According to Cohen, the designation of such identities could then allow for predictions and stories about identity confusion due to transracial placements. A "positive identity" could only be considered as such if it incorporated the black community and the "retrieval of lost origins" (p. 67). Cohen also noted that the Association of Black Social Workers and Allied Professionals proposed a model of 'psychological nigrescence' in which "the black child who is the 'victim' of transracial adoption is supposed to go through a series of levels or stages" (p. 67) which are characterized by the same stages postulated by Cross (1971) and Helms (1990). Cohen criticized this stance as indicating that "if the individual does not express a sense of pride in being black then this can only be a symptom of a neurotic or self-destructive

defense mechanism" (p. 69). This statement identifies and supports the need to recognize the heterogeneity in identity experiences and levels of adjustment likely to be found among transracial adoptees.

Another result of the controversy surrounding transracial adoption has been disagreement and confusion over the policies that dictate either the practice or the prohibition of transracial adoption placements. Until some relatively recent legislation, adoption workers and social workers have been making decisions about adoption placements based on individual agency's or individual worker's stance on this issue. However, while still in office, Senator Howard Metzenbaum (D-OH) successfully sponsored the Multiethnic Placement Act (MEPA) in October of 1994 (Project 21, 1995). This act was designed to prevent discrimination in adoption placements on the basis of race, color, or national origin, to aid in the recruitment of foster and adoptive families, and to increase the number of children adopted (Public Law 103-382). Despite these intentions, the Clinton administration's announcement regarding the interpretation of the bill resulted in actually making transracial adoption more difficult (Idelson, 1996; Project 21, 1995). With MEPA, an agency can continue to base an adoption placement on children's cultural, racial, or ethnic background and on the ability of foster or adoptive parents to meet the needs of these children; however, this can be only one of the factors used in the placement. The MEPA does prohibit general rules or agency-wide rules for adoption placements on the basis of race, culture, or ethnic background. Although the MEPA represents an improvement over previous legislation, adoption workers still have

the freedom to make placements that may be based more on the adoption workers' beliefs about effects of transracial placements rather than on the "best interests of the child." Those making adoption placements may be unfamiliar with current research on transracial adoptees' adjustment or they may maintain their opposition toward transracial placements in spite of empirical evidence to the contrary. Furthermore, no financial penalties or other forms of penalties are in place if these criteria were not met. Thus, the MEPA is a step in the right direction, but more work needs to be done.

The next form of legislation to be presented is the Adoption Promotion and Stability Act (HR 3286). This legislation was brought before Congress on May 10, 1996, but it failed to progress past the Committee on Indian Affairs. Had this law been passed, it would have allowed adoptive parents to take tax credits for adopting children. This law was intended to eliminate the "loopholes" found in MEPA. Financial penalties were to be enacted when/if adoptive placements were shown to be delayed for race or ethnic matching of adoptable children with adoptive parents (Idelson, 1996). To date, this bill has been rewritten and re-named and has again been presented in Congress. However, the new version of the Adoption Promotion and Stability Act, now referred to as the Adoption Promotion Act of 1997, no longer includes specific references to transracial adoption placements. The results of these legislative arguments remain to be seen.

The level of analysis used to understand transracial adoption has primarily been focused on disproving the predictions of opponents to transracial adoption. With that "goal" having been essentially "achieved," another level of analysis must be employed.

Because transracial adoption is still practiced, professionals still need to determine what differences currently exist among transracial adoptees rather than focusing on their differences from other groups. These differences are not merely demographic and may be of greater importance in explaining the effects of transracial adoption on adoptees. However, to better understand those effects, a guideline for observing and systematizing the study of transracial adoptees is needed. One such model was offered by Baden and Steward (1995) with their Cultural-Racial Identity Model for transracial adoptees. This model attempts to explain the varying identity statuses among transracial adoptees. The identity statuses that Baden and Steward postulated differ from previous models of identity, racial identity, and ethnic identity due to their emphasis on examining the culture and the race of transracial adoptees separately. They believe that the separate examination of the cultural identity and the racial identity of transracial adoptees is necessary to fully depict transracial adoptees' unique experiences in racially and possibly culturally integrated families. This model can serve as a starting point for extending the study of transracial adoption and its effects to another level of analysis.

Another argument for the need to conduct studies of transracial adoptees on another level of analysis is the paucity of studies attempting to make suggestions for the counseling/psychotherapeutic needs of transracial adoptees. Unfortunately, with a few exceptions, at this time counseling psychologists have yet to examine the needs of transracial adoptees. Perhaps it has been assumed that the needs of transracial adoptees are similar to the needs of traditionally (intraracially) adopted children. To endorse this

assumption, however, a crucial factor in development and adjustment is ignored: the racial and cultural identity development of transracial adoptees. In the case of transracial adoptees, the racial group membership of the adoptees differs from their adoptive parents' racial group membership and in many instances, the culture of the adoptees also differs (e.g., as in intercountry adoptions). These differences have been expected to have a differential and potentially negative effect on transracial adoptees--an effect that children adopted intraracially do not experience. Due to the potentially differential experiences of transracially adopted children, counseling psychologists must be prepared to serve the needs of these individuals throughout their childhood and adulthood and the implications for the practice of counseling with these individuals must be determined.

Furthermore, transracial adoption almost always entails the joining of individuals from not only racially different backgrounds, but also from culturally different backgrounds (e.g., Chinese, Korean, African American, or Guatemalan culture joined with the dominant, Euro-American or White culture). As a result, to accurately depict the unique experiences of transracial adoptees, distinctions between race and culture must be made. However, such distinctions are difficult to conceptualize and possibly even more difficult to achieve in measurable ways. Nevertheless, this study will attempt to make such distinctions so that the experiences of transracial adoptees will be more accurately understood.

To resolve these issues, further research should be conducted regarding the identity of transracial adoptees and those factors that contribute to their identity

development. The literature in this area provides some helpful information for resolving this dilemma about identity development. However, when studying transracial adoptees and their families, the level of analysis of transracial adoption continues to be problematic. The racial differences between parents and children have been the primary focus in transracial adoption studies. These studies have overlooked the impact of the family and the characteristics of parents that are independent of their racial group membership, thereby under-representing the role of the adoptive parents in the psychological adjustment and the racial identity of the children. As a result of this oversight, many of the studies of transracial adoptees have been based on the assumption that the racial differences of the parents and children are the causes of psychological maladjustment and "poor" identity development. However, this assumption may be faulty. For example, perhaps transracial adoptees can be impacted by racial differences and cultural differences to such an extent that they more closely identify with individuals of racial groups other than their own and that they engage in cultural practices from cultures other than the culture of their racial group. Does this necessarily imply psychological maladjustment? The answer to this question has not yet been demonstrated, but assumptions that it would result in maladjustment serve as the primary argument against transracial adoption. Yet another question has also not been addressed regarding this example. Do those transracial adoptees whose parents have intentionally assisted in the development of well-defined, "positive," racial/ethnic identities report better psychological adjustment and self-esteem than those whose parents have not assisted?

These questions must be answered to have more definitive evidence regarding the implications of transracial adoption on the adoptees.

Furthermore, the controversy surrounding transracial adoption also tends to assume homogeneity among transracial adoptees. That is, as with members of any identifiable group, observers tend to assume greater between-group variance and may neglect to account for within- group differences. Baden and Steward's (1995) model for conceptualizing the identities of transracial adoptees both allows for and expects differences *among* or *within* transracial adoptees as a group. They hypothesize that all transracial adoptees will not have a "positive" racial/ethnic identity, nor will all transracial adoptees experience identity confusion to such a degree that it could be classified as "maladjustment." In essence, what Baden and Steward suggested is that transracial adoptees' individual adaptations will be quite unique. They will all identify with a culture and they all identify with a racial group, but they do not necessarily all identify with the same culture or racial group because differences exist within the population of transracial adoptees. This perspective was validated by the concerns of Cohen (1994) and Hayes (1993). Finally, an examination of the impact of identity may have different results when psychological adjustment is assessed and viewed as a separate entity from self-esteem.

This study seeks to further examine some of the assumptions regarding transracial adoptees. With respect to the literature reviewed on transracial adoption, the studies purporting to examine racial identity tended to investigate only the racial group

preferences and objective racial self-identification of transracial adoptees and not their racial identity development. These studies conceptualized racial identity as being the racial group (e.g., Black, White, Korean, Native American, etc.) to which the adoptees felt they belonged. This conceptualization of racial identity appears to be based on the acknowledgment or recognition of racial group membership rather than on feelings about, attitudes toward, or comfort with one's racial group. Thus, these other conceptualizations of racial identity may actually obtain information about the identities sanctioned by society rather than the actual identities of transracial adoptees.

Alternative conceptualizations of racial identity include attitudes and feelings that individuals have had toward their own racial group and toward the dominant racial group. As a result, theories of racial identity development for racial ethnic minority groups have been developed (Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1979; Cross, 1971, 1978), however, these theories have grouped culture and race together within a single model and assume racial homogeneity within families. Because this homogeneity is not found in families adopting transracially, this study will rely upon the recently developed theory for transracial adoptees, the Cultural-Racial Identity Model (Baden & Steward, 1995).

The Cultural-Racial Identity Model allows distinctions to be made in identity between cultural identity and racial identity and among race, ethnicity and culture. It also accounts for racially heterogeneous families and for parental influence in identity development. In an effort to create a bridge linking racial group preferences/objective racial self-identification, racial identity, and cultural identity, this conceptual model was

developed in such a way that:

> 1)transracial adoptees' cultural identities are composed of both racial group cultural identity and the cultural identity of their parents; and, 2) transracial adoptees' racial identities are composed of their own racial identity and the racial identity of their parents. (pp. 8-9)

This model will serve as the foundation upon which this investigation will be based. The purpose of this study was to examine the efficacy, applicability, and comprehensiveness of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model by determining the degree to which the model validly describes the Cultural-Racial Identities of transracial adoptees and by identifying differences in the psychological adjustment of transracial adoptees having different Cultural-Racial Identities. Support for the Cultural-Racial Identity Model has not yet been empirically demonstrated. In the current investigation, those dimensions believed to differentiate among transracial adoptees according to their identities were determined based on Baden and Steward's (1995) model, and these factors were examined as they affect the psychological adjustment and self-esteem of transracial adoptees. Two of these factors are the level at or degree to which the transracial adoptee has knowledge of, awareness of, competency within and comfort with the culture of their own racial group or the culture of their parents' racial group. The other two factors are the degree to which the transracial adoptee self- identifies with his/her own racial group and is comfortable with his/her own racial group or with his/her adoptive parents' racial group. Because the vast majority of the transracial adoptions that have taken place in the United States have been White couples adopting non-White children and because much of the criticism lodged against the practice of transracial adoption has been directed

toward members of the dominant culture as the "socializers" of racial ethnic minority children (Gill & Jackson, 1983), all transracial adoptees who can participate in this study must have been adopted by White parents. Thus, references made to the "adoptive parents' racial group" or their "racial groups' culture", refer to the White culture.

As will be reviewed in Chapter II, distinctions between race and culture have been historically difficult to conceptualize but are even more difficult to measure in individuals. As a result, one of the challenges of the current study was to achieve the distinctions necessary between race and culture.

To increase the current knowledge base regarding transracial adoptees, we must answer the following questions: Does the Cultural-Racial Identity Model accurately depict the identities of transracial adoptees? Do different cultural and racial identities affect the psychological adjustment of transracial adoptees? Do different cultural and racial identities affect the self-esteem of transracial adoptees?

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

As noted in Chapter One, much of the concern regarding the effects of transracial adoption has been expressed by practicing social workers, leaders of minority group communities, and scholars (Chimezie, 1975; Hayes, 1993). Kim (1995) noted that "transracial adoption of black children stirred up many controversies regarding their psychological development, especially with respect to their ethnic identity, or 'cultural well-being' " (pp. 141-142). To determine the effects that transracial adoption has on adoptees, several studies investigated the racial identity and subsequent psychological adjustment of transracial adoptees (Bagley, 1993a, 1993b; Feigelman & Silverman, 1983; Johnson, Shireman, & Watson, 1987; McRoy, Zurcher, Lauderdale, & Anderson, 1982, 1984; Shireman & Johnson, 1986; Simon & Alstein, 1987). The following sections present an overview of the results of studies focused on transracial adoption, counseling recommendations for working with transracial adoptees, theories that apply to the unique experience of transracial adoptees, and the current study.

Psychological Adjustment

The construct of psychological adjustment has been of primary importance in the examination of transracial adoption, particularly since the statement issued by the NABSW in 1972 first predicted maladjustment. This maladjustment was expected to frequently be in the area of identity confusion and the inability to cope with racism. To address these concerns, studies were initially aimed at measuring the psychological

adjustment of transracial adoptees, often in comparison to White children adopted by White parents (often referred to as intraracial adoption).

One of the early studies of transracial adoptees was conducted by Fanshel (1972). This study examined approximately 100 American Indian/Native American children who were adopted by White families. Annual interviews were conducted over a period of five years with the findings based on the transracial adoptees' overall adjustment. The results of the study indicated that "more than 50 per cent of the children were performing 'extremely well' in all spheres of life and another 25 per cent were performing in a way that made the outlook for their future adjustment 'very hopeful'. Only 10 per cent of the children appeared to be experiencing difficulties which made the prognosis of likely outcome uncertain." (as cited in Gill & Jackson, 1983).

In response to the changing position statements of organizations such as the NABSW and the Child Welfare League of America, another study was conducted which attempted to address "whether children are better off adopted by parents of a different race than they would be if they lived with neither natural not [nor] adoptive parents" (Grow & Shapiro, 1974, p. ii). To begin to answer this question, Grow and Shapiro (1974) conducted a study of 125 transracial adoptees who were a median age of 8.8 years old at the time of the study and were placed in their adoptive homes at a median age of 13.9 months. All adoptees in the study had at least one African-American birth parent and all had to have been in their adoptive homes for at least three years for inclusion in the study. Demographic and attitudinal variables were measured regarding such issues as age

at adoption, parental perception of the transracial adoptees' "Blackness," religion, length of time in placement, income, reason for adoption, and parenting style (strict vs. permissive). The predictive value of these variables were assessed on the outcome measures. The "success" of the adoptions were measured using multiple outcome measures including interviews with parents, parents' responses on the Missouri Children's Behavior Checklist, transracial adoptees' scores on the California Test of Personality, and the Teacher's Evaluation Index. Based on all of the outcome measures, Grow and Shapiro found that 77% of the adoptions were "successful," a rate comparable to success rates for intraracial adoptions. Grow and Shapiro also computed a summary or overall measure of success. This summary score of success was found to have a significant relationship with the parents' perception of their transracially adopted children's Blackness as being "obvious." In interviews conducted with adoptive parents, information regarding the parents' beliefs about the degree to which their children were "obviously black" was collected and found to be related to the overall success scores of the adoptions. Those transracial adoptees who were "designated as obviously black were more likely to have average or high scores than were those whose parents felt they were not obviously black" (p. 110). Furthermore, parents' perceptions of their children's "obvious Blackness" was compared to the interviewers' perceptions on this same variable. Findings indicated that 50% of the transracial adoptees were seen as relatively light by their parents but only 33% were similarly described by the interviewers. Approximately 75% of the perception descriptions were compatible between parents and interviewers and when they were

incompatible, the parents tended to view their children as lighter than the interviewers did.

Other noteworthy findings of this study concerned the predictive value of some demographic and attitudinal variables. For example, Grow and Shapiro reported that transracial adoptees who had been in placement for the shortest amount of time (three to four years) relative to the other members of the sample tended to have low personal adjustment scores on the California Test of Personality. Low scorers also tended to be in families who had minority religious affiliations (e.g., not Protestant or Catholic) or who had no affiliation with any church. Relationships among variables on the social adjustment scale on the California Test of Personality were also of interest. Low scorers on this scale tended to be associated "with extreme ends of the income scale, with social or personal (other than infertility) reasons for adoption, with living in small communities, with the adoptive mother's uncertainty or ambivalence about the adoption of the handicapped, and with dissatisfaction with the agency's services" (p. 135). Neurotic symptoms such as bed-wetting, nightmares, and restlessness were more frequently found in transracial adoptees under age 12, in boys, in transracial adoptees having mothers under age 40, and in those living in smaller communities. Physical symptoms such as colds, headaches, and tiredness were more frequently found in transracial adoptees over age 10 and in transracial adoptees described as "not obviously black" (p. 150) by their parents.

With respect to the transracial adoptees' own attitudes about their racial origins,

Grow and Shapiro also found results related to demographic and attitudinal variables. Transracial adoptees tended to feel more discomfort with their appearance if they were the "darkest" children, if their parents had strong "pro-black" attitudes, if their parents had "the most initial reservations about the adoption" (p. 198), and if their mothers were young relative to the sample. Families with more positive attitudes toward Black heritage were found when the father in the family was a professional, when the family had frequent contact with relatives, and when the parents reported an positive orientation toward race. Another important finding reported by Grow and Shapiro was the transracial adoptees' experience of racial cruelty. Although they acknowledged the ambiguity and measurement problems presented by this variable, Grow and Shapiro reported that their analysis "suggested that significantly more such experiences are perceived by parents of girls, by parents living in communities with a nonwhite population of less than 5%, and by families with three or more adopted children" (p. 199).

What were formerly called "failed adoptions" were investigated by Barth, Berry, Yoshikami, Goodfield, and Carson (1988). They sought to predict adoption disruption in intraracial and transracial adoptions. The study they conducted provided evidence of how frequently adoptions were "unsuccessful," thus providing evidence regarding the level of adjustment of the adoptees while in the adoptive placement. Barth et al. attempted to identify adoption disruption rates, and to determine characteristics associated with disruption. Using a sample of 1,155 adoptees, 81% of whom were intraracially adopted and 19% of whom were transracially adopted and the adoption placement forms, Barth et

al. found that 832 adoptions were not disrupted, 94 were disrupted, and the remaining 229 could not be determined. The sample for the study included 158 Black children, 129 Latino children, 20 Asian or Pacific Islander children, and 20 Native American children. Barth et al. found an overall disruption rate of 10.2 percent within the sample and examined factors associated with adoption disruption. They found that "previous placements, an older child, a greater number of child problems, adoption not by a foster parent, a male child, and adoptive mothers with higher education were all associated with adoption disruption" (p. 229) but that no differences existed in disruption rate between intra and interracial matches. That is, transracial adoptions were not found to have significantly different rates of disruption than intraracial adoptions.

Racial Identity

With the criticisms of transracial adoption mounting, the subject of the "racial identity" of transracial adoptees appeared to be at the crux of the criticisms (Gill & Jackson, 1983). To address this criticism, researchers began to study the "racial identity" of transracial adoptees. However, conceptualizations of racial identity have frequently differed across disciplines and fields of study. As the following studies will demonstrate, the primary conceptualization of racial identity was well described by Loenen and Hoksbergen (1986). They delineated the four aspects of racial identity: identity, preferences, stereotypes, and aspirations. The following studies to be presented tend to address preferences, aspirations, and self-identification but, as will be explained later, they frequently do not include racial/ethnic pride and activism nor do they account for the

cultural differences that transracial adoptees experience. Moreover, as has been noted in some recent papers (Gill Willis, 1996; Harrison, 1996; Taylor & Thornton, 1996) many of the studies' attempts at measuring racial identity have been flawed for two primary reasons: First, they often rely on the adoptive parents' predictions of their children's racial identity, and second, they examine the construct of identity prior to adolescence. As will be discussed in further detail later in the chapter, the process of identity formation and racial identity formation is theorized to begin in adolescence. Thus, the examination of racial identity in preadolescent children may be of limited informative value. Nevertheless, studies investigating the racial identity of transracial adoptees follow.

Shireman and Johnson (1986) reported on a longitudinal study of the psychological adjustment, racial identity, and sexual identity of transracial adoptees as compared to intraracial adoptees and adoptees of single parents. All of the adoptees in the study were Black children. The families in the study were single-parent, traditional (i.e., Black parents adopting Black children), or transracial (i.e., White parents adopting Black children). Families were contacted when the children were four years of age and eight years of age. When the children were four, 36 intraracially adopted children and 37 transracially adopted children were included in the sample. At age eight, 26 intraracially adopted children and 25 transracially adopted children were included in the sample. Parents and adoptees were interviewed separately and the Clark Doll Test was administered. The findings suggested that there were no differences in psychological adjustment among the three groups of adoptees as determined by objective ratings of the

interviews. Furthermore, results of the Clark Doll Test revealed that transracially adopted Black children had greater awareness of their race (i.e., accurately identified the doll having a "race" similar to their own) and greater preference toward dolls of their own race at an earlier age (age four) than did intraracially adopted Black children. However, at older ages (age eight), both groups of adopted children expressed similar levels of awareness and preference. Also at age four, almost three-quarters of the transracially adopted children understood their adoption status whereas less than half of the intraracially (including both traditional and single-parent) children understood their adoption status. The authors viewed the difference between intraracially and transracially adopted children as suggesting that transracial adoptees were developing their "racial identity" at a rate that was different and possibly problematic than intraracial adoptees. They believed that this developmental difference in the transracial adoptees' pattern of racial identity development was "of concern." The follow-up study conducted by Johnson et al. (1987) provided additional support for their concern regarding this developmental difference.

Johnson et al. (1987) conducted a follow-up study of the families from the Shireman and Johnson (1986) study. Using the sample from the Shireman and Johnson study, 26 transracially and 26 traditionally (intraracial) adopted families were the participants. Interviews were conducted with both the parents and the adoptees, and the Clark Doll Test and the Morland Picture Interview were administered to the children. Both Shireman & Johnson (1986) and Johnson et al. (1987) were concerned with the

finding that transracially adopted children's awareness and preference stayed constant over time while intraracially adopted Black children's preferences and awareness both increased more rapidly and exceeded that of transracially adopted children. They concluded from this finding that the transracially adopted children were developing differently from intraracially adopted children, and that this developmental difference may be a precursor to awareness problems in the transracial adoptees' racial identity. Despite the lack of evidence demonstrating the harmful effects due to the differences, Johnson et al. assumed that different patterns of development may be harmful. They also did not address the possibility of ceiling effects on their measures of racial group preferences and awareness. Furthermore, based on a combination of problems evidenced and the severity of the problems, the adjustment of the children was assessed. Based on this form of measurement, approximately 75% of transracial adoptees and 80% of intraracial adoptees were described as "doing well." However, because interviews were used, tests of statistical significance were not conducted.

In both the Shireman and Johnson (1986) and the Johnson et al. (1987) studies, limitations of the studies may have substantially hindered the validity of the studies. First, the study's methodology was poorly reported so that, without further elaboration from the authors, the study's replicability would be nearly impossible to achieve. A second limitation comes from their chosen measures for the constructs identified. The use of interview data and the Clark Doll test to measure psychological adjustment, racial identity, and sexual identity may have been questionable means for securing reliable and

valid results due to the subjective nature of the reports and analyses. Third, a ceiling effect may account for the differing patterns of racial identity development. The transracial adoptees had already been shown to have greater awareness of and preference for dolls of their own race, thus subsequent trials would inhibit their ability to increase levels of preference because they may have already responded at the highest levels.

Furthermore, Tizard and Phoenix (1994) reviewed the Clark Doll Test citing that studies using the test tended to interpret findings to indicate that "black children experience self-rejection and low self-esteem because they internalize white people's negative view of their race" (p. 91). Identity confusion, manifested by Black children misidentifying themselves as White, was believed to be due to a denial of the individual's color and racial group membership. As more studies were conducted using the Clark Doll Tests, later studies found lower proportions of children misidentifying as White. However, despite its use in early studies, Tizard and Phoenix noted that "the findings of the doll and photograph studies do not directly attest to racial identity," (p. 92). In fact, multiple measures have sought to assess racial identity, but as Hollingsworth (1997) suggested, a commonly agreed upon, valid measure and definition of racial identity must be obtained before studies such as those reviewed above can have their intended impact.

Psychological Adjustment, Self-Esteem, and Racial Identity

As noted previously, many studies of transracial adoption have attempted to address the criticisms of transracial adoption by determining the degree to which the criticisms were accurate and commonly found among adoptees. Because much of the

criticism regarding transracial adoption predicts psychological maladjustment, low levels of self-esteem, and racial identity diffusion, the empirically based studies have attempted to address these concerns either as a whole or in various combinations. The review to follow briefly describes these studies and their findings, and offers critiques and comments where appropriate. An important consideration regarding the following studies is the methodology and experimental rigor utilized in each investigation. In many of the early studies (e.g., Simon & Alstein, 1977; Zastrow, 1977), the psychological adjustment of transracial adoptees was assessed based on the adoptive parents' perceptions of their adoptive child. In other studies (e.g., Andujo, 1988; McRoy et al., 1982, 1984), the adoptees themselves were the reporters of adjustment, and in a small number of studies (e.g., Alstein, Coster, First-Hartling, Ford, Glasoe, Hairston, Kasoff, & Wellborn Grier, 1994), trained observers (e.g., research technicians and psychologists) contributed to measures of adjustment. As will be reflected in the present author's comments and critiques, the findings of the studies may only be as powerful as the methodology used to obtain them.

In an early study of transracial adoption conducted by Falk (1970), the experiences of couples adopting either transracially or intraracially were compared. The study was conducted with 186 transracially adopting couples and 170 intraracially adopting couples. The subjects were matched on the population of their community, the age of the adopting mother, the age of the adoptee at placement, and the year of placement. Using a questionnaire developed specifically for the study, Falk asked the

adoptive parents to complete the questionnaire. The results of the study indicated that, based on the perceptions of adoptive parents, transracial adoptees were more likely to have problematic adjustment than intraracial adoptees. Falk also found that the adoptive parents of the transracial adoptees expected their Black children to have more problems with such experiences as school, dating, and employment. Moreover, fewer transracially adopting parents stated less willingness to recommend adoption to others or to do it again than did intraracially adopting parents. With respect to characteristics of the parents, transracially adopting parents tended to be more active in their community organizations, to be more geographically and socially distant from friends and relatives, to be married longer prior to the adoption, and to be more likely to have children by birth. This study has several limitations. First, Falk did not report any validation of the questionnaire used nor did he provide a sample of items. Second, as noted above, using parental reports of adjustment must be cautiously interpreted due to their potential bias and inaccuracy. However, in general the findings tend to support those who harbor some skepticism about transracial adoption.

In a 1977 study by Zastrow, the outcome of transracial placements of Black children with White parents was studied and compared to the outcome of intraracial placements of White children with White parents. Families adopting transracially were matched with families adopting intraracially in Wisconsin in the early 70s. They were matched on the age of the adopted child and the socioeconomic status of the adoptive parents. All children had to be six years of age or less and adoptions had to finalized prior

to participation. Interviews were conducted with the adoptive parents. The results of this study were intended to provide justification that would either encourage or discourage transracial adoption. Both groups of parents expressed similar ratios of satisfactions to dissatisfactions with their adoptive experience, but the transracially adopting parents expressed more satisfactions in "human relations" whereas the intraracially adopting parents expressed more satisfactions in "parent-child relationships" (p. 82). Overall success of the transracial adoptive experience was assessed through satisfaction ratings of the adoptive parents. Regarding overall satisfaction with the adoptive experience, findings indicated that 81/82 (99%) of the transracially adopting parents and all intraracially adopting parents chose either "extremely satisfying" or "more satisfying than dissatisfying." On the Adoption Satisfaction Scale, both groups of adoptive parents scored similarly (92.1 for both parents in transracially adopting families and 91.1 for husbands and 92.2 for wives of intraracially adopting families. Zastrow (1977) interpreted these findings to indicate that the adjustment of transracial adoptees was determined to be "good," and that transracial adoption was not detrimental to the adoptee. He stated that "the results indicate the outcomes of transracial placements are as 'successful' as for inracial [intraracial] placements" (p. 86). However, Zastrow noted that "because of the close association between parental satisfaction and personality adjustment, adoption agencies have some assurance that if a high level of parents' satisfaction is demonstrated in research of this type, a satisfactory adjustment of the children can also be expected" (p. 11). The interpretation of the findings of this study demonstrate Zastrow's endorsement of

this statement. Therefore, when reviewing Zastrow's conclusions regarding the psychological adjustment of the transracial adoptees in his study, the failure to directly measure the psychological adjustment of the transracial adoptees themselves must be considered. It cannot be assumed that the adoptive parents' perceptions of their children's experience is the same as the actual experiences of the children.

Simon and Alstein (1977) surveyed 204 families who had adopted transracially in the Midwest to determine the relations between the adoptive parents and the transracial adoptees and between the siblings within the families. They also investigated the adoptive parents' perceptions of the adoptees' racial identities and the parents' expectations of the children's future identities. The transracial adoptees included African American, Native American, Korean, Eskimo, and Mexican children. Using projective measures such as the Clark Doll Test, pictures, and other instruments, Simon and Alstein found that transracially adopted children were more "racially color blind and more indifferent to race as a basis for evaluation than any other group reported in any previous study, including studies not only on children in the United States but in Hawaii, New Zealand, and other parts of the world" (p. 1, Simon & Alstein, 1981). They also found that the parents tended to believe that race did not and would not be a major issue in how people perceived, evaluated, or related to each other. These adoptive parents were optimistic but seemingly realistic about the likelihood of their children's emotional/psychological adjustment and about their children's ability to "relate to the culture and society of their adopted parents and to the society of their ethnic origins" (p.

2, Simon & Alstein, 1981).

In a follow-up study, Simon and Alstein (1981) contacted the families from their study published in 1977 to assess the families' subsequent experiences and perceptions. Simon and Alstein were able to contact 71 percent of the original sample (Simon & Alstein, 1977), and had a return rate of 93 percent on their survey questionnaire. They found that similar percentages of families lived in predominantly White neighborhoods (77%) and the remaining families lived in mixed communities. Sixty-three percent of the transracial adoptees reported that most of their friends were White, about one-third had both Black and White friends, and three percent had mostly Black friends. A large majority of the transracial adoptees (74%) were considered to be "doing well" in school with no academic problems or conflicts with teachers, but 14 percent of the children were described as "slow learners" and another 10 percent were "not motivated." The remaining two percent had difficulties with teachers.

The racial identity of the transracial adoptees was assessed by asking parents to report how their adopted children described themselves through racial categories. These reports differed from the reports of the transracial adoptees' actual racial distributions. For example, 65 percent of the adoptees were actually African American, but only 45 percent of the parents believed that their children would identify themselves as Black. None of the children was White, but parents believed that 15 percent of the children would consider themselves White. Simon and Alstein quoted some of the parents' surveys and noted the difficulties some of the children had in identifying themselves. The

contradictory nature of these findings are of interest particularly in comparison with the findings of Shireman and Johnson (1986) and Johnson et al. (1987). Johnson et al. (1987) and Shireman and Johnson (1986) showed that the transracial adoptees had greater awareness of and preference for their racial group membership, but Simon and Alstein's (1981) findings indicate that the transracial adoptees were perhaps less aware of or more reluctant to identify themselves according to their racial group membership. These differences in findings may be due to the sources of the reports. In the Johnson et al. and Shireman and Johnson studies, the transracially adopted children themselves were assessed; however, in the Simon and Alstein study the parents of the transracial adoptees were the sources of the information. However, the results of these studies could also be interpreted as supportive of the predictions and criticisms of opponents to transracial adoption.

Silverman and Feigelman (1981) studied the psychological adjustment of transracially adopted Black children as compared to the effects of delayed placement of children. Based on reports in the literature regarding increased opposition from family and friends toward transracial adoption, especially adoption of Black children, Silverman and Feigelman stated that "it seems probable that the hostility that does exist toward transracially adopted Black children does have some negative effect on their adjustment" (p. 531). However, they also noted that delayed placement of transracial adoptees would be likely to have an effect on the adjustment of transracial adoptees. Silverman and Feigelman compared 56 White families who transracially adopted Black children and 97

White families who intraracially adopted White children on an index of maladjustment. This index consisted of responses to questions for parents regarding the adoptees overall adjustment and the frequency of emotional, growth, and physical problems for the adoptees. They found that both "family opposition" and "age at adoption" were significant predictors of maladjustment. Significant differences in adjustment were found for the Black children. However, when controlling for the children's age at adoption, the effects of the race of the child on scores of maladjustment were no longer significant. Silverman and Feigelman concluded that these findings "imply that when a choice must be made between transracial placement and continued foster or institutional care, transracial placement is clearly the option most conducive to the welfare of the child" (p. 535).

McRoy et al. (1982) looked at both the self-esteem and racial identity of 30 transracially adopted Black children as compared to 30 intraracially adopted Black children. The mean age of the children in the sample was 13. 5 years. They found no differences in self-esteem on the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale between Black children who had been either transracially or intraracially adopted. Of these children, 22 (73%) were racially mixed with at least one Black parent. The Twenty Statements Test was also used and revealed that transracial adoptees were more likely to make racial self-referents and to acknowledge their adoption status than were intraracial adoptees. In addition, interviews consisting of 95 items were conducted with the adoptive parents. These interview items addressed demographic information of the family, adoption experiences, composition of the adoptees' school and community environments, relationships, and

parental beliefs and attitudes about the adoptees' racial identity. McRoy et al. (1982) interpreted some of these interview data as indicating that transracial adoptees who lived in racially integrated communities, attended integrated schools, and whose parents "accepted their child's black racial identity" (p. 525) tended to have more positive feelings about their racial group membership than those transracial adoptees who had little contact with people of their racial group and whose parents de-emphasized their children's racial identity.

McRoy et al. (1984), using the transracial adoptee sample from the McRoy et al. (1982) study, detailed the interview data from McRoy et al. (1982) more extensively. Many of the findings replicated the findings from the interviews reported by McRoy et al. (1982), were interpreted similarly, and were applied to distinguish the sociopsychological context that affects the "development of racial self-feelings among transracially adopted children" (p. 38). The findings from this study were influential in increasing the understanding of the impact of the environment on transracial adoptees' beliefs, attitudes, and feelings about their racial group membership. Although these findings provided important information for transracially adopting parents, they may also differ in present-day-society due to changes in the social climate unique to each decade.

Another study addressing identity issues for transracial ("transethnic") adoptees was conducted by Andujo (1988). This study revealed some of the implicit judgments made within the social work field regarding transracial adoption. Andujo studied 60 Mexican American children between 12 and 17 years of age, half of whom were adopted

by White parents and the other half of whom were adopted by Mexican American parents. No differences were found in the level of self-esteem as measured using the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale between the transracially adopted and intraracially adopted children. Differences were found between acculturation levels (using the Mexican-American Value Attitude Scale) and the ways in which parents dealt with preparing their children to deal with racism; however, these differences were moderated by the socioeconomic status of the families. Families adopting intraracially but in high-income levels tended to rear their children similarly to those adopting transracially (i.e., higher acculturation level and the de-emphasizing of ethnicity). In discussing these findings and their implications, a bias of the investigator and, possibly of the field of social work (i.e., Andujo is an assistant professor of social work) was clearly indicated.

> The denial of one's heritage and emphasis on a "human identity" is potentially problematic: Adoptees who physically appear Mexican American may view themselves as different from other Mexican Americans and thus deny any connection with their ethnicity. . . . Because a majority of the transethnic adoptees studied had not developed a positive sense of ethnicity (manifested as pride in their ethnic roots and appearance), these individuals may not have reconciled their inner and outer experiences. (p. 534)

These statements demonstrate explicitly the value judgments placed upon ethnic identity. Andujo's assumption regarding what constitutes a "positive" ethnic identity has not been empirically demonstrated by either her study or by other studies on ethnic or racial identity. In fact, Andujo found similar levels of self esteem among adoptees despite their different ethnic identities. Therefore, the definition of a positive sense of ethnic identity may come from a value judgment regarding the "best way to be a Mexican

American" rather than from empirically demonstrated evidence on what constitutes a positive ethnic identity for transracial adoptees (Tizard & Phoenix, 1994). Furthermore, the "denial of one's heritage" is not unique to transracial adoptees and can occur among other racial ethnic minorities raised by their biological parents.

As this review suggests, several studies have been conducted demonstrating the relationship between racial/ethnic identity and self-esteem and/or psychological adjustment in transracial adoptees. However, many of these studies have yielded varying results making interpretation of the outcomes difficult. In a recent paper, Hollingsworth (1997) conducted a meta-analytic review of empirical studies which addressed the racial/ethnic identity and self-esteem of transracial adoptees. To be included in the review, the empirical studies had to meet the following criteria: (a) were conducted on transracial adoptees in the United States, (b) made use of comparison groups; (c) included comparison groups of Caucasian families adopting non-White children (transracial adoptions), non-White families adopting same-race children (intraracial adoption), and/or non-White biological children; (d) collected data directly from the transracial adoptees; (e) categorized biracial children based on the birth parent from a racial ethnic minority group in America; and (f) used racial/ethnic identity and self-esteem as dependent variables. Hollingsworth expected to find that transracial adoption would have a moderate effect on the racial/ethnic identity and self-esteem of transracial adoptees. This was partially supported by the data. The effect was in the negative direction indicating that transracial adoption was related to slightly lower racial/ethnic identity or self-esteem

levels for transracial adoptees when compared to that of intraracial adoptees. However, when self-esteem and racial identity were analyzed separately, adoption status (transracial versus intraracial) was not related to lower levels of self-esteem but it was related to lower levels of racial/ethnic identity. Hollingsworth also found that the age of transracial adoptees at the time when the studies occurred impacted the effect of transracial adoption on racial identity. This finding suggests that racial/ethnic identity may decrease as the transracial adoptees become older. However, the mean ages of the children in each of the studies were below age 18. In only five of the nine included samples of transracial adoptees, the adoptees had mean ages in adolescence. The fact that the adoptees were adolescents may reflect the process of identity formation and racial identity formation through which the adoptees may be progressing.

The meta-analytic review (Hollingsworth, 1997) also revealed that heterogeneity among the studies exists. This heterogeneity was explained by determining that the publication source (i.e., journal articles vs. meeting presentations vs. theses), the year of publication, the geographical recruitment area, and the sample size served as potential moderators of the effects found in the study. Hollingsworth identified the study conducted by Andujo (1988) as an outlier due to its large effect size. Without inclusion of the effect size of the Andujo (1988) study, the homogeneity of the studies in the meta-analysis would have increased, thereby allowing greater generalization of the results of the meta-analysis. Hollingsworth suggested that one explanation for the Andujo (1988) study as an outlier may be due to differences between biracial children as in the McRoy et al. (1984)

study and children who were Mexican American. Because many of the transracial adoptees included in the Andujo (1988) and McRoy et al. (1984) studies were biracial, their physical or phenotypic appearance and racially-mixed heritage may have impacted their racial identity statuses. Hollingsworth further noted the importance of studying differential effects of transracial adoption on children of racially mixed heritage.

The reviews of the above studies were primarily based on domestic transracial adoptions. Although some of the studies included adoptees who may have been born in foreign countries, the focus of the studies was on their adjustment, racial identity, and/or self-esteem as a result of being transracially adopted in America. As the following set of studies will demonstrate, other researchers have specifically addressed the transracial adoption of foreign-born children by American families. Unique to those studies is the attention paid to the adoptees' pre-placement histories and the controversy surrounding intercountry adoptions.

Intercountry/international transracial adoptees in the United States.

As a result of the political nature of transracial adoption placements in the United States, the criticism of such placements has restricted and complicated the adoption of Black children by White parents. In recent years, various developing countries around the world have allowed people from other countries to adopt the children from these countries. Alstein, Coster, First-Hartling, Ford, Glasoe, Hairston, Kasoff, and Wellborn Grier (1994) estimated that "since the mid-1950s, more than 100,000 foreign-born children have been adopted by American families" (p. 262). They also cited that foreign

born children are still being adopted by Americans at a rate of approximately 10,000 per year—about one-sixth of all nonrelative adoptions.

Although the Republic of Korea was, at one time, the primary source of foreign-born children who were adoptable, other countries have opened their doors as well. Currently, China represents a large source of intercountry/transracial adoptions. With a large number of transracial adoptees being adopted from foreign countries having different cultural practices, religions, and languages, the previous studies focusing primarily on Black children adopted by White parents may not adequately address the issues surrounding intercountry/transracial adoptions. Factors such as prejudice, racism, and cultural differences still apply; however, additional factors of stereotypes and language difficulties for each of the racial and cultural groups involved must be examined. Because many of the female children being adopted from China were abandoned due to strict birth rate laws (Bagley, 1993a), these children tend to have less information about their personal histories and their medical histories and they tend to have experienced the additional trauma that accompanies abandonment.

Due to the tendency of foreign-born children to be older at the time of their adoption, many researchers have focused their work on examining the effects of age at adoption on adjustment. Welter (1965) compared 36 foreign-born adoptees with American adoptees who were matched on several characteristics. All adoptees were between four and 12 years of age at adoption. Welter found no significant differences in the number of problems expressed. However, foreign-born adoptees reported fewer

"inter-psychic-interpersonal" problems but more cultural problems. Overall, the adjustment of the foreign-born adoptees was higher than that of the American-born adoptees.

Kim (1977) studied Korean transracial adoptees. His sample was 406 Korean and Black-Korean children between 12 and 17 years of age and adopted by White parents. The sample was divided into a group of 195 children who were adopted before age one and 211 who were adopted after age six. At the time of the assessments, the adoptees were adolescents ranging in age from 12 to 17 years of age. Kim was interested in studying the issue of identity among transracially adopted adolescents. He administered the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale and a questionnaire. Although all of the transracial adoptees had "good adjustment," those adopted earlier (before one year of age) were more well-adjusted in all areas than were the older adoptees.

In another study of Korean transracial adoptees, Kim, Hong, and Kim (1979) examined the adjustment of 12 adoptees having a mean age of five years two months reared by New York families. The children were adopted after age three. Kim et al. found many learning and behavioral problems in the children. These problems were interpreted to be related to English language acquisition problems, acculturation problems, and the shock of "transcultural transplantation." However, these findings must be viewed with caution given the lack of a comparison group for examining results. Despite the likely problem of finding a comparison group of Korean adoptees reared by Korean families given the cultural and practical restraints that rarely if ever resulted in this form of

intraracial adoption, the findings of Kim et al. (1979) study must be interpreted with this limitation in mind.

Alstein, Coster, First-Hartling, Ford, Glasoe, Hairston, Kasoff, and Wellborn Grier (1994) reported data from interviews done with 29 young adult transracial adoptees who were born in Asian countries. The interviews addressed the adoptees' psychological adjustment, their relationships with their adoptive families, their academic achievement, friendships, activities, ambitions, and religious practices. The data for the study consisted of the interviewers' reports of their clinical observations. The interviewers noted that "practically all adoptees felt that the adoption made absolutely no difference in family dynamics and that the parent-adoptee relationship was the same as with biological children and their families" (p. 265). They also concluded their data "do not appear to show any distinct differences that would lead to the expectation that being adopted a priori causes trauma" (p. 265). The observations comprising the data for this study were compelling evidence regarding the impact of transracial adoption. However, as with all interview data and clinical observations, the data must be considered with caution.

In a recent case review of transracial adoptions of Korean children, Kim (1995) noted that "the transracial adoption of Asian children has not received much scientific attention nor controversy" (p. 142). However, despite its lack of attention, this group has increased for many years and Korean children comprise the large majority of these adoptees in the United States. Between the years of 1976 and 1981, approximately 50% of all foreign adoptions in the U.S. and 59% in 1986, were of Korean children (Kim,

1995). Although the numbers have decreased and the Korean government has recently begun to discourage international adoption, the adoption of Korean children by American couples continues to occur. Kim estimated that 80,000 Korean children have been adopted by American families. Kim cited the social and cultural factors in Korea that contributed to the high availability of Korean children for adoption, but he also noted that stereotypes of the Asian countries have made these children popular for transracial adoptions.

In Kim's review of the literature on Korean adoptees, he grouped findings according to developmental periods. His findings suggested that "Korean children seem to be doing better than adoptees of other ethnic groups" (p. 149). Of particular interest is his finding that although Korean adoptees did better academically, received less professional psychiatric care for problems, and did better in emotional, developmental, social, and academic areas than did White or Black adoptees, the Korean adoptees showed more discomfort about their appearance than did White adoptees. Kim also reported findings indicating the adoptees often identified themselves as "American" rather than "Korean-American" or "Korean." Due to Kim's conclusion that the Korean adoptees did better than others, he developed some hypotheses regarding this finding. He suggested that they may have been less traumatized prior to adoption than others. Other explanations offered for their adjustment were the lower prevalence of child abuse in Korea due to the high value placed on children, the self-fulfilling prophesies of positive outcomes for Korean adoptees, the lower risk of behavioral and emotional problems in

girls coupled with the greater numbers of adopted Korean girls, and the temperamental fit of Korean children within American culture.

Transracial Adoption in Foreign Countries

Although the controversy about the practice of transracial adoption has not been limited to America, some professionals believe that race relations, the history of racial tension, and the diversity of races in the United States make transracial placements in the U.S. qualitatively different from transracial adoption in other countries (Hollingsworth, 1997). These differences are likely to have an impact on the psychological adjustment and racial identity of transracial adoptees. However, despite the social and political differences that exist among America, the United Kingdom, and The Netherlands (i.e., the three countries where transracial adoption has primarily been studied), the findings from the studies in countries outside America are of value and can inform the current study.

In a review of the empirical evidence regarding intercountry adoption, Tizard (1991) cited many of the criticisms that have been lodged by the Third World and some Western social workers, especially in Britain, against intercountry adoption. Those opposing intercountry adoption have called the "practice . . . a new form of colonialism, with wealthy Westerners robbing poor countries of their children, and thus their resources" (p. 746). Moreover, national pride is involved in the debate. Implied by the practice of intercountry adoption is that these countries cannot care for their own children. Knowledge of the abuses of intercountry adoptions in some countries causes wariness and fears of "trafficking in children" and children being bought and sold by "baby brokers."

However, the "fundamental" criticism of intercountry adoption is that "children adopted from Third World countries will lose access to their own culture and their roots, and will have a confused identity. In addition they will be exposed to racism, an evil which they would not meet in their own country" (p. 746). Bagley (1993a) added other criticisms made against intercountry adoption. Some critics believe intercountry adoptions distort patterns of child welfare in the countries from which the children are adopted. Other critics fear parents may place children for adoption to receive financial rewards or because they do not understand adoption. Lastly, critics suggest that wealthy but possibly "unsuitable" parents can adopt due to their wealth.

Despite these criticisms, intercountry adoption continues to be practiced. Tizard (1991) reviewed studies on intercountry adoptees and found that the patterns of results resembled findings in intracountry adoptions and that "as a group, adopted children have no more problems than other children, whilst others found slightly higher levels of disturbance at specific ages, especially in boys . . . However, it should be stressed that in both intracountry and intercountry adoption the majority of children have no more behavioral and emotional problems than non-adopted children" (p. 750). Tizard also reported findings indicating that when parents and children were more satisfied with the adoption, the children had a greater tendency to have a positive self-image and fewer behavioral problems.

In the 1960's, Britain faced several of the same concerns regarding transracial adoption that America faced. To better formulate policy, to understand the effects of

transracial adoption, and to answer the question o whether families be found for "colored children," the British Adoption Project (BAP) was enacted (as cited in Gill & Jackson, 1983). Fears regarding the availability of families willing to adopt transracially did not come to fruition. After placing non-White children with White families, the families were assessed. Interviews were conducted with families regarding health, development, personality, social and family relationships and problems possibly due to the child having been adopted and his/her race. The interviewer and independent rater rated the adjustment and progress of the children. Findings indicated that 94 percent of the transracial adoptees made "very good" or "satisfactory" adjustment. Greater than 75 percent of the parents were assessed as making "very good" or "satisfactory" adjustment as adoptive parents. As with previously reported studies, no comparison group was included, thus limiting the applicability of the findings.

Harper (1986) published findings on a study of the transracial adoption of older children in Australia. All adoptees for the study were at least four years old at the time of adoption. Twelve girls and 15 boy from Sri Lanka, India, Korea, Indonesia, South America, and Thailand comprised the sample. The mean age of the adoptees was 10 years eight months. Questionnaires were mailed to families. Adoptive parents reported multiple transition problems faced by the children, particularly problems with deprivation, culture, past experiences and trauma, and communication. Harper cited the importance of the child's past as having a powerful influence on adjustment. Harper stated, "important in this respect is the parents' attitude to the child's racial past and their commitment to

keeping alive the cultural heritage through a continuing process of acculturation" (p. 30). Harper found the overall "success" rating for the transracial adoption was "good up to the time of the follow-up and suggests that older-aged inter-country adoptions are able to catch up physically and emotionally and integrate into a new family and culture" (p. 30).

Verhulst, a Dutch psychiatrist and professor, and his colleagues published a series of three papers reporting on the problem behavior in international adoptees. In the initial paper, Verhulst, Althaus, and Versluis-den Bieman (1990a) compared 2,148 international adoptees who were between the ages of 10 and 15 with 933 children matched on age from the general, nonadopted population. In the group of international adoptees, 32% were Korean, 14.6% were Colombian, 9.5% were Indian, 7.9% were Indonesian, 6.7% were from Bangladesh, 4.9% were Lebanese, 5% were Austrian, 4.2% were from other European countries, and the remaining 15.2% were from other non-European countries. The children's parents were administered the Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL). Although they reported findings indicating that the adopted children engaged in more externalizing problem behavior, such behavior accounted for less than 1% of the variance in problem behavior. Problem scores increased with age for the adopted children and decreased for the nonadopted children. An interaction between sex and adoption status was also found with adopted boys having higher problem scores than adopted girls. However, Verhulst et al. (1990a) found that when those scoring above the 90th percentile were excluded from analyses, the effect of adoption status was no longer significant. This indicated that the differences found between adopted and nonadopted children "could be

attributed to a minority of boys' extremely high scores" (p. 97). When the highest scoring children from both samples were excluded in the analyses, Verhulst et al. found the majority of adopted children had scores in the same range as nonadopted children.

Among adopted boys between 12 and 15 years of age, more than twice as many scored above the clinical criteria for problem behavior than did nonadopted boys in the same age range. Boys in this age range had higher scores than nonadopted boys in this age range on the hyperactive, delinquent, and externalizing scales. Adopted girls in the same age range were given significantly higher scores on the schizoid scale. According to parents' ratings, the internationally adopted children were seen as less competent in social and academic functioning than nonadopted children but were viewed as more active and better functioning in sports and nonsports activities. Furthermore, internationally adopted children having lower socioeconomic statuses were found to be perceived as having higher academic performances and fewer school problems than those from higher socioeconomic statuses. This finding may be due to differences in parental expectations in the different income levels. The authors also advised caution in generalizing their findings because, as they noted, "the extent to which many important factors, possibly associated with causative mechanisms, such as ethnic background, age at placement, and negative experiences, may differ markedly across samples in different studies" (p. 102).

In their second paper in the series, Verhulst, Althaus, and Versluis-den Bieman (1990b) reported on the effects of international adoptees' age at placement on the scores given by parents on the CBCL. Verhulst et al. (1990b) recognized the "elevated risk of

maladjustment" that international adoptees have due to such factors as genetic vulnerability, personal and social stress of birth parents, potentially poor prenatal and perinatal care, birth hazards, malnourishment, and negative environmental influences. The authors also cited the possibility of poor social relationships and interactional styles due to institutionalized living. For those international adoptees who also are transracial adoptees (approximately 80-95% of the sample according to their report of racial ethnic backgrounds), Verhulst et al. cited transracial adoptees' increased vulnerability due to their "different appearance" (p. 104) causing them to feel "excluded from other family members or peers" (p. 104). Although no consensus has been reached regarding the optimal age for adoption placement and because evidence has been found demonstrating selective attachments to adoptive parents in adoptees placed at three and four years of age, the authors did a commendable job attempting to determine the risk for behavioral and emotional problems and the patterns of maladjustment that age at placement presents in international adoptees.

Using the same sample of children as reported by Verhulst et al. (1990a), Verhulst et al. (1990b) assessed the effects that the international adoptees' ages at the time of adoption had on their problem behavior scores. They found that the older the children were at the time of their adoption, the greater the probability that they would develop behavioral/emotional problems. In addition, older age at placement was also associated with a greater risk for lower performance in school. Among international adoptees 12 to 15 years of age, those older when adopted tended to have a higher risk for receiving high

scores on the delinquent and uncommunicative syndromes if they were boys and on the cruel, depressed, and schizoid syndromes if they were girls.

In the final paper of the series, Verhulst, Versluis-den Bieman, Van der Ende, Berden, and Sanders-Woudstra (1990c) addressed the prevalence of international adoptees being diagnosed with psychiatric disorders. Based on parental ratings on the CBCL in the first paper in the series (Verhulst et al., 1990a) and using that same sample, 66 international adoptees who were 14 years old and had scores above the 85th percentile were chosen and matched according to age and country of origin with 67 international adoptees from the original sample but who did not score above the 85th percentile. The adoptees were interviewed using the Child Assessment Schedule, were administered the WISC-R short form, completed the Youth Self Report (a self-report form of the CBCL), and were given a DSM-III diagnosis and a severity rating. The adoptive parents were interviewed using a questionnaire and the adoptees' teachers completed a Teacher Report Form (a teacher version of the CBCL). Based on the ratings, a "disordered" and a "nondisordered" group were determined. Verhulst et al. (1990c) found that boys tended to exhibit more disruptive behavior whereas girls reported poor peer relations and depression. For all problem areas, the "disordered" group had higher mean scores with antisocial behavior accounting for 34% of the variance. Twenty-five percent of the variance was accounted for by school problems and poor relations with parents. Higher scores were also found for the "disordered" boys over girls than for the children in the "nondisordered" group. A 28% prevalence rate for psychiatric disorders was found in this

sample with a 22% rate among girls and a 36% rate among boys. Conduct disorders were more frequently found among these adolescents than in general population samples. The authors also reported that "disordered" international adoptees tended to exhibit behavior characterized by antisocial behaviors, poor relationships, and problems of affect.

Verhulst, Althaus, and Versluis-den Bieman (1992) conducted a study examining the effects of international adoptees' backgrounds on their adjustment. They cited increased risk for maladjustment due to prenatal and perinatal factors (e.g., maternal stress during pregnancy, poor/inadequate prenatal and perinatal care, malnutrition and infectious diseases of birth mother during pregnancy) and due to factors after the birth (e.g., malnutrition and medical conditions, poor adult-child relationships and inconsistent caretaking, deprivation, abuse, acquisition of survival behaviors not adaptive in adoptive family, and influences in the adoptive environment including family, school, and social interactions). Using the same sample as described in Verhulst et al. (1990a), the authors sought to gain an explanation for the finding regarding age at placement (Verhulst et al., 1990b). They suggested that one explanation may be that when a child is older at the time of adoption, the child may have been exposed to negative environmental influences. Other explanations could be that older children have formed strong attachments to caretakers and adoption requires coping with the trauma of the loss, that adoptive parents may have difficulty adjusting to older children already having unfamiliar habits and behaviors, and that older children have more adjustments to make (e.g., language acquisition). Findings indicated that "the majority of children who had backgrounds

known to be damaging seemed to function quite well. . . apparently, the negative effects of early adverse influences can fade away under the positive influences by the adoptive family" (p. 522). However, they also found that when children were subjected to early, negative environmental influences, they had a greater probability of exhibiting maladaptive behaviors at a later age.

In a study of transracial adoptions in Britain, Bagley (1993b) reported on a follow-up of a study conducted by Bagley in 1979. In the 1979 study, 30 Black or mixed-race transracially adopted children were compared with 30 Caucasian intraracially adopted children, with 30 Black and mixed-race children in foster or group care, and with 24 children in a "nonseparated comparison group" (p. 289). All children were between six and eight years old. Bagley reported that the transracially adopted children had "generally good psychological outcomes in terms of a number of standardized measures of adjustment, although some Caucasian parents had few black friends and were unable or unwilling to transmit to their children any consciousness or pride in the heritage of being black" (p. 289). Bagley also reported findings regarding background characteristics thought to impact racial awareness in adoptive parents. He found that adoptive parents of higher social status, who were older, and who already had existing children in the family were more racially aware. These parents tended to make a conscious decision to adopt a mixed-race child rather than adopting due to infertility.

In a follow-up of that study, Bagley (1993b) studied transracial adoptees in Britain and found that the adjustment and identity of transracial adoptees as measured by the

Middlesex Hospital Questionnaire and measures of self-esteem, identity, ego identity, and self-image were "generally excellent" (p. 285). He also found that the percentage of adoptees described as being poorly adjusted or having identity problems among transracial adoptees was approximately the same among intraracial adoptees. Bagley concurred with the findings of previous studies of transracial adoptees and noted, "transracial adoption may be qualitatively different from inracial [intraracial] adoption in terms of identity outcomes, but it is by no means inferior in terms of identity and adjustment" (p. 293).

Chinese transracial adoptees who were raised in Britain were also the subject of a study conducted by Bagley (1993a). Bagley described the dilemma in the People's Republic of China where female children are frequently hidden, placed in orphanages, adopted by friends or relatives, or, in the worst cases, killed at birth. Because of Chinese social structure (male children care for aging parents and girls are "given" to their husbands' families) and because China has policies on the number of children permitted per household, female children have frequently been adopted internationally. He reported on the initial investigation involving these adoptees. In that study, 67 of the transracially adopted Chinese girls were interviewed and completed reports. At the time of the study, the girls were between 12 and 18 years old. This study was based on the work of Erikson (1968) and the degree to which the transracial adoptees' identity formation had allowed for adequate adjustment. Bagley concluded that there were "few problems of identity" (Bagley, 1993a, p. 149) and that "the only negative feature was some degree of anxiety

and over-protection in about 10 percent of parents" (p. 149). These girls' self-esteem was compared to 100 control subjects matched for age and sex but not for social class and the findings indicated that the adoptees had significantly better self-esteem than the control group. The identity development of the adoptees was also assessed and Bagley (1993b) found that the level of self-esteem and the level of identity development (ego strength) did not vary significantly according to the degree to which adoptive parents "emphasized the difference between cultural origins of the child and themselves" (p. 150).

Bagley (1993b) conducted a follow-up of this study when the Chinese transracially adopted "girls" were between 22 and 28 years old. The follow-up was with 44 of the original sample and interviews were again conducted. The women also completed the Middlesex Hospital Questionnaire, the revised Coopersmith Self-Esteem Scale for adults, a measure of personal orientation and self-actualization, and a measure of self-sentiment. Comparisons were made with control subjects (2 for each adoptee) and no significant differences were found between the transracial adoptees and the control subjects. Moreover, the women had high levels of educational and occupational attainment with only three women having "manifest problems of mental health or adjustment" (p. 153). With regard to the women's ethnic identity as determined by self-identification and items about the women's satisfaction with their adopted families, all of the women identified themselves as English and approximately half "maintained a strong emotional or intellectual interest in Chinese culture and institutions" (p. 152).

Counseling Transracial Adoptees

After the NABSW (1972) first issued their statement predicting the problems and psychological maladjustment expected to accompany transracial adoption, the vast majority of the literature addressing the adjustment of transracial adoptees focused on either proving or disproving the predictions of the NABSW. Relatively little work actually addressed the counseling and psychotherapy needs of transracial adoptees. Most studies have attempted to determine the conditions under which transracial adoption should take place; that is, families adopting transracially should consider how they feel about having a child of a different race than they are, what levels of integration to seek in schools, neighborhoods, and communities, at which age ranges they should adopt, etc. (e.g., Gill & Jackson, 1983; Grow & Shapiro, 1974; Silverman & Feigelman, 1981). By focusing on these considerations, transracial adoption researchers have frequently failed to address transracial adoptees' psychological adjustment *after* the adoption has taken place. In the adoption researcher's preoccupation with demonstrating the effects of transracial adoption, they have yet to study transracial adoptees as they actually are. As Hill and Peltzer suggested, "our philosophy was that where adoption of black children by white parents was already a fact, something needed to be done to help those existing families with the problems of raising a minority child in our society" (p. 5.61). Hayes (1993) suggested that the determination of the "best interests of the child" has often been overlooked due to greater attention to the political agendas of many involved in the transracial adoption debate. The few papers on counseling transracial adoptees reinforces

the position taken by Hayes.

Transracial adoption has and will continue to take place, thus complicating the issue. What about the transracial adoptees who have already been placed? If they need psychological services, what do we do for them? The question, then, becomes what, how, when, by whom, and for whom should psychologists and social workers address psychological interventions? Should we assume that all racial ethnic minorities have homogenous experiences that all indicate similar treatment? Or should we take the approach that according to each individual's racial group membership, particular cross-cultural counseling techniques can be utilized? Or perhaps we could take a universal approach to counseling and assume all counseling is cross-cultural? Regardless of the question that we choose to make primary, the vast amount of multicultural counseling literature available demonstrates the need to at least consider transracial adoptees as a unique group and with potentially unique counseling needs.

Unfortunately, a review of the literature revealed few studies addressing the counseling needs of transracial adoptees. The literature that does exist is brief and prescriptive. No empirical literature addressing the counseling process or counseling preferences or counseling needs of transracial adoptees was located in the literature review. The few published papers on counseling transracial adoptees were written by social workers, a rehabilitation counselor, school counselors, and family and children researchers. The single study conducted by a psychologist was conducted in a joint social work and psychology department (Richard Liow, 1994). This demonstrates that

psychologists as a whole and counseling psychologists in particular have yet to contribute to the professional literature on transracial adoptees. Although the population of transracial adoptees is relatively small as compared to the population of the United States, this unique group of individuals has a set of unique experience which may require sensitivity to the cultural and racial differences between the adoptees and their parents. First, however, the existing literature addressing the counseling needs of transracial adoptees must be reviewed.

The first paper to address counseling and transracial adoption focused on groupwork done with adoptive parents (Rathbun & Kolodny, 1967). The group took place in Massachusetts at an adoption agency. The group consisted of the adoptive parents of five pre-adolescent Chinese girls adopted from Hong Kong. All adoptive parents in the group had biological children as well. The group met 10 times and was described as evolving from a group intended to assist the adoption agency to a group that served as a support source for parents experiencing similar changes. The paper addressed transracial adoptees' cultural adjustments as they were related to age at adoption, language acquisition, comfort and adjustment to their new family, the potential marginality the children would encounter, and the conflict between aiding the children in acculturating to America versus maintaining ties to and schooling within the children's Chinese culture. The group served primarily as a support group in which the group leader gave no advice. The lack of advice given was clearly demonstrated by the authors' account of the "disguised racial hostility" of some of the parents. The authors' quoted some of the

parents as saying racially derogatory remarks in an attempt to "prepare" their daughter for racist remarks when she grew older. However, rather than reframing the remarks to the daughter and explaining both how to cope with the remarks and how to understand them, the parents used remarks such as "crazy as a Chinaman" and "chink" "so that their daughter would know first that they could be made by people who love you [her] and were not meant to be derogatory" (p. 120). The report of this groupwork clearly demonstrated the tremendous amount of work still needing to be done in this area.

Groupwork was again the chosen modality in a report by Hill and Peltzer (1982). The authors served as facilitators of 13 educational and therapeutic groups for White parents of Black children (i.e., they included single parents of biracial children and transracially adoptive parents and parents in interracial marriages with biracial children). The authors clearly stated a position in which they expressed concern over White parents' ability to properly parent Black children in a racist, inconsistent, and socially unjust society due to White parents' "endemic racism." They also considered children having a White and a Black birth parent as Black although they occasionally acknowledged the children's biracial status. The goals of the groups were initially to enable White parents to "examine their own self-esteem and self-concept issues; to identify their own racism, the racism of others, and institutional racism; and, to understand how racism impacts upon their lives" (p. 565) so the parents could raise their children with "positive black identities." The composition of each group differed slightly from the others depending on the number/presence of transracially adoptive parents, single White parents, married or

divorced White birth parents of black/biracial children, and even a single Black parent of a black/biracial child. The groups examined black history and culture, current experiences as black individuals in society, the Black community's perceptions of Black children raised by White parents, the development of a "positive self-concept as a black" (p. 558), parental feelings about having a Black child, the establishment of relationships within the Black community, ways to handle prejudice toward family and child, and difficulties in determining belongingness as well as rejection by both Black and White communities. Hill and Peltzer did a brief and incomplete depiction of the study characteristics and did not provide adequate information on the samples and the methodology to replicate their results. Thus, their conclusions must be considered with caution and their biases must be acknowledged.

Some of their findings were: (a) the groups were more valuable to parents if the children were at least three years old (i.e., has been in socialization process to allow discussion of possible racial incidents); (b) a Black/White co-leader approach is essential to bridge racism and to allow identification models for participants, the mixture of participants "works" (p. 565); (c) children's groups enable children to share common experiences; (d) a therapeutic focus allows strong bonds to be formed for more effective parenting and for personal growth; (e) White parents of Black children need interaction and support from Black community members to enable the children to develop a "positive black identity;" (f) White siblings of Black children need support and help to deal with racism they experience (as related to having a Black sibling) and with their feelings

toward their Black sibling; and (g) "white single parents with black children are at risk without strong support systems" (p. 565). The findings of this study are interesting due to the assumptions and political viewpoints of the authors. They acknowledged their shared belief that all White people have endemic racism to overcome and that Black children raised by either adoptive or birth White parents would have difficulty with their identity. This latter belief indicates a narrowing of focus; rather than both the adoptive experience and the within family racial differences being problematic to identity, Hill and Peltzer seem to be suggesting that the within-family racial differences alone are sufficient to cause identity confusion.

Although the paper by Myer and James (1989) represented one of the few attempts to address counseling needs of transracial adoptees themselves, it was flawed in several areas (Ramos, 1990). Myer and James considered the counseling needs of transracial adoptees from school counselors' perspectives. That, in itself, was not problematic. However, their assumptions regarding some descriptors of transracial adopted children were. For instance, in reference to an Asian or a Latin American intercountry/transracial adoptee, the authors cited a need for flexibility in counseling style to accommodate cultural differences such as that presented by "such reserved and reticent children" (p. 325). This descriptor and suggestion for counseling transracial adoptees not only tends to stereotype the adoptees according to the racial ethnic group to which they belong, but it also fails to account for differences in such things as social and interpersonal skills and cultural practices likely to be found in transracial adoptees.

Because transracial adoptees (depending on their ages at placement) tend to become socialized while residing with their adoptive parents, the same characteristics found among Colombians, for example, will frequently not hold true for Colombian children transracially adopted by White American parents. However, Myer and James (1989) did acknowledge the potential effects of adoptees' pre-placement histories as well as the need to consider those histories when counseling transracial adoptees. Overall, the attempt by Myer and James to address school counseling for transracial adoptees was greatly needed, but some of their problematic suggestions are due to their over-reliance on "cookbook" strategies for cross-cultural counseling and an assumption of older and more maladjusted children rather than on quantitative and qualitative assessments of transracial adoptees as they actually presented for counseling.

Ramos (1990) criticized the suggestions made by Myer and James (1989). Ramos disagreed with the labeling of intercountry/transracial adoptees as "IACs" (internationally adopted children) due to the disrespect for individuality it engenders. Moreover, Ramos objected to Myer and James' assumption that transracial adoptees who are having trouble in their adoptive homes are caught in a double bind. Ramos expressed concern with "their casting the adoptive parents into the role of adversaries without any justification" (Ramos, 1990, p. 149). Ramos also criticized the suggestion of a program to focus on differences of "IACs" because counselors have not consistently validated the different forms all families take (e.g., traditional, single-parent, divorced or separated, remarried, interracial, foster, adoptive, or any combination of these). Ramos concluded by pointing

out that "IACs" need to be perceived as "part of the fabric of our multicultural U.S. society" (p. 150) rather than as "problems."

The psychological effects of counseling and suggestions for counseling were offered by Helwig and Ruthven (1990). They identified several issues as important for adoptive families to address. Some of these issues are directed at the adoptive parents. Adoptive parents who are infertile need to work through issues of infertility and to grieve the infertility otherwise they may "be inappropriate adoptive parents, and they may inadvertently harm their adoptive children" (p. 26). The authors also acknowledged that couples may adopt due to the loss or death or miscarriage of an infant, family member, etc. as a way to ease the pain of loss. Still other couples may adopt when the adoptions are subsidized (e.g., given governmental allowances for adopting some children). Regardless of the reason, Helwig and Ruthven addressed the importance of both acknowledging the reasons for the adoption and for working through those issues. When adoptions take place transracially, the authors cautioned that these families may experience more stress and the adoptee may encounter more difficult circumstances in their development. Parental guilt, problem behavior, and the discovery of physical, emotional, or mental disabilities in the adoptees are some issues possibly faced in transracially adopting families. The adoption of older children was also described as potentially presenting additional issues such as acting out, unknown backgrounds, communication problems, and testing of attachments to the new family. Adoptive parents may also be prone to feel they must be perfect or they will lose their child. Fears that the

children will leave or seek biological/birth parents may also be experienced by adoptive parents given that adoptees frequently choose to seek information about or contact with birth parents.

Counseling interventions to cope with these problems were offered by Helwig and Ruthven (1990). They suggested pre-placement counseling to cope with ambivalent feelings or with the impact of the adoption on the spousal relationship. For older adoptees, strategic interventions for five stages of development were delineated: (a) adjusting to new living situation through identifying elements of the new life; (b) allowing self to experience separation from and loss of birth parents and others and coping with the pain of that loss; (c) learning expression of emotions such as frustration and anger and communicating fear and sadness to adoptive parents; (d) coping with the individuation of the child including identity and self-image struggles; and (e) forming new bonds with the adoptive family and struggling with the fear of rejection by the new family. Other interventions for counseling described in the article included family therapy, conjoint and structural approaches, psychodrama, role-playing, and group therapy. The "Life Books" technique was also suggested in which a scrapbook was assembled using memorabilia, pictures, letters, etc. to give adoptees "a chance to value their unique past histories and to help them achieve a clearer sense of self and individuation" (p. 35). These suggestions by Helwig and Ruthven represent one of the more complete attempts to document the issues and counseling techniques available, but it does not offer any evidence that these techniques and interventions are effective.

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Although counseling interventions were not specifically addressed, Bagley (1992) also identified the theoretical assumptions in adoption as they affect adjustment and as they may direct counseling. Bagley acknowledged the importance and crucial nature of the identity task in adolescence. Transracial adoptees, however, have the added task of "incorporate[ing] into identity structure the knowledge that his or her present parents are not the biological parents, and the knowledge that the original family felt unable to care for their child" (p. 100). Moreover, the "acknowledgment of difference" was found by Kirk (as cited in Bagley, 1992) as being foundational for the development of stability, ego strength, and good mental health. Openness, honesty, and enthusiasm about the adoptees' biological origins were touted as important as was a "frank and cheerful acceptance" (p. 100) of the special and different nature of being adopted. When phenotypic differences exist between adoptive parents and children, Bagley advocated the acceptance or accentuation of difference model. This involves giving knowledge and a "positive emotional orientation to both personal ethnicity, and country of origin" (pp. 100-101).

Rickard Liow (1994) suggested counseling guidelines to facilitate adjustment for families adopting transracially. These guidelines were based on issues arising in the Adoptive Families Group in Singapore. Rickard Liow generated a list of questions, concerns, and issues regarding the adoptees' pre-adoptive history that should be addressed. For example, birthright, ancestry, lineage, culture, and religion were areas that were addressed to facilitate the process of adjustment. This paper represents another attempt to acknowledge issues that transracial adoptees may face. However, its

application is somewhat limited due to its focus on transracial adoptees living in Singapore, because the suggestions seem to be based on intuitive and logical issues in transracial adoption, and because the authors do not provide empirical support for the suggestions. Given the limited amount of work done on the counseling needs of transracial adoptees, the findings from the current study can serve as an additional step toward understanding the effects of race and culture on transracial adoptees adjustment. Using these findings as a base, empirical support for counseling interventions may be garnered.

Background Factors Affecting Adoptees

The study of adoptees tends to take place after the adoptive placement; however, many factors that contributed to the adoption affect the psychological adjustment of the adoptees. These factors occur *prior* to the adoption and are often believed to have a significant effect on the psychological adjustment of transracial adoptees when investigated later in life (e.g., Alstein et al., 1994; Bagley, 1992, 1993a, 1993b; Harper, 1986; Loenen & Hoksbergen, 1986; McRoy et al., 1982; Singer et al., 1985; Verhulst et al., 1990a, 1990b, 1990c, 1992). Bagley (1992) noted that internationally adopted children have frequently experienced early trauma such as abandonment and malnutrition, early neglect, physical illness, low birth weight, and poor prenatal care. Birth mothers often were found to have worked long into pregnancy, often smoked during pregnancy, and had more abnormal conditions during pregnancy. Silverman and Feigelman. (1981) also cited age at adoption as a factor likely to impact psychological adjustment.

Findings from the studies reviewed indicate that transracial adoptees' racial group preferences often depend on the areas in which they live (integrated vs. predominantly White), the schools that they attend (integrated vs. predominantly White), and the attitudes of their parents toward the adoptees' racial group membership (Bagley, 1993b; McRoy et al., 1982; Silverman & Feigelman, 1981). Singer et al. (1985) and Verhulst (1992) also suggested the importance of the number of pre-adoptive placements that children experienced. Family opposition (Silverman & Feigelman, 1981; Singer et al., 1985) and socioeconomic class of the families both transracially and intraracially adopting (Andujo, 1988) were also considered relevant factors for consideration in adjustment. The literature also suggests that regardless of their racial group preferences/objective racial self-identification, transracial adoptees' self-esteem and adjustment tended to be on par with that of intraracial adoptees.

Pre-adoptive history.

Transracial adoptees' personal histories as well as the trauma and negative experiences that they have faced have frequently been cited as potentially affecting the adjustment of transracial adoptees. As noted above, Verhulst et al. (1990b) cautioned that international adoptees tended to be at an "elevated risk of maladjustment" due to genetic vulnerability, personal and social stresses faced by birth parents, poor prenatal and perinatal care, birth hazards, malnourishment, and negative environmental influences. Although they do not specifically detail the "negative influences," other authors describe physical, emotional, and sexual abuse as potential factors affecting adjustment (Verhulst

et al., 1992). Moreover, in the study regarding the "damaging backgrounds" of international adoptees, Verhulst found that in their sample of international adoptees 45% of the adoptees had been neglected, 13% had been abused, 54% had changes in caretakers, and 43% were in poor physical condition when placed in the adoptive family. Six percent of the children had three or more pre-adoptive placements. The findings of the study indicated that these background factors increased the likelihood that children would show more problem behavior at later ages. In those children who had been severely neglected, 24% exhibited problem behavior and in those who had been severely abused, 31% exhibited problem behavior.

Trolley (1994-1995) also suggested that the pre-adoptive history and adjustment to losses of transracial adoptees be considered. She noted the losses faced by transracial, and particularly international, adoptees include not only losses of biological parents, of culture of origin, and of separation from pre-placement caretakers, but also involves losses of familiar foods, language, objects, faces, environment, and frequently even losses of one's name. These losses are also likely to impact adjustment. These findings suggest that transracial adoptees' pre-adoptive histories must be considered as they affect the psychological adjustment and identity issues of the adoptees.

Age at adoption.

Many researchers have cited the age at adoption of transracial adoptees as accounting for differences in the psychological adjustment of the adoptees (Silverman & Feigelman, 1981; Harper, 1986; Kim, 1995; Tizard, 1991; Trolley, 1994-1995).

Silverman and Feigelman's (1981) findings regarding differential adjustment levels in African American transracial adoptees were attributed to their older ages at adoption. In a study conducted by Verhulst et al. (1990b), the authors attempted to determine the effects of age at placement on their adjustment. They found a greater probability of emotional and behavioral problems when children were adopted at older ages. Tizard (1991) noted that children adopted at older ages tended to have learned techniques for survival (e.g., lying and stealing) which must then be "unlearned." In a review of the empirical studies of intercountry adoption, Tizard (1991) found that

> family and educational difficulties are most likely to occur when children are adopted at a relatively late age. There is reason to believe that when these difficulties arise, they do so as a consequence of their early experiences, or the situation as adopted children, rather than from the experience of intercountry adoption" (p. 755).

Other researchers in addition to Tizard (1991) have conducted research demonstrating the effects of age at placement. Verhulst et al. (1990b) examined the effects of age at placement on the problem behavior of international adoptees and found that older ages at the time of adoption were associated with a greater probability of developing emotional and/or behavioral problems and with lower school performance.

Contrary to these findings, Bagley (1992, 1993a, 1993b) found that the age of the children at placement was not related to the adoptees' current adjustment. In one study, Bagley (1993b) reported that age at placement, age at separation from birth mother, and factors such as a history of abuse or neglect "bore no relationship to the children's current adjustment" (p. 290). Bagley (1993a) reported similar findings in a second study with

Chinese girls adopted transracially. In that study, age at placement, a history of early illness, minor congenital difficulties, and early fears or tantrums were all found not to be related to later adjustment. Bagley explained these findings by suggesting that "the excellent care provided by the adoptive parents had counteracted the negative effects of early environmental and physical handicaps" (Bagley, 1993b, p. 290).

Summary of the Empirical Literature

Transracial adoption has been demonstrated to effect racial identity in some studies, but that effect has been inconsistently reported across studies. Although Verhulst et al. (1990a) found differences in exhibited problem behavior between transracial adoptees and the general population, none of the studies reviewed empirically demonstrated differences in psychological adjustment or self-esteem when transracial adoptees were compared to intraracial adoptees. However, several studies also demonstrated the effects of transracial adoptees' backgrounds and their age at adoption on their psychological adjustment. These factors must be considered in studies of transracial adoptees as they may impact and/or aid in explaining the findings of such studies. In addition, with few exceptions (Alstein et al., 1994; Bagley, 1993a), most of the work addressing transracial adoptees has focused on children and adolescents. However, several researchers have cited the need to address adjustment and issues of identity in older adoptees (Alstein et al., 1994; Bagley, 1993b; Hollingsworth, 1997; Kim, 1995). The current study attempted to address the identity of transracial adoptees as conceptualized by a new model, the Cultural-Racial Identity Model (Baden & Steward,

1995). It also accounted for those background factors considered likely to affect adjustment, determined the adjustment and self-esteem of transracial adoptees, and focused on older age adoptees (i.e., adults 18 to 35 years of age).

Theoretical Conceptualizations: Identity Formation

As the literature review demonstrated, the vast majority of work on identity in transracial adoptees has been limited to the construct of *racial identity* which is based on the concept of personal identity as described by Erikson (as cited in Helms, 1990). However, one study did address identity formation in transracial adoptees (Brenner, 1993), but it did not elucidate racial identity per se. Drawing upon this work, similar conceptions as well as alternative conceptions regarding the formation of identity in transracial adoptees was examined.

The primary theoretical model to have addressed identity formation has been that of Erik Erikson (1980). Drawing upon the work of Erikson, James Marcia (1980) developed a model operationalizing Erikson's work on identity. Marcia developed a model of identity statuses that depicted the conscious identity crisis (as opposed to the unconscious crisis described by Erikson) through which adolescents traverse. Furthermore, Penuel and Wertsch (1995) made use of Vygotsky's cultural historical theory to describe identity formation, and in doing so, they incorporated the role of culture and the examination of individuals' environment and context into the identity development process.

Erikson's theory of identity formation.

Erikson (1968) drew upon Freudian theory and developed a psychosocial developmental stage model in which development is charted in a series of eight stages, each with a particular conflict and developmental task. Contrary to psychoanalysis, this theory focuses on ego processes (rather than id impulses) and the epigenetic principle. The first four stages in the theory consist of conflicts between trust versus mistrust, autonomy versus shame and doubt, initiative versus guilt, and industry versus inferiority. To form an enduring ego identity depends upon successful completion of these four stages.

The development of identity has generally been associated with adolescence. In Erikson's theory, this represents the fifth stage in which individuals must negotiate the ego identity versus identity diffusion crisis. One's "sense of ego identity" was described by Erikson (1980) as an individual's "accrued confidence that one's ability to maintain inner sameness and continuity (one's ego in the psychological sense) is matched by the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for others" (p. 94). Identity diffusion is described as a "split of self-images, . . . , a loss of center and a dispersion" (Erikson, 1968, p. 212) such that an individual may be unable to choose an occupational identity and, therefore, begin to overidentify with crowds or cliques (Erikson, 1980). The failure of an individual to adaptively progress through this stage is the maintenance of role diffusion. Thus, the adolescent does not have an established identity or sense of self and purpose or station in life. If the individual is successful in their progression through this stage, the

formation of ego identity results.

Erikson (1968) stated that,

> identity formation, finally, begins where the usefulness of identification ends. It arises from the selective repudiation and mutual assimilation of childhood identifications and their absorption in a new configuration, which, in turn, is dependent on the process by which a society (often through subsocieties) identifies the young individual, recognizing him as somebody who had to become the way he is and who, being the way he is, is taken for granted. (p. 159)

Thus, identity formation, according to Erikson, includes as an influence on identity the context and environment in which an individual matures. Erikson stated that traditional psychoanalytic theory has not incorporated identity into psychoanalytic theory as evidenced by the theory's failure to conceptualize terms for the environment. Erikson also stated that identity must be integrated into culture so a "unity of personal and cultural identity" results (Erikson, 1968, p. 20). This inclusion of environment and culture into the theory set the stage for conceptualizing culture and race into identity formation, particularly for transracial adoptees.

Marcia's model of identity statuses.

Extending Erikson's work, James Marcia (1980) developed an identity status approach to study identity formation. In Marcia's model, four identity statuses were described based upon two dimensions: (1) commitment and (2) exploration. Identity diffusion is the least developmentally advanced due to the absence of a commitment to an internally consistent set of values and goals and low or shallow exploration (Patterson, Sochting, & Marcia, 1992). Identity foreclosure is a status defined by a high level of commitment but this commitment is based upon little or no exploration (Patterson et al.,

1992). Those in this stage tend to have adopted the values and goals of their parents, thus explaining the lack of exploration. The identity moratorium status is considered a stage in which individuals may be in the process of forming an identity. They are currently in the crisis of identity formation so they have not yet committed to an identity but have engaged in significant exploration (Patterson et al., 1992). Finally, those in the identity achieved status have committed to values and goals after having autonomously explored the possibilities (Patterson et al., 1992).

Marcia's extension of Erikson's work included a focus on more of the conscious processes of identity formation as opposed to the unconscious processed delineated by Erikson (Brenner, 1993). The identity statuses are also intended to be outcomes of the process of identity formation and to be structural properties of the personality (Patterson et al., 1992). In addition, Marcia's work represents a shift in the analytic primacy (i.e., the starting point in research that requires attention toward particular phenomena and away from other phenomena) of sociocultural and individual processes, as with Erikson, to the analytic primacy of individual processes alone (Penuel & Wertsch, 1995). This shift has been criticized because it neglects Erikson's valuable integration of "sociocultural, historical, and psychological factors within a social psychological perspective" (p. 83). However, other researchers disagree and view Erikson as giving analytic primacy to individual mental functioning (Penuel & Wertsch, 1995). Shifts in analytic primacy can also be seen when alternative theories such as Vygotsky's cultural historical theory are used to conceptualize identity formation.

Vygotsky's cultural historical theory and identity formation.

Penuel and Wertsch (1995) extended Vygotsky's cultural historical theory to address identity formation. They described Vygotsky's work as premised on the belief that social activity is the basis for development and individual mental phenomena. "Vygotsky examined development as a process of transformation of individual functioning as various forms of social practice become internalized by individuals" (Penuel & Wertsch, 1995, p. 84). This fact about Vygotsky lead to their observation that in cultural historical theory, sociocultural processes have analytic primacy over individual functioning. Although Vygotsky never wrote about identity or identity formation, Penuel and Wertsch have began the process of extending Vygotsky's theory to address identity formation. This extension was intended to be integrated into Eriksonian conceptions of identity formation. Their sociocultural approach to identity formation, then, involves a bridge between the poles of sociocultural processes and individual functioning such that they interact in human action.

Penuel and Wertsch suggested a "mediated-action approach" to identity formation. In this approach, human action takes analytic primacy. To apply Vygotsky's work to identity formation, the three themes that characterize his work must be discussed. Vygotsky used "genetic or developmental analysis to study human functioning; the claim that individual mental functioning has sociocultural origins; and the claim that human action is mediated by tools and signs" (Penuel & Wertsch, 1995, p. 85). These themes used in conjunction with Erikson's work result in the "mediated-action approach." Use of

this approach results in four points of departure for identity research:

> (a) The use of a genetic method calls attention to the importance of studying identity in settings where forming identities are at stake in the course of the activity; (b) cultural and historical resources for identity formation are integral as empowering and constraining tools for identity formation; (c) mediated action, rather than an inner sense of identity, provides a basic unit of analysis; and (d) variation in the use of cultural resources for identity formation must be viewed in terms of commitments in Erikson's domains of identity--fidelity, ideology, and work. (p. 90)

Penuel and Wertsch (1995) suggested that an understanding of the interplay between individual functioning as depicted in Erikson's work and sociocultural processes as depicted in Vygotsky's work results in a more accurate conceptualization of identity formation. They encouraged researchers to recognize and examine cultural and historical resources for identity formation as both empowering and constraining tools for identity formation. The extension of Vygotsky's work to identity formation can further inform the identity development process of transracial adoptees. Because transracial adoptees, by virtue of their adoption across races and often cultures, tend to have experienced multiple cultures, the, inclusion of cultural tools and signs in identity formation can help account for differences in the process of identity formation for these individuals.

Identity formation in adoptees.

Although the theorists described above did not directly address the effects of adoption on identity, their theories have been extended and interpreted to account for the experiences of adoptees. Much of the work addressing identity in adoptees has focused on Eriksonian theory and on psychodynamic theories. The process of identity formation in adoptees was addressed by LeVine and Sallee (1990) in their paper describing "critical

phases among adoptees." They noted the additional emotional and behavioral stress imposed by adoption on adoptees' psychological adjustment, but they also recognized the need to determine the degree to which the origins of problems experienced by adoptees are due to family dynamics versus due to the adoption itself. Their review of the literature indicated a greater likelihood of adjustment difficulties if the adoptive parents are older at the time of adoption, if the adoptee is an only child in the adoptive family, if the parents or extended family do not support the adoption, and if conflicts generally exist within the family (p. 219).

LeVine and Sallee addressed adoption from a psychosocial and psychodynamic perspective. They described the basis of adoptees' adjustment to center around the adoptees' process of "fully understand[ing] the implications of being adopted" (p. 221). The phases they describe are as follows: (a) Phase I--preawareness; (b) Phase II--dim awareness of a special state; (c) Phase III--cognitive integration of biological and social differences; (d) Phase IV-- identity crisis of the adopted adolescent; and (e) Phase V-- concomitant acceptance of the biological and adoptive family. After the adoptees traverse through the first three phases, they become aware of their adoptive status and reach a cognitive awareness of their unique biological and social status as adoptees. However, in Phase IV, the adoptees are often adolescents and must attempt to develop, according to Erikson (1968) "1) a conscious sense of their individual uniqueness; 2) an unconscious striving for continuity of experience; and 3) a solidarity with group ideals" (LeVine & Sallee, 1990, p. 223). For adoptees, their attempts at achieving continuity with their past

and solidarity with the group is more difficult and their questions about their biological roots are most salient. These difficulties coupled with such early childhood traumas as abuse, neglect, and poor parental bonding may make adoptees more vulnerable to maladjustment, particularly in the form of narcissistic personality disorders. LeVine and Sallee also provided a set of signs of maladjustment according to the phase of adjustment of the adoptees. Some examples are being unresponsive to adults, language deficits, rage, inappropriate affect, splitting, active rejecting of adoptive family, search behavior, and emerging personality disorders.

Identity Formation in Racial Ethnic Minorities

As noted above, racial identity has previously been conceptualized as individual's objective racial self-identification and racial group preferences. Occasionally levels of acculturation and ethnic group pride have also been included. Since Cross developed one of the first models of racial identity development in 1971, several other theorists have extended his model or developed similar models for different populations. However, all of these more recent models share the premise that individuals' psychological adjustment and self-concept may, to a degree, depend upon the racial identity of the individual. Those in particular stages of development are believed to have poorer adjustment and poorer self-concepts. The parallel between this belief and that found in Erikson's theory (1968) is evident.

Relationship between racial identity and Eriksonian theory.

One of the most well-known theorists of racial identity development has been

Janet Helms. Helms (1990) extended the work of Cross (1971) to understand the "quality or manner of one's identification with the respective racial groups." She conceptualized racial identity as being comprised of a combination of "personal identity, " "reference group orientation," and "ascribed identity." Helms described personal identity as "one's feelings and attitudes about oneself," reference group orientation as "the extent to which one uses particular racial groups," and ascribed identity as "the individual's deliberate affiliation or commitment to a particular racial group" (Helms, 1990, p. 5). Helms cited Erikson's work in her identification of these components and noted the role that sociocultural influences are given in Erikson's theory of adolescent identity development (1968). She suggested that at different stages or times in individuals' lives, different individuals and institutions are influential in the development of racial identity. In individuals' early childhood and infancy, parents and adult authority figures are most influential on racial identity whereas peers or cohort and nonfamilial social institutions (e.g., school, media) are more influential during late childhood and adolescence.

With the acknowledgment that culture and race affect individuals' experiences and, therefore, development in many domains, the formation of identity in adolescents represents yet another affected area. Phinney and Rosenthal (1992) noted that for "adolescents from ethnic minority groups, the process of identity formation has an added dimension due to their exposure to alternative sources of identification, their own ethnic group and the mainstream or dominant culture" (p. 145). This process is likely to be even more complicated for transracial adoptees. Phinney and Rosenthal identified differences

between the dominant culture and adolescents' cultures of origin as primary factors in adolescents' abilities to integrate ethnic identity into self-identity. They also posited that a positively valued ethnic identity is necessary for the construction of a positive and stable self-identity (as described by Erikson, 1968). However, as noted in the review of the study by Andujo (1988), the concept of a "positive ethnic identity" should be considered in greater depth due to the values and judgment inherent in the construct.

To better conceptualize the role of race and culture in identity formation, a distinction must also be made between ego or self-identity and ethnic identity. Phinney and Rosenthal described ethnic identity as a social identity with its meaning coming from the culture with which one is affiliated. They noted that despite the attention given context in Erikson's theory, little research has actually examined the role of family in identity formation. Ethnic identity also involves the heritage that individuals are given rather than that which is chosen. The aspect of choice contrasts with Erikson's work in which occupations or goals are chosen. A third distinction is the importance of ethnic identity among various ethnic groups. The salience of ethnic identity differs among ethnic groups and individuals whereas ego identity is considered to be more stable and similar for all adolescents. These distinctions demonstrate the importance of culture and race in identity formation as well as the differences that are inherent in the identity formation of racial ethnic minority adolescents.

Phinney and Rosenthal further noted that ethnic identity should be compared with self-esteem because prior evidence has demonstrated that achieved ego identity is

associated with high self-esteem. Their review of the literature suggested that "the consequences of minority group membership for an individual's sense of self-worth are not due to minority status per se but are mediated by other factors such as gender role prescriptions in society" (p. 163). In particular, an achieved ethnic identity, which consists of the exploration of issues related to one's ethnicity as well as the resolution of the issues and a commitment to an ethnic identity, contributed positively to self-esteem.

Also contributing to the understanding of identity formation in racial ethnic minorities is the work of Whaley (1993). He examined a construct termed cultural identity in relation to African American children and their identity formation. He defined cultural identity as similar to ethnic identity but including similarities in values, beliefs, and attitudes. Whaley reviewed the literature on cultural identity formation and found that for African American children, interactions among cultural factors, cognitive-developmental processes, and social experiences determine identity formation. African American children's identity formation appears to be highly impacted by their cognitive-developmental processes. Young children (between ages two and six) have not reached cognitive developmental stages at which they can accurately racially self-identify. Whaley noted that "they do not have the cognitive capacity to comprehend the concept of membership in an ethnic/racial group" (p. 413). Racial awareness and cultural identity increase with each successive stage in Piagetian cognitive-developmental theory. Ultimately, the importance of cultural identity in racial ethnic minority adolescents varies according to " the degree of identification with their ethnic/racial group, level of self-

exploration and self-awareness, and cross-cultural social experiences" (p. 414). The findings of this study may serve to explain some of the findings identified in the literature review, particularly those studies attempting to measure racial identity in young children (e.g., Johnson et al., 1987; Zastrow, 1977).

Because Phinney and Rosenthal (1992) in addition to numerous other researchers have attempted to demonstrate the link between "positive ethnic identity" and self-esteem, additional results of Whaley's (1993) literature review are relevant. Whaley noted that the degree to which children are *competent* in areas they value and the level of regard or support they perceive from significant others impacts their self-esteem. Thus, personal efficacy, or competence, is also considered to be relevant to the identity formation of adolescents.

Identity Formation in Transracial Adoptees

One of the early attempts at understanding the identity experiences of transracial adoptees was offered by Falk (as cited in Zastrow, 1977). He noted that no theoretical work in this area had yet been done, but despite the lack of formal theory, he anticipated the work of Baden and Steward (1995) as well as that of some other researchers in the field.

Falk (as cited in Zastrow, 1977) stated that Black children learn the special meanings and values of being Black in America through their birth parents and their community. When Black children are reared in White families, they also learn the values and meanings of their White middle-class families. Falk poignantly described two

potential outcomes for transracial adoptees' identity experiences. First, he noted that,

> at some point the TRA [transracially adopted] child will cast off the protectiveness of the family of orientation and establish his more-or-less independent identity in the community of his choosing. If in this new circumstance he finds himself forced into situations where he is identified stereotypically and he is without prior experience in coping with them, he may face an identity crisis. . .His identity will be with the white world while others assume that his identity is with the black world. His rearing establishes the white world as his referent, and his new peers demand that his referent be the minority world. (as quoted in Zastrow, 1977, p. 57)

Alternatively, he drew upon Erikson's work and suggested that, given the necessary guidance and affection by adoptive parents, transracial adoptees should develop a positive self-concept and the social and interpersonal skills need to successfully cope with the environment. Through exposure to the history and culture of the transracial adoptees' race, they should be able to obtain more information regarding the meanings and values associated with their race.

In a recent book chapter, Barry Richards (1994) addressed identity formation in transracial adoptees. He cited the popularity of Erikson's concept of identity in examining issues of adjustment. However, Richards (1994) stated the importance of recognizing that although identity involves the appreciation and awareness of one's difference from others, it also involves a sense of sameness, commonality with others, and identifying with larger groups or systems. He also advocated that distinctions be made between one's personal identity and one's social identity. The difference between these two aspects of identity are particularly important in examining the experiences of transracial adoptees. A social identity is that which a person has as a result of their membership in certain social groups

(e.g., an Asian working-class man or a homosexual Jewish doctor). In forming social identities, individuals tend to classify themselves according those group memberships they consider to be important. Personal identity, on the other hand, involves "the way in which we are formed through our relationships with other *individuals* rather than through our relationships of belonging or not belonging to social groups" (p. 81). Within a single family, all members will have differing personal identities but their social identities may be similar.

Richards (1994) related this distinction between personal identity and social identity to the transracial adoption controversy. He noted

> personal identity cannot be reduced to, nor subsumed under, social identity, and it is a major confusion in much of the debate about transracial adoption that the term 'identity' is used as if it included personal identity, when the phenomena under discussion are aspects of social identity. (p. 82)

Furthermore, he described the controversy about transracial adoption as being focused on the problems transracial adoptees are likely to have in their social identity. However, because personal identity is the basis of a sense of emotional security, because the empirical literature demonstrates "transracially adopted children. . . are basically as healthy psychologically as control groups" (p. 83), and because the formation of personal identity is essentially unrelated to the ethnicity of one's family, transracial adoptees are not suffering from identity problems. Richards predicts that they will usually be able to cope with problems of social identity given an already established and secure personal identity.

Other conceptualizations about the racial identity of transracial adoptees have also

been proposed. Loenen and Hoksbergen (1986) addressed attachment relations and identity issues in intercountry adoptees in the Netherlands. Although they perceived similarities between transracial adoptees in the Netherlands and those in the UK, they noted that they share the belief of some researchers who question the notion of a "single identity." Rather, they advocate for terms such as a "situational identity" and "identity options." Loenen and Hoksbergen stated,

> a black youngster living in a white family and in a predominantly white society needs to be appreciated and accepted for having a range of identities which are more or less salient in different contexts at different times in his or her life-cycle. He or she needs to be encouraged and assisted to develop his or her black identity in a situation which may deny or discourage it. (pp. 25-26)

However, they cited the lack of "relevant" Black communities in the Netherlands and noted that the transracial adoptees in their clinical work demonstrates a greater concern with personal life histories among transracial adoptees than with racial identity.

In a book chapter by Tizard and Phoenix (1994), the authors critiqued the evidence regarding the relationship between self-esteem and racial identity. They noted criticisms suggesting the dependence of self-esteem on racial identity and found that few studies have assessed both constructs in the same children. From their critique, they determined that assumptions regarding the "inextricable link" between self-esteem and racial identity may be incorrect. Tizard and Phoenix suggested an alternative theory in which self-esteem and other aspects of mental health are developed primarily in the context of individuals' most salient and important relationships (i.e., as children, these relationships are within the family). Racial identity in Black children, in turn, although

influenced by the family, develops through relationships with the dominant/White culture. In this conceptualization of racial identity, Black children, regardless of their adoption status, may hold some negative feelings about their racial identity but still maintain healthy self-esteem and adjustment. On the other hand, those with poor family relationships but with high or positive racial identities may still have low self-esteem and poor psychological adjustment.

Tizard and Phoenix (1994) shared the view of Baden and Steward (1995) regarding assumptions of homogeneity within cultures and racial groups. This view holds that advocating a "positive" Black identity as if it were a commonly shared state disregards the vast differences among people of African descent. The authors acknowledged the problematic nature of children misidentifying themselves (i.e., believing they look White or are White when the are not), but they made distinctions between a self-identification problem and an identity problem. Choosing alternative self-labels such as those preferred by some British children--for example, "colored," "brown," and "half-caste"--does not necessarily indicate a problem with racial identity. Tizard and Phoenix also suggested racial identity be considered in much the same way gender identity has recently been conceptualized. The following three dimensions of gender identity may be relevant to racial identity: (1) the degree to which individuals' identity is based on perceived similarities between themselves and others in the group; (2) the extent of awareness of a common fate; and (3) the degree to which membership of the group is central to the ways individuals think of themselves.

As the findings of Whaley's (1993) study demonstrated, the ages at which identity formation takes place can vary according to the population and the type of identity being formed. Adolescence has traditionally been considered the stage or time period during which identity crises occur and identity is formed (Erikson, 1968). However, when considering racial/ethnic identity, that developmental stage may differ. Helms (1990) considered racial identity development to be a life-long process. However, despite Helms' view and Whaley's findings, transracial adoption researchers have frequently attempted to measure racial identity in adoptees before they are developmentally prepared to struggle with issues of race and identity. Hollingsworth's (1997) findings demonstrating that "racial/ethnic identity may decrease as transracial/transethnic adoptees become older" (p. 22) also called for a better understanding of the effects of age on transracial adoptees' identity. Perhaps transracial adoptees begin the process of racial identity formation at a later age or perhaps Hollingsworth's findings depict transracial adoptees' racial identity at the height of their struggle (i.e., adoptees in the studies Hollingsworth (1997) analyzed all had average ages under 18). Bagley (1992) described identity formation as a long-term process and cautioned that "uncertainty and unhappiness at one point in a child or adolescent's development may simply be a transient phenomenon as the individual copes with certain problems in the formation of personal identity, at different points in the life cycle" (p. 101). Based on this reasoning, Bagley advised against studies capturing adoptees before the crucial phase of adolescence due to their tendency to be misleading and he suggested final assessments of adoptions when adoptees are young adults.

In addition, Norvell and Guy (1977) noted a great deal of the research on adoptees' self-concepts have tended to focus on pre-adolescents, but "because the formation and crystallization of identity occurs in the adolescent years, this period appears particularly acute for the development of self-image" (p. 444). With that reasoning in mind, Norvell and Guy used a sample of adoptees between the ages of 18 and 25. Similarly, Brown (1995) used a sample of biracial/interracial young adults between the ages of 18 and 35 to examine issues of racial identity in these individuals. These studies demonstrated researcher's (including the present author) judgment that the identity of transracial adoptees may best be represented by those having already traversed many of the identity conflicts inherent in adolescence.

An empirical study of identity formation in transracial adoptees.

With the exception of a single study, no literature exists addressing the identity formation of transracially adopted adolescents. Brenner (1993) conducted a study for her dissertation that examined the identity formation of transracial adoptees in comparison to that of intraracial adoptees (adoptees in same-race families). Brenner used psychoanalytic theory and the theories of Blos, Erikson, Douvan and Adelson, and Marcia to conceptualize identity formation for her study. Brenner posited that the unique developmental context for transracial adoptees is likely to affect the identity formation of the adoptees in a manner qualitatively different than the identity formation process for adolescents raised either with their biological parents or with adoptive parents of the same race as the adoptees. Brenner delineated those factors having the potential to impact

transracial adoptees' identity formation.

In the application of identity formation theory to transracial adoptees, Brenner noted the work done by Sorosky, Baran, and Pannor in 1975 (as cited in Brenner, 1993). Sorosky et al. identified four categories likely to challenge transracial adoptees' completion of development tasks. These categories were disturbances in early object relations, complications in resolving the oedipal complex, pro-longation of the "family romance fantasy, and "genealogical bewilderment" (Brenner, 1993, p. 54). Within these categories, several more specific issues to transracial adoptees were identified.

Identity conflicts as the result of "having both unknown parental figures and an unknown culture or country of origin" were considered more likely for transracial adoptees. Environmental factors such as the adoptive parent who feels defective due to infertility or adoptive parents' ambivalence toward the race of the adopted children may affect the adoptees' identity and self-worth. The increased probability for identity confusion was also noted by Brenner as being manifested as confusion about racial identity and/or as insecurity about self-image. The phenotypical differences or differences in physical appearances between transracial adoptees and their parents were also considered likely to affect adoptees' ability to identify with their adoptive parents and their ability to feel a secure sense of belonging. For example, this reasoning suggests that identity foreclosure (Marcia, 1980) may be less likely to occur as a result of these differences. Also likely to affect identity formation for transracial adoptees were adoptive parents' attitudes and willingness to acknowledge the accurate racial group membership

of their adoptive child rather than assuming the "color blind" or "humanistic" orientation. The humanistic orientation may tend to impede adoptees' racial identity and may result in denial of racial group membership.

In the study that Brenner conducted, measures of ego identity and psychosocial adjustment were obtained in addition to other variables specific to the study's hypotheses. The findings are difficult to interpret and their validity is somewhat questionable due to the small sample size of the transracial adoptees (i.e., African American transracial adoptees, n=5; Asian American transracial adoptees, n=11). Despite these small sample sizes, Brenner's findings may serve as a starting point for understanding factors that differ in the ego identities and adjustment of transracial adoptees. In general, Asian transracial adoptees had higher scores than intraracially adopted Caucasian adoptees and African American transracial adoptees on measures of adjustment. The single area in which Asian transracial adoptees scored below intraracial adoptees was in their feelings about their sexuality. Thus, Asian transracial adoptees demonstrated a higher degree of identity consolidation and were more adept in their functioning in family relatedness, peer relationships, school performance, and self-esteem in comparison to intraracial adoptees. African American transracial adoptees appeared to "experience a lower level of identity consolidation and were, generally, more poorly adjusted than their Caucasian counterparts" (p. 179). They had lower scores for impulse control and affective stability and they were less clear and comfortable regarding bodily boundaries and bodily changes.

The results of the study by Brenner and her extension of the literature on identity

formation in transracial adoptees represented an initial theoretical basis for examining identity formation in transracial adoptees. However, although Brenner (1993) found differences in identity formation among transracial adoptees according to their racial group memberships, her findings primarily suggested the need to account for racial and cultural differences. The current study will address factors that may provide theoretical and contextual explanations for transracial adoptees' differing identities. Specifically, the current study will examine the differences within the population of transracial adoptees as delineated by the Cultural-Racial Identity Model (Baden & Steward, 1995).

The Cultural-Racial Identity Model

The Cultural-Racial Identity Model was developed by Baden and Steward (1995) to explain and conceptualize the identity statuses of transracial adoptees. Although the model has not yet received wide recognition and has not yet been published in a professional journal, the accuracy and validity of the model and its premises must be determined. However, before the model is presented, the rationale for the development of the model must be reviewed.

Rationale for the development of the model.

Racial/ethnic identity has been the focus of much of the attention and criticisms of transracial adoption and the empirical literature addressing transracial adoption has primarily examined the effects of transracial adoption on the adoptees' racial identity, self-esteem, and psychological adjustment. However, despite all the evidence showing similar levels of adjustment and self-esteem between transracial adoptees and intraracial

adoptees (e.g., Andujo, 1988; Grow & Shapiro, 1974; McRoy et al., 1982, 1984; Silverman & Feigelman, 1981; Simon & Alstein, 1977, 1981), the practice of transracial adoption continues to be debated and controversial. Baden and Steward (1995) viewed this controversy as a result of a lack of theory conceptualizing the unique experiences of transracial adoptees. Due to the racial differences between adoptive parents and the adoptees in transracial adoption, existing theories of racial/ethnic identity are not applicable to the experiences of transracial adoptees.

Because the experiences of transracial adoptees may differ from that of intraracial adoptees and of nonadopted individuals, several researchers and professionals in the field have also acknowledged a need to conceptualize the racial/ethnic identity of transracial adoptees. Tizard (1991) stated, "most studies do not explore the extent to which the young people assign themselves a mixed cultural identity, but ask them to choose between their adopted or original identity" (p. 754). Researchers may fail to recognize this difficulty because, as Tizard further stated, immigrant children living with their birth parents in the United States have never been compared to transracial adoptees. Without such comparisons, a clear understanding regarding the degree to which "the identity conflicts of the intercountry adoptees stem from living in a white culture, rather than with white parents *per se*" (p. 754) cannot be accurately understood. Trolley (1994-1995) shared Tizard's recommendation regarding the need for research assessing how international adoptees feel about their mixed heritage and how they choose to define their cultural identification. Trolley advocated the identification of variables "which promote

pride in one's native culture and how the benefits of both cultures can be integrated" (p. 261). Trolley also acknowledged that visible racial differences between transracial adoptees and their adoptive parents are likely to have an impact on their identity.

Similarities between biracial/interracial/multiracial individuals and transracial adoptees have occasionally been assumed by professionals in the field (Hill & Peltzer, 1982). The similarities in these individuals' experiences may be assumed because both are reared with racial differences within the family. However, although parallels can be discerned between these groups, the present author believes that the adoptive experience of transracial adoptees can both complicate and qualitatively alter the experiences of transracial adoptees, thus, making the two groups disparate enough to warrant studying the groups individually. Despite these differences, however, the research conducted on biracial/interracial/multiracial individuals can substantially inform the current study and it provided an additional rationale for the reasoning to be seen in the Cultural-Racial Identity Model (Baden & Steward, 1995). Furthermore, transracial adoptees have the unique experience of growing up in America, a country which has had racial and cultural tensions associated with it since its founding, as a racial ethnic minority but having been raised by White parents who can provide access to privilege. This unusual perspective that transracial adoptees have as a result of their experience can provide not only information important to serving their counseling needs adequately, but also the impact of racial and cultural differences on individuals' development and identity.

Several studies (e.g., McRoy et al., 1982, 1984; Zastrow, 1977) used samples of

transracial adoptees who were biracial (i.e., had one Black birth parent and one White birth parent) but the researchers classified them as "Black." However, Brown (1995) acknowledged that although biracial children have been categorized as Black within the official system of racial classification, conflicts can occur for these children due to "society's insistence that interracial children are simply black, when in reality they incorporate a dual racial heritage" (p. 125). This societal perspective "undermines the formation of a healthy racial identity and creates conflicts" (p. 125). Moreover, an assumption in "popular opinion" is that those biracial or interracial individuals who have disassociated themselves from their White heritage and have accepted the socially endorsed Black identity have resolved their conflicts about racial identity and racial group membership (p. 126). Also popular is the belief that an interracial/mixed/dual identity is "evidence of defensive denial" because a White identity is regarded as "detrimental to the emotional health of interracial people since . . . it is an illegal identity for them" (p. 126). Brown (1995) conducted a study of 119 biracial young adults between 18 and 35 years of age. Their racial identity was examined through a semi-structured interview and consisted of racial self-identification, how they viewed themselves racially in the absence of societal pressures, and racial self-perceptions during various developmental phases. They were also asked if they had ever tried or considered trying to "pass" as White. Conflict was also measured with respect to their racial identity. Findings indicated a qualitatively different journey toward racial identity that differed from non-biracial young adults.

Findings also suggested that racial identity differed—some participants identified

as Black and some as White, but most preferred an interracial identity if given the option. Of particular interest for the current study and the Cultural-Racial Identity Model (Baden & Steward, 1995) is the finding that biracial individuals have differing public and private identities. This compartmentalization frequently evolves as a result of a desire to preserve their interracial self-perception while still conforming to societal pressures to disregard their White heritage (p 127). This conforming behavior was described by some as a coping mechanism "developed in response to a gradual conditioning process within the family as well as the requirements of the larger social milieu" (p. 127), whereas others described it as a conscious and often sudden decision when their interracial or White self-perceptions were criticized. With respect to the Cultural-Racial Identity Model, the compartmentalization of identities may be explained by distinguishing between Cultural Identity and Racial Identity as the model allows, where the "public identity" is similar to the Racial Identity component of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model and the "private identity" is similar to the Cultural Identity.

Brown (1995) also found "fluctuations" in racial identity through different developmental phases with more similar proportions of biracial individuals recalling identifying as Black, White, and "human." Predictors of racial identity were cited as: (a) messages from family or friends regarding racial group membership; (b) acceptance by Blacks within their social networks; (c) racial status laws; (d) contact with various racial groups; (e) exposure to both Black and White cultures; and (f) physical appearance or phenotype. Brown stated, "these results failed to verify the common assumption that the

most successful racial identity for people of interracial heredity is the black one, but it confirmed the high emotional cost associated with white identity" (p. 129). Instead, she found diminished conflict in identity was associated with the interracial identity. According to Brown, contributing to conflicts in racial identity are societal pressure to identify as Black, the lack of institutional recognition of the interracial identity, and the reality that biracial individuals cannot legally identify as White.

In another study of interracial or "mixed parentage" individuals, Tizard and Phoenix (1995) interviewed 58 biracial (one Black and one White parent) adolescents between 15 and 16 years of age. They assessed the adolescents' racial self-identification, attitudes toward their status as mixed parentage individuals, and their friendships and allegiances. Findings indicated 39% self-identified as Black, 10% identified as Black in certain situations, and 49% did not identify as Black. Instead, they self-described as "brown," "half and half," "mixed," or "colored" and 10% stated they "sometimes felt white" (p. 1404). Positive attitudes about their mixed parentage were associated with attending a multiracial school but not with thinking of oneself as Black, living with a Black parent, being in certain social classes, or holding certain political views. "Problematic identities" were associated with a strong affiliation to White people and, interestingly, with reports that their parents had told them to be proud of being Black or of mixed heritage.

With respect to the allegiances (i.e., those they felt comfortable with) and friendships that the adolescents reported, two-thirds of the adolescents reported feeling

equally comfortable with White and Black people "with rather more of the rest feeling uncomfortable with black people than white" (p. 1405). More of the adolescents had a close White friend (85%) than a close Black friend (42%) with 27% having no Black friends. Finally, another interesting finding was that those attending multiracial and state schools and those living with a White parent only were most strongly affiliated to Black people, whereas those attending predominantly White and independent schools and those living with a Black parent were most strongly affiliated to White people. Tizard and Phoenix (1995) critiqued the assumptions that mixed parentage individuals "need" to have a Black identity and that the race/color of foster or adoptive parents is "of paramount importance in the development of a positive racial identity" (p. 1409). These assumptions do not allow the individual construction of identity and denigrates these individuals' mixed backgrounds. Furthermore, Tizard and Phoenix (1995) stated, "our findings suggest that during adolescence, school, social class, and peer groups exert more influence on racial identities than the color of their parents" (p. 1409).

The findings of these two studies on biracial individuals serve as introductions to the theoretical underpinnings for the current study. Several of the same factors found to affect racial identity in the Brown (1995) and Tizard and Phoenix (1995) studies can be found in the description of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model (Baden & Steward, 1995). Before describing the current study, however, the Cultural-Racial Identity Model must first be presented.

A description of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model.

The Cultural-Racial Identity Model was developed in response to a need for greater distinctions between culture and race. As evidenced by the literature review, one of the concerns voiced by those opposing transracial adoption has been that transracial adoptees may share the culture of their parents rather than the culture of their racial group (Chimezie, 1975; Hayes, 1993). Thus, African American children adopted by White families may identify their culture as White American. Another concern expressed has been that transracially adopted children may mistakenly identify or reject their racial group. As noted above, studies on "racial identity" (i.e., racial group preferences/objective racial self-identification) have responded to criticisms of transracial adoption by showing how transracial adoptees identify their racial group membership. However, although current conceptualizations of racial identity address individuals' racial, psychosocial identity formation in a more comprehensive manner, they also were found not to be applicable to the unique experiences of transracial adoptees because of the racial integration within transracial adoptees' families.

The model proposed herein was designed to clarify the distinctions between culture and race, to identify the contributors to individuals' cultural and racial identities, and to aid in understanding the manifestation of the potential combinations of culture and race. Moreover, as noted above, transracial adoptees are frequently viewed as a homogeneous group with all having similar levels of ethnic/racial pride and identity. However, as in any identifiable group, within group differences are likely to be as great as

between-group differences. The model to be described below demonstrates some of the possible differences among transracial adoptees according to the degrees to which they identify with the culture and racial groups of themselves, their adoptive parents, and others.

Because the distinctions between race and culture were so crucial to the study, Baden and Steward (1998) defined race and culture. From a biosocial perspective, Baden and Steward recognized "racial groups to be determined by groups who are distinguished or consider themselves to be distinguished from other people by their physical characteristics and by their social relations with other people" (p. 20). In terms of culture, they defined culture as "consisting of the ideals, beliefs, tools, skills, customs, languages, and institutions into which individuals are born" (p. 19). When conceptualizing and describing the Cultural-Racial Identity Model, these distinctions between race and culture were used to carefully separate the sources of and criteria for the various Cultural-Racial Identities.

The Cultural-Racial Identity Model consists of two axes: the Cultural Identity Axis and the Racial Identity Axis. The final model combines these two axes into a single model and a single graphic representation and consists of 16 potential Cultural-Racial Identities. Before describing the final model, the two axes must first be presented.

Baden and Steward separated culture from race (i.e., unlike previous models of racial/ethnic identity) by creating two dimensions of racial/ethnic identity. They defined culture as consisting of the ideals, beliefs, tools, skills, customs, languages, and

institutions into which individuals are born. Relying on the vast amounts of literature describing various cultures in the United States and abroad, Baden and Steward acknowledged that the racial groups and ethnic groups living in the U.S. have differing sets of customs, beliefs, languages, etc. (i.e., cultures) that are associated with those racial and ethnic groups. For example, Chinese Americans tend to endorse particular values, beliefs, etc. that comprise the Chinese American culture. Similarly, African Americans tend to possess a culture unique to their racial group. Although Baden and Steward acknowledged that individuals belonging to these racial groups do not necessarily endorse all of the cultural values, practices, beliefs, etc. associated with the racial groups, cultural behaviors and practices common to African Americans and Chinese Americans and other racial ethnic groups do exist in the U.S. Moreover, at the risk of assuming some degree of homogeneity within each racial group's culture, the Cultural-Racial Identity Model required that some baseline for cultural behaviors and practices be set for each racial group. However, in the case of transracial adoptees, the adoptees are from a different racial group than their adoptive parents. Thus, at least two different racial groups as well as two different cultures can be represented within transracially adopting families. For this reason, Baden and Steward developed the Cultural Identity Axis to represent four possible combinations of cultural endorsement.

The Cultural-Identity Axis has two dimensions: (a) Adoptee Culture Dimension--the degree to which transracial adoptees identify with their own racial group's culture (i.e., if the adoptee is Korean, to what degree does the adoptee identify with Korean

culture); and (b) Parental Culture Dimension--the degree to which transracial adoptees identify with their adoptive parents' racial group's culture (i.e., because most transracially adopting parents are White, to what degree does the adoptee identify with White culture). The transracial adoptees' levels of identification with a culture or cultures is determined by their levels of knowledge, awareness, competence, and comfort with either or both the culture of their own racial group, their parents' racial group, or multiple racial groups. Four types of cultural identities (e.g., Bicultural Identity, Culturally Specific Type I Identity, Culturally Specific Type II Identity, and Culturally Undifferentiated Identity) exist each differing according to level of the transracial adoptee on each of the two dimensions. For example, a transracial adoptee identifying more highly with their adoptive parents' racial groups' culture (i.e., the White culture) would be high on Parental Culture Dimension and low on Adoptee Culture Dimension; thus, the adoptee would have a Culturally-Specific Type II Identity. A graphical representation of the Cultural Identity Axis is depicted in Figure 1.

In transracially adopting families, racial differences also exist among family members. Baden and Steward (1995) viewed these differences as affecting both racial/ethnic self-identification and the allegiances and friendships of transracial adoptees. Using a bio-social definition of race similar to that of Helms (1990), Baden and Steward (1995) considered racial groups to be determined by groups who are distinguished or consider themselves to be distinguished from other people by their physical characteristics and by their social relations with other people. As Brown (1995) and

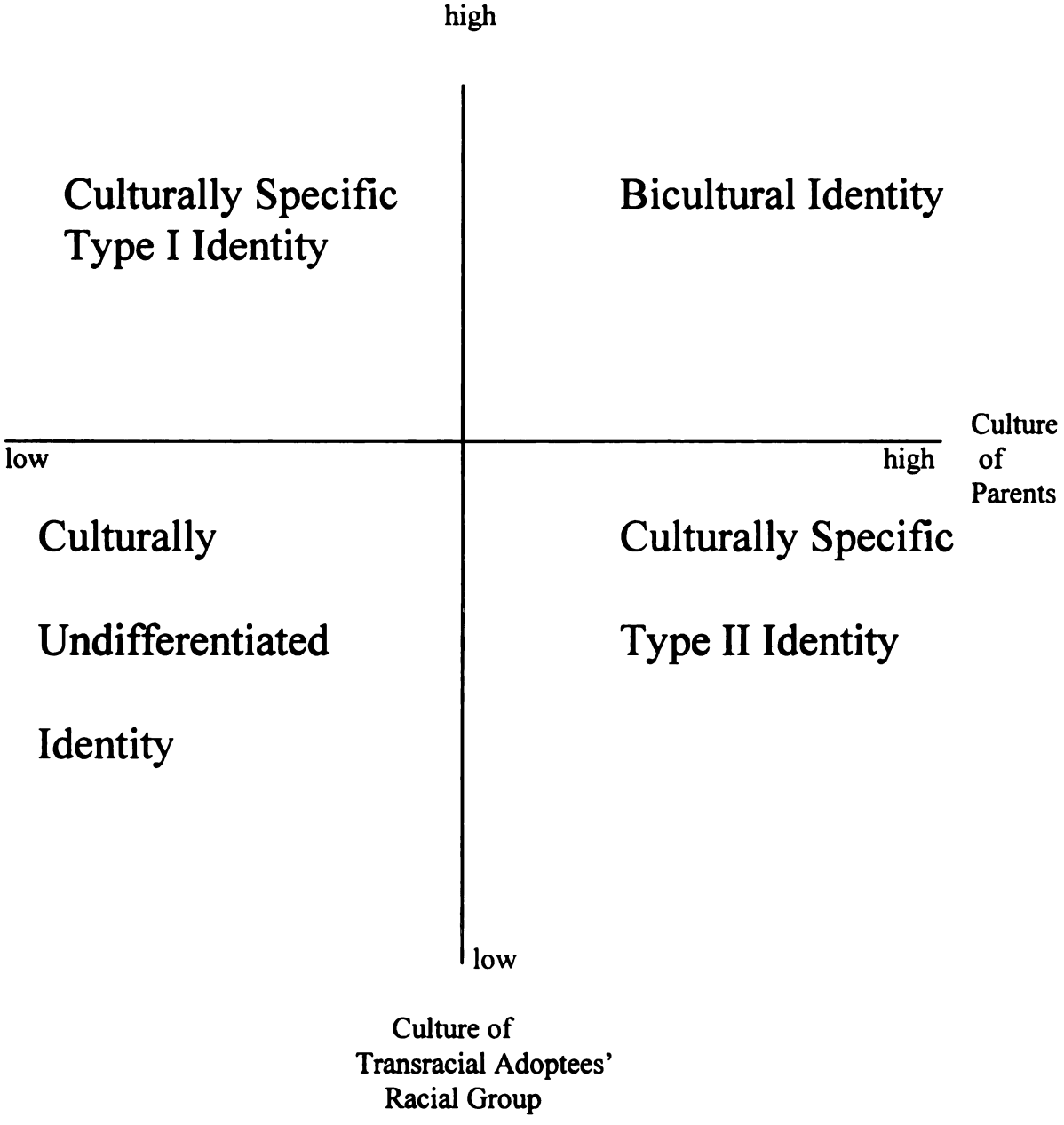


Figure 1. The Cultural Identity Axis.

Phinney and Rosenthal (1992) described when discussing nonadopted or biracial individuals, transracial adoptees may make decisions about their racial group membership, based on societal pressures (Brown, 1995), and based on the degree to which they have achieved an ethnic identity (Phinney & Rosenthal, 1992). Moreover, decisions about personal identity and situational identities (Richards, 1994) may be made as a result of the transracial adoption. Phinney (1992) and Tizard and Phoenix (1994) noted that the ethnic self-identification of individuals can result in "misidentifying" one's racial ethnic group membership. To account for varying racial ethnic self-identifications of transracial adoptees and for the role of allegiances and friendships in transracial adoptees experiences, Baden and Steward developed the Racial Identity Axis in the Cultural-Racial Identity Model.

The Racial Identity Axis has two dimensions: (a) Adoptee Race Dimension--the degree to which transracial adoptees identify with their own racial group (i.e., if the adoptee is Black, to what degree does the adoptee identify with Blacks); and (b) Parental Race Dimension--the degree to which transracial adoptees identify with their adoptive parents' racial group (i.e., because most transracially adopting parents are White, to what degree does the adoptee identify with Whites). The transracial adoptees' levels of identification with a racial group is determined by assessing the degree to which the adoptees self-identify as belonging to their own racial group or their parents' racial group. It also consists of the adoptees' comfort level with people belonging to their own racial group and their adoptive parents' racial group. The transracial adoptees' comfort level

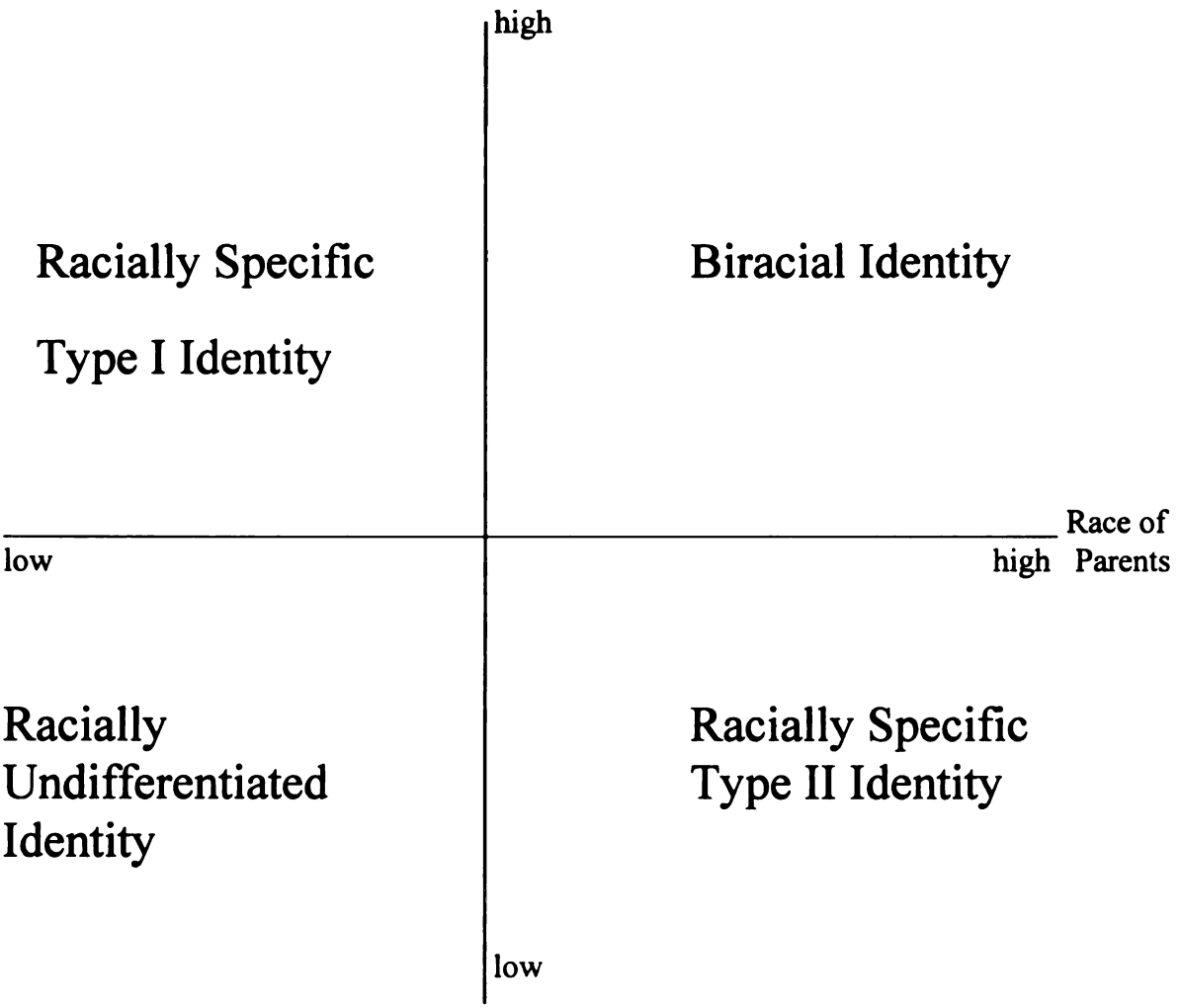


Figure 2. The Racial Identity Axis.

with different racial groups involves their allegiances to those racial groups and the friendships they have with members belonging to different racial groups. In other words, these racial identities are determined according the degree to which transracial adoptees accurately identify and are comfortable with their racial group membership and the degree to which they are comfortable with either or both those belonging to their racial group, their parents' racial group, or multiple racial groups. Four possible racial identities are possible. These racial identities are Biracial Identity, Racially Specific Type I Identity, Racially Specific Type II Identity, and Racially Undifferentiated Type II Identity (see Figure 2).

The final model combines the Cultural Identity Axis and the Racial Identity Axis into a single model. The Cultural-Racial Identity Model represents the pairing of each of the four types of possible Cultural Identities, as in Figure 1, with each of the four types of possible Racial Identities, as in Figure 2. The resulting model has 16 identity statuses to describe the identities of transracial adoptees. These identity statuses can be seen in the Figure 3.

To date, no measure exists to determine the Cultural-Racial Identity of a transracial adoptee; therefore, to subject the Cultural-Racial Identity model to empirical validation, an instrument had to be developed. The present author developed the Cultural-Racial Identity Questionnaire (CRIQ) (see Appendix A) to remedy this situation. The CRIQ is a self-report instrument intended to obtain demographic information and adoptive histories. This instrument in conjunction with an altered version of the

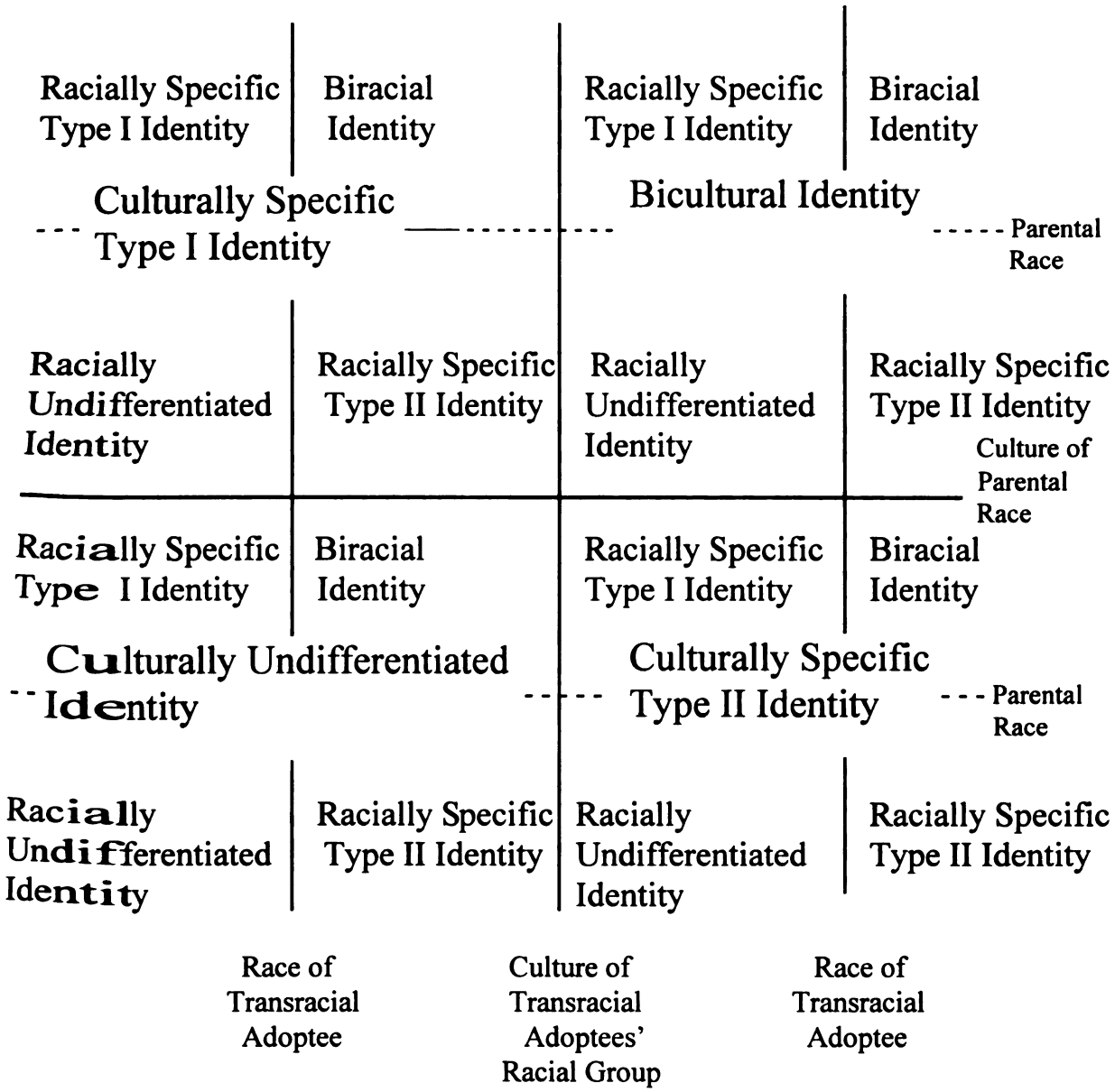


Figure 3. The Cultural-Racial Identity Model

Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM; Phinney, 1992) will be used to assess transracial adoptees' identities according to the criteria for each of the four dimensions identified above. These criteria, the dimensions to which they correspond, and the corresponding scales on the MEIM can be seen in Figure 4.

In a recent paper, Baden and Steward (1997) included descriptions of each of the 16 identities. They also described environmental or contextual factors likely to affect the identities of transracial adoptees. In particular, they sought to incorporate the role of transracial adoptees' adoptive families and parents as well as the environments in which they were reared into the transracial adoptees' resulting Cultural-Racial Identities. In other words, Baden and Steward (1997) attempted to demonstrate through a theoretical and graphical representation the contextual and familial situations, attitudes, and characteristics that would produce transracial adoptees from each of the 16 potential Cultural-Racial Identities in the Cultural-Racial Identity Model. They posited that "parental attitudes and beliefs that either *affirm* or *discount* the transracial adoptees' culture and racial group membership" (p. 10) would influence the development of the various Cultural-Racial Identities. This supplemental model (i.e., the role of parental attitudes and contextual factors in impacting Cultural-Racial Identities) for the Cultural-Racial Identity Model suggests that the degree to which parents, extended family, and the environment affirm (i.e., acknowledge, accept, approve of) the transracial adoptees' racial group membership and/or their racial group's culture impacts their identity and psychological adjustment. Similarly, discounting (i.e., decreased emphasis, lack of

Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions	Criteria for Inclusion in the Dimension	Subscale(s) of the MEIM-R for the Dimension
Adoptee Culture Dimension	Transracial adoptee's level of knowledge, awareness, competence, and comfort with the culture associated with his/her own racial group	♦ Ethnic Behaviors and Practices for Transracial Adoptees' Ethnic Group
Parental Culture Dimension	Transracial adoptee's level of knowledge, awareness, competence, and comfort with the culture associated with his/her adoptive parents' racial group	♦ Ethnic Behaviors and Practices for Adoptive Parents' Ethnic Group
Adoptee Race Dimension	Transracial adoptee's level of comfort with his/her own racial group membership and with those belonging to his/her own racial group	♦ Self-Identification for Transracial Adoptees' Ethnic Group ♦ Ethnic Identity Achievement for Transracial Adoptees' Ethnic Group ♦ Affirmation and Belonging for Transracial Adoptees' Ethnic Group
Parental Race Dimension	Transracial adoptee's level of comfort with his/her racial group membership and with those belonging to his/her adoptive parents' racial group	♦ Self-Identification for Adoptive Parents' Ethnic Group ♦ Ethnic Identity Achievement for Adoptive Parents' Ethnic Group ♦ Affirmation and Belonging for Adoptive Parents' Ethnic Group

Figure 4. The Four Dimensions in the Cultural-Racial Identity Model

interest in, lack of acceptance of) the transracial adoptees' racial group membership and/or their racial group's culture will be likely to affect their identity and adjustment.

Baden and Steward (1997) created a graphic representation or model to aid in understanding the factors at work (see Figure 5). In the model, transracial adoptees may be reared in environments that: (a) either affirm or discount the adoptive parents' culture and/or racial group membership; (b) either affirm or discount the transracial adoptees' racial group's culture and/or their racial group membership; or (c) have some combination of affirmation and discounting of adoptive parents' and transracial adoptees' cultures and racial groups. Baden and Steward (1997) noted that the attitudes and characteristics they described are not theorized to be explicit/intentional efforts, behaviors, beliefs, etc., nor do they necessarily result from inadvertent or unintentional efforts, behaviors, beliefs, etc. Rather than attempting to predict how active or passive adoptive parents may be in the transmission of these attitudes to transracial adoptees, the authors instead cautioned that the child-rearing context (including extended family, schools, teachers, community leaders, and peers) may also be sources aiding in creating the contexts seen in Figure 5.

The Current Study

The current investigation assessed the Cultural-Racial Identity Model according to its applicability to the experience of transracial adoptees. To investigate this question, key variables were defined. The adoption status of the study's participants (i.e., transracially adopted versus intraracially adopted) served as an independent variable in the study. As previously implied, transracial adoptees are adoptees who are of a different

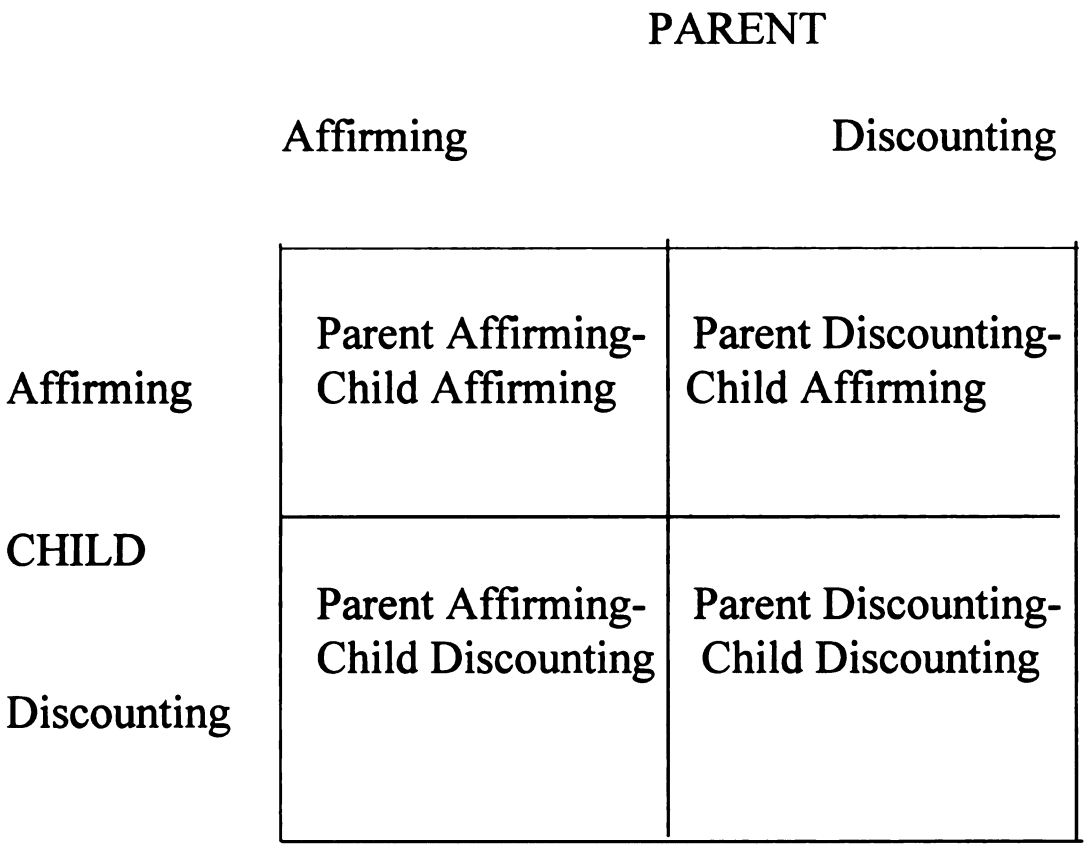


Figure 5. Parental Attitudes and Characteristics Model for Affirming/Discounting Environments

racial group than their adoptive parents. It must be noted that racial group differences may not be indicated by visible phenotypic differences (e.g., adoptees can be racially different from their parents as in the case of Hispanic or Native American children adopted by White parents, but they can still resemble their adoptive parents). For the purposes of this study, visible racial group differences will not be required to identify transracial adoptees. Also, because the vast majority of transracial adoptions are done by White parents and because the controversy surrounding the practice of transracial adoption tends to focus on White parents as the adoptive parents, all the transracial adoptees in the study were adopted by White parents. All participants in the current study will be young adult transracial adoptees.

The four dimensions in the model represented the independent variables. The four dimensions were called the Adoptee Culture Dimension, the Parental Culture Dimension, the Adoptee Race Dimension, and the Parental Race Dimension. The dimensions were identified above and the criteria and meaning of each can be seen in Figure 4. According to the measures/criteria of knowledge, awareness, competence, and comfort with culture and with those of various racial groups, transracial adoptees' identities were assessed. This assessment was conducted using an instrument developed for the current study, the Cultural-Racial Identity Questionnaire (see Appendix A) and a modified version of Phinney's (1992) MEIM (see Appendix B).

Because Phinney has already established a means for assessing identity including aspects of culture and race, the MEIM, which is intended to measure ethnic identity, was

altered to fit the purposes of the current study. Ethnic identity was defined as an aspect of a person's social identity. Phinney (1992) described it as "that part of an individual's self-concept that derives from his or her knowledge of membership in a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (p. 156). Some of the components of ethnic identity include self-identification, language, social networks, religious affiliation, and cultural traditions and practices. Because many researchers have attempted to study and measure racial/ethnic identity, several measures of identity have been developed for use with different ethnic groups. However, no single measure had been developed for use with all ethnic groups. Phinney (1992) remedied this problem by the development of the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM; Phinney, 1992). This measure examines the components of ethnic identity and contains subscales assessing these components. The components are: Self-Identification and Ethnicity, Ethnic Behaviors and Practices, Affirmation and Belonging, Ethnic Identity Achievement, and Attitudes Toward Other Groups. Although this instrument as well as Phinney's work in this area contributed significantly to the understanding of racial/ethnic identity, use of Phinney's model for transracial adoptees is problematic, as demonstrated through critique of the self-identification construct in the model.

Self-identification is the "ethnic label that one uses for oneself" (Phinney, 1992, p. 158). This label can be different from one's ethnicity because ethnicity is one's objective group membership and is determined by the ethnic heritage of one's biological parents. However, to have an ethnic identity, one must self-identify as a member of an ethnic

group. By definition, for transracial adoptees, ethnicity differs between the transracial adoptee and his/her adoptive parents. Thus, the ethnic identity of transracial adoptees may be affected by these differences. Moreover, although Phinney's MEIM was developed both for use with individuals who may or may not differ in their self-identification and their ethnicity as well as for those of mixed backgrounds who identify with a single group from that background, its use with transracial adoptees may problematic. The MEIM only provides information about the transracial adoptees' own ethnic group rather than including information specifically about their identification with their adoptive parents' ethnic group. Thus, without alteration, its use with transracial adoptees in this study would not adequately address the experiences of transracial adoptees.

However, with alterations, the MEIM can be used with the transracial adoptee population for the current study (see Appendix B). Three of the subscales of the MEIM correspond well with the two axes of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model (Baden & Steward, 1996). As described above, the Cultural Identity Axis involves knowledge, awareness, competence, and comfort with the culture of the transracial adoptees' own racial group's culture and with their adoptive parents' racial group's culture. To assess the degree to which transracial adoptees have knowledge of, awareness of, competence within, and comfort with their own or their parents' culture required an evaluation of the adoptees' participation in cultural practices, traditions, values, beliefs. These cultural practices include, for example, cultural holidays, customs, foods, dress, and music. The MEIM contains a subscale called Ethnic Behaviors and Practices which addressed the

same components but does so only for the respondent's racial ethnic group. Altering this subscale to include the culture of adoptive parents and adding additional items regarding culture allowed the Ethnic Behaviors and Practices subscale to be used to assess the Adoptee Culture Dimension and the Parental Culture Dimension on the Cultural Identity Axis.

Similarly, the Racial Identity Axis is based on transracial adoptees' comfort with their own racial group membership (including their self-identification which could include identification with racial groups other than their own) and their comfort with people from their own and their adoptive parents' racial groups (including allegiances to, affiliations with, and friendships with people from various racial groups). To assess transracial adoptees' based on these criteria, their self-identification and feelings about their racial group membership, as well as their affiliations, friendships, and allegiances served as indicators of racial identity according the Cultural-Racial Identity Model. The MEIM includes subscales assessing Ethnic Identity Achievement, Self-Identification, and Affiliation and Belonging. Because Ethnic Identity Achievement refers to "an exploration of the meaning of one's ethnicity (e.g., its history and traditions) that leads to a secure sense of self as a member of a minority group" (p. 160), the Ethnic Identity Achievement subscale appropriately addressed the criteria of comfort with racial group membership as delineated in the Cultural-Racial Identity Model. Furthermore, one's self-identification provides information regarding ethnicity and the Affirmation and Belonging subscale provided a means for assessing transracial adoptees' comfort with members of various

racial groups. Therefore, the Ethnic Identity Achievement, Self-Identification, and Affiliation and Belonging subscales of the MEIM were altered to include items related to the adoptive parents' racial group. With this alteration, these subscales were used to measure Adoptee Race Dimension and Parental Race Dimension of the Racial Identity Axis within the Cultural-Racial Identity Model.

The dependent variables in this study were the psychological adjustment and self-esteem of the transracial adoptees. The construct of psychological adjustment gives general indices of well-being, normal functioning, and the ability to cope effectively with the daily demands of living. Self-esteem is considered the evaluative part of one's self-concept. High levels of self-esteem are considered healthy and adaptive. Andujo (1988) and McRoy et al. (1982) operationalized psychological adjustment using measures of self-concept and self-esteem.

To control for pre-existing differences in the transracial adoptees and the inability to randomly assign individuals to transracial adoption and pre-adoptive experiences, several background factors were accounted for in the study. The background variables expected to have an impact were identified in the literature (Andujo, 1988; Bagley, 1993; McRoy et al., 1982; Silverman & Feigelman, 1981) as accounting for much of the variance in the transracial adoptees' psychological adjustment, particularly when they were compared to intraracial adoptees or nonadopted individuals. Five background variables of the adoptees and their families were controlled for in the study: age at adoption, number of pre-adoptive placements, pre-adoptive history/trauma (physical,

political, etc.), sex of the adoptees, and socioeconomic status of the adoptive family. The age at adoption (as measured in months), number of pre-adoptive placements, and pre-adoptive history/trauma were measured as continuous variables. Pre-adoptive history/trauma were considered to include abuse, physical health from birth to adoptive placement, medical history (e.g., pre-disposition to mental health problems, substance abuse histories), political conditions surrounding the adoption (e.g., war, government sanctions on number of children such as in China), and remembered loss of family members. Pre-adoptive history/trauma was measured by the number of items chosen to describe the "history" of each participant's adoption, but when "healthy" was chosen, it was not included in the total. Socioeconomic status was measured as a continuous variable with 7 levels of socioeconomic status. An additional variable that may have an impact on adjustment is the current age of the adoptees, especially given that adolescence has traditionally been the period during which identity issues are most salient. Because the current study addressed identity as it developed after adolescence, the changes that occur during young adulthood could also potentially have impacted adjustment and self-esteem.

The research questions that were addressed in this study are as follows: (a) Are there differences among transracial adoptees on their level of knowledge, awareness, competence, and comfort with their racial group's own culture (Adoptee Culture Dimension)? (b) Are there differences among transracial adoptees on their level of knowledge, awareness, competence, and comfort with their parents' racial groups' culture

(Parental Culture Dimension)? (c) Are there differences among transracial adoptees on their level of comfort with their own racial self-identification and with those belonging to their own racial group (Adoptee Race Dimension)? (d) Are there differences among transracial adoptees on their level of comfort with their own racial self-identification and with those belonging to their parents' racial group (Parental Race Dimension)? (e) Controlling for age at adoption, number of pre-adoptive placements, pre-adoptive history/trauma, sex of the transracial adoptees, current age of the transracial adoptees, and socioeconomic status of the transracial adoptees, are there differences in the psychological adjustment of transracial adoptees having different levels of the four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions? (f) Controlling for age at adoption, number of pre-adoptive placements, pre-adoptive history/trauma, sex of the transracial adoptees, current age of the transracial adoptees, and socioeconomic status of the transracial adoptees, are there differences in the self-esteem of transracial adoptees having different levels of the four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions?

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to examine the efficacy, applicability, and comprehensiveness of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model (Baden & Steward, 1995) by determining the degree to which the model is valid in describing the Cultural-Racial Identities of transracial adoptees and by determining if there are differences in the psychological adjustment of transracial adoptees having different Cultural-Racial Identities. Support for the Cultural-Racial Identity Model has not yet been empirically demonstrated. In the current investigation, the four dimensions (i.e., Adoptee Culture Dimension, the Parental Culture Dimension, the Adoptee Race Dimension, and the Parental Race Dimension) believed to determine the Cultural-Racial Identities of transracial adoptees were measured. Based on that level at which transracial adoptees are measured on each factor, the transracial adoptees will represent the various Cultural-Racial Identities delineated by Baden and Steward (1995). Each of the four dimensions will also be analyzed according to the degree to which they affect the psychological adjustment of the transracial adoptees in the study. To increase the current knowledge base regarding transracial adoptees, we must answer several research questions.

First, is there significant variation among transracial adoptees on the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure-Revised (MEIM-R; Phinney, 1992)? In other words, does the Cultural-Racial Identity Model accurately depict the range of identities of transracial adoptees? The model would be considered as having been confirmed if a large amount of

variation among transracial adoptees was found in comparison to the variation among items on the MEIM-R as is the case with a high measure of reliability. The findings related to this question can answer several other research questions that center around the four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions that were delineated within the Cultural-Racial Identity Model. These questions follow. Are there differences among transracial adoptees on the degree to which they identify with the culture of those of their own racial group? Are there differences among transracial adoptees on the degree to which they identify with the culture of those of their adoptive parents' racial group? Are there differences among transracial adoptees on the degree to which they identify racially with their own racial group? Are there differences among transracial adoptees on the degree to which they identify racially with their adoptive parents' racial group? Given the limitations imposed by self-report instruments and the method through which the four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions must be measured (i.e., the MEIM-R), the current study allowed the examination of the variation produced by the instrument and the validation of that instrument as a measure that distinguishes among transracial adoptees. However, acceptance of the rationale for using the MEIM-R to measure the Cultural-Racial Identities of transracial adoptees did provide validation of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model

A second research question for the current study was, are there significant differences in psychological adjustment as measured by the Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI; Derogatis & Cleary, 1977) of transracial adoptees having different levels of the four

Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions (Adoptee Culture Dimension, the Parental Culture Dimension, the Adoptee Race Dimension, and the Parental Race Dimension) as measured by the MEIM-R? This question essentially examines whether differences in these dimensions affect the psychological adjustment of transracial adoptees. This question was investigated using each of the four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions and various combinations of them to predict psychological adjustment as measured by the BSI. Differences among transracial adoptees' psychological adjustment were viewed as existent if a model significantly predicting psychological adjustment was estimated in the data.

Finally, are there significant differences in self-esteem as measured by the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) of transracial adoptees having different levels of the four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions (Adoptee Culture Dimension, the Parental Culture Dimension, the Adoptee Race Dimension, and the Parental Race Dimension) as measured by the MEIM-R? As with psychological adjustment, a statistical model demonstrating that some combination of the Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions significantly predicted self-esteem among transracial adoptees was considered to be necessary to confirm the relationship between self-esteem and Cultural-Racial Identity .

Subjects

Description of the Sample

The subjects who participated in this study were young adult transracial adoptees ranging in age from 19 to 36 years of age with a mean age of 24.35. Thirty-eight of the

subjects were females with a mean age of 24.18 and 13 were males with a mean age of 24.85. Subjects were identified as transracial adoptees if they were the biological offspring of at least one non-White individual and if they were adopted by two White parents. Based on this identification, all the transracial adoptees were racially different from their adoptive parents (i.e., phenotypical differences were not required for inclusion in the sample). These criteria for transracial adoptees were used to ensure a sample that reflects the composition of the American population of transracial adoptees. This population includes African Americans and Latino Americans adopted by White American families as well as intercountry adoptees from Asian and South American countries.

Although comparisons using the Cultural-Racial Identity Model will eventually be useful between intercountry and domestic transracial adoptions, the exploratory nature of the current study makes this comparison a subject for future research. Furthermore, adequate numbers of intercountry and domestically transracially adopted subjects could not be found for this comparison. Also, although some cases of transracial adoption have occurred in which the adoptive parents were non-White and the adoptees were White or from some other different racial group than the adoptive parents, these cases are few in number, difficult to identify, and have not been the subject of substantial controversy. Given the infrequency of these cases of transracial adoption, the current study only included transracial adoption where White parents adopted non-White children.

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for the sample of transracial adoptees. The

statistics were broken down by the racial ethnic group with which the adoptees identify and by their sex. Among the 38 females in the sample, one identified as White American (2.6%), six identified as Black or African American (15.8%), 26 identified as Asian American (68.4%), four identified as "multicultural" or "mixed race" (10.5%), and one identified as "other" (2.6%). Among the 13 males in the sample, four identified as Asian American (30.8%), one identified as Latino (7.7%), six identified as "multicultural" or "mixed race" (46.2%), and two identified as "other" (15.4%).

The sample obtained was one of convenience. An initial sample size of 180 was chosen to ensure adequate power and to account for potential Type II errors. Using 0.80 as the acceptable level of power and an alpha level of 0.05, sample size was computed (Cohen, 1977). The subjects were recruited through advertisements (e.g., Internet adoption bulletin boards, adoption newsletters, regional newspapers), social service agencies, and special interest adoption groups (e.g., support groups for transracial adoptees). All participation was voluntary and a lottery with a prize of $200 was used as an incentive for participation. Following the closing date for the lottery (February 1, 1998), each subject to complete a survey received $15.

Procedure

Transracial adoptees were recruited by advertisements, social service agencies, and special interest adoption groups. Flyers and postcards were distributed via personal contacts and social workers in the field (see Appendix E). All respondents to flyers, contacts, and ads were mailed survey packets consisting of the following materials: an

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for the Sample of Transracial Adoptees.

Females

	White American	African American	Asian American	Latino American	Multicultural Mixed Race	Other
Current Age	19	26.50	24.08	-	23.75	20.00
Age at Adoption[1]	2	35.17	21.04	-	5.00	6.00
Number of Pre-adoptive Placements	1	.80	2.23	-	.50	2.00
Educational Level	4	6.17	4.54	-	4.75	4.00
Adoptive Family Income	6	6.60	6.69	-	6.50	6.00

[1]Age at Adoption given in months.

Males

	White American	African American	Asian American	Latino American	Multicultural Mixed Race	Other
Current Age	-	-	23.50	31.00	22.00	33.00
Age at Adoption[1]	-	-	45.00	0.00	9.00	58.50
Number of Pre-adoptive Placements	-	-	1.25	0.00	.83	2.50
Educational Level	-	-	4.00	7.00	4.17	6.00
Adoptive Family Income	-	-	6.00	2.00	6.83	8.00

[1]Age at Adoption given in months.

Note. "Educational Level" refers to the highest level of education achieved by the transracial adoptees using the following scale: 1 = less than high school; 2 = high school degree (or GED); 3) post high school (e.g., trade, technical, secretarial); 4 = some college (e.g., one year, associates degree); 5 = completed college (e.g., bachelor's degree); 6 = some graduate or post-bachelor's training; 7 = completed graduate or post-bachelor's training. "SES" refers to Socioeconomic Status of the adoptive family and was measured using the following scale: 1 = $7,499 or below; 2 = $7,500 to $14,999; 3 = $15,000 to $24,999; 4 = $25,000 to $39,999; 5 = $40,000 to $59,999; 6 = $60,000 to $89,000; 7 = $90,000 or more.

informed consent form, a letter of introduction to the study, instructions for the completion of the measures, the measures to be administered (i.e., these are self-report measures only), and a pre-addressed and stamped return envelope for their convenience. All survey packets were assigned identification numbers. Subjects who participated signed the informed consent and, if interested in the $200 lottery and/or in receiving a summary of the results, completed a detachable postcard on which they indicated their interest and put their names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses (if applicable). Upon receipt of the completed surveys, the informed consent forms and postcards were separated from the measures and demographic data. The completed surveys were kept confidential and no identifying data were included on the surveys themselves.

Due to the attrition rate associated with the use of a mail survey for data collection, an increased sample size was desired to maintain power (Heppner, Kivlighan, & Wampold, 1992). To adjust for this procedure, all transracial adoptees identified for the study responded to flyers, advertisements, web pages, or recruiters prior to mailings to confirm their participation. This initial response consisted of e-mail messages, phone calls, face-to-face contact, or the return of stamped, pre-addressed postcards indicating the interested participant's address and phone number (see Appendix G). An increased sample size of 180 (i.e., double the size identified by the power analysis) was desired to account for the approximately 50% return rate (Heppner et al., 1992). However, despite a nine month data collection period, a research team of a doctoral student and four masters

students, the use of professional and personal contacts, a web site designed specifically for the study (http://www.msu.edu/user/badenama), and numerous other outreach attempts, the sample size obtained only reached 51 completed surveys. Given that the sample size was smaller than desired, interpretation of statistical analyses accounted for this limitation.

The self-report measures were presented in the survey packets in the following order: demographics questionnaire (the Cultural-Racial Identity Questionnaire), measures of cultural and racial identity (the MEIM-R), and measures of psychological adjustment (the BSI) and self-esteem (the SES).

Measures

Research measures required for this study assessed the Cultural-Racial Identity status and psychological adjustment of transracial adoptees. Due to the exploratory nature of this study and the model examined in the study, measures of Cultural-Racial Identity status did not exist. However, a means for identifying the Cultural-Racial Identity status of transracial adoptees was necessary to address the questions in this study. Thus, using a rational method of identifying relevant factors distinguishing among identity statuses, an instrument was developed to obtain demographic and adoptive history information. This measure provided information for the potentially confounding variables (e.g., age at adoption, number of pre-adoptive placements, pre-adoptive history/trauma, sex of the transracial adoptees, and socioeconomic status of transracial adoptees). The four dimensions of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model were assessed using a modified version

of the MEIM (Phinney, 1992). Other measures to be used in this study addressed the psychological adjustment and the self-esteem of transracial adoptees.

Cultural-Racial Identity Measures

The measures to be used for this portion of the study were intended to directly address the Cultural-Racial Identity Model (Baden & Steward, 1995). The first measure was designed to allow the categorization of transracial adoptees into each of the identity statuses depicted in the model (see Figure 3). To determine the identity status descriptive of each transracial adoptee, four dimensions consistent with the Cultural-Racial Identity Model were used. The model is comprised of two parts, the Cultural Identity Axis and the Racial Identity Axis. According to the model, transracial adoptees have a cultural identity that is determined by the degree to which they have knowledge, awareness, competence, and comfort with the culture of their own racial group (Adoptee Culture Dimension) and with the culture of their adoptive parents' racial group (Parental Culture Dimension). These dimensions were represented by the graphical axes in Figure 1. The model also posited that transracial adoptees have a racial identity determined by their racial self-identification and the degree to which they are comfortable with individuals belonging to their own racial group (Adoptee Race Dimension) and with individuals belonging to their adoptive parents' racial group (Parental Race Dimension). These dimensions were represented by the axes in Figure 2. The measure includes items regarding the transracial adoptees' racial group membership, the racial composition of their social support network, schools, and community, their cultural knowledge and practices, and their

exposure to other cultures, and role models. These items were developed to assess not only the transracial adoptees accumulated experiences, but also the family and environment in which they were raised.

The *Cultural-Racial Identity Questionnaire* (CRIQ) (see Appendix A) was developed for the current study, for the purpose of operationalizing the independent variable, and for collecting background information on transracial adoptees. The criteria for cultural identity (i.e., knowledge, awareness, competence, and comfort with the culture) were addressed within the questionnaire as were the criteria for racial identity (i.e., comfort with racial groups). The questionnaire consists of 41 items that are open-ended, multiple-choice, or forced-choice 4-point Likert scale items ranging from *strongly agree to strongly disagree.* All items were chosen using a rational method of development which used the face validity of the items for inclusion. The scores on these items determine the Cultural-Racial Identity of the transracial adoptees. Demographic information such as age at adoption, trauma/history of the adoption, integration level of the community and schools in which the transracial adoptees were raised, and numbers and adoption status of siblings can be collected on the CRIQ.

No validity or reliability information is currently available on the CRIQ. However, because the CRIQ served primarily as a demographics measure and was designed to provide a validity check for the revised MEIM, the measure was deemed appropriate for use in the current study.

The *Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure-Revised* (MEIM-R) was administered. This measure was a revised or modified version of the original Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) developed by Phinney (1992). The original MEIM measure consisted of 20 items that measured seven subscales of ethnic identity as described by Phinney (1992): Ethnic Identity (14 items), Affirmation and Belonging (5 items), Ethnic Identity Achievement (7 items), Ethnic Behaviors and Practices (2 items), Ethnicity, Other-Group Orientation (6 items), and Self-Identification (open-ended). When modified for use in the current study, 14 items that assessed four aspects of ethnic identity were chosen for use in analyses: Affirmation and Belonging, Ethnic Identity Achievement, and Ethnic Behaviors and Practices, and Self-Identification. Items are rated on a 4-point Likert scale from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. High scores indicate high ethnic identity as demonstrated by both exploration and commitment to obtaining information and awareness about one's ethnicity. Low scores indicate low ethnic identity which is evidenced by the absence of exploration and commitment to obtaining awareness and understanding of one's ethnicity. Reported reliability estimates demonstrate adequate internal consistency. Phinney (1992) reports a Cronbach's alpha overall .81 for a high school sample and .90 for a college sample for the whole measure. Individual scales demonstrated alphas of .75 and .86 for Affirmation/Belonging; .69 and .80 for Ethnic Identity Achievement; and .71 and .74 for the other-group-orientation.

However, as addressed in Chapter 2, the MEIM has not been used in describing the ethnic identity of transracial adoptees. Due to the racial and other potential differences

between adoptive parents and the transracial adoptees themselves, the MEIM was adapted for use with transracial adoptees (see Appendix F). Items one to 20 were repeated exactly as they appear on the original MEIM. Because the original MEIM included only two items to measure Ethnic Behaviors and Practices and, therefore, the Cultural Identity Axis, additional items were necessary to improve the reliability of the scale. For items 21, 22, and 23 in the MEIM-R, additional items intended to assess Ethnic Behaviors and Practices were added. For the remaining items, 24 through 46, the wording in items one to 20 from the original MEIM and the additional items (21 to 23) were altered so that instead of referring to "my . . ." or "my own ethnic group" or "my cultural or ethnic background" the new items refer to "my adoptive parents" or "my adoptive parents' ethnic group" etc. These additional items served as measures of the transracial adoptees' ethnic identification with their adoptive parents' culture and racial group. The subscales of the altered MEIM were used to operationalize the four dimensions of the Cultural Racial Identity Model (Baden & Steward, 1995).

Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions

Each of the four Cultural-Racial Identity dimensions (i.e., Adoptee Culture Dimension, Adoptee Race Dimension, Parental Culture Dimension, Parental Race Dimension) were determined by extracting the items from the MEIM-R comprising each of the subscales used to measure each of the dimensions as seen in Figure 4. A reliability analysis was then conducted to determine what combination of the items resulted in the most reliable set of items for each of the four Cultural-Racial Identity dimensions. When

the final set of items for each dimension was determined, the scores for each dimension were standardized. Higher scores on each dimension indicated a strong endorsement of that dimension as being descriptive of the transracial adoptees' identity experience.

The Adoptee Culture Dimension was comprised of items 2, 16, 21, and 22 from the Ethnic Behaviors and Practices for transracial adoptees' racial group of the MEIM-R. The Adoptee Race Dimension was comprised of items 1, 2, 10R, 11, 12, 13, 14, 18, and 20 from the Self-Identification, Ethnic Identity Achievement, and Affirmation and Belonging for transracial adoptees' racial group of the MEIM-R. The Parental Culture Dimension was comprised of items 39, 44, 45, and 46 from the Ethnic Behaviors and Practices for adoptive parents' racial group of the MEIM-R. Finally, the Parental Race Dimension was comprised of items 24, 26, 29, 33R, 34, 36, 37, 41, and 43 from the Self-Identification, Ethnic Identity Achievement, and Affirmation and Belonging for adoptive parents' racial group of the MEIM-R

Psychological Adjustment Measures

Psychological adjustment has frequently been the focus of research on transracial adoption (e.g., Alstein & Simon, 1977; Andujo, 1988; McRoy et al., 1982; McRoy et al., 1984; Shireman & Johnson, 1986; Simon & Alstein, 1981). Because critics of transracial adoption frequently cite psychological maladjustment as the result of transracial adoption (Gill & Jackson, 1983; Hayes, 1993; Silverman & Feigelman, 1981; Tizard, 1991) and because the identities of transracial adoptees as described in the Cultural-Racial Identity Model have yet to be compared according to the degree to which they are associated with

adaptive behavior, psychological adjustment was measured in the current study. Moreover, because self-concept and/or self-esteem (e.g., Andujo, 1988; McRoy et al., 1984) were frequently used as indicators of psychological adjustment, self-esteem was also measured in the current study. The measures chosen to assess psychological adjustment were chosen based on their comprehensive measurement of aspects of psychological adjustment, their reported validity and reliability, their appropriateness for the population, and their completion time. The Brief Symptom Inventory and Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale were chosen for use. Their combined completion time is estimated to be 10 minutes.

Psychological adjustment.

The *Brief Symptom Inventory* (BSI; Derogatis & Cleary, 1977) (see Appendix C) was used as one of the dependent measures of the dependent variable, the psychological adjustment of transracial adoptees. It has been used in previous studies (e.g., Frazier & Schauben, 1994; Waggener & Galassi, 1993) to measure psychological adjustment. This instrument is a brief form of the SCL-90-R, both of which are self-report symptom check lists (Derogatis, 1993). The BSI is appropriate for individuals age 13 and above who are psychiatric patients, medical patients, and non-patient individuals in the community. It has 45 items on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "not at all" to "extremely." These items measure three global indices (Global Severity Index [GSI], Positive Symptom Total [PST], and Positive Symptom Distress Index [PSDI]) and nine factors (Somatization, Obsessive-Compulsive, Interpersonal Sensitivity, Depression, Anxiety, Hostility, Phobic

Anxiety, Paranoid Ideation, and Psychoticism). Respondents rate items according to "how much that problem has distressed or bothered you during the past 7 days including today." Scores on the BSI factors and global indices are converted into standardized T scores and plotted on profiles appropriate for the norm group to which the respondents are to be compared. Reliability estimates for BSI demonstrate good internal consistency and test-retest reliabilities. For the nine factors, Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from .71 on Psychoticism to .85 on Depression. Test-retest reliability estimates for a two-week interval were reported to range from .68 for Somatization to .91 for Phobic Anxiety whereas the GSI was found to have a stability coefficient of .90. Derogatis (1993) reported validity estimates demonstrating good convergent, discriminant, construct, and predictive validity. The BSI demonstrated convergent validity (Derogatis, 1993) with the clinical scales of the MMPI with coefficient greater than .30 and high correlations with the longer SCL-90-R.

Self-esteem.

The *Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale* (SES; Rosenberg, 1965) (see Appendix D) was used to assess transracial adoptees' self-esteem. Because many of the studies identified in the literature review assessed self-esteem distinct from psychological adjustment, this construct served as a separate outcome. In the current study, this 10-item measured assesses general feelings of self-worth. The items are arranged in a 4-point Likert scale format with a score range from 10 to 40 with higher scores designating higher self-esteem. Reliability estimates for the SES have ranged from a Cronbach's alpha .77 to .88.

Test-retest reliabilities have been reported between .85 (after a two- week interval) to .82 (after a one-week interval). Thus, the SES has demonstrated adequate internal consistency and test-retest reliability. Correlations between the SES and confidence were reported as .65 and between the SES and popularity as .39. The SES correlated well with the Lerner Self-Esteem Scale (.72) and with the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (.55). Scores on the SES also had a negative relationship with anxiety (-.64), depression (-.54), and anomie (-.43). Therefore, the SES has demonstrated adequate convergent validity. Reports of the discriminant validity of the SES also showed no significant correlations with achievement scores or with gender, age, work experience, or marital status. Thus, the SES demonstrates adequate discriminant validity.

Design

This study was conducted using a correlational field design. No experimental control over or manipulation of independent variables was used. This design was chosen due to the exploratory nature of the study, the inability to make use of randomization in sampling or assignment to groups, and the inability to make the observations of the transracial adoptees in their natural settings. This design does not allow for causal inferences, but it has high external validity. It also enabled the determination of within and between group differences.

Analyses

Due to the exploratory nature of this study and its design, descriptive statistics such as correlations, means, and standard deviations were calculated for the data. Due to

the alterations made on the MEIM, reliability estimates for the subscales used to operationalize the dimensions of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model were obtained to ensure that the items comprising each subscale are measuring the intended constructs. Scores for each of the four dimensions were standardized into z-scores as were the items from the CRIQ comprising the potential confounds. Support for the first research question regarding whether transracial adoptees differ on Adoptee Culture Dimension was determined by plotting the standardized scores of the participants on each of the two axes (the Cultural Identity Axis and the Racial Identity Axis), by determining correlation coefficients for the dimensions comprising each of the two Axes, and by calculating reliability estimates. Similarly, the other three dimensions were assessed by plotting the scores of the participants and calculating reliability estimates. If the data were distributed across the potential Cultural-Racial Identities and the reliability estimates were high, then these hypotheses were considered to have been supported.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to determine the degree to which the Cultural-Racial Identity Model actually depicts the identity experiences of transracial adoptees as these experiences were measured by the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure-Revised (MEIM-R). A second purpose for this study was to assess the degree to which the psychological adjustment of transracial adoptees differed based on their Cultural-Racial Identities. The research questions that were addressed in this study are as follows: (a) *When used on transracial adoptees, does the MEIM-R reliably distinguish among adoptees' levels of knowledge, awareness, competence, and comfort with their racial group's own culture (Adoptee Culture Dimension)?* Are there differences among transracial adoptees on their level of knowledge, awareness, competence, and comfort with their racial group's own culture (Adoptee Culture Dimension)? (b) *When used on transracial adoptees, does the MEIM-R reliably distinguish among adoptees' levels of knowledge, awareness, competence and comfort with their parents' racial group's culture (Parental Culture Dimension)?* Are there differences among transracial adoptees on their level of knowledge, awareness, competence, and comfort with their parents' racial group's culture (Parental Culture Dimension)? (c) *When used on transracial adoptees, does the MEIM-R reliably distinguish among adoptees' levels of comfort with their own racial self-identification and with those belonging to their own racial group (Adoptee Race Dimension)?* Are there differences among transracial adoptees on their

level of comfort with their own racial self-identification and with those belonging to their own racial group (Adoptee Race Dimension)? (d) *When used on transracial adoptees, does the MEIM-R reliably distinguish among adoptees' levels of comfort with their own racial self-identification and with those belonging to their parents' racial group (Parental Race Dimension)?* Are there differences among transracial adoptees on their level of comfort with their own racial self-identification and with those belonging to their parents' racial group (Parental Race Dimension)? (e) Controlling for age at the time of adoption, number of pre-adoptive placement, pre-adoptive history/trauma, sex of the transracial adoptees, current age of the transracial adoptees, and socioeconomic status of the transracial adoptees, are there differences in the psychological adjustment of transracial adoptees having different levels of the four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions? (f) Controlling for age at the time of adoption, number of pre-adoptive placement, pre-adoptive history/trauma, sex of the transracial adoptees, current age of the transracial adoptees, and socioeconomic status of the transracial adoptees, are there differences in the self-esteem of transracial adoptees having different levels of the four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions?

Analyses

Due to the exploratory nature of this study and its design, descriptive statistics such as correlations, means, and standard deviations were calculated for the data. Due to the alterations made on the MEIM, reliability estimates for the subscales used to operationalize the dimensions of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model were obtained to

ensure that the items comprising each subscale are measuring the intended constructs. Scores for each of the four dimensions were standardized into z-scores as were the items from the CRIQ comprising the potential confounds. Support for the first research question concerning whether transracial adoptees differ on the four Cultural-Racial Identities was determined by plotting the standardized scores of the participants on each of the two axes (the Cultural Identity Axis and the Racial Identity Axis). Correlation coefficients for the two dimensions comprising each of the two Axes were also calculated and used to indicate the variability of respondents scores on the measure of Cultural-Racial Identity. Reliability estimates were also used as indicators of the distribution of transracial adoptees on the various Cultural-Racial Identities available.

The data were analyzed to determine if differences exist in the psychological adjustment of transracial adoptees having different levels of the four dimensions while controlling for potential confounds. That is, regressions were performed using psychological adjustment as the outcome variable, the four dimensions as predictors. The degree to which the six potentially confounding variables (age at placement, pre-adoptive history, sex, current age, socioeconomic status of the adoptive family, and number of pre-adoptive placements) impacted the relationships among the dependent and independent variables was determined. Similarly, additional regressions were performed to determine if differences exist in the self-esteem of transracial adoptees having different levels of the four dimensions.

Descriptive statistics.

Table 2 summarizes the means, standard deviations, and reliabilities for the major subscales from the BSI, SES, and the MEIM-R. The exploratory nature of this study

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics and Reliabilities.

Variables	Actual Ranges	Means	Standard Deviations	α
Demographics				-
Age at Adoption (in months)	0 to 144	22.29	31.04	-
Number of Pre-Adoptive Traumatic Incidents Reported	0 to 2	.53	.54	-
Number of Pre-Adoptive Placements	0 to 18	1.64	2.67	-
Socioeconomic Status of Adoptive Family	2 to 9	6.56	1.57	-
Brief Symptom Inventory				
Global Severity Index (GSI)	36 to 80	60.65	9.70	.95
Positive Symptom Total (PST)	36 to 76	59.61	8.89	-
Positive Symptom Distress Index (PSDI)	43 to 78	57.09	8.46	-
Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale				
Self-Esteem	21 to 40	33.43	5.42	.89
Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure-Revised				
F1 Adoptee Culture Dimension (MEIM-R items: 2, 16, 21, 22)	-4.03 to 6.88	3.61E-16	3.33	.85
F2 Adoptee Race Dimension (MEIM-R items: 1, 3, 10R, 11, 12,13, 14, 18, 20)	-13.86 to 10.21	2.11E-16	7.00	.73
F3 Parental Culture Dimension (MEIM-R items: 39, 44, 45, 46)	-6.52 to 2.98	-6.49E-16	2.98	.92
F4 Parental Race Dimension (MEIM-R items: 24, 26, 29, 33R, 34, 36, 37, 41, 43)	-16.29 to 10.33	-6.50E-16	6.02	.84

necessitated the calculation of descriptive statistics. The means and standard deviations for the BSI were standardized using Derogatis and Cleary's (1977) reported factor structure for a sample of non-patient adults. The means and standard deviations of other relevant variables were also included in Table 2.

Table 2 also enumerates the items used to make up each of the four dimensions of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model and reports standardized item alphas for each subscale as well as their means and standard deviations. As described in Chapter 2, the four dimensions of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model were constructed by determining those scales in the MEIM-R that were theoretically consistent with the Cultural-Racial Identity Model according to Phinney's (1992) descriptions of the subscales and their theoretical premises (See Figure 4). The specific items comprising each of the four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions were then determined by combining Phinney's factor structure and the additional items generated for the ethnic behaviors and practices subscale. For example, a sample item that comprises the Adoptee Culture Dimension was "I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group." A sample item in the Parental Culture Dimension was "I participate in cultural practices of my parents' group, such as special food, music, or customs. In the Adoptee Race Dimension, some sample items were "I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group" and "I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me, in terms of how to relate to my own group and other groups." Finally, some items comprising the Parental Race Dimension were "I am happy that my parents are members

of the group they belong to," "I feel a strong attachment towards my parents' ethnic group," and "I have a strong sense of belonging to my parents' ethnic group."

When the items believed to be theoretically relate to each of the four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions were obtained, a reliability analysis of the MEIM-R was conducted to determine those items that, when included in the score for each of the dimensions, resulted in adequate reliability for the dimension. For each of the four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions, the combination of items that yielded the highest reliability was retained and became the items comprising that dimension. Table 2 lists those items that were included in each dimension for the analyses to follow. Due to the small number of items making up the Ethnic Behaviors and Practices subscale of the original MEIM, additional items were constructed using a rational methodology. Three items were added to supplement the Ethnic Behaviors and Practices for Transracial Adoptees' Ethnic Group subscale; the same three items were then altered slightly (i.e., changing "my own ethnic group" to "my parents' ethnic group") and added to the Ethnic Behaviors and Practices for Adoptive Parents' Ethnic Group subscale. The additional items were: "I know the language/dialect/slang of people from my own [parents'] ethnic group," "I celebrate the holidays of people from my own [parents'] ethnic group," "I have values and beliefs similar to those of people from my own [parents'] ethnic group."

As Table 2 depicts, the reliability estimates for the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure-Revised (MEIM-R), the Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI), and Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (SES) were calculated.

The Cultural-Racial Identity Model

The first four research questions posed in the current study address the degree to which Cultural-Racial Identity Model is a viable means for representing the unique identity statuses of transracial adoptees. An examination of the data allowed an assessment of the degree to which the measures used and, therefore, the theory behind the chosen measures, substantively differentiated between transracial adoptees' Cultural-Racial Identities. As a result, the specific research questions were addressed using three different analyses.

Figure 6 shows two scatterplots of the data points in the Cultural Identity Axis and Racial Identity Axis, respectively. These plots depict the transracial adoptee participants' scores on each of the four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions. For example, in the Cultural Identity Axis plot, transracial adoptees were plotted on the graph according to the degree to which they reported being knowledgeable of, aware of, competent within, and comfortable with the culture of their own racial group (Adoptee Culture Dimension) by the degree to which they reported being knowledgeable of, aware of, competent within, and comfortable with the culture of their parents' racial group (Parental Culture Dimension). As the two plots illustrate, the transracial adoptee participants reported cultural identities and Racial Identities that were substantially scattered on the four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions of interest. In other words, the transracial adoptees reported a wide range of cultural Identities or racial identities rather than remaining clustered in a few of the potential Cultural-Racial Identities. This graph served as one of

the means for supporting the measure of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model, and, therefore, the theory behind the model.

Table 4 reports correlations between each of the four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions, psychological adjustment, and self-esteem. Because Pearson's correlation coefficient is a measure of linear association, this statistic gives an indication of the degree to which a linear relationship exists between two variables. In the case of the Cultural Identity Axis, the Adoptee Culture Dimension was plotted by the Parental Culture Dimension. The correlation between these two dimensions was –0.12 and failed to attain significance (p = .40). This statistic indicated that reported Cultural Identities were scattered throughout the scatterplot. Thus, a linear relationship was not found between the Adoptee Culture Dimension and the Parental Culture Dimension such that participants reported various Cultural Identities as measured by the MEIM-R. Similarly, the Adoptee Race Dimension and the Parental Race Dimension were plotted against each other for the Racial Identity Axis. The correlation between these two variables was 0.95 (p = .51). This statistic indicated that transracial adoptees' reported Racial Identities as measured by the MEIM-R were scattered throughout the Racial Identity Axis.

Table 2 also contains the reliability estimates for the four dimensions of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model. Reliability analyses which yielded reliability estimates were performed on the data and provided additional support for the viability of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model was found.

Reliability estimates give an indication of the relationship between the variation

between subjects and the error in the variation within subjects. The Kuder-Richardson formula 20 is calculated in the following formula:

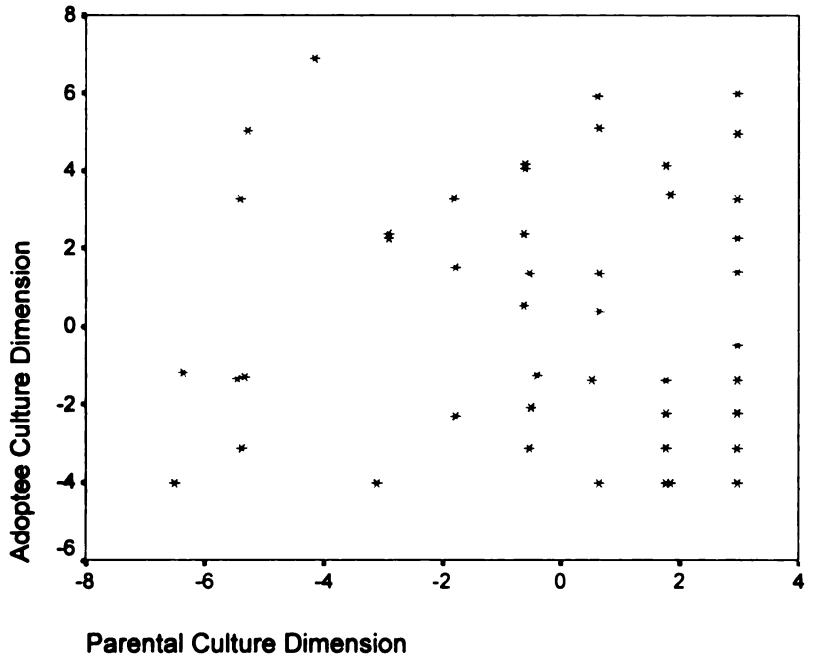
$$KR_{20} = \frac{n}{n-1}\left(\frac{SD^2 - \Sigma pq}{SD^2}\right)$$

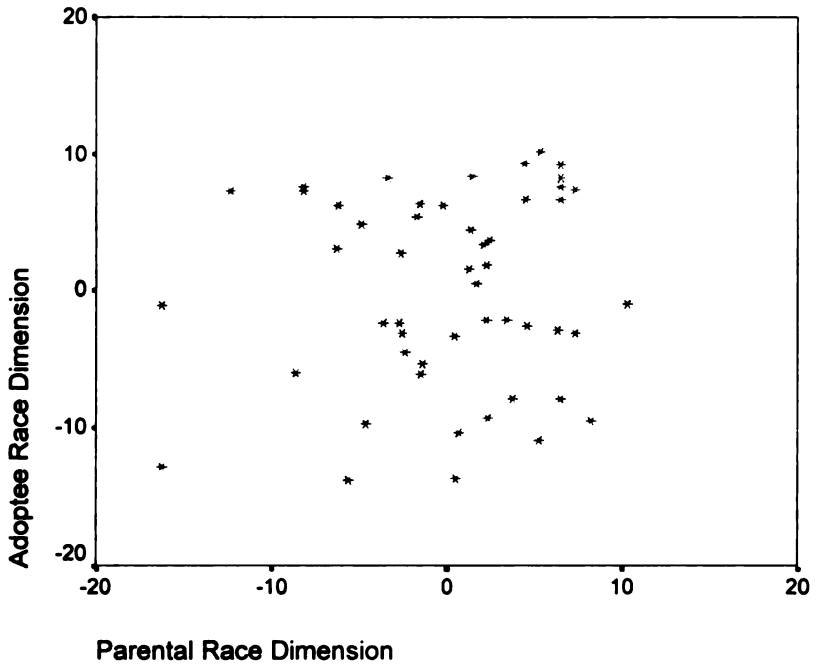
where n = the number of items on the test
SD^2 = the variance of scores (the standard deviation squared
p = the difficulty level of each item or the proportion of the group that responded correctly
q = the proportion that missed the item, or 1-p (Sax, 1980, p. 265).

Sax (1980) noted that the larger the true variance of the scores, the higher the reliability. Thus, because reliability "refers to the consistency of measuring true individual differences," (p. 268) measures are more reliable when greater differences among individuals' performance on a measure exist. A high reliability estimate (e.g., above .70), indicates that a set of items in a measure is successful in detecting variation among people on that measure. A high reliability estimate also is indicative of a high degree of variability among people on a particular measure. In this case, if the four dimensions of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model as measured by the MEIM-R have high reliabilities, then variation in the Cultural-Racial Identities of transracial adoptees in the current study exists.

As seen in Table 2, the Adoptee Culture Dimension had four items and a reliability of .85, the Parental Culture Dimension had four items and a reliability of .92, the Adoptee Race Dimension had nine items and a reliability of .73, and the Parental Race Dimension had nine items and a reliability of .84. The reliability estimate for each of the four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions was within the "high" range as previously

Figure 6. Scatterplots of the Cultural Identity Axis and the Racial Identity Axis.





defined. Thus, the viability of the Cultural-Racial Identity for differentiating among transracial adoptees' Cultural-Racial Identities was empirically demonstrated.

Confounding Variables

The remaining research questions for this study addressed the psychological adjustment and self-esteem of those having a broad range of Cultural-Racial Identities. To account for potential confounds, six variables were assessed for their impact on psychological adjustment and self-esteem. The six variables were: age at adoption, number of pre-adoptive placement, pre-adoptive history/trauma, sex of the transracial between psychological adjustment and self-esteem has been both theoretically and empirically well-documented in the literature. The relationship between these variables serves as an additional source of construct validity. Although these findings did not have implications for the degree to which the variables were confounds, they do substantiate relationships among variables that make intuitive sense.

Model Predicting Psychological Adjustment

Table 4 displays a correlation matrix of the variables of interest for this study. These correlations served as guides for examining additional relationships among variables. The correlation between the Adoptee Race Dimension and the Adoptee Culture Dimension ($r = .801$) supports the concern regarding the degree to which race and culture and their respective impacts can be separated. This finding demonstrates that these two variables are strongly related. Similarly, the correlation between the Parental Race

Table 3. Correlations of Potential Confounding Variables and Dependent Variables.

Variables	Mean	Sex	Age at Adoption	Placements	Trauma	Socio-Economic Status	Current Age	Psychological Adjustment	Self-Esteem
Sex	1.25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
(n)		(51)							
Age at Adopt.	22.29	.090	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
(n)		(51)	(51)						
Placements	1.64	- .109	- .108	-	-	-	-	-	-
(n)		(50)	(50)	(50)					
Trauma	0.53	.010	.371**	- .004	-	-	-	-	-
(n)		(51)	(51)	(50)	(51)				
SES	6.56	- .067	.192	.064	.141	-	-	-	-
(n)		(50)	(50)	(49)	(50)	(50)			
Current Age	24.35	.071	.189	- .044	.130	- .325***	-	-	-
(n)		(51)	(51)	(50)	(51)	(50)	(51)		
Psych Adj.	60.65	.134	- .022	.025	.135	.038	- .080	-	-
(n)		(51)	(51)	(50)	(51)	(50)	(51)	(51)	
Self-Esteem	33.43	- .089	.035	.117	- .136	- .022	- .044	- .556**	-
(n)		(51)	(51)	(50)	(51)	(50)	(51)	(51)	(51)

* Correlation is significant at the 0.10 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Note. "Age at Adoption" is measure in months. "Placements" refers to the Number of Pre-Adoptive Placements the transracial adoptees reported. "Trauma" refers to the number of traumatic conditions the transracial adoptees reported as comprising their pre-adoptive history. "SES" refers to Socioeconomic Status of the adoptive family and was measured using the following scale: 1 = $7,499 or below; 2 = $7,500 to $14,999; 3 = $15,000 to $24,999; 4 = $25,000 to $39,999; 5 = $40,000 to $59,999; 6 = $60,000 to $89,000; 7 = $90,000 or more. "Psych. Adj." refers to psychological adjustment as measured by the Global Severity Index of the Brief Symptom Inventory. "Self-Esteem" was measured by the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale.

Dimension and the Parental Culture Dimension (r = .510) also shows a relationship of high to moderate strength between these two variables. Other correlations between variables were between the Parental Culture Dimension and psychological adjustment, between the Adoptee Race Dimension and self-esteem, and between the Parental Race Dimension and self-esteem. Also, as has been traditionally found, the correlation between psychological adjustment and self-esteem was high and statistically significant at alpha = .01. These relationships were further explored in subsequent analyses.

For the remaining research questions, scores on the four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions were correlated with the dependent variables.

Table 4. Correlations of Variables of Interest.

Variables	Adoptee Culture Dimension	Parental Culture Dimension	Adoptee Race Dimension	Parental Race Dimension	Psych. Adjustment	Self-Esteem
Adoptee Culture Dimension	-	-	-	-	-	-
Parental Culture Dimension	-.120	-	-	-	-	-
Adoptee Race Dimension	.801***	-.178	-	-	-	-
Parental Race Dimension	.024	.510***	.095	-	-	-
Psychological Adjustment	.043	-.243*	-.027	.058	-	-
Self-Esteem	.172	.184	.243*	.266*	.556***	-

* Correlation is significant at the 0.10 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Note. N = 51 for all correlations. "Psychological Adjustment" was measured by the Global Severity Index of the Brief Symptom Inventory. "Self-Esteem" was measured by the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale.

Table 5 contains the results of multiple regression analyses used to address the fifth research question for the current study. This question concerns the degree to which differences exist in the psychological adjustment of transracial adoptees having different levels of the four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions. As the results from the prior analyses reported above demonstrate, different levels of the four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions exist. Therefore, the task was to assess which, if any, of the four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions or what combination of the dimensions predicted the psychological adjustment of the transracial adoptees in the current study. As seen in Tables 5 and 6, even when all four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions were entered into the regression, statistically significant relationships were found only with particular combinations of variables.

When examining the results of the analyses, the traditional alpha level used in significance testing is .05 (Beale, 1972; Magidson, 1978), however, several statisticians and researchers have questioned this practice. Beale (1972), Magidson (1978), and Olejnik (1984) critiqued the use of a significance level of .05, but Olejnik noted the potential Type I and Type II errors that accompany decisions to change significance levels. As the following results demonstrate, few of the analyses yielded statistically significant results when the alpha was .05. However, the small sample size obtained for this study (n=51) and the resultant lower power made effects more difficult to discern and made significant results less likely to emerge from the data. However, very few published studies used a significance testing level of .10. Thus, in the current study, the results were

reported with notations regarding those findings that were significant at alpha = .05 (as denoted by a double asterisk) and those that were significant at alpha = .10 (as denoted by a single asterisk). For interpretation of the results, those findings significant at alpha = .05 were utilized (see Chapter V for further details), but those findings significant at alpha = .10 were utilized as guidelines for future research and practice issues.

Table 5 shows the regressions performed to predict psychological adjustment. When all four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions were entered into the regression, the overall model did not reach statistical significance (F (4, 46) = 1.141, p = .349), but the Parental Culture Dimension was a significant predictor of psychological adjustment (t = -1.956, p = .057) only when alpha = .10. Thus, having already established that the MEIM-R effectively measures differences in the Cultural-Racial Identities of transracial adoptees, the null hypothesis that no differences among transracial adoptees having varying levels of the four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions existed was retained. This indicates that psychological adjustment does not differ based on transracial adoptees' Cultural-Racial Identities.

In the second regression predicting psychological adjustment seen in Table 5, the Parental Culture Dimension and the Parental Race Dimension were predictors. This analysis was conducted with respect for determining the most parsimonious model for predicting psychological adjustment. Although the Parental Culture Dimension continued to be a significant predictor of psychological adjustment, the overall model was still not significant (F (2, 48) = 1.670, p = .199). However, in the third regression seen in Table 5,

Table 5. Predicting Psychological Adjustment.

Predictors	Partial Regression Weight	
	Raw	Standardized
Regression 1		
F1 Adoptee Culture Dimension[1]	.640	.220
F3 Parental Culture Dimension	- 1.084*	- .333*
F2 Adoptee Race Dimension	- .380	- .275
F4 Parental Race Dimension	.213	.133
Intercept	60.647	
Summary Statistics: R = .300, R^2 = .090		
Regression 2		
F3 Parental Culture Dimension[2]	- .940*	- .289*
F4 Parental Race Dimension	.144	.089
Intercept	60.647	
Summary Statistics: R = .255, R^2 = .065		
Regression 3		
F3 Parental Culture Dimension[3]	- .791*	- .243*
Intercept	60.647	
Summary Statistics: R = .243, R^2 = .059		
Regression 4		
F1 Adoptee Culture Dimension[4]	.126	.043
Intercept	60.647	
Summary Statistics: R = .043, R^2 = .002		
Regression 5		
F2 Adoptee Race Dimension[5]	- .037	- .027
Intercept	60.647	
Summary Statistics: R = .027, R^2 = .001		
Regression 6		
F3 Parental Race Dimension[6]	- .093	- .058
Intercept	60.647	
Summary Statistics: R = .058, R^2 = .003		

Note. Psychological Adjustment is measured by the Global Symptom Severity Index of the Brief Symptom Inventory.

**$p < .05$, *$p < .10$

[1]F (4, 46) = 1.14, power = .329

[2]F (2, 48) = 1.67, power = .334

[3]F (1, 49) = 3.080*, power = .405

[4]F (1, 49) = .092, power = .049

[5]F (1, 49) = .035, power = .042

[6]F (1, 49) = .165, power = .053

the overall model was significant (F (1, 49) = 3.080, p = .086) at an alpha = .10 but included only a single predictor, the Parental Culture Dimension. In this analysis, the data indicates that more psychological maladjustment (i.e., a higher Global Severity Index on the Brief Symptom Inventory [BSI]) results from less identification with the culture of transracial adoptees' parents. In other words, when transracial adoptees are less knowledgeable of, aware of, competent within, or comfortable with their adoptive parents' culture (i.e., in this case the White culture), they report more severe psychological symptoms on the BSI. These data suggest that the psychological adjustment of transracial adoptees was only able to be significantly predicted when the alpha level for significance testing was made more lenient and when a single variable was included in the regression, the Parental Culture Dimension. Furthermore, Table 5 shows that the zero order correlation for each of the other Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions (i.e., regressions with only a single predictor) demonstrate that none of the other predictors were significantly related to psychological adjustment when analyzed alone. The models with only the Adoptee Culture Dimension (F (1, 49) = .092, p = .763), the Adoptee Race Dimension (F (1, 49) = .035, p = .852), and the Parental Race Dimension (F (1, 49) = .165, p = .687) alone all failed to reach significance.

Model Predicting Self-Esteem

Table 6 shows regressions predicting self-esteem using the Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions. As with psychological adjustment, the full model for predicting self-esteem included all four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions. The research question to be

tested here was the degree to which differences exist in the self-esteem of transracial adoptees having different levels of the four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions. In this case, neither the overall model (F (4, 46) = 1.772, p = .151) nor any of the individual predictors significantly predicted self-esteem. Thus, different levels of self-esteem among transracial adoptees with varying levels of the Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions were not detected in the data, so the null hypothesis could not be rejected.

Once again striving for the most parsimonious prediction model, several analyses were conducted on the data. The second regression in Table 5 included only two variables, the Adoptee Race Dimension and the Parental Race Dimension. The overall model was significant, (F (2, 48) = 3.233, p = .048), the Parental Race Dimension was a significant predictor (t = 1.802, p = .078) at alpha = .10, but the Adoptee Race Dimension was not a significant predictor (t = 1.616, p = .113). This finding indicated that, when a more lenient alpha level of significance was used, transracial adoptees' feelings about both their own and their parents' racial group memberships as well as their comfort with those belonging to both their own and their parents' racial groups maybe related to transracial adoptees' self-esteem in a positive direction.

The third regression in Table 6 predicted self-esteem with the Parental Culture Dimension and the Parental Race Dimension. In this case, the Parental Culture Dimension (t = .406, p = .687), the Parental Race Dimension (t = 1.441, p = .156), and the overall model did not meet the alpha level requirements for statistical significance in predicting self-esteem (F = 1.918, p = .158). Although the Parental Race Dimension was

significant in the second regression in Table 6, it did not attain significance in this regression. The fourth regression analysis in Table 6 included only the Parental Race Dimension. In this analysis, the overall model was significant (F (1, 49) = 3.734, p = .059) at alpha = .10. This suggests that the degree to which transracial adoptees were comfortable with those belonging to their parents' racial group (i.e., the White racial group) may be positively related to their reported levels of self-esteem such that more comfort with White people could indicate a somewhat higher level of self-esteem.

As with the fourth regression in Table 6, the fifth regression in Table 6 included a single predictor, the Adoptee Race Dimension, to predict self-esteem. The overall model was significant (F (1, 49) = 3.077, p = .086) at alpha = .10. This suggests that the degree to which transracial adoptees were comfortable with those belonging to their own racial group may be positively related to their reported levels of self-esteem. This finding in conjunction with the finding reported in the fourth regression in Table 6 (the Parental Race Dimension predicting self-esteem) replicates the finding from the second regression in Table 6 where both the Parental Race Dimension and the Adoptee Race Dimension were used to predict self-esteem. The additional regressions reported in Table 6 were zero order correlation models where neither the Adoptee Culture Dimension (F (1, 49) = 1.499, p = .227) nor the Parental Culture Dimension (F (1, 49) = 1.720, p = .196) was significant at alpha = .10.

These findings suggested that the second regression in Table 6 in which the Parental Race Dimension and Adoptee Race Dimension predicted level of self-esteem

Table 6. Predicting Self-Esteem.

	Partial Regression Weight	
Predictors	Raw	Standardized
Regression 1		
F1 Adoptee Culture Dimension[1]	- .078	- .048
F2 Adoptee Race Dimension	.226	.292
F3 Parental Culture Dimension	.266	.146
F4 Parental Race Dimension	.149	.165
Intercept	33.429	
Summary Statistics: R = .365, R^2 = .134		
Regression 2		
F2 Adoptee Race Dimension[2]	.170	.220
F4 Parental Race Dimension	.221*	.245*
Intercept	33.429	
Summary Statistics: R = .345, R^2 = .119		
Regression 3		
F3 Parental Culture Dimension[3]	.209	.233
F4 Parental Race Dimension	.119	.066
Intercept	33.429	
Summary Statistics: R = .272, R^2 = .074		
Regression 4		
F4 Parental Race Dimension[4]	.239*	.266*
Intercept	33.429	
Summary Statistics: R = .266, R^2 = .071		
Regression 5		
F2 Adoptee Race Dimension[5]	.188*	.107*
Intercept	33.429	
Summary Statistics: R = .243, R^2 = .059		
Regression 6		
F1 Adoptee Culture Dimension[6]	.280	.229
Intercept	33.429	
Summary Statistics: R = .172, R^2 = .030		
Regression 7		
F3 Parental Culture Dimension[7]	.335	.255
Intercept	33.429	
Summary Statistics: R = .184, R^2 = .034		

Note. Self-esteem is measured by Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale.
**p < .05, *p < .10

[1] F (4, 46) = 1.772, power = .499
[2] F (2, 48) = 3.233**, power = .589
[3] F (2, 48) = 1.918, power = .378
[4] F (1, 49) = 3.734*, power = .473
[5] F (1, 49) = 3.077*, power = .405
[6] F (1, 49) = 1.499, power = .232
[7] F (1, 49) = 1.720, power = .249

was the most parsimonious model with the best predictive ability for predicting self-esteem among transracial adoptees. No other combination of variables or single predictor models provided better indices for predicting self-esteem than did the Parental Race Dimension and the Adoptee Race Dimension. However, the predictive power was still fairly limited. This indicates that the ways in which transracial adoptees identify themselves and the comfort level they feel with people of their own and their parents' racial groups seems to have the most impact on their subsequent self-esteem.

Partial Regression Coefficients

The data from these analyses can also be interpreted in a different manner. Although significance testing represents the traditional manner in which to assess the findings of an empirical study, social scientists also make use of partial regression coefficients. The beta weights found in each of the regression analyses already reported represent standardized partial regression coefficients that are of moderate size. Because "a partial regression coefficient (raw or standard) can be interpreted as the amount of change that is expected to occur in the criterion per unit change in the predictor when statistical control has occurred for all other variables in the analysis" (Licht, 1995 in Grimm and Yarnold, p. 38), the moderate partial regression coefficients found in the data suggest relationships that deserve further examination.

The first regression in Table 5 predicted psychological adjustment using all four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions. The sizes of the partial regression coefficients in this analysis were noteworthy. The standardized partial regression coefficient for the

Parental Culture Dimension was of a moderate size (- .333) and the R-square was .090. This moderate effect was detected despite a small sample size and an analysis with a power of .329. The import of this finding suggests that the Parental Culture Dimension may have had a sizable impact, especially when considering the low power of the analysis and the relatively low chance of detecting any effect at all. Furthermore, this finding could reinforce the notion that the Parental Culture Dimension has an inverse relationship with psychological adjustment (i.e., as transracial adoptees are more adept at and comfortable within their adoptive parents' culture, or the White culture, they report less severe psychological distress). The partial regression coefficients of the Adoptee Culture Dimension (.220) and the Adoptee Race Dimension (-.275) also could suggest that with greater power in the analysis, significant effects may be found. If these two dimensions were of moderate size or greater, their impact on these findings would suggest that adoptees having greater knowledge, awareness, competence, and comfort within their own racial group's culture report more psychological adjustment. It would also suggest that those transracial adoptees who feel less comfortable with their own racial self-identification and with those of their own racial group membership tend to report to greater psychological distress.

Tables 5's second regression predicting psychological adjustment utilized the Parental Culture Dimension and the Parental Race Dimension as predictors. When only these two Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions were included in the analysis and when considering partial regression coefficients, the strength of the partial regression

coefficient (- .289), decreased slightly with fewer variables in the model, as did the R-square (.065).

The third regression in Table 5 contained a single predictor, the Parental Culture Dimension. Again, the partial regression coefficient (- .243) decreased as did the R-square (.059). The fourth, fifth, and sixth regressions in Table 5 contained single predictor models where psychological adjustment was predicted by the Adoptee Culture Dimension (.043), Adoptee Race Dimension (-.027), and Parental Race Dimension (-.058). In each of the models, the partial regression coefficient was of such a small size that they were considered to have a relationship of negligible, if any, strength with psychological adjustment.

The results of these analyses suggest that the model with all four dimensions may be a better predictor of psychological adjustment than the parsimonious models. Also, when using partial regression coefficients as indicators of relationships, the Parental Culture Dimension was the only variable to demonstrate a relationship to psychological adjustment.

Table 6 shows the full model for predicting self-esteem and includes all four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions. In this regression, the partial regression coefficient for the Adoptee Race Dimension (.292) was of low-moderate strength. Furthermore, the R-square (.134) for this analysis was more substantial than the R-square was in predicting psychological adjustment. The power for this analysis was stronger (.499) than it was in previous analyses, but continued to present a challenge when seeking stronger effects.

The significance of this finding was that those transracial adoptees who were comfortable with their racial group membership and with those of their own racial group reported higher levels of self-esteem.

Table 6's second regression utilized the Adoptee Race Dimension and the Parental Race Dimension to predict self-esteem. When compared to the full model containing all four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions, both the strength of the partial regression coefficient for the Adoptee Race Dimension (.220) and the R-square (.119) decreased slightly in this model but the partial regression coefficients for the Parental Race Dimension increased (.245).

Parental Culture Dimension and Parental Race Dimension were used to predict self-esteem in the third regression in Table 6. In this regression, the strength of the partial regression coefficients for the Parental Race Dimension decreased (.066) as did the R-square (.074), but the strength of the partial regression coefficient for the Parental Culture Dimension increased (from .146 in the first regression in Table 6 to .233 in the third regression in Table 6). This suggested that when the Parental Culture Dimension was included in the regression, it accounted for more of the relationship between self-esteem and the Parental Race Dimension (perhaps due to multicollinearity). In this case, neither variable nor the overall model met the alpha level requirements for statistical significance in predicting self-esteem.

The fourth regression analysis in Table 6 included only the Parental Race Dimension. The R-square (.071) decreased but the partial regression coefficient (.266)

for the Parental Race Dimension increased.

Although the Parental Race Dimension continued to maintain the strength of its relationship with self-esteem in three of the four regressions, it did not hold the relationship when paired with the Parental Culture Dimension. The Adoptee Race Dimension, on the other hand, did maintain the strength of its relationship throughout the analyses. Thus, the Adoptee Race Dimension was regarded as having the most substantive relationship with self-esteem among the four Cultural-Racial Identities. However, as noted above, the poor reliability of the SES indicates the need for caution in accepting the relationship between the Adoptee Race Dimension and self-esteem as one of even low-moderate strength.

As with the prediction of psychological adjustment, the overall model containing all four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions appears to be a better predictor of self-esteem than those models having smaller combinations of the four dimensions when examining partial regression coefficients. As a result of this finding, the Adoptee Race Dimension was the variable that demonstrated the most substantial relationship with self-esteem when partial regression coefficients serve as the indicator.

Summary

When examining the results of these data analyses, the data demonstrated that the four dimensions in the study have a modest amount of predictive power in predicting psychological adjustment and self-esteem. The partial regression coefficients in the regression models also suggest that greater effects may exist but require a larger sample

to emerge in the data. Two other issues in the analysis were also addressed. First, to ensure that the data followed, as assumed, a linear pattern, the possibility of curvilinear relationships in the data were investigated. The results of these analyses demonstrated that curvilinear relationships do not exist in the data.

Second, multicollinearity was suspected as an issue in the significance testing portion of the study. This was an issue because multicollinearity in the data can make the beta weights of the variables unstable. Therefore, a sensitivity analysis was conducted to determine if the variables were affected by the multicollinearity.

Table 7. Sensitivity Analysis for Multicollinearity.

Variables	Standardized Beta Weight	Standardized Beta Weight	Standardized Beta Weight
Predicting Psychological Adjustment			
Adoptee Culture Dimension	.220	-	.007
Adoptee Race Dimension	- 2.750	- .094	-
Parent Culture Dimension	- .333	- .318	- .288
Parental Race Dimension	.133	.113	.089
Predicting Self-Esteem			
Adoptee Culture Dimension	- .048	-	.179
Adoptee Race Dimension	.292	.252	-
Parent Culture Dimension	.146	.143	.098
Parental Race Dimension	.165	.170	.212

Table 7 presents the results of the sensitivity analysis conducted on the data. It shows the standardized beta weights for the four dimensions when all four variables were entered into a regression analysis and when the Adoptee Culture Dimension and Adoptee Race Dimension were alternately excluded from the regression analyses. When predicting both psychological adjustment and self-esteem, the beta weights for the Adoptee Culture

Dimension and the Adoptee Race Dimension were unstable (i.e., their magnitude changed substantially when different combinations of variables were included in the analyses and they had large standard errors). Thus, the inclusion of either the Adoptee Culture Dimension or the Adoptee Race Dimension must be done with caution.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study constitute a substantial contribution to the literature on transracial adoption and on racially integrated families. The purpose of this study was to examine the efficacy, applicability, and comprehensiveness of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model by determining the degree to which the model validly describes the Cultural-Racial Identities of transracial adoptees and by identifying differences in the psychological adjustment and self-esteem of transracial adoptees having different Cultural-Racial Identities. This purpose was accomplished by addressing the following research questions for the study: Does the Cultural-Racial Identity Model accurately depict the identities of transracial adoptees? Do different cultural and racial identities affect the psychological adjustment of transracial adoptees? Do different cultural and racial identities affect the self-esteem of transracial adoptees?

The exploratory nature of the study requires caution in the interpretation of the empirical evidence presented in the current study. With these cautions in mind, the findings of the current study were interpreted and their implications for counseling psychology and transracial adoption policies follow. However, before discussing the results, the significance level for interpretable findings must be addressed.

Significance Level for Interpretation

Given that the significance level chosen for the current study has a substantial

impact on the interpretation of the findings for the study, the literature on significance levels was consulted. Although the current study is an exploratory one, the traditional significance level of $\alpha = .05$ was expected to be utilized when the study was designed. However, because a smaller sample size (n=51) than had been desired (n=90) was obtained for the study despite the best efforts of the researcher, a more lenient significance level ($\alpha = .10$) was considered. Shine (1980) warned against replacing an *a priori* significance level (in this case, the traditional $\alpha = .05$) with an *a posteriori* significance level (in this case, the more lenient $\alpha = .10$). He formulated several reasons to avoid this practice including that "the probability under the null hypothesis that the observed probability level is less than the *a posteriori* significance level is not, as is thought by many researchers, generally equal to the a posteriori significance level" (p. 331). Furthermore, it also cannot be considered the probability of a Type I error, it cannot be it "interpreted as an a priori significance level" (p. 331), and it is unethical to perform such a replacement.

Another argument against making the significance level more lenient includes that given by Olejnik (1984). He stated that "most hypotheses in the social sciences are tested at a .05 level of significance . . . While this criterion of significance is arbitrary, it has gained wide acceptance to the point where any hypothesis tested at a higher probability of a Type I error is viewed with considerable reservation" (p. 41).

However, Olejnik (1984) also noted that detecting a small effect requires a large sample size, even if the significance level is set at $\alpha = .10$ and a power of .5 is considered

acceptable. Other researchers (e.g., Beale, 1972; Magidson, 1978) have also felt the need to express their concern that the significance level of .05 has become too rigid. They espoused the belief that "the contribution made by any experiment should not be a function of a particular value for alpha or, more generally, should not be a function of any statistic alone" (Beale, 1972, p. 1080). Despite the support for being less rigid in setting significance levels found in the literature, published studies having significance levels set at any level above .10 are rare indeed. A study conducted by Levinson (1971) is one example of a study where the significance level was set at .10. With respect to that decision, Levinson stated,

> The significance level of .10 was adopted for the experiment, first because of the small *N*, dictated by practical considerations, and the high variability of human Ss; and second because of the high social cost ascribed in the present instance to the failure to reject a false null hypothesis. (p. 1376)

The two sides of this argument as well as a literature search suggested that few studies have been published, and therefore accepted by the academic community where significance levels were greater than .05. Furthermore, the import of research should not only be based on finding differences, but also on finding similarities. The failure to find significant results in a study, especially one like the current investigation, has as many, if not more, implications for policy, practice, and education. Thus, the findings of the current study must be interpreted with caution and with care.

With these cautions in mind, the current study was interpreted with the understanding that the significance level chosen for the current study was the traditional .05. This decision was made for several reasons. Most importantly, the potential for

making a Type I error was substantial enough to force errors on the side of making Type II errors. Given the nature of the study and its exploratory nature, the decision was made to adhere to the traditional boundaries for testing the Cultural-Racial Identity Model. Furthermore, the author of the study believes that findings that fail to reach statistical significance are often as important as those that do reach significance. Furthermore, the highest power obtained for the current study was .4 for analyses using psychological adjustment as the outcome variable and .6 for analyses using self-esteem as the outcome variable. Thus, the probability of failing to reject the null hypothesis when in fact the null is true is .6 and .4 respectively. Because these are high probabilities, caution must be used when interpreting failures to reject the null hypothesis. Thus, the findings from the current study that approached statistical significance at the .05 level will be reported as *interpretable findings* and those that were significant at the .10 level will be reported as *noteworthy findings.*

Summary

The findings of this study gave indications for the research questions formulated as well as for constructs and phenomena related to transracial adoptees' identity experiences that were not included in research questions. These findings were examined and reviewed in light of their impact on understanding identity experiences of transracial adoptees.

The Cultural-Racial Identity Model

The validity of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model was assessed in four research

questions in this study of young adult transracial adoptees. These questions determined whether, within the sample of transracial adoptees, the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure-Revised (MEIM-R) reliably distinguished among levels of: (1) knowledge, awareness, competence, and comfort with their own racial group's culture; (2) knowledge, awareness, competence, and comfort with their adoptive parents' racial group culture; (3) comfort with their own racial self-identification and with those belonging to their own racial group; and (4) comfort with their own racial self-identification and with those belonging to their adoptive parents' racial group.

The data obtained for this study consisted of that yielded by 51 young, adult, transracial adoptees. The transracial adoptees in this study reported a wide range of Cultural-Racial Identities and did not cluster in just a few identity status areas. Evidence supporting this conclusion came from three sources. First, this finding was determined by viewing plots of the transracial adoptees on the two axes of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model (the Cultural Identity Axis and the Racial Identity Axis). Plots of participants' scores on the variables made up by MEIM-R subscales revealed data points that were spread across the two axes. Second, the lack of a relationship between the variables comprising the two axes verified that a linear relationship was not detected. Correlation coefficients which were used to measure the degree to which a linear relationship existed revealed no such relationship, thus indicating a substantial scatter of scores. Third, the scatter of scores on the two axes of Cultural-Racial Identity Model was shown by demonstrating the variability among respondents on the MEIM-R via reliability estimates.

The sets of items on the MEIM-R that were used to measure the four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions were successful in detecting variation among people.

These findings suggested that the instrument used to measure the Cultural-Racial Identities of transracial adoptees allowed the variation among respondents to be detected and the inference to be made that all 16 cells of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model were represented in the data. However, these findings did not allow the strict validation of the model. To validate the model, a substantially larger sample was needed so that the various cells of the model could be tested. With this limitation in mind and based on the findings of this study, the evidence suggested that the Cultural-Racial Identity Model with the accompanying MEIM-R instrument can be accepted as having been supported. Thus, the four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions can be used to assess the identity experiences of transracial adoptees, and subsequently, to determine their Cultural-Racial Identity status.

Predicting Psychological Adjustment

A series of multiple regression models were built to determine which, if any, Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions predicted levels of psychological adjustment. To simply the results, the findings for psychological adjustment were summarized in Table 8. As the table indicates, two different alpha levels were included to give an overview of both interpretable and noteworthy findings.

Table 8. Significant Findings when Psychological Adjustment is the Outcome.

	$\alpha = .05$ (Interpretable findings)	$\alpha = .10$ (Noteworthy Findings)
Overall Model	No overall model significant at $\alpha = .05$	Parental Culture Dimension (zero-order correlation)
Individual Predictors	No individual predictors significant at $\alpha = .05$	Parental Culture Dimension (when the model includes all four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions)
		Parental Culture Dimension (when model includes the Parental Race Dimension as the other predictor)

Interpretable findings for psychological adjustment: Using the traditional significance testing level.

The degree to which transracial adoptees with different Cultural-Racial Identities reported varying levels of psychological adjustment was assessed in this study. As previously discussed, the findings, and therefore implications, of this study depend on the significance testing criteria chosen. For the reasons already enumerated, the standard criterion for significance testing (e.g., significance level of $\alpha = .05$ where $p < .05$) was used. Using this criterion, none of the models predicting the psychological adjustment of the young adult transracial adoptees in this sample attained statistical significance. That is, given an alpha = .05, no single Cultural-Racial Identity Dimension nor any combination of the four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions was found to significantly

predict level of psychological adjustment. This means that, for example, a transracial adoptee who identifies as Culturally Specific Type II Identity—Racially Specific Type II Identity (i.e., an adoptee who is most knowledgeable of, aware of, competent within, and comfortable with the White culture, who is comfortable with his/her own racial self-identification, and who is most comfortable with those who are White) was found to be neither better nor worse psychologically adjusted than a transracial adoptee who identifies as a Culturally Specific Type I Identity—Racially Specific Type I Identity (i.e., most knowledgeable of, aware of, competent within, and comfortable with his/her racial group's own culture, who is comfortable with his/her own racial self-identification, and who is most comfortable with those who are from his/her own racial group).

The failure to find any interpretable, significant relationship between the Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions and psychological adjustment suggests that transracial adoptees psychological adjustment may be less dependent upon their identity experiences than has previously been surmised. However, other facets of transracial adoptees' lives and self-concepts may well be affected by their identity experiences. Perhaps the psychological adjustment of transracial adoptees may be influenced more by their parental/family relationships, peer relationships, achievement, or a host of other factors than by the racial and often cultural differences that exist in transracially adopting families. Although no empirical evidence was gathered to support this supposition, the findings of the current study suggest that this possibility be explored.

Noteworthy findings for psychological adjustment: Using a more lenient significance testing level.

An alternate way to examine the findings of the study entails the use of the more lenient significance level of .10 as a guide for locating potentially important results and for making suggestions for future research. These results can also be considered in conceptualizations for future theoretical work in this area. Although, these results are not considered suitable for making judgments on policy or practice guidelines, they include findings relevant for future research.

Using this more lenient level of statistical significance (e.g., significance level of $\alpha = .10$ where $p < .10$), the only full model to attain significance was the zero order correlation model where the Parental Culture Dimension predicted the psychological adjustment of the young adult transracial adoptees. The finding that the Parental Culture Dimension predicted psychological adjustment at a significance level of .10 is of interest to this study as a guideline. As the third regression in Table 5 indicated, an inverse relationship between the Parental Culture Dimension and psychological adjustment was found. This finding suggests that a relationship may exist such that when transracial adoptees were *less* knowledgeable of, aware of, competent within, or comfortable with their adoptive parents' culture (i.e., in this case the White culture), they reported *more* severe psychological symptoms on the BSI. That is, discomfort within, a lack of knowledge or awareness of, or the perceived incompetence in dominant, middle-class White culture (i.e., the culture of the adoptive parents) may have some relationship to

psychological distress or maladjustment. The nature of this relationship suggested that transracial adoptees who were could function adequately in the White culture and who did not reject White culture appeared to be in less psychological distress. Given that transracial adoptees in the current study were all raised by White parents thereby having had a vast amount of exposure to that culture via their adoptive parents, psychological adjustment would naturally be poorer for those transracial adoptees who did not accept or at least function well within the culture of their parents. Thus, a phenomena that reinforces common sense and psychological principles may exist such that if children feel disenfranchised from or choose to reject the values, beliefs, traditions, etc. that comprise their parents' culture, they are likely to have more difficulty in their adjustment. When an individual endorses values or beliefs that differ from their parents and particularly when they are unable or unwilling to accept these differences, they are likely to have a greater chance of experiencing psychological distress.

Perhaps with a larger sample size and the attendant greater power, this finding would have been interpretable and significant at $\alpha = .05$. However, with the limitations imposed by the current study, the Parental Culture Dimension and its relationship to psychological adjustment is one that suggests a need for further clarification.

Predicting Self-Esteem

As with psychological adjustment, a series of multiple regression models were analyzed to determine which, if any, Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions predicted levels of self-esteem. Table 9 shows the findings in a format intended to simplify and guide

their discussion. As the table indicates, two different alpha levels were included to give an overview of both interpretable and noteworthy findings.

Table 9. Significant Findings when Self-Esteem is the Outcome.

	$\alpha = .05$ (Interpretable findings)	$\alpha = .10$ (Noteworthy Findings)
Overall Model	Adoptee Race Dimension and Parental Race Dimension	Parental Race Dimension (zero-order correlation) Adoptee Race Dimension (zero-order correlation)
Individual Predictors	No predictors significant at $\alpha = .05$	Parental Race Dimension (when model includes the Adoptee Race Dimension as the other predictor)

Interpretable findings for self-esteem: Using the traditional significance testing level.

As with psychological adjustment, the traditional significance level of $\alpha = .05$ affected the interpretable findings for the study. The full model which included all four Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions failed to attain significance. When other combinations of the Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions were analyzed, only a single model attained statistical significance at $\alpha = .05$. This model utilized the Parental Race Dimension and the Adoptee Race Dimension to predict the self-esteem of transracial adoptees. In this model, although the overall model was significant, only one of the

individual predictors was significant (Parental Race Dimension). This suggested that a relationship exists between self-esteem and the degree to which transracial adoptees are comfortable with their own racial self-identification and comfortable with those in their social networks from their own racial groups and from their adoptive parents' racial group (i.e., in the current study, White individuals). That is, when transracial adoptees were more comfortable with their own racial self-identification and with people from both their own racial group and from the White racial group (i.e., their parents' racial group), they reported higher self-esteem. For example, a Korean, female transracial adoptee will be more likely to report higher levels of self-esteem if she is comfortable with her own membership in the Asian race and if she is comfortable with people from the Asian racial group and the White racial group. Therefore, transracial adoptees' comfort with their own appearance and with those who resemble them was predictive of higher levels of self-esteem. This finding makes intuitive sense given the likelihood that dissatisfaction can occur with oneself when one is visibly different from those with whom one is most comfortable, particularly when self-esteem is involved.

When transracial adoptees report feeling uncomfortable with their status as a member of their racial group and with those who share their racial group membership, they may experience dissonance between themselves and those with whom they prefer to affiliate (e.g., White people). This dissonance could be related to differences in physical appearance and could lead to a rejection of either or both those from the transracial adoptees' own racial group and from the White racial group. Furthermore, this dissonance

can result in lower levels of self-esteem. However, when transracial adoptees report feeling comfortable with their racial group membership and with those from their own and the White (i.e., their parents') racial group, they may experience less dissonance, a greater degree of acceptance of the differences both visible and invisible between themselves and Whites, and a resultant higher level of self-esteem. This finding suggests phenotypic and, therefore racial, differences between parents and transracial adoptees may be impacting self-esteem levels. This phenomena may be occurring through *self-other comparisons* made when transracial adoptees are presented with role models and models of beauty that can differ from their own appearance. These role models and models of beauty may be the primary factors influencing the dissonance transracial adoptees experience, but other factors may also be impacting this relationship. For instance, Brenner (1993) found that body image concerns differed between Asian and non-Asian transracial adoptees. Because the sample in the current study was predominantly Asian transracial adoptees, these body image concerns may be reflected in this finding regarding self-esteem and self-other comparisons. To determine the degree to which body image, self-other comparisons, role models, and models of beauty affect self-esteem for transracial adoptees, further exploration of this finding is necessary.

Noteworthy findings for self-esteem: Using a more lenient significance testing level.

As with the noteworthy findings where psychological adjustment was the outcome variable, the more lenient significance level of .10 served as a guide for suggestions for

future research and conceptualization, but it was not considered interpretable for judgments regarding policy or practice. When the more lenient significance level was used where $\alpha = .10$, only two zero order correlation models attained statistical significance. These models were the zero order correlation model in which the Parental Race Dimension predicted the level of self-esteem and the zero order correlation model in which the Adoptee Race Dimension predicted the level of self-esteem. These findings emphasize the interpretable finding (where $\alpha = .05$) in which the both the Parental Race Dimension and the Adoptee Race Dimension predicted self-esteem. In other words, a relationship may exist such that when transracial adoptees feel higher levels of comfort with their own racial group membership and with those belonging to the White racial group (i.e., their parents' racial group), they report higher levels of self-esteem. Similarly, a relationship may also exist such that when transracial adoptees feel higher levels of comfort with their own racial group membership and with those belonging to their own racial group, they report higher levels of self-esteem. As theorized above, transracial adoptees' experiences of dissonance between their own appearances and that of their parents may be reflected in their comfort levels with people from their own racial group and people from their parents' racial group (i.e., Whites). Rejection of the transracial adoptees' own racial group, their parents' racial group, or both racial groups can result from this dissonance. These noteworthy findings suggest higher levels of comfort with each racial group may lead to higher levels of self-esteem, but, as seen with the interpretable finding already presented, comfort with both racial groups may have the

strongest link to high levels of self-esteem. The combination of the two Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions (the Adoptee Race Dimension and the Parental Race Dimension) resulted in a stronger relationship with self-esteem than either of the two dimensions alone. Thus, it may be that transracial adoptees' affiliations and belongingness experiences with both their own and their parents' racial groups are necessary to more accurately predict self-esteem.

Furthermore, additional information was gleaned from an examination of the partial regression coefficients associated with these analyses. Based on the strength of the partial regression coefficients, the model involving self-esteem and the Adoptee Race Dimension was the more salient relationship in understanding these phenomena. This finding, although not statistically significant, suggests that some basis for concern regarding transracial adoptees' feelings about their racial group membership and their affiliations may exist. Again, this phenomenon may be related to the phenotypic differences between transracial adoptees and their parents as these differences impact self-esteem.

Fit With Existing Research

The exploratory nature of the current study as well as the status of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model as a newly developed model make fitting this model with existing research complicated. The Cultural-Racial Identity Model has yet to be empirically validated and the current study serves this purpose. All prior research conducted on transracial adoptees and involving racial identity have tended to use racial self-

identification, racial aspirations, racial group preferences, or some form of racial group affiliations to measure racial identity (e.g., McRoy et al., 1984; Johnson et al., 1987). An additional problem with the existing studies was the age of the subjects used to examine identity experiences. A review of the theoretical bases for identity suggested that identity conflicts and formation occur in adolescence. However, the vast majority of studies of identity and adjustment were with pre-adolescent subjects. Thus, the current study represents one of the few to examine identity with older transracial adoptees.

Andujo (1988) used an acculturation scale to measure ethnic identity with 60 Mexican American adoptees who had been adopted by either White families (n=30) or by Mexican American families (n=30). The transethnic adoptees had a mean age of 14.1 and the same-ethnic adoptees had a mean age of 13.9. Adjustment was also assessed using the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale and the Twenty Statements Test. No significant differences were found between the groups of adoptees on self-esteem, but differences were obtained between adoptees on the acculturation scale with transethnic adoptees reporting more acculturation to the dominant Anglo-culture than did the same-ethnic adoptees. This study was critiqued in Chapter 2, but the findings it presented represented the only studies reviewed to assess acculturation as a measure of ethnic identity. Like the current study, Andujo was interested in cultural affiliation as it related to ethnic identity. However, this study was a comparison study between transethnic and same-ethnic adoptees. Thus, it assumed homogeneity among the transethnic adoptees and did not assess for differences among the transethnic adoptees on the measures of ethnic identity. Therefore, the

applicability of this study to the current one is extremely limited.

Vroegh (1997) conducted a study of 34 Black, transracial adoptees and 18 Black, intraracial adoptees. The adoptees had a mean age of 17. The adoptees were assessed in an interview format to determine "racial issues" and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scalewas administered. Vroegh measured "racial issues" according to the number of transracial adoptees who identified themselves as Black, Mixed, or Undecided in comparison to those who had one White and one Black birth parent and those who had two Black birth parents. Although few similarities exist between the current study and Vroegh's study, the examination of self-esteem using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale was a point of similarity as was the interest in phenotypic or visible racial differences. With respect to self-esteem, the participants in Vroegh's study had a mean self-esteem score of 32.8 and in the current study the mean score was 33.43.

The findings of both of these studies laid the groundwork for the current study and assisted in demonstrating that differences between transracial and intraracial adoptees did not exist on measures of self-esteem. These works allowed the focus to be on the differences between the population of transracial adoptees and intraracial adoptees. Because homogeneous experiences of transracial adoptees were not addressed or systematically examined, the current study was able to focus on differences within the population of transracial adoptees. Furthermore, for the current study, the processes of identity crisis and formation were expected to occur at ages later than the ages at which the Andujo (1988) and the Vroegh (1997) studied transracial adoptees. Therefore, the

findings from the current study do not replicate previous findings because there have been no other studies similar in scope. Also, the findings do not examine the same issues in the same ways as previous studies have because the current study approaches the issue of transracial adoption from a different perspective.

Limitations

Due to its status as an exploratory study, the limitations that affect the study are fewer than found in studies in which causal inferences are made. However, because causal inferences cannot be made due to the design of the study, some of the usual limitations that would apply to a correlational field design were not of primary concern. The external validity of the current study was high, but the internal validity was a source of limitation. Internal validity was limited because of the inability to apply random selection and random assignment to subjects. Obviously, individuals could not be randomly assigned to transracial adoption status or to Cultural-Racial Identities.

Another limitation of this study lies in its lack of a comparison group. The ability to compare transracial adoptees to intraracial adoptees and to nonadopted young adults would provide additional validation for the Cultural-Racial Identity Model. If the model grouped individuals who were reared in racially homogeneous families in different Cultural-Racial Identities, then the validity of the model would be questionable. Moreover, a comparison group would allow another comparison of the psychological adjustment of transracial adoptees. This information would add to the growing body of evidence demonstrating similar levels of adjustment and could aid in making that body of

evidence more difficult for policy makers to ignore.

Another limitation was in the instrumentation used to assess the Cultural-Racial Identities. An existing measure of ethnicity was altered for use in the current study. However, conceptually, distinctions between race and culture were very important in the current study and the use of the term ethnicity could have blurred this distinction. Although this alteration allowed the necessary distinctions to be made between Cultural-Racial Identities, an instrument that aided in making the distinctions between race and culture clearer for the transracial adoptees themselves may have yielded results that would more easily support the theoretical conceptualization of the model.

In addition to the threats due to the sampling procedure, the potential problems inherent in survey research can also lead to selection bias. Selection biases may threaten the external validity of the study due to the possibility that those who return the surveys and participate in the very adoption support groups that facilitated their identification as transracial adoptees may be quite different from other transracial adoptees not as amenable to participation in such a study. Transracial adoptees were difficult to identify in the general population, so word-of-mouth, the assistance of an adoption agency and a state agency, and an Internet website (http://www.msu.edu/user/badenama) were the points of contact for participants. Thus, those not readily reached through these resources were not represented in the sample.

The small representation of transracial adoptees from non-Asian racial ethnic backgrounds also forced comparisons based on racial groups to be between Asian-

identified transracial adoptees and non-Asian transracial adoptees (e.g., Biracial, Black/African American, Latino, and Native American). Moreover, this study was limited to White parents adopting transracially. Thus, the results of the study are only applicable to those kinds of transracial adoptions.

Another limitation of this study was that it had a sample size that was too small to allow for more sophisticated statistical analyses. Unfortunately, obtaining completed questionnaires from transracial adoptees between the ages of 18 and 36 was extremely difficult and would have required several years and substantial funding to attain the number of participants necessary for these additional analyses. However, in comparison to many of the studies conducted with transracial adoptees as the participants, the current study had a more than adequate sample size.

Furthermore, the limited sample size also affected the results of the analyses, especially considering the low power of the analysis and the relatively low chance of detecting any effect at all. The partial regression coefficients of the several of the variables (e.g., Adoptee Culture Dimension and the Adoptee Race Dimension) also suggested that with greater power in the analysis and therefore a larger sample size, greater effects may be found.

Another limitation in the study is often presented when self-report measures are used. The outcome measures have been shown to have adequate reliability and validity (e.g., Derogatis & Cleary, 1977; Phinney, 1992; Rosenberg, 1965), but the modified version of the MEIM had yet to be validated. Despite this potential limitation, however,

the MEIM-R did yield adequate reliability as seen in Table 2.

A final potential limitation of the current study could be in the transracial adoptees' ability to make distinctions between race and culture when reporting their experience. As difficult as these distinctions are to make conceptually, they may be just as difficult to make when applying the distinctions to one's own experience.

Despite the limitations noted above, the findings of the current study represent the first empirical validation and application of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model. With the information obtained in this study, future research, practice, and theoretical guidelines can be formulated.

Implications of the Study

As the first empirical study of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model, the findings of the current study have several important implications. These implications are in the arenas of future research, clinical practice, and adoption policy.

The Cultural-Racial Identity Model serves as the first attempt to conceptualize the unique identity experiences of transracial adoptees. In this role, it has been the first to make purposeful distinctions between race and culture and their separate influences on identity. The validation of this model by the current study validates the intuitive but yet-to-be-empirically-demonstrated belief that heterogeneity exists within the population of transracial adoptees. The demonstration of the scope and nature of that heterogeneity represents a substantial improvement in the understanding of the factors influencing transracial adoptees' identity. As a result, adoption policy and guidelines can be

formulated with greater attention to the sources of identity and the impact of identity on such important factors as psychological adjustment and self-esteem.

For example, because a relationship between psychological adjustment and the Cultural-Racial Identity Dimensions could not be empirically demonstrated, concerns among adoption policymakers that particular Cultural-Racial Identities may lead to healthier or less healthy adjustment could be addressed. As the findings of this study suggest, no particular Cultural-Racial Identity or Identities was found to lead to better or worse psychological adjustment. Thus, some of the current training for pre-adoptive transracially adopting parents that suggests both exposure and competence within the transracial adoptees' culture of origin may be unnecessary. In fact, the findings of the current study suggest that a more important factor in transracial adoptees' experience may be the increase in self-esteem that could occur from the exposure to and the incorporation of role models and models of beauty from the transracial adoptees' own racial group.

In making these recommendations as informed by the current study, however, caution must be used especially due to the exploratory nature of the study. Before such recommendations were formalized, these findings should be replicated and should be yielded via an instrument that reflects the distinctions between race and culture found in the conceptual model itself.

The findings of the study can also greatly inform the view of transracial adoption among opponents and proponents to transracial adoption. First, because heterogeneity exists among transracial adoptees and because a particular way or ways of identifying was

not associated with better or worse psychological adjustment, neither proponents nor opponents can purport a "best way" to identify as a transracial adoptee. Second, racial differences between parents and adoptees have been targeted as the primary source of potential problems in transracial adoption. This expectation can be problematic because many other factors (e.g., parenting, reasons for adopting, hardiness, ego strength, and trauma) have been virtually forgotten and their impact has yet to be examined with respect to transracial adoptees. Although these other factors continue to deserve empirical and theoretical attention, the findings of the current study provide evidence for both proponents and opponents to transracial adoption. Opponents have been shown to be justified in their concerns regarding the impact of racial differences on self-esteem as evidenced by the finding that phenotypic or racial differences do have an impact on transracial adoptees' level of self-esteem. Proponents, on the other hand, have also been supported in their contention that high levels of self-esteem *can* result from transracial adoption, especially if the differences are addressed and accounted for. A third important implication concerns the finding suggesting that cultural differences may have less of an impact on transracial adoptees' adjustment, and particularly their self-esteem. Expectations have long been held that culture (the values, beliefs, traditions, etc.) were of great importance in adjustment and identity. The findings of the current study suggest that racial concerns may actually be of greater importance in self-esteem.

Finally, the results of this study are important to the controversy surrounding transracial adoption. Hollingsworth (1997) found results indicating lower levels of racial

identity in transracial adoptees as compared to that of intraracial adoptees. Based on the Cultural-Racial Identity Model and the work on identity presented in this study, the results reported by Hollingsworth may need to be reconsidered especially in light of the current finding that no form of Cultural-Racial Identity was "better" or "higher" than others. With this contrast in mind, the premise that there are healthier and less healthy racial identities must be revisited.

Furthermore, Hollingsworth also found that transracial adoptees did not differ from intraracial adoptees with respect to levels of self-esteem. Again, the role of self-esteem in transracial adoptees' experiences and the degree to which self-esteem can be considered an indicator of psychological adjustment is called into question. The findings of the current study suggest that, for transracial adoptees at least, some evidence exists that differences may exist between self-esteem and psychological adjustment. These differences appear to indicate that self-esteem may be more sensitive to differences in Cultural-Racial Identities than is psychological adjustment. Moreover, the degree to which transracial adoption has resulted in maladjustment may need to be addressed from a different level of analysis than has previously been done. This level should incorporate those factors supporting adjustment among transracial adoptees and those factors hindering adjustment—that is, the analysis should account for heterogeneity among transracial adoptees.

Implications for Practice

The findings of this study are of substantial importance to the provision of ethical and competent services to transracial adoptees. This study is one of the few studies to specifically focus on young adult transracial adoptees and their unique identity experiences. Currently, no empirical studies of the counseling and psychotherapeutic needs of transracial adoptees exist. It also addresses transracial adoption from a perspective that focuses on assisting those who have already been transracially adopted rather than focusing on whether or not to make transracial adoption placements. As a result, the findings from the present study, in conjunction with the literature on multicultural counseling, can be used to aid psychologists and other clinicians in providing culturally sensitive and culturally competent counseling to existing and future transracial adoptees. To date, clinicians have been without a guide to the unique experiences and influences that affect transracial adoptees' identity statuses. Without this information, clinicians can be prone to errors and assumptions regarding the cultural and racial identities of transracial adoptees.

With respect to the specific findings of the current study and their impact on practice with transracial adoptees, several areas deserve attention. First, the findings of the study were intended to serve as guidelines for psychotherapeutic explorations, especially regarding racial and cultural identity. Second, important areas for future research were expected to emerge from the data, especially as that research can further aid in promoting ethical, competent, clinical practice.

The finding that a positive relationship exists between the Adoptee Race Dimension, the Parental Race Dimension, and higher levels of self-esteem suggests transracial adoptees may be making *self-other comparisons* between themselves, their parents, and those from both racial groups represented by themselves and their parents. That is, transracial adoptees' self-esteem levels seem to be affected by their comfort levels and affiliation with people from both their own racial group and their parents' racial group, in this case the White racial group. When transracial adoptees feel uncomfortable with or have fewer affiliations or feelings of belongingness toward people from either their own race or their parents' (Whites), they reported lower levels of self-esteem. This finding has important implications for the counseling psychologist's job. When addressing self-esteem issues in counseling or psychotherapy, the therapist can be better equipped to address these issues when they are aware of the relationship between self-esteem and transracial adoptees' comfort with those from their own and their parents' racial groups. Without this information, the therapist could mistakenly assume, for example, that lack of exposure to the transracial adoptees' culture of origin could be a cause of lower levels of self-esteem. However, as the findings of the current study can attest to, therapists should also consider the relationship described above before foreclosing on their assumptions.

Another way in which the findings could assist in clinical practice draws upon the finding that there may be a relationship between psychological adjustment and the Parental Culture Dimension. Although not considered statistically significant for the

study, this finding was deemed noteworthy and relevant for the practice arena, with an even greater meaning for social workers, adoption agencies, and psychologists who work with transracial adoptees. Also, because this finding failed to attain a level of statistical significance that would allow its interpretation, interpretations of the relationship between psychological adjustment and the Parental Culture Dimension are not appropriate. However, for clinical practice and particularly for psychotherapy and counseling, therapists can use this relationship as a guide for exploration. With this caution in mind, the form that this exploration takes can be guided by this noteworthy finding.

As previously indicated, this potential relationship suggests that when transracial adoptees endorse values, beliefs, and other cultural practices different from that of their parents (especially if this endorsement is purposefully different from their parents), then psychological distress is somewhat likely. In this case, the transracial adoptees and their parents may have very poor communication or a contentious relationship. Although the author of the current study supports this initial explanation for the relationship, other, more controversial explanations exist.

One of these explanations is that biases exist in the evaluation of psychological adjustment or in society in general that lead to a relationship in which a stronger identification with the White, middle-class, American culture is predictive of better psychological adjustment. Another explanation indicates that the debate surrounding transracial adoption, the value judgments placed on transracial adoptees regarding the "appropriate" way to identify, and the social pressure exerted by members of transracial

adoptees' racial groups to reject or at least devalue their experience in the White culture may actually exert pressure on transracial adoptees who choose *not* to identify with the White culture. Perhaps this pressure could lead to greater psychological maladjustment.

Determining the validity of these potential explanations for the potential relationship between psychological adjustment and the Parental Culture Dimension is beyond the scope of the current study, but it definitely provides a guideline for exploration in psychotherapy as well as points to important areas for future research. As this example demonstrates, the knowledge that a relationship may exist between psychological adjustment and the Parental Culture Dimension can lead to many rich hypotheses that can be tested and generated throughout clinical practice. The mere sensitivity to the issues that may affect transracial adoptees can represent a substantial improvement in the current service provision to transracial adoptees.

Implications for Future Research

The results of this study provide substantial bases for future research. The current study represents the first empirical examination of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model. The data from the study validated that the measure used allowed an appropriate test of the model and that the model successfully differentiated among the possible Cultural-Racial Identities. The data also provided an understanding of the relationship among the potential Cultural-Racial Identities and psychological adjustment and self-esteem. These findings have several important implications for practice, policy, theory, and research. However, many limitations existed that necessitate the replication of the data and an

improvement upon the measures use, size of sample, composition of sample, etc. to demonstrate a definitive validation of the model. Furthermore, the current study was exploratory in nature and resulted in several areas for future research.

First, Baden and Steward (1995) posited that the identity crisis for transracial adoptees occurs in late adolescence and early adulthood. As a result, an accurate measure of transracial adoptees' identity experiences would have to be assessed when they were young adults. The current study was one of the few empirical studies on transracial adoption to measure identity at this stage of development. Future research on racial identity in transracial adoptees should continue to use this life stage to ensure a more accurate measure of the process and outcome of transracial adoption on identity (Taylor & Thornton, 1996).

Second, transracial adoptees varied widely in the Cultural-Racial Identities they reported via the MEIM-R. Thus, they did not report a common Cultural-Racial Identity as may have been expected based previous studies that have assumed a homogeneity of experiences among transracial adoption. For example, based on the literature review and the stances taken by those involved in the controversy surrounding transracial adoption, transracial adoptees having a greater degree of knowledge, awareness, competence, and comfort in their adoptive parents' culture (Culturally Specific Type II Identity) and having greater comfort with those belonging to their adoptive parents' racial group (Racially Specific Type II Identity) could be expected to have experienced "poor identity development." However, transracial adoptees did not all report these identities alone;

rather, the reliability estimates reported demonstrated the variability in Cultural-Racial Identities among the transracial adoptees who participated in the study. This finding suggests that future research should address the confirmation of these results with a larger sample of transracial adoptees. Ideally, substantial samples of transracial adoptees could be obtained so that comparisons could be made with various racial ethnic groups and with intraracially adopted young adults. Third, the psychological adjustment of the transracial adoptees in the current study did not differ based on the Cultural-Racial Identities of participants. Future research should replicate this finding with a larger sample so that the 16 individual cells of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model can be utilized in the analyses. More specifically, validation of the model could be advanced through a demonstration that each of the 16 cells of the model were represented in the data and that comparisons of adjustment between levels was replicated the findings of the current study.

Additional areas for future research are plentiful. The current study provided a baseline for understanding the unique experiences of transracial adoptees. The Cultural-Racial Identity Model can garner additional support by gaining additional information about the experiences of other individuals raised in racially integrated families (e.g., biracial individuals, "displaced" individuals). When the experiences of these individuals in addition to the experiences of intraracially adopted individuals are compared to the experiences of transracial adoptees, a greater understanding of the effects of adoption, racial integration within families, and the impact of familial and contextual factors can be extrapolated.

Finally, future research must also address the psychological and counseling needs of transracial adoptees. As noted in Chapter II, empirical studies addressing the psychotherapeutic needs of transracial adoptees do not currently exist. Future research could begin with case studies and progress toward empirically validating techniques and issues among transracial adoptees.

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A

Dear Colleague,

I am a doctoral student in counseling psychology at Michigan State University. I am seeking your assistance in a research endeavor that is a very exciting part of my professional development. Through this research, I am attempting to collect information which will lead to a better understanding of the identity and adjustment of transracial adoptees. This information will enable helping professionals to better understand the unique experiences of transracial adoptees. As a transracial adoptee myself, I have been interested in better understanding the impact of adoption across racial groups and, sometimes, cultural groups. I believe that this study will contribute to both my personal and professional understanding of the ways in which transracial adoptees experience the adoption. I am conducting this study for my dissertation and hope to have the opportunity to publish the findings in a professional journal so that many will benefit, but I will be unable to do so without your help. I certainly hope you choose to participate.

Participation in this study will not cost you anything but approximately 30-45 minutes of your time. I have included an instruction sheet in this packet to aid in your completion of the materials. On the back of this page, you will find an informed consent form for your records and within the survey packet you will find an informed consent form that must be completed and returned with the packet in the enclosed pre-addressed, stamped envelope. Also, please be sure to fill out the card attached to the packet to be entered in the drawing.

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this important research project. Your participation will aid in the understanding of transracial adoptees' experiences and will allow the development of improved counseling and career services for transracial adoptees. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the study or the survey packet itself, please do not hesitate to contact me. Should the questions or items on the questionnaires to follow cause you any concern or discomfort, please feel free to call 1-800-372-8460 (if you reside in Michigan, this is the toll-free number for Emergency Services) or to contact your local adoption agency or mental health agency for a referral for counseling.

Sincerely,

Amanda Baden
Counseling Psychology Doctoral Candidate
badenama@pilot.msu.edu

Consent Form

I agree to participate in the research entitled "The psychological adjustment of transracial adoptees: An application of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model" which is being conducted by Amanda Baden from the Counseling Psychology Program at Michigan State University.

I understand that the completion of the survey packets will take approximately 30-45 minutes. I understand that this participation is entirely voluntary; I can refuse to answer certain questions and withdraw my consent at any time without penalty. In addition, I further understand that these results will be treated with strict confidence and that the questionnaires that I complete will be kept completely confidential. I also understand that by returning the completed survey materials, I will automatically be entered into a lottery for $200. The chance that I could win the lottery will be approximately 1 in 90.

I also understand that I can contact Amanda Baden at (517)355-8502 or (517)333-3864 regarding any questions or concerns that may be raised by participating in the study. Please sign both copies of this form. Keep one and return the other to the investigator.

Should the questions or items on the questionnaires to follow cause you any concern or discomfort, please feel free to call 1-800-372-8460 (if you reside in Michigan, this is the toll-free number for Emergency Services, a community mental health crisis center) or to contact your local adoption agency or mental health agency for a referral for counseling.

_____

Signature of Participant Date

_____

Signature of Investigator Date

Please retain this copy for your records.

The Survey Packet

Instructions for the completion of this survey packet.

1. Please read and sign both copies of the informed consent form. Retain one copy as indicated at the bottom of the sheet and sign the second copy which is printed on the back of this page.

2. Please fill out the card attached to the survey packet as your entry into the **$200** lottery. This card will be detached from the rest of the survey packet upon receipt by the researchers and will entered into the lottery drawing. The information on this card will enable us to contact you if you are the winner. Check the appropriate box on the card if you wish to receive a copy of the results of this study.

3. If you do not wish to enter the lottery, leave the card blank.

4. Please respond as completely and honestly as possible to the questionnaire to follow. Instructions for each section are included.

5. When the survey packet is complete, place the packet in the pre-addressed, stamped envelope and send it by U.S. Mail.

Thanks again for your assistance with this study. To conserve paper, please note that questionnaires and the informed consent form are PRINTED ON BOTH SIDES OF THE PAPER.

Consent Form

I agree to participate in the research entitled "The psychological adjustment of transracial adoptees: An application of the Cultural-Racial Identity Model" which is being conducted by Amanda Baden from the Counseling Psychology Program at Michigan State University.

I understand that the completion of the survey packets will take approximately 30-45 minutes. I understand that this participation is entirely voluntary; I can refuse to answer certain questions and withdraw my consent at any time without penalty. In addition, I further understand that these results will be treated with strict confidence and that the questionnaires that I complete will be kept completely confidential. I also understand that by returning the completed survey materials, I will automatically be entered into a lottery for $200. The chance that I could win the lottery will be approximately 1 in 90.

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_____

Signature of Participant Date

_____

Signature of Investigator Date

Please return this copy to the investigator.

CRIQ

For the following questions, answer as honestly and completely as possible.

Your Background

1. Age: _____
2. Sex (circle one): 1) Female 2) Male
3. At what age were you adopted? _____
4. If applicable, what is your country of origin?_____
5. Please circle the number next to your Race/Ethnicity or please describe the specific group that you identify with the most in the blank next to your ethnicity (for example, Chinese American, German, Navajo, Alaskan Aleut):
   1) Caucasian, White, European American_____
   2) African American, Black_____
   3) Asian, Asian-American, or Pacific Islander_____
   4) Native American or American Indian_____
   5) Latino, Hispanic, Mexican American _____
   6) Multicultural Mixed Race_____
   7) Other, please specify_____
6. Please describe your religious background and, if applicable, your religious group membership._____
6. How many pre-adoptive placements did you have?____ What were they (for example, were you in foster care, an orphanage/children's home, with relatives, etc.)? _____
   _____

8. To your knowledge, please circle or write in the item(s) that most accurately describe the reason(s) you were put up for adoption. Circle all that apply.
   1) illegitimacy
   2) taken from birth family by protective services
   3) birth parent(s) unable to care for at the time
   4) drug use in family
   5) physical disability
   6) abandoned
   8) war in country
   9) death of birth parent(s)
   10) physical abuse
   11) sexual abuse
   12) do not have information
   13) other (please specify_____
   _____)

9. To your knowledge, please circle or write in the item(s) that most accurately depict your pre-adoptive history (for example, physical and possible psychological conditions at and prior to adoption). Circle all that apply.
   1) healthy
   2) malnourished
   3) physically disabled
   4) other physical/medical condition (please specify_____)
   5) war in home country
   6) death of birth parent(s)
   7) physically abused
   8) sexually abused
   9) drug dependent
   10) do not have information
   11) other (please specify_____ _____)

10. What is the highest educational level you have reached?
    1) less than high school
    2) high school degree (or GED)
    3) post high school (e.g., trade, technical, secretarial)
    4) some college (e.g., one year, associates degree)
    5) completed college (e.g., bachelor's degree)
    6) some graduate or post-bachelor's training
    7) completed graduate or post-bachelor's training

11. What is your current annual income?

_____

12. What is your current occupation?_____

13. In what city do you currently reside? _____

14. Please rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following areas:

a) your current occupation/career.	very satisfied 5 4 3 2 1 not satisfied
b) your current peer relationships.	very satisfied 5 4 3 2 1 not satisfied
c) your current relationships with significant others.	very satisfied 5 4 3 2 1 not satisfied
d) your educational achievement.	very satisfied 5 4 3 2 1 not satisfied
e) your physical appearance.	very satisfied 5 4 3 2 1 not satisfied

Your Biological Family--If you are able to answer the following questions about your birth/biological family, please do so in the spaces provided.

15. Please describe the racial background of your biological family (all family members).
    Father: 1) Caucasian/White 2) African Am./Black 3) Asian/Pacific Islander
    4) Native American 5) Latino/Hispanic 6) Other_____
    7) Multiracial (please specify_____)

    Mother: 1) Caucasian/White 2) African Am./Black 3) Asian/Pacific Islander
    4) Native American 5) Latino/Hispanic 6) Other_____
    7) Multiracial (please specify_____)

16. Please describe the religious background of your biological/birth family members.
    Father_____
    Mother_____

17. Have you had any contact with your biological family? ☐ Yes ☐ No.
    If "yes," please respond to the following items.
    a) Are you *currently* in contact with any members of your biological family? ☐ Yes ☐ No
    b) If so, with whom are you in contact? _____
    c) How old were you when you met this/these biological family members?_____
    d) Please rate your level of satisfaction with your relationships with your biological family member(s).
    very satisfied 5 4 3 2 1 not satisfied

Your Adoptive Family--Please complete the following items based on the family into which you were adopted.

18. Please describe the racial background of your adoptive family (all family members).
    Father: 1) Caucasian/White 2) African Am./Black 3) Asian/Pacific Islander
    4) Native American 5) Latino/Hispanic 6) Other_____
    7) Multiracial (please specify_____)

    Mother: 1) Caucasian/White 2) African Am./Black 3) Asian/Pacific Islander
    4) Native American 5) Latino/Hispanic 6) Other_____
    7) Multiracial (please specify_____)

    Maternal Grandparents: 1) Caucasian/White 2) African Am./Black 3) Asian/Pacific Islander
    4) Native American 5) Latino/Hispanic 6) Other_____
    7) Multiracial (please specify_____)

    Paternal Grandparents: 1) Caucasian/White 2) African Am./Black 3) Asian/Pacific Islander
    4) Native American 5) Latino/Hispanic 6) Other_____
    7) Multiracial (please specify_____)

19. Please circle the number next to your adoptive parents' marital status
    1) Married and living together
    2) Separated
    3) Divorced and neither parent remarried
    4) Divorced and one or both parents remarried
    5) Widowed, or one parent deceased
    6) Single-parent (never been married)

20. Please describe the religious background of your adoptive family members.
    Father_____
    Mother_____
    Maternal Grandparents_____
    Paternal Grandparents_____
    Siblings (brothers and sisters)_____

21. In your adoptive family, how many siblings (brothers and sisters) do you have?_____
    Sisters: Number of sisters?_____
    Age of sister 1: _____ Adopted?☐ Yes ☐ No
    Racial background of sister 1: 1) Caucasian/White 2) African Am./Black 3) Asian
    4) Native American 5) Latino/Hispanic 6) Other_____
    7) Multiracial (please specify_____)

    Age of sister 2: _____ Adopted?☐ Yes ☐ No
    Racial background of sister 2: 1) Caucasian/White 2) African Am./Black 3) Asian
    4) Native American 5) Latino/Hispanic 6) Other_____
    7) Multiracial (please specify_____)

    Age of sister 3: _____ Adopted?☐ Yes ☐ No
    Racial background of sister 3: 1) Caucasian/White 2) African Am./Black 3) Asian
    4) Native American 5) Latino/Hispanic 6) Other_____
    7) Multiracial (please specify_____)

Brothers: Number of brothers?_____
Age of brother 1: _____ Adopted?☐ Yes ☐ No
Racial background of brother 1: 1) Caucasian/White 2) African Am./Black 3) Asian
4) Native American 5) Latino/Hispanic 6) Other_____
7) Multiracial (please specify_____)

Age of brother 2: _____ Adopted?☐ Yes ☐ No
Racial background of brother 2: 1) Caucasian/White 2) African Am./Black 3) Asian
4) Native American 5) Latino/Hispanic 6) Other_____
7) Multiracial (please specify_____)

Age of brother 3: _____ Adopted?☐ Yes ☐ No
Racial background of brother 3: 1) Caucasian/White 2) African Am./Black 3) Asian
4) Native American 5) Latino/Hispanic 6) Other_____
7) Multiracial (please specify_____)

**If you need additional space, please complete this item on an additional sheet of paper.

Additional Comments/Information:_____

_____

22. What is your adoptive family's annual income?_____

23. What is your adoptive father's occupation? _____

24. What is your adoptive mother's occupation?_____

25. Have you maintained contact with your adoptive family?☐ Yes ☐ No.
If "yes," please respond to the following items.
a) With whom are you in contact? (please circle all that apply)
(1) all members of adoptive family including extended family (e.g., grandparents, aunts, cousins, etc.)
(2) all members of adoptive family excluding extended family
(3) adoptive mother
(4) adoptive father
(5) adoptive siblings
(6) other (please specify _____)
b) Please rate your level of satisfaction with your relationships with your adoptive family member(s).
very satisfied 5 4 3 2 1 not satisfied
c) Please add any additional comments/explanations_____
_____
_____

26. Please give an approximate breakdown of the **percentage** of individuals belonging to the different racial groups **attending your high school.**
Caucasian _____% African American _____% Latino _____%
Asian American _____% Native American _____%
Biracial _____% Other (please specify_____) _____%

27. Where did you live when you attended high school? City _____
State_____School District_____ Was it public or private? (circle one)

28. Please give an approximate breakdown of the **percentage** of individuals belonging to the different racial groups and living in your community/neighborhood **while you were growing up.**
Caucasian _____% African American _____% Latino _____%
Asian American _____% Native American _____%
Biracial _____% Other (please specify_____) _____%

29. What **percentages** of your social support network (e.g., friends or those who provide social outlets and support) were made up of individuals belonging to the following groups **while you were growing up.**
From your racial group:_____% From your parents' racial group:_____%
From other racial groups (excluding your own racial group and your parents'):_____%

30. Please give an approximate breakdown of the **percentage** of individuals belonging to the different racial groups and living in your community/neighborhood **where you live now.**
Caucasian _____% African American _____% Latino _____%
Asian American _____% Native American _____%
Biracial _____% Other (please specify_____) _____%

31. What **percentages** of your **current** social support network (e.g., friends or those who provide social outlets and support) are made up of individuals belonging to the following groups.
From your racial group:_____% From your parents' racial group:_____%
From other racial groups (excluding your own racial group and your parents'):_____%

32. What is the race of your closest friend?(circle one). 1) Caucasian/White
2) African Am./Black 3) Asian 4) Native American 5) Latino/Hispanic
6) Other_____7) Multiracial (please specify_____)

33. What is the race of your next **three** closest friends? (circle one).
Friend 1: 1) Caucasian 2) African Am./Black 3) Asian 4) Native American 5) Latino
6) Other_____ 7) Multiracial (please specify_____)

Friend 2: 1) Caucasian 2) African Am./Black 3) Asian 4) Native American 5) Latino
6) Other_____ 7) Multiracial (please specify_____)

Friend 3: 1) Caucasian 2) African Am./Black 3) Asian 4) Native American 5) Latino
6) Other_____ 7) Multiracial (please specify_____)

34. Would you consider an interracial marriage?☐ Yes ☐ No What are the racial backgrounds of those you have dated?

_____

35. To which racial/ethnic group does your knowledge of culture primarily pertain?
1) Caucasian 2) African Am./Black 3) Asian 4) Native American 5) Latino
6) Other_____ 7) Multiracial (please specify_____)

36. Have there been any non-parent individuals (e.g., role models) whom you believe to have played an important/crucial role in your life? ☐ Yes ☐ No

NOTE: If you answered "yes" to 28, please describe briefly the top **three** such relationships and the impact they had in your life in the spaces provided. PLEASE DESCRIBE THREE RELATIONSHIPS if possible.

Relationship #1 to You:	This Person's Gender	Briefly Describe This Person's Impact on Your Life:
_____	1) Female 2) Male	_____

Racial Background of This Person
1) Caucasian 2) African Am./Black 3) Asian _____
4) Native American 5) Latino
6) Other_____ 7) Multiracial (please specify_____)

Relationship #2 to You:	This Person's Gender	Briefly Describe This Person's Impact on Your Life:
_____	1) Female 2) Male	_____

Racial Background of This Person
1) Caucasian 2) African Am./Black 3) Asian _____
4) Native American 5) Latino
6) Other_____ 7) Multiracial (please specify_____)

Relationship #3 to You:	This Person's Gender	Briefly Describe This Person's Impact on Your Life:
_____	1) Female 2) Male	_____

Racial Background of This Person
1) Caucasian 2) African Am./Black 3) Asian _____
4) Native American 5) Latino
6) Other_____ 7) Multiracial (please specify_____)

37. Please rank the following according to your **level of comfort** with the following groups with "1" as the most comfortable and "3" the least comfortable.

___individuals from your racial background
___individuals from your parents' racial background
___individuals from racial backgrounds other than yours or your parents'?

****
****

Scoring Key for the Cultural-Racial Identity Questionnaire

Confounds to be controlled for in analyses:

Item(s)	Confounding Variable
1	Current Age--continuous variable
2	Sex of Transracial Adoptee--categorical variable
3	Age at adoption--continuous variable
7	Number of Pre-Adoptive Placements--categorical variable
8, 9	Level of Trauma Associated with Adoption--categorical variable
19, 20	Socioeconomic Status of Adoptive Family--continuous variable

Demographic Variables to be used for Post-Hoc Analyses

Item(s)	Post-Hoc/Demographic Variables
5	Race of Transracial Adoptee--categorical variable
6	Religion of Transracial Adoptee--categorical variable
7, 8, 9	Level of Trauma Associated with Adoption--categorical variable
10	Highest Education Level of Transracial Adoptee--continuous variable
11	Socioeconomic Status of Transracial Adoptee--continuous variable
12	Prestige Level of Occupation--continuous variable
13	Race of Birth Parents--categorical variable
14	Religion of Birth Parents--categorical variable
15	Race of Adoptive Parents/Family (**Must be Caucasian for study)
16	Marital Status of Adoptive Parents--categorical variable
17	Religion of Adoptive Family--categorical variable
18	Number, Gender, Race, and Adoption Status of Siblings--categorical
24	Interracial Dating Practices of Transracial Adoptee--categorical var.
26	Level of Integration of Transracial Adoptee's School-categorical var.
27	Level of Integration of Transracial Adoptee's Community--categorical
30	Role Model, Impact, Gender, and Race--categorical
44	Appearance, Similar Physical Features as Parents--Validity Check
45	Appearance, Pass as Biological Child of Parents--Validity Check
46	Appearance, Pass as White--Validity Check

Scoring for Variables

Level of Trauma associated with Adoption: Items 7, 8, 9---One point for each indicated pre-adoptive placement, one point for each item checked in #8 and #9 **except** for choice "12" in #8 and choice "10" in #9. Total for level of trauma ranges from 0 on up with lower numbers indicating less trauma and higher numbers indicating more trauma. High, medium, and low levels of trauma will be determined by getting the mean for these items and designating those one standard deviation above the mean or greater as in the "high trauma" group, those at the mean and within one standard deviation above and below the mean as in the "medium/average trauma" group, and those one standard deviation below the mean or less as in the "low trauma" group.

Social Support Network: Item 21--Estimates given will be turned into standardized scores.

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure--Revised

(Phinney, 1992)

In this country, people come from a lot of different cultures and there are many different words to describe the different background or *ethnic groups* that people come from. Some examples of the names of ethnic groups are Mexican-American, Hispanic, Black, Asian-American, American Indian, Anglo-American, and White. Every person is born into an ethnic group, or sometimes two groups, but people differ on how important their *ethnicity* is to them, how they feel about it, and how much their behavior is affected by it. These questions are about your ethnicity or your ethnic group and how you feel about it or react to it.

Please fill in:
In terms of ethnic group, I consider myself to be
_____.

Use the numbers given below to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

4: Strongly agree	3: Somewhat agree	2: Somewhat disagree	1: Strongly disagree

____ 1. I have spent time trying to find out more about my own ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.

____ 2. I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group.

____ 3. I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me.

____ 4. I like meeting and getting to know people from ethnic groups other than my own.

____ 5. I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership.

____ 6. I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to.

____ 7. I sometimes feel it would be better if different ethnic groups didn't try to mix together.

____ 8. I am not very clear about the role of my ethnicity in my life.

____ 9. I often spend time with people from ethnic groups other than my own.

____ 10. I really have not spent much trying to learn more about the culture and history of my ethnic group.

____ 11. I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.

____ 12. I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me, in terms of how to relate to my own group and other groups.

____ 13. In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my ethnic group.

____ 14. I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group and its accomplishments.

	4: Strongly agree	3: Somewhat agree	2: Somewhat disagree	1: Strongly disagree

____ 15. I don't try to become friends with people from other ethnic groups.

____ 16. I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs.

____ 17. I am involved in activities with people from other ethnic groups.

____ 18. I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.

____ 19. I enjoy being around people from ethnic groups other than my own.

____ 20. I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background.

____ 21. I know the language/dialect/slang of my people from my own ethnic group.

____ 22. I celebrate the holidays of people from my own ethnic group (e.g., if Chinese, celebrate Chinese New Years, etc.).

____ 23. I have values and beliefs similar to those of people from my own ethnic group.

Now consider each of the following items in terms of your **adoptive parents'** ethnic group. As a transracial adoptee, this means you should consider each of the items using your parents' ethnic group as the basis. These questions are about your parents' ethnicity or their ethnic group and how *you* feel about it or react to it.

Please fill in:
In terms of ethnic group, I consider my parents to be_____.

Use the numbers given below to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

	4: Strongly agree	3: Somewhat agree	2: Somewhat disagree	1: Strongly disagree

____ 24. I have spent time trying to find out more about my parents' ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.

____ 25. I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my parents' ethnic group.

____ 26. I have a clear sense of my parents' ethnic background and what it means for me.

____ 27. I like meeting and getting to know people from ethnic groups other than my parents'.

____ 28. I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my parents' ethnic group membership.

____ 29. I am happy that my parents are members of the group they belong to.

____ 30. I sometimes feel it would be better if different ethnic groups didn't try to mix together.

____ 31. I am not very clear about the role of my parents' ethnicity in my life.

____ 32. I often spend time with people from ethnic groups other than my parents'.

4: Strongly agree	3: Somewhat agree	2: Somewhat disagree	1: Strongly disagree

____ 33. I really have not spent much trying to learn more about the culture and history of my parents' ethnic group.
____ 34. I have a strong sense of belonging to my parents' ethnic group.
____ 35. I understand pretty well what my parents' ethnic group membership means to me, in terms of how to relate to my parents' group and other groups.
____ 36. In order to learn more about my parents' ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my parents' ethnic group.
____ 37. I have a lot of pride in my parents' ethnic group and its accomplishments.
____ 38. Except for my parents' ethnic group, I don't try to become friends with people from other ethnic groups.
____ 39. I participate in cultural practices of my parents' group, such as special food, music, or customs.
____ 40. Except for my parents' ethnic group, I am involved in activities with people from other ethnic groups.
____ 41. I feel a strong attachment towards my parents' ethnic group.
____ 42. I enjoy being around people from ethnic groups other than my parents'.
____ 43. I feel good about my parents' cultural or ethnic background.
____ 44. I know the language/dialect/slang of people from my parents' ethnic group.
____ 45. I celebrate the holidays of people from my parents' ethnic group.
____ 46. I have values and beliefs similar to those of people from my parents' ethnic group.

Note. From Phinney, J. S. (1992). The multigroup ethnic identity measure: A new scale for use with diverse groups. Journal of Adolescent Research, 7, 156-176. Copyright 1992 by the Journal of Adolescent Research. Adapted with permission.

Scoring for the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure

Sum items in each of the following groups:

Ethnic Identity for Transracial Adoptee's Ethnic Group: reverse negative items (indicated by "R"), sum across items, and obtain the mean
Items 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8R, 10R, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 18, and 20

Ethnic Identity for Adoptive Parents' Ethnic Group: reverse negative items (indicated by "R"), sum across items, and obtain the mean
Items 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 31R, 33R, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, 41, and 43

Affirmation and Belonging for Transracial Adoptees' Ethnic Group:
Items 6, 11, 14, 18, and 20

Affirmation and Belonging for Adoptive Parents' Ethnic Group:
Items 29, 34, 37, 41, and 43

Ethnic Identity Achievement for Transracial Adoptees' Ethnic Group:
Items 1, 3, 5, 8R, 10R, 12, and 13

Ethnic Identity Achievement for Adoptive Parents' Ethnic Group:
Items 24, 26, 28, 31R, 33R, 35, 36

Ethnic Behaviors for Transracial Adoptees' Ethnic Group:
Items 2, 16, 21, 22, and 23

Ethnic Behaviors for Adoptive Parents' Ethnic Group:
Items 25, 39, 44, 45, and 46

Ethnic Self-Identification and Parent-Identification:
Open-ended

Ethnicity for Transracial Adoptees' Ethnic Group:
See Items 5 and 6 of CRIQ

Parents' Ethnicity for Transracial Adoptees' Ethnic Group:
See Item 15 of CRIQ

Other-Group Orientation for Transracial Adoptees' Ethnic Group:
Items 4, 7R, 9, 15R, 17, and 19

Other-Group Orientation for Adoptive Parents' Ethnic Group:
Items 27, 30R, 32, 38R, 40, and 42

APPENDIX C

APPENDIX C

Brief Symptom Inventory
(Derogatis & Cleary, 1977)
BSI

On these pages is a list of problems people sometimes have. Please read each one carefully, and circle number that best describes HOW MUCH THAT PROBLEM HAS DISTRESSED OR BOTHERED YOU DURING THE PAST 7 DAYS INCLUDING TODAY. Circle only one number for each problem and do not skip any items. If you change your mind, cross out the incorrect answer and circle the appropriate number.

	0	1	2	3	4	
	Not at all	A little bit	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely	
1	0	1	2	3	4	Nervousness or shakiness inside
2	0	1	2	3	4	Faintness or dizziness
3	0	1	2	3	4	The idea that someone else can control your thoughts
4	0	1	2	3	4	Feeling others are to blame for most of your troubles
5	0	1	2	3	4	Trouble remembering things
6	0	1	2	3	4	Feeling easily annoyed or irritated
7	0	1	2	3	4	Pains in heart or chest
8	0	1	2	3	4	Feeling afraid in open spaces or on the streets
9	0	1	2	3	4	Thoughts of ending your life
10	0	1	2	3	4	Feeling that most people cannot be trusted
11	0	1	2	3	4	Poor appetite
12	0	1	2	3	4	Suddenly scared for no reason
13	0	1	2	3	4	Temper outbursts that you could not control
14	0	1	2	3	4	Feeling lonely even when you are with people
15	0	1	2	3	4	Feeling blocked in getting things done
16	0	1	2	3	4	Feeling lonely
17	0	1	2	3	4	Feeling blue
18	0	1	2	3	4	Feeling no interest in things
19	0	1	2	3	4	Feeling fearful
20	0	1	2	3	4	Your feelings being easily hurt
21	0	1	2	3	4	Feeling that people are unfriendly or dislike you
22	0	1	2	3	4	Feeling inferior to others
23	0	1	2	3	4	Nausea or upset stomach
24	0	1	2	3	4	Feeling that you are watched or talked about by others
25	0	1	2	3	4	Trouble falling asleep
26	0	1	2	3	4	Having to check and double-check what you do
27	0	1	2	3	4	Difficulty making decisions
28	0	1	2	3	4	Feeling afraid to travel on buses, subways, or trains
29	0	1	2	3	4	Trouble getting your breath
30	0	1	2	3	4	Hot or cold spells
31	0	1	2	3	4	Having to avoid certain things, places, or activities because they frighten
32	0	1	2	3	4	Your mind going blank
33	0	1	2	3	4	Numbness or tingling in parts of your body

	0 Not at all	1 A little bit	2 Moderately	3 Quite a bit	4 Extremely	
34	0	1 2 3	4	The idea that you should be punished for your sins		
35	0	1 2 3	4	Feeling hopeless about the future		
36	0	1 2 3	4	Trouble concentrating		
37	0	1 2 3	4	Feeling weak in parts of your body		
38	0	1 2 3	4	Feeling tense or keyed up		
39	0	1 2 3	4	Thoughts of death or dying		
40	0	1 2 3	4	Having urges to beat, injure, or harm someone		
41	0	1 2 3	4	Having urges to break or smash things		
42	0	1 2 3	4	Feeling very self-conscious with others		
43	0	1 2 3	4	Feeling uneasy in crowds, such as shopping or at a movie		
44	0	1 2 3	4	Never feeling close to another person		
45	0	1 2 3	4	Spells of terror or panic		
46	0	1 2 3	4	Getting into frequent arguments		
47	0	1 2 3	4	Feeling nervous when you are left alone		
48	0	1 2 3	4	Others not giving you proper credit for your achievements		
49	0	1 2 3	4	Feeling so restless you couldn't sit still		
50	0	1 2 3	4	Feelings of worthlessness		
51	0	1 2 3	4	Feeling that people will take advantage of you if you let them		
52	0	1 2 3	4	Feelings of guilt		
53	0	1 2 3	4	The idea that something is wrong with your mind		

APPENDIX D

APPENDIX D

Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965)

SES

1: Strongly Agree 2: Agree 3: Disagree 4: Strongly Disagree

____1. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others.
____2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
____3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.
____4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.
____5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.
____6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.
____7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
____8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.
____9. I certainly feel useless at times.
____10. At times I think I am no good at all.

APPENDIX E

APPENDIX E

Transracial Adoption Study

Hello! I am a doctoral student in counseling psychology and I am also a transracial adoptee. I was adopted from Hong Kong when I was one by White parents. As a result of my own experience and that of my sister who was also adopted, I became interested in gaining a greater understanding of the effects and implications of transracial adoption. To do so, I must first identify individuals *over age 18* who are racially different from their adoptive parents. In America, most transracial adoptions have been of non-White children who were adopted by White parents. For this reason, I expect the transracial adoptees to be Asian American, African American, Latino, or Native American. With your help, I hope to be able to identify individuals fitting this description. At this point, I would like to request their assistance in completing my dissertation study.

The study that I am interested in doing involves surveying adult transracial adoptees regarding their adoptive history, adoptive family history, and personal history. This study involves completion of a series of questionnaires which take approximately 30 minutes to an hour to complete. All of the information obtained will be strictly confidential and will be anonymous. A lottery with a winning prize of $200 (with an approximately 1 in 90 chance of winning) will also be offered for those completing surveys. I hope to begin to send out questionnaires by the month of July, 1997.

If you or anyone you know is an adult transracial adoptee, then I would like to ask for your help in completing this study. If you have information about potential participants or if you yourself are willing to get more information and/or participate, please do not hesitate to contact me. I can be reached via e-mail (badenama@pilot.msu.edu) or at the following addresses and phone numbers:

Amanda Baden, M.Ed.

787 Burcham Drive Apt. #6
East Lansing, MI 48823
(517)333-3864

or

435 Erickson Hall
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48824
(517)355-8502

APPENDIX F

APPENDIX F

Dear Amanda:
Your research sounds very interesting. It would extend the growing literature on biracial/biethnic individuals, who share some of the same issues (I would imagine) as transracial adoptees. You are welcome to use and modify the MEIM, and your suggestions sound generally appropriate. I do have several questions, which may stem from my lack of familiarity with the topic. Would it be possible for the ethnic self-identification of the transracial adoptee to be either that of their natural/birth parents or of their adoptive parents? I'm not sure what racial groups you are including, but if appearance is not salient, would it not be possible for an adoptee to know that their ethnicity is different from that of their adoptive parents but yet to identify with them? Instead of using self-identification, would it make sense to ask the adoptee to respond to the MEIM first in terms of the ethnicity of their natural/birth parents and second in terms of their adoptive parents? It seems that a separate question then might be which group they most strongly identify with. In any case, I do think you should specific which parents you are referring to when you ask about their ethnicity. Perhaps it would be clearer if I was familiar with your model. I would appreciate receiving a copy of your papers describing the model, from APA and/or the C-C Roundtable. I would of course be interested in receiving a copy or summary of results from your study when it is completed.
Sincerely, Jean Phinney

Dept of Psychology
California State University, LA
Los Angeles, CA 90032-8227

APPENDIX G

APPENDIX G

[Front of the Postcard]

Hi! I am a doctoral student at Michigan State University and I am doing my dissertation on transracial adoption. I am seeking transracial adoptees who are willing to participate in my dissertation study. To be eligible, you must be at least 18 years old, you must be racially different from your parents, and both of your adoptive parents must be Caucasian. If you fit these criteria, I would greatly appreciate your willingness to participate in this study. For those who agree to be in the study and who complete the short survey that I will send them, I will be having a $200 lottery drawing (approximately 1 in 90 chance of winning). The survey will take between 30-45 minutes to complete and it will be at no cost to you.

If you are interested in this study, please fill out the following information, check the appropriate box, and mail this card back to me as soon as possible.

Name _____ Age_____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

☐ I am interested in the study but would like to request more information.

☐ I am a transracial adoptee fitting these criteria and I am willing to participate in the study. Please send me more information about the study.

☐ I am a transracial adoptee fitting these criteria and I am willing to participate in the study. Please mail me a survey when it is ready.

Name_____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____

Amanda L. Baden, M.Ed.
Department of Counseling and Educational
Psychology and Special Education
Michigan State University
435 Erickson Hall
East Lansing, MI 48824

[Back of the Postcard]

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