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Racial identity, ethnic identity, and acculturation in Korean adoptees

Kathleen Leilani Ja Bergquist

College of William & Mary - School of Education

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Racial Identity, Ethnic Identity, and Acculturation

in

Korean Adoptees

by

Kathleen Leilani Ja Sook Bergquist

Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School of Education
of
the College of William and Mary
in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELOR EDUCATION

The College of William and Mary
2000

Approved by

Dissertation Committee Chair
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To Jim and Lorrie Bergquist, who are my real parents in every sense of the word. Thank you for your love, support, and endless patience and for having the courage to open your home and hearts to an orphan whose physical and mental potential were (and probably still are) unknown.

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To my twin, Mark, who taught me through his quiet strength that being a Korean adoptee is a very individual experience and that every person’s experience is just that.

To my sons, David, Rick, and Alex, for the precious gift of love and biological heritage. Looking at you has made me feel whole; connected to my past, present, and future.

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To my biological parents, thank you providing me an opportunity at life, and know that all your hopes and wishes for me were shared and nurtured by my adoptive family. Your decision was a singular act of love for which I am grateful.
This study explored the relationships between racial identity, ethnic identity, and acculturation in transracial Korean adopted adolescents. The research questions were as follows: What is the relationship between racial and ethnic identity for adoptees? What is the relationship between racial identity and adoptees' level of acculturation? What is the relationship between adoptees' level of acculturation and ethnic identity? The research was exploratory in nature and entailed a quantitative design comprised of (1) a demographic profile, (2) Helm's (1995) People of Color Scale to measure racial identity, (3) Suinn-Lew's (1992) Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (SL-ASIA) to measure ethnic identity, and (4) Schonpflug's (1997) Need for Assimilation, Differentiation, and Inclusion Scale to determine level of acculturation.

The sample group was comprised of 69 adoptees ranging in age from early-adolescence (11-14 years) to mid-adolescence (15-17 years), and early adulthood (18-25 years). Findings, for the most part, substantiated the hypothesized relationships between the three constructs. It was determined that the more adoptees derive their racial identity from a white reference group orientation, the more likely they were to be Western-identified ethnically, and were to be more highly acculturated into the American mainstream. Also, adoptees who align themselves with Korean or Asian cultural practices, or affiliate more with other Asians, have a higher need to be acculturated and/or included into their own racial and/or ethnic group. This was indicated by an inverse relationship between ethnic identity and acculturation. There were strong
significant correlations between racial identity and acculturation as measured by the People of Color Scale (POC) and Need for Assimilation, Differentiation, and Inclusion Scale. Findings indicated that as adoptees have a greater ability to define a dualistic racial identity for themselves, embracing both their Korean heritage and western acculturation, they have an increased need for inclusion into their own ethnic group. The group as a whole is characterized as embracing a dualistic racial identity while tending to be more Western-identified ethnically, and having a somewhat greater need for assimilation or inclusion into the Korean community than differentiation from it.

This study illustrates that adoptees do progress through a process of racial identity development, although it may look different than for other racial minorities and Asian Americans. The more salient factors for adoptees seem to be own-group affiliations, both externally imposed or self-selected, and their experiences as Asians or Koreans in this country, rather than a need to be culturally Korean.
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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Transracial adoption in this country has been viewed as both an act of benevolence, with white parents opening their homes to underprivileged children, and as cultural and racial genocide, when in 1971 the Black Association of Social Workers (BASW) completely halted the placement of black children into white homes. The transracial placement of Asian children began post World War II and became increasingly prevalent following both the Vietnamese and Korean Wars. The Korean War, which began in 1950 and lasted for three and a half years, devastated the country and tore families apart (Chun, 1989). Children were left homeless through the loss of parents and separation from families. The prevalence of Amerasian children, the product of unions between American military men and Korean women, increased with many mothers being unable or unwilling to care for their children. Many of these children were born out of loving relationships which were ill-fated due to sociopolitical circumstances. Many were also born out of casual or unwanted encounters. Regardless of the circumstances, whether biracial or full Korean, the number of orphaned children became a burden for a country which was ill-prepared systemically or economically to care for them. Thus, the first wave of Korean children were sent, as were the Vietnamese orphans, to alleviate the overstressed social conditions in their birth country.

Similarly, the placement of African American and Native American children into white homes increased, bringing issues of identity and culture to the forefront. Amidst all the shouting and consternation, Asian children were quietly being transracially placed at record numbers. The foreign-born adoptees seemed to be categorically different because their birth countries were willingly giving them up and sending them to the United States.

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There have been approximately 141,000 foreign adoptions of Korean children since 1955 with more than 98,000 of the placements in the United States (The Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute, 1999). Korean adoptions continue today, more than 40 years following the Korean War. According to The Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute (1999), the reasons for the continued practice of foreign adoptions by South Korea include: an increasing demand for adoptable infants, the country's "ongoing relationship with charitable organizations that opened orphanages" (p. 5) such as Holt Children's Services; an unstable economic climate; the low incidences of in-country adoptions, previous successes of international adoptions and inadequate domestic child welfare policies. Prevailing social attitudes in South Korea were also cited as factors: lack of support for single mothers, reduction of family size, stigmatization of adoption and the assumption that adoption offers a child better opportunities.

Previous Research

Adoption researchers have focused primarily on initial adjustment, acculturation, and self-esteem (Kim, 1976; Fanshel, 1972; Feigelman and Silverman, 1984) as measures of placement success. Questions of racial identity, however, have been conspicuously absent from the literature. It is somewhat like the elephant in the room, everyone knows its there, but they are not sure how to talk about it, or what to do about it. Korean adoptees, no matter how American they become, are still racially different than their adoptive families. Whether or not the adoptive family acknowledges, or ignores, the impact of racial identity on their child, it is something which the adoptee will confront everyday of his or her life. Certainly there are external expectations and assumptions, but there will also be a time when the child realizes that race is something that will always set
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themselves apart from the rest of their family, and the need for congruence will increase.

The research with regard to initial adjustment and acculturation concerns itself with how the child fits into the family and is able to manage their day to day functions; i.e. language, family cohesiveness, and school performance (Fanshel, 1972; Feigelman and Silverman, 1984). Studies which followed adoptees into their teenage years were more concerned with self-esteem and self-concept (Kim, 1976; Thompson-Issues, 1988; Alstein and Simon 1991; Bergquist, 1997) offering a tentative look at racial identity. Kim (1976) developed a measurement for participant's affiliation with Korean-related items; i.e. food, language, church, cultural events, etc. He does not, however, examine the process of racial or ethnic identity formation.

Research Questions

The research questions to be addressed are as follows:

1. What is the relationship between racial and ethnic identity for adoptees?
2. What is the relationship between racial identity and adoptees' level of acculturation?
3. What is the relationship between adoptees' level of acculturation and ethnic identity?

Statement of the Problem

Inherent to transracial adoption is the forming of a multiracial family, often with adoptive parents who are Caucasian and non-Caucasian children. While issues of identity are raised in any adoptive situation, they are externally more visible in these homes. Adoptive researchers have, to varying degrees, looked at race and ethnicity as it relates to transracial adoptees. The constructs of ethnicity and race are often used.
interchangeably or viewed as highly interrelated, and not just in adoptive research. (Kim, 1976 and Thompson-Iaac, 1988). Researchers have considered the relationship between ethnic identity and personal identity as it relates to self-concept, patterned after Cross' (1985) work with African Americans.

Research has supported that transracially placed Korean adoptees are culturally white American (Kim, 1976; Thompson-Issucs, 1988; Bergquist, 1997). That is to say, when instruments are used to measure their knowledge and affiliation for Korean culture it is marginal, if at all. This finding should not be startling considering adoptive families often have little or no knowledge of Korean culture to transmit to their children. It also should not seem alarming if the families, as well as the adoptees themselves, do not necessarily see this as problematic. The fact that an adoptee does not have a penchant for kimchee or speak Hangul does not appear to negatively impact their self-esteem. However, if language is held up as the transmitter of culture and culture is deemed an integral part of ethnicity, it would preclude adoptees from being ethnically Korean. A factor which is not altered by transracial adoption is the adoptees' physical attributes. While it is argued that race is arbitrary and more of a function of societal definition than biology, adoptees share physical similarities to other Asian Americans and expectations are imposed on them based on those characteristics. Consequently, this study will consider race and ethnicity separately as well the relationship between them as they relate to ego development.

Ethnic identity is one aspect of the more general construct of identity referred to by Erikson (1959) in his psychosocial stages of development, although he did not directly address the impact of ethnicity on identity. It is "generally viewed as a multidimensional
construct that includes feelings of ethnic belonging and pride, a secure sense of group membership, and positive attitudes toward one's ethnic group." There exists also a developmental component which includes the extent to which an individual has achieved a sense of their own ethnicity (Phinney and Alipuria, 1996, p. 142). Zsembik and Beeghley (1993) refer to ethnic identity as the self-perception of membership in an ethnic group. Similarly, Rotheram and Phinney (1987) view ethnic identity as "one's sense of belonging to an ethnic group and the part of one's thinking, perceptions, feelings and behavior that is due to ethnic group membership" (p. 13). Spickard and Fong (1995) point out that it can be somewhat fluid between active and latent depending on the context one finds oneself. "When one is with one's ethnic fellows, one seldom thinks about one's ethnicity except on ritual occasions. One just is ethnic . . . the time when one feels one's ethnicity more vividly is when one is confronted by a large group of outsiders" (p. 1372). Bagley (1993b) points out that transracial adoptees have a "set of identity tasks which are both unique . . . , and are also rather complex" (p.54). Ethnic identity formation in adoptees, therefore, is assumed to be somewhat comparable to other ethnic minorities with the confounding factor of being displaced into a host environment which is different racially and ethnically than they.

Racial identity has been most widely researched with relation to the African American population and the process of "becoming black" or nigresence as Cross (1971) delineated. Helms (1993) defined racial identity as pertaining to "the degree and quality of identification individuals maintain towards those with whom they share a common racial designation (Day-Vines, 1998). Racial identity formation has been conceptualized through developmental stages; (Cross, 1971; Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1983; Phinney,
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1990) progressing from a state of unawareness or acceptance of externally imposed identity through a period of self searching and self-definition moving towards congruency. Cross proposed a 5-stage Nigrescence model which delineates the developmental process by which a person "becomes Black," progressing from pre-encounter, wherein an individual has a "white frame of reference and devalues or denies Blackness" (Plummer, 1996, p. 170), to encounter, which is marked by a critical incident which causes a questioning process, to immersion-emersion, involving the embracing of Black culture and often rejecting the dominant culture and value, to internalization, where an individual is able to balance a healthy ethnic identity with an appreciation of other cultures, and finally to internalization/commitment, wherein there is a commitment to a more global addressing of oppression and racism which impacts all groups. Cross later omitted the fifth stage due in part to a lack of empirical support for the existence of the final stage. Similarly, Atkinson et. al (1983) proposed a stage model which was both discrete and linear, based largely on Cross' research. Atkinson et. al identified five distinct stages including conformity, resistance, immersion, introspection and finally synergistic articulation and awareness. Phinney's (1987) model borrowed Marcia's (1966) developmental possibilities to include; diffusion wherein ethnic identity has not yet been explored; foreclosure involves a sense of identity based exclusively on parental values; moratorium marks a period of exploration without commitment; and achieved indicates a formalized ethnic identity. Yeh and Huang (1996) argued that these developmental models were inappropriate in assessing ethnic identity formation in Asians and Asian Americans because of their collectivistic worldview. Too linear and intrapersonal in focus, the stage models originate from an Eurocentric perspective and
cannot account for the impact of "the judgments and demands of the social environment, they value external influences more than self-assessments and self-inferences" (p. 650). There is also little consideration for an individual being in more than one stage at a time, or that the process might be circular rather than linear.

The racial identity models developed to date do not quite seem relevant when applied to transracial adoptees because they all seem to assume that the individual was raised within their racial or ethnic group and that acculturation was a conscious, voluntary process. The majority of Korean adoptees are acculturated practically from birth, therefore, they often consider themselves as part of the majority until they are reminded by others outside of their adoptive family that they are different. They are also unique in that they may not know first-hand what the values of their own ethnic group are. For example, considering the five stage model of Atkinson et. al. (1983), proposing that an individual has a preference for the values of the dominant culture over their own assumes knowledge of one's own ethnic group values in the first place. This is often not the case for Korean adoptees as they often have little or no contact with other Korean Americans as children. The resistance and immersion stage assumes that individuals have the option of completely immersing themselves in their own ethnic culture and traditions. This is a difficult task when language, which is the transmitter of culture, is a barrier and there are no familial support systems available to adoptees to support such an immersion.

Is it important for Korean adoptees to understand traditional Korean customs and language to make sense of who they are? Perhaps not. But what is important is that they have the ability to navigate the individuals and institutions in this country who would
place limitations on them based on their own assumptions and prejudices about race and ethnicity. Also, it is equally important to recognize that these adoptees have a biological tie to South Korea and its people.
Definitions of Terms

One of the challenges to conducting research in the field of ethnocultural studies is the lack of consensus regarding the definition of commonly used terms. For the purpose of this study, the following definitions will be incorporated.

Acculturation - refers to an ethnic and/or racial minority’s adoption of the culture of the dominant or host, but does not necessitate non-affiliation with own group.

Assimilation - process marked by movement out of formal and informal ethnic associations into the nonethnic equivalents accessible to ethnic and/or racial minorities in the dominant culture.

African American – refers to someone who is of African descent.

Asian – refers to someone whose country of origin is from the continent of Asia or an affiliated country.

Asian American – refers to someone whose country of origin is from the continent of Asia or an affiliated country and who is a permanent resident in the United States.

Ethnic identity - construct that includes attitudes toward one's ethnic group.

Ethnicity - membership within a group comprised of people who share a common and distinctive culture, language, customs, traditions, and ancestral origin.

First generation – refers to someone who was foreign born and has immigrated to the United States.


Nissei- second generation Japanese American.
Korean — refers to someone whose country of origin is South Korea.

Korean American - refers to someone whose country of origin is South Korea and they are a permanent resident in the United States.

Race - designation predicated on assumed shared physical attributes deriving from geographic proximity, argued to be a social construct rather than having a sound biological based.

Racial identity - construct that includes attitudes toward one's racial group.

Second generation - refers to someone whose parent or parents were foreign born and he or she was born in the United States.


Transracial adoption – refers to the placing of children with adoptive parent or parents who are of a different race than themselves.

Limitations of the Study

An indisputable limitation of the study is the generalizability of the findings. Adoption research has been, by necessity, based on an availability sampling. This is especially true for studies which have targeted adult adoptees who have left their parents' homes. It becomes somewhat challenging to locate participants unless they are affiliated with adoptee organizations or maintain informal affiliations with other adoptees. The adult adoptees who have established or maintained such affiliations comprise a small percentage of the overall population and are certainly not representative of their peers. Motivations for such affiliations vary, however, the willingness to identify with their adoptive status may be reflective of their willingness to acknowledge and propensity to be drawn to adoption issues and/or concerns. This trait may not be reflective of many adoptees who self select not to maintain such formal ties.
Another limitation is the lack of research in the arena of racial identity with Asian Americans, and more remarkably, with Korean adoptees. The predominant research on racial identity has been in relation to African Americans. The challenges which are posed in considering racial identity in Asian Americans include ethnicity and generation. While both of those factors are present in the African American community, they are much more marked with Asian Americans because of the language and cultural barriers which exist between ethnic groups and the prevalence of multigenerational families. Asian Americans have historically defined their sense of who they are ethnically with relation to their families’ immigration. The issei Japanese are often culturally isolated from the sensei; as are the ABC (American born) Chinese from the FOB (fresh-off-the-boat) although they share a racial and cultural designation. Consequently, racial and ethnic identities are often considered between distinct ethnic groups (Verkuyten and Kwa, 1996; Ascher, 1989; Hein, Jeremy, 1985; Kwan and Sadowsky, 1997).

Significance of the Study

A transracially placed adoptee is socialized in the culture of their adoptive family with varying degrees of exposure to their birth culture. Ethnic identity is a social construct rather than an inherent attribution, nurtured, and sustained by the family and community through the instilling of cultural traditions, mores, and values. How can, or should, such an individual attempt to develop an ethnic identity which is congruent with their physical appearance as defined by society? The theoretical research would suggest that congruency is important because we are social beings, and therefore, do not function in isolation. Ethnocultural research has also empirically demonstrated that higher levels of racial and ethnic identity are positively correlated with psychological well-being (Cross, 1971 and Helms, 1994). The innate tendency for people to gravitate toward those who are like them is undeniable. Likeness defined by race would draw adoptees to other Koreans or Asians in general. Likeness defined by socialization would draw adoptees, for the most part, to their white peers.
It brings into question the universality of existing racial identity models to the development of certain groups such as transracial adoptees. Certainly the framework provides an opportunity for understanding. However, if it is used as a measuring stick to determine dysfunction, it could misrepresent the reality of transracial adoptees. If an adoptee never fully explores his ethnic or racial identity and insists that he or she is "just like any other white American, but just happens to look Asian," perhaps that would be an example of foreclosure for this group. Another consideration may be that the task of generativity may act as a catalyst for adoptees to address their racial and ethnic identity. As the focus of concern shifts to their own children, or the younger generation of adoptees, they may recognize the need to fully integrate their sense of identity to include their race and ethnicity. Research focusing on identity formation in transracial adoptions clearly needs to be recognized as an arena of ethnic research. Although adoption is a phenomenon within itself, the variable of race is a powerful one, and has been a variable which has heretofore been minimized. It should not be seen as creating a "crisis," but rather recognizing it as an important part of the adoptee's development.

The community of Korean adoptees has grown exponentially since the 1950s and the implications of such placements as the children become adults and enter society is yet unknown. However, they are as a group "successful" in their acculturation, but at what cost? The major contribution this study will be to consider ethnic and racial identity development in Korean adoptees as separate constructs and their possible impact on ego development.
CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

It [face] is like honor and yet not honor. It cannot be purchased with money. It gives a man or woman material pride. It is hollow and what men fight for and what woman die for. It is invisible yet by definition exists by being shown to the public . . . It is this hollow thing which men in China live by.

Pye (1968)

The concept of face, which according to Pye (Yeh and Huang, 1996, p. 651) cannot be defined, is closely tied into the interdependent, collectivistic expectations of traditional Asian cultures. It represents the importance of responsibility not only to oneself, but to family and community and underlies the immediacy of external influences to the definition of self. This same cultural value and worldview impacts Asian Americans to varying degrees based on generation, ties to ethnic identity, and ethnic group membership.

Introduction - The Asian American Experience

Asian Pacific Islanders as an ethnic designation are a heterogeneous group which, according to the 1990 Asian American Health Forum, included 28 Asian groups and 15 Pacific Islander groups (Lee, 1997). The Asian population in the United States in 1992 was 9 million and is projected to grow to 40 million in 2050 (Chandras, 1997).

Asians in America have been represented by varying, and often dichotomous, images in this country. Stereotypes run the gamut from being passive and unassuming to sneaky and villainous. More specifically, Asian American women have been ionized as both the mysteriously seductive geisha and the icy dragon lady. These images reflect the changing sociopolitical climate and corresponding fluctuating immigration policies, and as most stereotypes, are not founded in cultural reality. Early immigration laws brought Asian laborers from Japan, China, and the Philippines, predominately men (Lee, 1997). Fear and ignorance of these strangers gave birth to stereotypes which were self-
generating. Similar to the experiences of African Americans, Asians were not allowed to attain citizenship, own property, and were confronted with racism. Parks in California had signs forbidding dogs and Chinese from walking on the grass. Japanese Americans were stripped of their rights as US citizens during World War II and herded into relocation camps, often forced to relinquish their birth names for American names (Takaki, 1993).

Today Asian Americans have been labeled the *model minority*, a dramatic shift from the *yellow peril* of a few decades ago. David Bell (1985) popularized this phrase in his article, "America's Greatest Success Story: The Triumph of Asian Americans" in The New Republic when he cited selective statistics on successes in the realms of education and economics (Morrissey 1997). Chinese and Japanese have exceeded the national median income and Asian Americans "complete a higher median number of grades than all other groups" (Sue and Sue, 1999, p. 256). The most profound evidence lies in the measurement of social distance between Asians and whites, which according to Bogardus (1925), is a measure of prejudice and/or discrimination. Intermarriage and the forming of intimate relationships across racial and cultural boundaries are indications of a reduction in social distance. The incidences of interracial marriage between Asians and whites is proportionally much higher than between Blacks and whites in this country (Chan, 1991; Fugita & O'Brien, 1991; Sue and Sue, 1999; Kitano et al., 1984).

Much has been written and speculated about Asian Americans and who they are, however, less is known about how they experience identity and race. What is their cultural *reality* in relation to being a model minority? Sue and Sue (1999) deem the stereotype a myth, challenging the apparent economic and educational successes of Asian Americans as being misrepresented. Accordingly, references to a higher than average median income per household are skewed by the fact that (a) there is a higher percentage of more than one income source (more than one member working) than in white families, (b) the prevalence of poverty is equal, despite the higher median income, (c) less
utilization of poverty assistance or welfare, and (d) disparity between education and income, Asian Americans are not being compensated commensurate with their level of education. While Asian Americans seemingly excel in education, there is a bimodal distribution with a large undereducated population, when averaged out with the high levels of achievement, presents a misleading picture. Finally, the Chinatowns, Koreatowns, and Japantowns which have sprouted in large cities throughout the country appear outwardly quaint, but are actually ghettos which are plagued by unemployment, poverty, juvenile delinquency, and health problems. Sandhu concludes that "The myth of Asians as a model minority, based on the success image of a few elite individuals, has a very negative and debilitating effect on the general population." The gilded cage which Asian Americans find themselves in serves to threaten their cultural identity as well as generate feelings of powerlessness, marginality, hostility, and perceived alienation and discrimination which "remain unredressed and hidden under the veneer of the model minority myth" (Morrissey, p. 1).

Identity Development

Erikson proposed a psychosocial model of development, considering the self over the life span (1959). Seven stages, marked by developmental crises, emphasize the importance of progressive individuation and separation into adulthood. During adolescence identity becomes primary as the individual transitions from childhood to adulthood, seeking to establish "both a persistent sameness within oneself and a persistent sharing of some kind of essential character with others" (Erikson, 1968, p. 109). According to Erikson, failure to do so may lead to psychological distress and confusion.

Today ethnicity and race are commonly presumed to be an integral part of identity formation, especially for people of color. However, Erikson did not directly address the impact of these factors or the developmental process whereby they become integrated into identity. "Most theories of human behavior tend to be culturally exclusive" (Sue and Sue, 1999, p. 193) with a definite Western worldview, reflecting an individualistic,
internally focused orientation. Asians have been described as "situationally centered, externally oriented, and collectivistic" (Salett and Koslow, 1994).

*Ethnic identity* is one aspect of the more general construct of identity referred to by Erikson (1959) in his psychosocial stages of development and is "generally viewed as a multidimensional construct that includes feelings of ethnic belonging and pride, a secure sense of group membership, and positive attitudes toward one's ethnic group."

There exists also a developmental component which includes the extent to which an individual has achieved a sense of their own ethnicity (Phinney and Alipuria, 1996, p. 142). Zsembik and Beeghley (1993) refer to ethnic identity as the self-perception of membership in an ethnic group. Similarly, Rotheram and Phinney (1987) view ethnic identity as "one’s sense of belonging to an ethnic group and the part of one’s thinking, perceptions, feelings and behavior that is due to ethnic group membership" (p. 13).

Spickard and Fong (1995) point out that it can be somewhat fluid between active and latent depending on the context one finds oneself. "When one is with one's ethnic fellows, one seldom thinks about one’s ethnicity except on ritual occasions. One just is ethnic ... the time when one feels one's ethnicity more vividly is when one is confronted by a large group of outsiders" (p. 1372).

Race and ethnicity are terms that are often used interchangeable; however, race is a designation predicated on physical attributes while ethnicity is defined through a shared culture which is usually geographically determined. The intimate relationship between the two are obvious to most, however, *racial identity* has been most widely researched with relation to the African American population and the process of "becoming black" or Nigresence as Cross (1971) delineated. Helms (1993) defined racial identity as pertaining to "the degree and quality of identification individuals maintain towards those with whom they share a common racial designation" (Day-Vines, 1998). Racial identity formation has been conceptualized through developmental stages; (Cross, 1971; Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1989; Sue and Sue, 1999; Phinney, 1990) progressing from a
Racial Identity and Ethnic Identity in Korean Adoptees, 17

state of unawareness or acceptance of externally imposed identity through a period of self searching and self-definition moving towards congruency. Cross proposed a four-stage (originally five-stage) Nigrescence model which delineates the developmental process by which a person "becomes Black;" progressing from pre-encounter, wherein an individual has a "white frame of reference and devalues or denies Blackness" (Plummer, p. 170), to encounter, which is marked by a critical incident which causes a questioning process, to immersion-emersion, involving the embracing of African American culture and often rejecting the dominant culture and value and finally to internalization, where an individual is able to balance a healthy ethnic identity with an appreciation of other cultures. Similarly, Atkinson, Morten, and Sue (1989) proposed the Minority Identity Development Model (MID), which was later elaborated by Sue and Sue (1999) and renamed the Racial/Cultural Identity Development Model (R/CID). This stage model was both discrete and linear, based largely on Cross' research. Sue and Sue identified five distinct stages including conformity, dissonance, resistance and immersion, introspection, and finally integrative awareness. Yeh and Huang (1996) argued that these developmental models were inappropriate in assessing ethnic identity formation in Asians and Asian Americans because of their collectivistic worldview. Too linear and intrapersonal in focus, most stage models originate from a Eurocentric perspective and cannot account for the impact of "the judgments and demands of the social environment, they value external influences more than self-assessments and self-inferences" (p. 650). There is also little consideration for an individual being in more than one stage at a time, or that the process might be circular rather than linear.

Helms (1995) developed a racial identity model for people of color whom she defines as “persons whose ostensible ancestry is at least part African, Asian, Indigenous, and/or combinations of these groups and/or white or European ancestry” (p.189). Implicit in her model is the assumption that all socioracial groups, regardless of group membership, experience a racial identity development process which can be embodied in
Racial Identity and Ethnic Identity in Korean Adoptees, 18

a status framework. Her work builds on Cross' (1971) Nigrescence model and the Minority Identity Development model (Atkinson, Morten, and Sue, 1989), delineating five stages associated with increasingly more sophisticated and adaptive responses to matters or situations concerning race. Helms later reconsidered the use of the term stage, deeming it to be inadequate in conceptualizing the permeable, non-rigid progression of racial identity development. The term status was adopted to embody the "dynamic interplay between cognitive and emotional processes that racial identity models purport to address" (p. 184). Each status marks schema, which are patterns of behavior attributed to the underlying status, paralleling the succession in the other stage models toward increasing levels of complexity. The four (originally five) statuses are conformity, dissonance, immersion/emersion, internalization, and integrative awareness. Conformity is marked by external self-definition, devaluing of own group, and a dominate white orientation; dissonance involves mediating events or circumstances which create confusion and ambivalence towards socioracial self-definition; immersion/resistance is characterized by a strong own-group identification and denigration of white orientation; and internalization entails identification with own-group, an internalization of racial identity, and ability to be more responsive to members of the dominant group.

Progress toward a more complex status does not preclude access to behaviors in "lower" statuses. The predominant status marks the set of behaviors which are most commonly used in relation to race related situations. Secondary statuses contain sets of behaviors which are called upon when the predominant schema is not working, responses which have worked before will then be called upon. When a person is confronted with dissonance-generating racial experiences, those events either serve to reinforce the current status or act as a catalyst for movement toward a different status. If status schema is not consistently reinforced, movement will occur. Helms' expansion of the stage models to statuses provides a framework wherein the accessibility of status-related behaviors is primary to the understanding of racial identity, rather than the rigid

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The assignment of an individual to a stage.

### Table 2.1

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<th>Racial Identity Models</th>
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<td><strong>Integrative Awareness</strong></td>
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**Shared traits:** Low salience to own-group, perceived social stigma assigned to own-group membership, Eurocentric

**Shared traits:** Cognitive dissonance between previous and emerging identities, growing interest in exploring racial identity

**Shared traits:** Idealistic engagement in own-group, participation in cultural affiliation to the point of exclusivity (Afrocentric), anger toward dominant group and guilt for previous non-affiliation

**Shared traits:** Integration of both Eurocentric and own-group (Afrocentric) worldviews, more inclusive and balanced in perspective

**Shared traits:** Broader commitment to eradicating oppression in whatever form, recognition that it affects everyone, not just persons of color

Integral to the concepts of ethnicity and race is acculturation. There are numerous definitions for acculturation, but the general consensus is that it refers to an ethnic and/or racial minority’s adoption of the culture of the dominant or host culture.
Racial Identity and Ethnic Identity in Korean Adoptees, 20 (Nguyen et. al., 1999; Snowden and Hines, 1999; LaRoche et. al., 1998; and Gans, 1997). Assimilation, which is often confused with acculturation, marks a “move out of formal and informal ethnic associations . . . into the nonethnic equivalents accessible to them in that same host society” (Gans, 1997). This process assumes the foregoing of traditional cultural practices and values in a linear progression toward full integration into American society. Acculturation is a primary, and often necessary, process for immigrants as they adapt to their new home but does not necessitate an abandonment of their original culture. Assimilation is viewed by many researchers as a “worn-out theory which imposes ethnocentric and patronizing demands on minority peoples struggling to retain their cultural and ethnic integrity” (Alba, 1997) with limited relevance to today’s multicultural reality.

The concepts of ethnic identity and acculturation have often been considered factors in the study of ethnicity with existing research holding divergent perspectives regarding the relationship between the two (LaRoche et. al., 1998). An early model of ethnic identity development was proposed by Phinney (1989) which borrowed Marcia’s (1966) developmental possibilities to include; diffusion wherein ethnic identity has not yet been explored; foreclosure involves a sense of identity based exclusively on parental values; moratorium marks a period of exploration without commitment; and achieved indicates a formalized ethnic identity.

Two approaches to ethnic identity; a linear-bipolar or unidimensional-bipolar model, emphasizing assimilation, and a two-dimensional or bidimensional model, emphasizing ethnic pluralism, have been identified (LaRoche et. al, 1998 and Nguyen et. al, 1999). The linear-bipolar model proposes a continuum with two extremes; strong
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ethnic ties at one end and strong mainstream ties at the other. Inherent in this model is
the assumption of an inverse relationship between the two extremes. The two-
dimensional model delineates that ethnic groups or individuals retain their cultural
heritage, to varying degrees, as they undergo a process of acculturation into the host
culture (LaRoche et. al., 1998 and Alba, 1997). Intergenerational studies of ethnic
identity have also indicated a nonlinear relationship of acculturation, noting that "ethnic
identification undergoes a much slower-paced change from the second generation and
on" (p. 420) following an initial period of acculturation wherein accommodations are
made of extrinsic behaviors to facilitate initial adjustment

A stage model of acculturation exists (Berry, 1997 and Berry 1992) wherein four
strategies are proposed; assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization.
Assimilation strategy refer to high assimilation, involving a rejection of parent culture
and embracing of the host culture; separation entails the inverse with individuals valuing
their parent culture and an avoidance of the host culture; integration or biculturalism
occurs with the retention of parent culture while interacting with the host culture; and
marginalization involves lack of participation in either culture. Similarly, Suinn et al.
(1995) conceptualized ethnic identity in terms of level of low or high acculturation. Low
acculturation involves an individual resisting "the cultural values, attitudes, and behaviors
of the host culture and retain[ing] the cultural values, attitudes, and behaviors of their
parent culture" (Chang, 1998, p. 30) and high assimilation involves the inverse. Between
the two extremes are varying degrees of biculturalism that involves the adoption of
characteristics from both cultures. In both models biculturalism is deemed as "the most
successful and mentally healthy" (Chang, 1997, p. 31).
The processes of acculturation and ethnicity identity have also been conceptualized in relation to optimal distinctiveness. Chang (1997) incorporated the concept of optimal distinctiveness as delineated by Schopflug, Atac, and Akcal (1996) in her study of Korean adolescents. Accordingly, “overall life satisfaction or wellness should be optimal when the needs for assimilation and differentiation and degree of inclusion into one’s group are all at an intermediate level of intensity” (Chang, 1997, p.5). Optimal Distinctiveness Theory (Brewer, 1991) is a synthesis of social identity theory and the theory of uniqueness which purports that individuals must negotiate the conflicting needs to differentiate and assimilate to one’s own group, and that the need to differentiate or assimilate will depend on the degree of inclusion. Extreme deindividuation or extreme individuation is thought to engage the opposing drive as some level of equilibrium is sought.

Race is a mediating factor between ethnic identification and acculturation. Ethnic minorities who are of a different race than the dominant group are “visible minorities” which has precluded their ability to assimilate into mainstream America, regardless of generation or level of acculturation. Ethnic minorities have two strategies available (Tse, 1999): to disassociate with their ethnic group membership through loss of language and lifestyle, a strategy wrought with limited success for visible minorities; or to “develop a more positive ethnic orientation” (p. 121).

**Asian American Identity**

Making a case for the existence of an Asian American identity is tenuous at best. The heterogeneity of this group; characterized by variant languages and dialects, ethnicities, degrees of assimilation or acculturation, migration status, levels of education,
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religions, and cultural contexts compounds the facility of making generalizations based on these within-group differences (Sue and Sue, 1999).

The ambiguity of this racial/ethnic designation may be correlated to the lack of identity research available. The challenges confronted when attempting to consider Asian Americans as a monolithic group can be daunting at best and in many instances probably inappropriate. Kohatsu, Suzuki, and Bennett (in Carter, et. al. 1991) bemoan the dirth of racial/ethnic identity models and theories on Asian Americans citing only a handful of studies which were attempted in the 1970s. They also found few efforts to produce sound empirical measures to support existing models or theories. They did, however identify the S. Lee Asian American Cultural Identity Scale and F. Lee Asian American Ethnic Identity Scale as being promising exceptions.

More recently, attempts have been made to elicit or suggest common traits which members within this group share which might contribute to a common identity. Oyserman and Sakamoto (1997) proposed that there are four components to Asian American identity; interdependence with family, strong connection to heritage and tradition, a belief that achievement reflects on one's family and group, and an awareness of racism. In their study of 162 Asian American students from a large Midwestern university the researchers, "explored the interplay between individualism and collectivism, . . . collective self-esteem and the ways in which these components of identity may influence perceptions of the model minority label" (p.448). They proposed that collectivism, characterized by interdependence and group connectedness, is integral to an Asian American ethnic identity. Asian American identity was hypothesized to correlate positively with collectivism and a collective self-esteem, a "positive valuation.
of one’s ethnic group generally" (p. 438). It was also hypothesized that Asian American identity correlates positively with the valuation of the model minority label; with valuing hard work as being central to identity, but independent of the "American" cultural value of individualism; and with an awareness of the existence of barriers due to ethnic group membership. The researchers found that the participants were more individualistic than collectivistic and both orientations were positively correlated to collective self-esteem. Based on these findings they considered the possibility of cultural accommodation wherein "being American does not necessarily mean losing a rootedness in one’s traditions . . . allow[ing them to] view their ethnic group as self-defining and themselves as good members of their ethnic group while also focusing on individualistic goals of self-definition" (p. 449). Collectivistic orientation was found to be positively correlated, while collective self-esteem was negatively correlated, with holding a strong Asian American identity and positive valuation of the model minority stereotype. Similarly, collectivism was found to increase awareness of barriers, while collective self-esteem decreased awareness. Students who viewed the model minority label as positive are less likely to believe that being Asian American will pose a barrier and may be more apt to blame themselves unnecessarily.

Yeh and Huang (1996) also explored collectivism and its impact on ethnic identity development in their study of 87 undergraduate Asian American college students. They administered the Ethnic Identity Development Exercise (EIDE), a projective assessment developed by the researchers which incorporated open-ended questions requiring written or drawn responses. The research questions focused on furthering understanding of how Asian Americans conceptualize ethnic identity and identifying the
factors which are influential in that development. The findings supported the researchers' assertion that existing theories and stage models are inappropriate for Asian Americans, being too linear, intrapersonal and individualistic. Their results indicated ethnic identification to be "dynamic and complex, emphasizing collectivism, the impact of external forces... and the power of shame as a motivating force..." (p.654). They conclude that ethnic identity, specifically for Asian Americans, has been oversimplified and must be recognized for being a complex and malleable construct.

When considering the importance that Erikson placed on individuation and identity in adolescence to healthy psychosocial development, Huang (in Lee, 1997) contends that there is no comparable developmental stage in most Asian cultures, referencing the collectivistic orientation as primary. It has only been until the recent influence of western individualism that an increased focus on self-differentiation has emerged among younger generations. Similarly, many Asian Americans are raised with the expectation that "one derives a sense of identity from the family group-identity and one's position in the family," not from separating. Holding traditional values while living in a larger culture that embraces individualism can pose cultural conflicts that have implications for identity development. Huang also brings to light the limited application of Erikson's model.

In consideration of the traditional importance of family and collectivism on Asian Americans, Kohatsu et. al (1991) referenced Troll, Bengston, and McFarland's (1979) identification of transgenerational issues in families to which racial/ethnic identity is primary. Three generational processes/systems were delineated in the transgenerational framework: (1) generations of family lineage, or placement in the family generationally,
(2) generations as developmental levels, which considers the developmental grouping of individuals into life stages, and (3) generations as age cohorts - focusing not on the individual or family, but rather on the larger societal and historical context. For instance, the experiences and identification of a Japanese American who was interned during WWII will be very different than one who was born post-WWII.

Huang (in Salett and Koslow, 1994) proposes an integrative model for Asian American identity formation wherein identity is delineated as a product of two interconnected components; Personal Internal Identity and Social External Identity. Personal Internal Identity derives from primary identifications in early childhood with individuals from within ethnic group, and as the child begins to have contact with the external world, from non-ethnic identifications. Both ethnic and non-ethnic identifications are integrated into an identity salience hierarchy, a process which "invoke[s] the identity most salient to the given situation . . . provid[ing] the conceptual framework for the individual who is straddling two cultures" (p. 54), the persistent sameness of which Erikson (1968) spoke. The Social External Identity refers to the relationship between one's ascribed reference group and external or out groups. These Intergroup Relations, comprised of external reactions and perceptions to one's ascribed group can vary situationally, dependent in large part on surrounding sociopolitical, as well as demographic, variables. However, Huang postulates that given the proclivity of Asians for collectivism and externalized identifications, they are particularly susceptible to out group assessments. The interaction between the Personal Internal Identity and the Social External Identity combine to compose the overall sense of identity. Huang's model is predicated on the assumption that Asian Americans, although highly diverse
within group, share a tendency to be situationally oriented and, therefore, more prone to adapt to contextual variables.

Kim (1981) conducted an exploratory study of ten Sensei (third generation) Japanese American women to examine the resolution of identity conflict in Asian Americans living in a predominately white society. He identified five developmental, sequential stages which parallel in large part Cross' stages of nigrulence. The first stage, *ethnic awareness*, occurs during the preschool years, wherein the child gains an initial knowledge of his or her ethnic origins. The second stage, *white identification*, is marked by entrance into elementary school, an increased contact with non-Asians and awareness of being different and inferior, resulting in an internalization and overidentification with whites. The third stage is often marked by a significant event which facilitates the awakening to *social political consciousness* and involves a reassessment of their previous identification. Their ego identity is now "centered around being a minority, being oppressed, not being inferior . . . " (Kim, 1981). The fourth stage, *redirection to Asian American consciousness* involves an embracing of in group identification and immersion into their own culture. This stage can be characterized by anger and/or rejection of White society. Later phases of this stage involve a less reactive evaluation which leads to the final stage. *Incorporation* is marked by a healthy identification with one's own ethnic group while neither needing to identify with or against whites. One of the cautions of this study has to be its generalizability, not only due to its small sample size, but also to the researcher's exclusive use of participants from one ethnic group, generation, and gender.

Paralleling Kim's (1981) model is Tse's exploration of ethnic identity in Asian
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Americans (1999). She identifies four stages; *ethnic unawareness, ethnic ambivalence/evasion, ethnic emergence* and *ethnic identity incorporation*, which she drew from existing research, to include Kim’s. The focus of her research was on the last two stages since the majority of identity research is done on adolescents and young adults, there is less rigorous evidence of the existence of the latter stages. She conducted a qualitative content analysis of narratives written by Americans of Asian descent published prior to 1996. Her findings were consistent with the proposed progression of the stage models of ethnic identity exploration. She found that in stage four the individuals sought out a more generalized Asian American identity, rather than an ethnic identity, “finding neither mainstream American nor ethnic culture fully accepting or acceptable, the narrators discovered the ethnic minority American group – Asian Americans. Here, they found others who shared their cultural experiences” (p.136).

**Transracial Adoption Research**

The controversy over transracial adoption has been raging since its inception and continues today, most recently with President Bill Clinton's "Adoption 2002" campaign and with the Multiethnic Placement Act sponsored by Senator Howard Metzenbaum of Ohio. The question to be answered is whether it is in the best interest of a child to be placed intraracially or transracially when seeking adoptive parents.

The practice of transracial adoptions has always existed in this country, both formally and informally. However, it was not until the late 1950s that adoption agencies became involved in such practices with "the displacement of Korean, Japanese and Chinese war orphans and the initiation of the American Indian project of the Child Welfare League of America" (Jones and Else, 1979, p. 373). The emphasis shifted in the
1960s to the placement of African American children in Caucasian homes as a result of an increasing number of minority children being "held" in institutions and long-term foster care awaiting suitable placements. As the placement of transracial African American children increased along with the "greater emphasis on ethnic pride and militancy" of the Civil Rights Movement, the concern from the African American community rose (Feigelman and Silverman, 1984, p. 589). The National Association of Black Social Workers publicly denounced the practice as cultural genocide and voiced concerns regarding the ethnic identity. During the same year, Native American leaders took a similar stance, "accusing white society of seeking to deny the Indian their future by taking their children" (p. 374). Simon and Altstein surmised that the opposition from minority professionals had reverberating impact on the prevalence of transracial adoptions and forced this country to re-evaluate the impact of this practice on children, as well as on ethnic communities from which they came.

Despite the National Association of Black Social Workers' strong position against transracial placements, many child welfare professionals maintain that given the overburdening of the foster care system in this country and over-representation of minority children within that system, transracial adoptions must remain an option.

In an attempt to analyze transracial adoption and politics, Hayes (1993) underscores an apparent inconsistency. He concludes that while research supports that at least three-fourths of such placements are deemed "successful," the same rate as for inracial adoptions, researchers are still hesitant to minimize the importance of race in "determining which parents are suitable adopters" (p. 302). Proponents for transracial adoption invariably qualify it by specifying that the Caucasian parents must, "first,... endeavor to provide the child with information on his or her cultural heritage. Second, they will encourage a strong sense of positive racial identity in the child." He questions
the standards by which "success" is measured and the cultural bias which may lie therein.

Much of the research which has focused on the development of self-esteem and self-concept in adoptees has correlated successful acculturation or assimilation as a causal variable. The assumption has been made that if an adoptee can learn to function in their new environment, becoming a part of that culture to the best of their ability, they will have higher self-esteem. Research has shown that transracial adoptees do score high on self-esteem (Kim, 1984; Bagley, 1993b), often outscoring their white peers. However, to conclude that their self-esteem, as measured, is directly correlated to their ability to adapt to their adoptive culture may be misguided at best. Measures of racial or cultural identity have been infantilely touched on in research and have just more recently come to the forefront as having relevance in transracial adoptions.

In 1981 Bagley and Young reported a follow-up study of 67 Chinese girls who had been adopted between 1962 to 1964 to British parents. The girls were in their mid-teens to early 20's at the time of interview. The subjects were drawn from 100 girls who were placed out of an Anglican orphanage in Sha Tin, Hong Kong. An initial questionnaire was completed by the parents and; 51 of the parents and their 53 adopted children were interviewed in person. Standardized testing of self-esteem, identity, and adjustment were conducted with the adoptees. Bagley and Young concluded that the girls "had few problems of identity." In fact, the subjects had "markedly and significantly better self-esteem than a group of girls of similar age drawn from the general population" (1981, p. 200). They found the adoptive homes to be supportive and loving and able to offer the children the comforts of a middle class home. The only complaints were of some parents being overly protective. The researchers found the subjects to be integrated and healthy.

A subsequent follow-up was conducted nine years later wherein 44 of the original young women were interviewed. The researchers found their subjects to be generally well educated and have a high achievement motivation. When asked about their ethnic
Identity all of the subjects identified themselves as English with approximately 50 percent having "maintained a strong emotional or intellectual interest in Chinese culture and institutions" (p. 202 - 203). Their self-report indicated a high level of satisfaction with their adopted families and few expressed concerns around identity.

Bagley and Young concluded that the level of nurturance, love, and support in the adoptive home is more integral to successful identity formation than the degree to which adoptive parents help their children connect to their ethnic identity. "It was found that level of self-esteem, and level of identity development or ego-strength did not show any statistically significant variation according to the degree to which parents emphasized the difference between cultural origins of the child, and themselves." They found the subjects to be "highly accepting of self (including their ethnicity), but nevertheless had strong cross-ethnic identifications" (1983, p. 200).

The most extensive research to date with regard to Korean transracial adoptions was conducted by Dong Soo Kim. His longitudinal study follows the same cohort group across a decade. His first study, conducted in 1974, was comprised of a sample of 406 twelve- to seventeen-year old Korean children adopted in the United States. Subjects and their families were administered a postal survey. Kim's research was based on the assumption that self-concept "... generally reflects past experiences, influences current functioning, and is predictive of future self actualization" and that it "may serve as a reliable indicator of their [adoptees'] total healthy developmental patterns" (p. 47 - 48). From that assumption he proposed to determine whether the age at time of placement initially impacts an adoptee's adjustment and development of self-concept, especially for older children. He also proposes that those differences become negligible as the children assimilate and accommodate; most specifically in families where the environment is supportive, allowing them to "develop adequate levels of self-concept, in spite of their unique status as foreign adoptees" (p. 48). Kim's stressing of family environmental factors is a significant and important part of his research. Subjects were separated into
two groups; the Early Group comprised those who were placed at or before one year of age and the Later Group, those who were six years or older at time of placement, for comparative purposes.

Kim's findings indicated that "in spite of cultural uprooting or racial isolation ... there is, in fact, no evidence that the Korean children show any significant difference in their self-concept when compared to an American norm group" (p. 131). He also determined that adoptees virtually lost the Korean cultural factors, with the Later Group having "slightly more cultural retention" (p. 122) and the length of time in placement being an influencing factor. Their levels of socialization overall were substantially high, again, with the Early Group's scores being slightly higher. Kim concludes that the attitudinal-interactional environment of the adoptive family plays the most important role in the process of the child's development of a healthy self-concept.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

The majority of transracial adoption studies have targeted children or adolescents who were residing in their parents' home at the time of research. Studies of initial adjustment and adaptation have necessarily looked at young children and their adoptive families. Research regarding identity has isolated adolescence, a developmentally pivotal period for identity formation as noted by Erikson. Following adoptees into adulthood creates design challenges for the researcher, however, the absence of their perspective in the research is alarming. Consequently, this study targeted adoptees from adolescence to early adulthood in an attempt to capture a clearer lifespan impact of transracial adoption and provide some data for generational comparison.
This study explored the constructs of racial identity, ethnic identity, and acculturation and their relationships to each other as experienced by Korean adoptees. Three standardized instruments have been selected to measure these constructs. Helm's (1995) People of Color Scale (POC) to measure racial identity, Suinn-Lew's (1992) Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (SL-ASIA) to measure ethnic identity, and Schonpflug's (1997) Need for Assimilation, Differentiation, and Inclusion Scale to determine level of acculturation.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Considering the nature of the transracial adoptions targeted in this study; Korean children placed into white homes, the following research questions were posed in Chapter One.

1. What is the relationship between racial identity, as measured by the POC, and ethnic identity, as measured by the SL-ASIA, for adoptees?

2. What is the relationship between racial identity, as measured by the POC, and adoptees' level of acculturation, as measured by the Need for Differentiation, Assimilation, and Inclusion Scale?

3. What is the relationship between adoptees' level of acculturation, as measured by the Need for Differentiation, Assimilation, and Inclusion Scale, and ethnic identity, as measured by the SL-ASIA?

Based on the three research questions, the following hypotheses were tested:

Hypothesis One:

What is the relationship between racial and ethnic identity for adoptees?

a) Given that racial identity and ethnic identity are theoretically linked, it is
expected that there will be a positive correlation between the conformity status on the POC and the SL-ASIA. Presumably, adoptees who have a strong white orientation and worldview will also be more Western-identified.

b) Similarly, there will be a negative correlation between the immersion status on the POC and the SL-ASIA. Adoptees who have a new or growing awareness of belonging to a racial group different than their Caucasian parents will presumably align more strongly with an Asian-identification.

**Hypothesis Two:**

What is the relationship between racial identity and adoptees' level of acculturation?

a) It is expected that there will be a positive relationship between the conformity and dissonance statuses of the POC and the need to differentiate scale. Presumably, an adoptee who strongly identifies with the values and cultural norms of the majority will have a greater need to differentiate from Korean and/or Asian cultural affiliations.

b) It is further hypothesized that there will be a positive correlation between the POC immersion status and the need to assimilate scale, as well as between the POC internalization status and the need for inclusion scale. As adoptees seek out opportunities to explore their Korean heritage, their frame of reference may shift from the white majority to Korean American.

**Hypothesis Three:**

What is the relationship between adoptees' level of acculturation and ethnic identity?

a) It is anticipated that there will be a positive correlation between the need to differentiate scale and the SL-ASIA since a higher score on the ethnic identity
Racial Identity and Ethnic Identity in Korean Adoptees, 35

instrument indicates a more Western-identification.

b) Conversely, it is expected that the need for assimilation and need for inclusion scales will have a negative correlation to the SL-ASIA; as adoptees become more connected to their Korean heritage, they will become less Western-identified.

Population

This study targeted Korean adoptees who were transracially adopted in the United States. Country of adoption is limited to the United States so as not to confound findings by cultural factors, although Korean children have been transracially placed throughout Europe and Australia. The study group was operationally defined as:

1. Korean adoptees, both biological parents are Korean
2. whose ages at the time of the study range from 11 to 25 years

There were three age designations within the range of 11 to 25 years. Early adolescence (11 to 14 years), middle (15 to 17 years), and late (18 to 25 years). The categorization was purposeful in its alignment with Chang’s (1997) age designations for comparative purposes.

This research data was compiled through an availability sampling. Participation was solicited through existing adoption-related organizations, agencies, conferences, websites and through personal contacts throughout the United States. Adoptees under the age of 18 were required to gain parental consent in order to participate. Responses were coded numerically for data analysis to ensure confidentiality, however, anonymity was not possible since many of the responses were gathered via email, precluding such possibility.
Instrumentation

The instruments used in this study include: (a) Demographic Profile (b) the Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (SL-ASIA) (Suinn et al., 1992) to measure ethnic identity, (c) the People of Color (POCS) Racial Identity Attitudes Scale (Helms, 1995) to measure racial identity, and (d) the Need for Assimilation, Differentiation, and Inclusion Scale (Schonpflug, 1997) to measure acculturation. The adaptation of each scale for relevancy to the identified population will follow.

Demographic Profile

An eight-item profile was administered (see Appendix C) to ascertain basic demographic information and age at time of arrival in the United States. Questions regarding respondents race and race of adoptive parents were asked to ensure that the adoptees were full Korean and that they were transracially placed.

Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (SL-ASIA)

An adapted version of the Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (Suinn, Khoo & Ahuna, 1995), a 21-item multiple-choice questionnaire that covers language, identity, friendship, behaviors, generational/geographic background, and attitudes (see Appendix D) was administered. Scores on each item range from a low of 1.00, indicative of low acculturation or high Asian identity, to a high of 5.00, indicative of high acculturation or high Western identity. The item scores were summed for a total and then divided by 21, resulting in a mean representing level of acculturation. Suinn et al. (1992) indicated an alpha coefficient of .91. The original SL-ASIA was adapted to 22 questions for the purpose of this study. Adaptations by both Chang (1997) and this researcher are discussed later.
POC Racial Identity Attitudes Scale

The People of Color (POC) Racial Identity Attitudes Scale (Helms, 1990), is a 50-item scale measuring identity on a 5-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree (see Appendix E). The instrument consists of four subscales; conformity an 11-item subscale (pre-encounter), Dissonance (encounter) a 15-item subscale, Immersion/Emersion a 14-item subscale, and Internalization a 10-item subscale. Each subscale corresponds with the named status in accordance with Helms' People of Color Identity Model. Scores are calculated by summing the items assigned to each subscale and scores are indicative of the "level of usage of each racial identity status" (Alvarez, p. 67).

Need for Assimilation, Differentiation, and Inclusion Scale

Schonpflug's (1997) Need for Assimilation, Differentiation, and Inclusion Scale (see Appendix F) was developed for use with ethnic Turkish adolescents living in Germany and adapted by Chang (1997) for use with Korean American adolescents. The instrument is comprised of three subscales; the need to assimilate, need to differentiate and need for inclusion, with Korean Americans as the reference group. The original version of Schonpflug's (1997) Need for assimilation scale reportedly had a Cronbach's alpha of .53. The adapted scale consists of six items which measure the need to assimilate into Korean culture. Individual scores are averaged into a total score ranging from 1 to 4, indicating a low to high need to assimilate.

Schonpflug's Need for Differentiation Scale (see Appendix F) was adapted by Chang (1997) for use with Korean American adolescents. Schonpflug (1997) reported a Cronbach's alpha of .85. The adapted scale consists of eight items which measure the
need to differentiate from Korean culture. Individual scores are averaged into a total score ranging from 1 to 4, indicating a high to low need to differentiate.

Schonpflug’s Need for Inclusion Scale (see Appendix F) was adapted by Chang (1997) for use with Korean American adolescents. Schonpflug (1997) reported a Cronbach’s alpha of .58. The adapted scale consists of eight items which measure the need for inclusion into Korean culture. Individual scores are averaged into a total score ranging from 1 to 4, indicating a high to low need for inclusion.

Adaptation to Instruments

Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (SL-ASIA)

The SL-ASIA was adapted by Chang (1997) so that the vocabulary is more representative of the targeted ethnic group. When appropriate, the term Korean American was substituted for Asian American. The adapted instrument has 28-items, seven more than the original 21-items. Suinn et al. included seven unweighted sub-questions to question 12 in order to assist respondents in determining generation of immigration. Chang weighted the sub-questions in the adapted version of the SL-ASIA for "clarity and ease of reading" (p.66). These seven questions have values ranging from 1 to 4, which if averaged into the remaining 21 questions, values ranging from 1 to 5, could artificially lower the overall mean. For the purposes of this study, the original sub-questions were confined to those about self and birthparents. The four questions referencing grandparents and great-grandparents were omitted for two reasons. First, such transgenerational information is well beyond the scope of most adoptees' knowledge. Also, inclusion of the additional questions, as previously noted, would increase the probability that the overall mean would be artificially lowered because of the
variance in range of responses. It is important to note that for the most part, responses with regard to birth parents were educated guesses as many adoptees do not have substantive information about their biological family. Questions four and five on the original version of the SL-ASIA were also eliminated because they were designed to elicit information about the birthparents which the adoptees, in most cases, would not have direct knowledge of. As a result of the adaptations to the SL-ASIA for this study, there were a total of 22-items included.

Need for Assimilation, Differentiation, and Inclusion Scale

Chang (1997) adapted the Need for Assimilation, Differentiation, and Inclusion Scale to "reflect the circumstances" (p. 67) of Korean American adolescents. Questions such as; "I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly other Koreans," "I find it embarrassing when my Korean background gets known in a group of American peers," and "If someone were to insult Korea, I would be personally offended," are examples of the need for assimilation, differentiation, and inclusion scales.

The Need for Assimilation Scale adapted by Chang consisted of seven-items (questions one through seven), however question seven "When my parents speak to me in Korean in public, it embarrasses me" was determined by this researcher to be reflective of the need for differentiation rather than assimilation. The instrument was therefore adapted to include question seven in the need for differentiation scale. Also, it is important to note for purposes of analysis that the Need for Assimilation, Differentiation, and Inclusion Scale is loaded from high agreement to low agreement, however, three questions (numbers one, eleven, and twenty-one) are worded so that they are inverted. For example, on the Need for Differentiation Scale question eleven states "I prefer going
out with my Korean friends to my American friends," a response of 1=strongly agree would indicate a low need for differentiation. In comparison, question twelve states "I do not want to represent other Koreans in social organizations," a response of 1=strongly agree is representative of a high need for differentiation. Response values to questions one, eleven, and twenty-one were inverted during scoring to correct for the noted inconsistency.

Research Design

This research design incorporates a quantitative approach which includes several standardized instruments to measure identity and acculturation in transracial Korean adoptees. A profile questionnaire was designed to elicit demographic information.

Korean adoptees ranging in age from 11 to 25 years were invited to participate through their affiliation with various existing adoption-related organizations, agencies, conferences, websites and through personal contacts. Sources were asked to either provide mailing databases or solicit participation through announcements in newsletters and/or websites. Each package was coded for tracking and follow up purposes, as well as to ensure confidentiality.

Packages included a Parent Letter for participants under the age of 18, and a Consent Form to inform participants of the voluntary nature of this research, any possible risks, and assurances of confidentiality. The instruments were compiled in order with the Demographic Profile, SL-ASIA, POCS Racial Identity Attitude Scale, and the Need for Assimilation, Differentiation, and Inclusion Scale. The completion time was estimated at 45 minutes.
Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted to address the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis one:

What is the relationship between racial and ethnic identity for adoptees?

a) There will be a positive correlation between the conformity status on the POC and the SL-ASIA.

a) There will be a negative correlation between the immersion status on the POC and the SL-ASIA.

A Pearson's correlation was run with the mean values of the conformity, dissonance, immersion/emersion and internalization statuses of the POC Racial Identity Attitude Scale and the mean values of the SL-ASIA.

Hypothesis two:

What is the relationship between racial identity and adoptees' level of acculturation?

a) There will be a positive relationship between the pre-encounter and dissonance statuses of the POC and the need to differentiate scale.

b) There will be a positive correlation between the POC immersion status and the need to assimilate scale, as well as between the POC internalization status and the need for inclusion scale.

A Pearson's correlation was run with the mean values of the conformity, dissonance, immersion/emersion and internalization statuses of the POC Racial Identity Attitude Scale and the mean values of the need to assimilate, need to differentiate, and the need for inclusion scales.
Hypothesis three:

What is the relationship between adoptees' level of acculturation and ethnic identity?

a) There will be a positive correlation between the need to differentiate scale and the SL-ASIA.

b) The need for assimilation and need for inclusion scales will have a negative correlation to the SL-ASIA.

A Pearson's correlation was run with the mean values of the need to assimilate, need to differentiate, and the need for inclusion scales and the mean values of the SL-ASIA.

Ethical Considerations

Possible ethical considerations are identified in the Consent to Act as A Human Subject (Appendix B) so that participants may give informed consent. Considerations include confidentiality, parental consent for those under 18 years of age, and the voluntary nature of the research. No potential harm to participants is anticipated. Phone numbers for the researcher and committee chair are provided for any questions or concerns as well as requests for study results.

Potential Limitations of the Study

In considering potential limitations, four variables were considered. First, as with any research, this study has its limitations due in part to the nature of the phenomenon being considered. Participation was solicited through existing adoption-related organizations, agencies, conferences, and websites which inherently attract adoptees who have a certain level of comfort with or identification to their adoptive status. Those who do not so affiliate may represent a perspective or experience not found among research participants. This may bring into question possible limitations to generalizability to
Korean adoptees as a whole.

Another limitation may have arisen with the use of self-report. All the instruments used in this research rely on self-report which "provide more dependable estimates of personality-related variables than behavioral measures" (Chang, p. 76). Relying solely on self-report does not allow for supportive data collection which can be obtained through triangulation. Previous studies have included parental responses (Kim 1976), however considering the role of individuation in identity formation (Erikson 1959), self-definition is of primary importance.

Also, researcher bias is a concern which has been addressed through the use of pre-existing objective measures. Mail surveys were chosen, as opposed to personal interviews, to minimize researcher impact. As a Korean adoptee, this researcher is aware of possible personal bias which could unintentionally influence data collection and interpretation. Although it is impossible as a researcher to be completely objective, an acknowledgment and awareness of subjectivity will help to minimize the problem.

Finally, while the use of standardized instruments allows for the minimization of researcher bias in data collection and analysis, the use of these instruments with specific populations may require instrument adaptation. None of the selected tools were normed on Korean adoptees; thus some of the questions were inappropriate or not relevant. Adaptations to the instruments were therefore cautiously made, keeping in mind the psychometric integrity. The use of mean, rather than individual, scores in data analysis will minimize the impact of the elimination or adaptation of a question to findings.
CHAPTER IV

Results

Introduction

This study sought to consider the relationships between racial identity, ethnic identity, and acculturation in transracially placed Korean adopted adolescents. Three quantitative standardized instruments and one demographic survey were chosen to elicit the desired data. Chapter four presents an overview of the demographic information and a summary of the findings from the data analyses.

Again, the research questions considered in Chapter One were:

1. What is the relationship between racial and ethnic identity for adoptees?
2. What is the relationship between racial identity and adoptees' level of acculturation?
3. What is the relationship between adoptees' level of acculturation and ethnic identity?

Descriptive Data

Transracially placed adoptees, whose biological parents are Korean, ranging in age from 11 to 25 years were targeted for study. There were 72 original respondents, three of whom identified as being biracial (Korean/White) and were therefore not included in the sample group. Two respondents self-identified their race as other and both indicated that they were full Korean to the "best of their knowledge," hence they were included in the sample group. One participant did not indicate her race. She was retained in the sample group because the omission derived from a failure to respond to the last three questions on the demographic survey, rather than an indication that she is biracial. Although it was assumed by the researcher that the adoptive parents would be white, the findings indicate that four parents (one father and three mothers) are Asian-American (Korean). In each case at least one of the adoptive parents is white, qualifying
the placement as being *transracial*, thus these cases were included in the study. There were 69 final respondents; 23.2 percent were in the early- (11 to 14 years), 31.9 percent in the mid- (15 to 17 years) and 44.9 percent in the early adult (18 to 25 years) age range. The mean age was 18 with bimodal frequencies of ages 16 and 23. Almost half of the adoptees reported being in the early adult age range with 2.9 percent still in high school, 29 percent attending college and 9 percent indicated other, presumably either never attended, not attending currently, or completed college. The over-representation of the early adult age-range was somewhat unexpected by this researcher. College-aged and older adoptees are usually more difficult to locate since they often do not reside with their adoptive families. However, the recent adult adoptee conference sponsored by Holt Children’s Services was an unprecedented event which brought together adoptees who were 21 years of age and older, providing greater access to this population.

Participants were predominately female, comprising 79.9 percent of the sample group. As a whole, the adoptees have spent the majority of their life in the United States. All but one was under six years of age upon arrival in the United States with *time since arrival* evenly distributed between three time categories; 10 to 15 years (33.3 percent), 15 to 20 years (31.9 percent), and over 20 years (31.9 percent). Many of the sample group have lived in more than one state, however, more than half (53.5 percent) have resided in central Eastern states such as Virginia, Maryland, New York, New Jersey, and the District of Columbia. Other states of residence included California, Connecticut, Texas and the State of Washington. Many respondents who lived in states further from the east coast often did so while attending college.

**Hypothesis One**

What is the relationship between racial and ethnic identity for adoptees?

**Hypothesis 1-a**

When considering the relationship between racial identity and ethnic identity it was expected that there would be a positive correlation between the conformity status on
the POC and the SL-ASIA. Presumably, adoptees who have a strong white orientation and worldview, as measured by the conformity status on the POC, were also found to be more Western-identified. The hypothesis was substantiated, there was a significant (0.01 level) positive correlation of .350.

**Hypothesis 1-b**

Similarly, it was expected that there would be a negative correlation between the immersion status on the POC and the SL-ASIA. Adoptees who have a new or growing awareness of belonging to a racial group different than their Caucasian parents will presumably align more strongly with an Asian-identification. A Pearson's correlation indicated a negative relationship between the immersion status on the POC and the SL-ASIA, however, it was not significant (-.199). The hypothesis was not supported.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pearson's Correlation for the POC and SL-ASIA (n=69)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conformity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissonance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immersion/Emersion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>p &lt; .01</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hypothesis Two**

What is the relationship between racial identity and adoptees' level of acculturation?

**Hypothesis 2-a**

A positive relationship between the conformity and dissonance statuses of the POC and the need to differentiate scale were anticipated when examining the relationship between racial identity and acculturation. Presumably, an adoptee who strongly identifies
with the values and cultural norms of the majority will have a greater need to differentiate from Korean and/or Asian cultural affiliations. A Pearson’s correlation indicated a significant (0.01 level) negative relationship (−.339) between the conformity status and a significant (0.05 level) negative relationship (−.251) between the dissonance status on the POC and the need to differentiate scale. It is important to note that the Need for Assimilation, Differentiation, and Inclusion Scale is weighted inversely than the POC and SL-ASIA, therefore, a negative relationship is interpreted as a positive correlation. The findings did support the hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2-b

It was further hypothesized that there would be a positive correlation between the POC immersion status and the need to assimilate scale, as well as between the POC internalization status and the need for inclusion scale. As adoptees seek out opportunities to explore their Korean heritage, their frame of reference may shift from the white majority to Korean American. The correlation between the POC immersion status and the need to assimilate scale was not significant, although it was positive. The hypothesis was not supported. The correlation between the POC internalization status and the need for inclusion was significant (0.01 level) with a negative correlation of .334, which is interpreted as a positive correlation when inverted, therefore the secondary relationship was supported by the findings.

Additionally, three other significant relationships between the POC and Need for Assimilation, Differentiation, and Inclusion Scales were found which were not considered in the hypotheses. There was a negative relationship between the conformity status of the POC and both the need for assimilation and need for inclusion scales (after inversion) with a significance of 0.05. There was also a positive relationship (after inversion) between the immersion status of the POC and the need for inclusion scale with a significance of 0.01.
Table 4.2
Pearson's Correlation for the POC and the Need for Assimilation (NA), Differentiation (ND), and Inclusion (NI) Scales (n=69)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>NA</th>
<th>ND</th>
<th>NI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conformity</td>
<td>.300*</td>
<td>-.339**</td>
<td>.264*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissonance</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>-.251*</td>
<td>-.024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immersion</td>
<td>-.151</td>
<td>-.019</td>
<td>-.321**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internalization</td>
<td>-.114</td>
<td>.049</td>
<td>-.334**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05      ** p < .01

(Values for the Need for Assimilation, Differentiation, and Inclusion Scales are inverted in data analysis.)

**Hypothesis Three**

What is the relationship between adoptees' level of acculturation and ethnic identity?

**Hypothesis 3-a**

A positive correlation between the need to differentiate scale and the SL-ASIA was predicted when considering the relationship between acculturation and ethnic identity since a higher score on the ethnic identity instrument indicates a more Western-identification. A significant (0.01) relationship of -.340 was found between the need to differentiate scale and the SL-ASIA, which when adjusted for the inverted weighting of the Need for Assimilation, Differentiation, and Inclusion Scales is interpreted as a positive correlation, which does support the hypothesis.

**Hypothesis 3-b**

Conversely, it is expected that the need for assimilation and need for inclusion scales will have a negative correlation to the SL-ASIA; as adoptees become more connected to their Korean heritage, it was hypothesized that they would become less Western-identified. The relationships between the SL-ASIA and the need for assimilation and need for inclusion scales were significantly (0.01) negative (after
inversion), thus supporting the hypotheses.

Table 4.3
Pearson's Correlation for the SL-ASIA and the Need for Assimilation (NA), Differentiation (ND), and Inclusion (NI) Scales (n=69)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NA</th>
<th>ND</th>
<th>NI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SL-ASIA</td>
<td>.393**</td>
<td>-.340**</td>
<td>.502**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** p < .01

(Values for the Need for Assimilation, Differentiation, and Inclusion Scales are inverted in data analysis.)
Additional Findings

Frequencies and case summaries were completed for the POC, SL-ASIA and Need for Assimilation, Differentiation and Inclusion scales to determine mean, standard deviation, variance, and range of scores for the whole group, and also factored by gender and age range.

Table 4.4
Correlation Matrix for the POC, SL-ASIA, and the Need for Assimilation (NA), Differentiation (ND), and Inclusion (NI) Scales (n=69)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Racial Identity</th>
<th>Ethnic Identity</th>
<th>Acculturation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conf</td>
<td>Diss</td>
<td>Imm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conf</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.631**</td>
<td>.191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diss</td>
<td>.631**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.504**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imm</td>
<td>.191</td>
<td>.504**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>-.033</td>
<td>.054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL</td>
<td>.350**</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td>-.199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
<td>.300*</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>-.151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ND</td>
<td>-.339**</td>
<td>-.251*</td>
<td>-.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NI</td>
<td>.264*</td>
<td>-.024</td>
<td>-.321**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05    ** p < .01

(Values for the Need for Assimilation, Differentiation, and Inclusion Scales are inverted in data analysis.)

Group Results

The group as a whole is characterized as embracing a dualistic racial identity while tending to be more Western-identified ethnically, and having a somewhat greater need for assimilation or inclusion into the Korean community than differentiation from it.
Internalization is their predominant status related level of functioning as measured by the POC Racial Identity Attitudes Scale with a mean score of 4.05, indicating adoptees' comfort with both their birth and adoptive heritages. There is a considerable variance between the internalization mean score and the mean scores of the other three statuses with the dissonance mean at 2.75, immersion mean at 2.34, and the conformity mean at 2.08. It is important to reiterate that the POC is designed so that respondents will net a score on all four subscales. Racial identity is conceptualized as being non-discrete, non-linear, and somewhat fluid in that certain catalytic events can cause an individual to recycle through the dissonance, immersion, and internalization statuses. There is, however, a definite progression toward internalization which is viewed as promoting a healthier sense of well-being and more defined racial identity. Although respondents will incur a score on all four subscales, the scale with the highest score will generally indicate a predominant status related level of functioning.

The mean ethnic identity score is 3.95, halfway between the mid-range of being bicultural and Western-identified as measured by the SL-ASIA. The range of scores is 2.50, with a minimum of 2.20 and a maximum of 4.70, and a modal score of 4.0. Adoptees appear to not be completely Western-identified despite being raised in white American homes, while they are not bicultural either. Adoptees' mean acculturation scores on the need for assimilation and inclusion into the Korean community were both 2.21, which is inverted to 1.79 for data analysis purposes. These two subscale scores were higher, although not markedly so than the need for differentiation mean score, which was 1.39 (after inversion). The mere .40 variance between the three subscale means may be indicative of some ambiguity or fluidity on the part of the adoptees as they
manage their dual identities.

Table 4.5
Descriptive Statistics for the Adoptees as a Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Racial Identity</th>
<th>Ethnic Identity</th>
<th>Acculturation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>POC</td>
<td>SL-ASIA</td>
<td>***Need for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Diss</td>
<td>Imm</td>
<td>Int</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>2.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>2.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>2.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>.5249</td>
<td>.5690</td>
<td>.4655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance</td>
<td>.2755</td>
<td>.3237</td>
<td>.2167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***. Scores are inverted for purposes of analysis

Early-Adolescent Results

There were a total of 16 respondents in the age range of 11 to 14 years, comprised of 11 girls and 5 boys. Two of the adoptees, one girl and one boy, did not complete the racial identity scale. As a group they are characterized as having an integrated racial identity, being more Western-identified than bicultural, and having a more dominant need for inclusion into the Korean community than the adoptee group as a whole. There is little variance between the scores on the conformity and internalization statuses for the boys and girls. The greatest variance was noted in the dissonance and immersion statuses, with the girls scoring consistently higher. The age-group mean on the SL-ASIA was consistent with the total group mean. However, when accounting for gender, the
boys seem to be more Western-identified with a score of 4.16 than the girls in their age group and also than the total group. While the early-adolescent girls scored higher on the need for assimilation and need for inclusion scales than the total group and the boys scored consistently lower on all three scales; as a group the need for inclusion was dominant.

Table 4.6
Descriptive Statistics for the Early-Adolescent Age Group (n=16, 11 females/5 males)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Racial Identity</th>
<th>Ethnic Identity</th>
<th>Acculturation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>POC</td>
<td>SL-ASIA</td>
<td>***Need for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diss</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imm</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age-Group Mean</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Mean</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Mean</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Group Mean</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>1.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n=69)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scores are inverted for purposes of analysis</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Mid-Adolescent Results

There were a total of 22 respondents in the age range of 15 to 17 years, comprised of 17 females and 5 males. This age group is characterized in general the same as the total group; by having an integrated racial identity, more Western-identified than bicultural ethnically and having higher needs for assimilation and inclusion into Korean culture or identification. Unlike the early-adolescent group, there was some variance between the scores on the conformity and internalization statuses for males and females.
Racial Identity and Ethnic Identity in Korean Adoptees

with the girls having a higher overall mean in conformity and the boys having higher overall mean in internalization. The variance between the males and females in the immersion status is negligible, however, there is a .42 gender variance in the dissonance status with the girls scoring higher. The mean value on the SL-ASIA was higher for females than males, indicating the girls to be more Western-identified, which was inverted for the younger age group. The overall age-group mean was comparable to that of the total group mean. The mean female scores on the three subscales for acculturation were comparable to that of the total group. The male means varied with higher scores on the need for assimilation and inclusion scales and a notably lower score of 1.18 on the need for differentiation scale, in contrast to a score of 1.40 for the total group.

Table 4.7
Descriptive Statistics for the Mid-Adolescent Age Group (n=22, 17 females/5 males)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Racial Identity</th>
<th>Ethnic Identity</th>
<th>Acculturation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>POC</td>
<td>SL-ASIA</td>
<td>***Need for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Diss</td>
<td>Imm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age-Group Mean</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>2.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Mean</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>2.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Mean</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>2.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Group Mean</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>2.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n=69)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***. Scores are inverted for purposes of analysis

Early-Adult Results

There were a total of 31 respondents in the age range of 18 to 25 years, comprised...
of 27 females and 4 males. This group was typified, as indicated by mean scores, as
having a predominantly integrated racial identity, being more Western-identified than
bicultural and having a higher need for assimilation into their Korean heritage than
inclusion or differentiation. The young women scored consistently higher on the first
three statuses of the POC than their male counterparts, notably so in the conformity status
with an overall mean score of 2.14 versus 1.47. The predominant status related level of
functioning for both genders is internalization. The age-group means, for the most part,
paralleled the total group mean with enough variance so that the early adult group mean
was slightly higher for the need for assimilation and lower for the need for inclusion.

The most remarkable variance, as with the mid-adolescent males, was in relation to the
1.25 mean score on the need for differentiation scale, in comparison to a 1.49 for their
female counterparts and 1.40 for the total group.

Table 4.8
Descriptive Statistics for the Early Adult Age Group (n=31, 27 females/4 males)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Racial Identity</th>
<th>Ethnic Identity</th>
<th>Acculturation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>POC</td>
<td>SL-ASIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Diss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age-Group Mean</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>2.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Mean</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>2.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Mean</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>2.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Group Mean</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***. Scores are inverted for purposes of analysis
Summary

The findings indicated some significant relationships between racial identity, ethnic identity, and acculturation in Korean adopted adolescents. The SL-ASIA is a uni-dimensional/uni-directional scale which measures ethnic identity from (low) Asian-identified to Western-identified (high), with mid-range score indicating a bicultural identity; while both the POC and Need for Assimilation, Differentiation, and Inclusion Scales are multi-dimensional with several subscales conceptualizing racial identity and acculturation more as multi-faceted, non-discrete processes or statuses. Correlations, therefore, consider relationships between the identified processes or statuses rather than the singular constructs of race and acculturation.

Within the three constructs there are similar processes which were found to have significant positive relationships. The conformity status on the POC, the SL-ASIA, and the need for differentiation scale (inverted) were all positively correlated indicating a predominately white-orientation and disassociation from Korean/Asian cultural behaviors, values, and perspectives. The correlation between the dissonance status and the need for differentiation scale was positive (inverted) although not as significant. The immersion/emersion and internalization statuses on the POC displayed a significant positive correlation (inverted) to the need for inclusion scale in one's own reference group on the acculturation instrument. The proposed relationships were supported in most part in the findings, although the negative correlations between the immersion and internalization statuses on the POC and the SL-ASIA were not strong enough to be significant.
CHAPTER V

Discussion

Summary

The following chapter will present an interpretation of findings, implications for current theory, recommendations for further research, and implications for professional practice. This study considered the relationships between race, ethnicity, and acculturation in adolescent Korean adoptees. The sample group consisted of 69 Korean adoptees ranging in age from 11 to 25 years of age; 16 in the early-, 22 in the mid-, and 31 in the early adult age group. Although four of the respondents had one parent who was of Asian descent (one father and three mothers) they were retained as study participants because their other parent was white, qualifying the placement as transracial. Almost 80 percent of the adoptees were female with the ratio of male to female decreasing as age increased. The adoptees reported having spent the majority of their life in the United States with all but one being in the infant to five year old age range upon arrival. The sample group was drawn predominantly from central Eastern states such as Virginia, Maryland, New York, New Jersey, and the District of Columbia.

Research questions posed at the onset were: What is the relationship between racial and ethnic identity for adoptees? What is the relationship between racial identity and adoptees' level of acculturation? What is the relationship between adoptees' level of acculturation and ethnic identity? A quantitative exploratory research design comprised of a demographic profile and three objective instruments was compiled. The three constructs under consideration were racial identity as measured by Helm's People of Color Racial Identity and Attitudes Scale (POC), ethnic identity as measured by an
adapted version of Suinn-Lew's SL-ASIA, and acculturation as measured by an adapted version of Schonpflug's Need for Assimilation, Differentiation, and Inclusion Scale.

Interpretations

Findings, for the most part, substantiated the hypothesized relationships between the three constructs. It was determined that the more adoptees derive their racial identity from a white reference group orientation, the more likely they were to be Western-identified ethnically, and were to be more highly acculturated into the American mainstream. Consequently, the higher the scores on the conformity status of the racial identity scale (POC), indicating the likelihood that the adoptees had a greater white reference group orientation, the more Western-identified they were on the ethnic identity scale. Similarly, the conformity status of the racial identity scale also related positively (after inversion) to the need for differentiation scale, which is indicative of a high level of acculturation into white culture. Inversely, the lower the scores on the conformity status, indicating that adoptees are less likely to derive their racial identity from a white reference group orientation, the greater the need for assimilation and inclusion into their own ethnic group as measured by the acculturation scale.

Seemingly, adoptees who align themselves with Korean or Asian cultural practices, or affiliate more with other Asians, have a higher need to be acculturated and/or included into their own racial and/or ethnic group. This was indicated by an inverse relationship between ethnic identity and acculturation. The lower the scores on the SL-ASIA, meaning adoptees are less Western-identified, the higher the scores on the need for assimilation and inclusion scales when measuring level of acculturation.

It had also been hypothesized that the more Western-identified the adoptees were
ethnically, the less likely they would be to immerse themselves in their Korean racial identity or have the ability to integrate both identities. Hence, it was anticipated that the higher the scores were on the SL-ASIA, the lower the scores would be on the immersion and internalization statuses of the POC. Findings did indicate a negative correlation as hypothesized, however, it was not significant.

There were strong significant correlations between racial identity and acculturation as measured by the POC and Need for Assimilation, Differentiation, and Inclusion Scale. It is integral to the interpretation of findings to understand that the reference group for the acculturation scale is one's own racial or ethnic group, not the white majority. Findings indicated that as adoptees have a greater ability to define a pluralistic racial identity for themselves, embracing both their Korean heritage and western acculturation, wherein internalization is their predominant status related level of functioning, they have an increased need for inclusion into their own ethnic group. This relationship, indicating an increased need for inclusion into one's own ethnic group, was true also for adoptees in the exploratory racial identity status of emersion/immersion, wherein reference group shift occurs. Both statuses were marked by an increased need for assimilation, however, the relationships were not strong enough to be significant.

As a group, the internalization status was the predominant level of functioning as measured by the POC. Despite having been raised in white homes, the adoptees have managed to integrate their identity to include aspects of both their Korean heritage and their socialized upbringing. Several contributing factors could be associated with this finding. Probably the most relevant would be the fact that all of the respondents are affiliated, either formally or informally with adoptee-related groups, organizations, or
networks. This willingness to expose themselves to other adoptees and Korean culture may predispose them to also have a more integrated racial identity. The supportive variables which have allowed the adoptees to progress to this status are not addressed within the scope of this study, however, Kim's (1976) findings pointed to the importance of the attitudinal-interactional environment of the adoptive family. Also, the current sociopolitical climate with regard to transracial Korean adoption is much more open, and there exists more resources for adoptees to address questions of racial identity, than for their earlier peers. Findings indicated that the secondary status as a group was dissonance, which is characterized by a certain amount of ambivalence and confusion with regard to racial identification. The likelihood that adoptees may vasillate situationally between internalization and dissonance, or that threats to a sense of an integrated racial identity may result in ambivalence is certainly conceivable.

Transracially placed adoptees find themselves in a somewhat tenuous situation in that a consolidated racial identity is often not reinforced due in large part to environmental factors such as living in white homes, predominantly white communities, and limited exposure to Korean heritage or affiliations with the Korean American community. Variance in both the predominant and secondary statuses are inevitable given the wide age range of respondents, disparate cognitive-affective developmental levels, and life experiences.

There appears to be gender differences in how adoptees experience race. The males scored the same or higher than the females across age-groups in the internalization status while having overall means which were lower in the first three statuses. It seemed especially apparent that the males were less likely to be aligned with the conformity
status in the older age ranges. The findings relating to gender differences cannot be
construed as representative for all the reasons stated previously; but especially because
there were so few male respondents, comprising only 20 percent of the sample group.

**Implications for Current Theory**

An important contribution which this study lends to the field of Korean adoptive
research is considering the constructs of racial identity, ethnic identity, and acculturation.
Respondents are asked to relate their experiences as Asians in America rather than as
adoptees. This focus was purposive in isolating the identified constructs.

**Identity Development**

Erikson’s (1959) psychosocial model of development specifies that identity
formation entails establishing “a persistent sameness within oneself . . . ,” (Erikson, 1968,
p. 109) and that failure to do so can threaten ego development. For transracially placed
adoptees this sameness within oneself necessarily incorporates factors of race and
ethnicity; but it is oftentimes experienced dichotomously, having been socialized as white
but appearing outwardly to be Asian. The minimal attention given to race and ethnicity
by Erikson as being integral to identity development is a reflection of the cultural
exclusivity pervasive in most Western psychological and social models.

Race is a mediating factor in relation to ethnic identification and acculturation.
All immigrant groups have traversed a process of acculturation and to varying degrees,
assimilation (Helms, 1995). Most European Americans have, over generations and
through interethnic interactions, for the most part disconnected from their ethnic origins.
Ethnic identification as such is voluntary and somewhat touristic in nature. The privilege
of self-definition is bestowed on whites in this country while visible minorities are often
precluded from fully assimilating into the *melting pot* because of physical characteristics which differentiate them. As a result, identification within same race or ethnic group is assumed regardless of an individual’s level of acculturation.

The existing racial and ethnic identity models (Sue and Sue, 1999; Helms, 1995, Suinn et al., 1995) as predicated on the assumption that individuals were raised in their family of origin, and that access to their ethnic or racial heritage is readily accessible, therefore, affiliation or non-affiliation is simply a matter of choice. Transracial adoptees’ access to own-group affiliations are usually not available within their homes or extended family, and accessibility during their formative years is determined by their parents’ willingness or comfort in providing such opportunities. If the premise of stage models is that progression toward more complex stages or statuses is healthier, are adoptees delayed developmentally as a result of their transracial status? Considering the role that acculturation plays in racial and ethnic identification, a parallel if not inverse process seems to occur with this population. Most adoptees have been *culturally transplanted*, that is they were rooted in Korea but are not familiar with Korean culture or language. Such knowledge must be learned, usually outside of the home. Researchers have conceptualized the process of acculturation as being unidirectional, progressing from low to high assimilation (Suinn et al.) with the starting point being low assimilation. This may be true for most first-generation immigrants, however, the majority of the adoptees in this study arrived to their adoptive homes as infants or less than five years of age. They did not come with cultural knowledge in tact, and therefore did not have to go through an acculturation process. The process is inverted in that acculturation occurs, if at all, into the Korean rather than white dominant culture.
Race has been defined as having little or no biological relevance, rather it is a social construct upon which meaning has been arbitrarily placed. Whether or not adoptees accept the racial label, they are viewed as being Asian and are categorized with others who share that designation. Racial identity is about negotiating the oppression experienced by an individual as a member of a racial designation. Helms (1995) delineates that progression toward a more healthy racial identity necessitates some degree of immersion into one’s own racial or ethnic group involving the “idealization of one’s socioracial group and denigration of that which is perceived as white” (p. 186).

Similarly, Sue and Sue (1999) specify that an individual in the resistance and immersion stage “rejects white social, cultural, and institutional standards as having no validity for him or her” (p. 133). Is this rejection of dominant cultural values salient for Korean adoptees? How does that process relate to Erikson’s conceptualization of individuation? In traditional immigrant families individuation, if it occurs, is often marked by a rejection of parents’ cultural values as being “old country,” an embracing of more Western values, and tends to be affiliated developmentally with adolescence. Adolescent adoptees negotiate individuation from their parents, as do their white peers, but this does not necessarily involve the rejection of their parents’ cultural values from an ethnic perspective as it may with some immigrant families. Cited examples of immersion usually reference experiences of young to mid-life adults who have left their families’ homes wherein own-group affiliation is deliberate rather than by default. Adoptees do not have the experience of having own-group affiliation by default, rather it is always deliberate. However, does own-group affiliation necessarily equate with assimilation or acculturation into own-group for adoptees? Is it possible for adoptees to progress
towards an integrated or internalized racial identity without first rejecting the dominant culture as proposed by existing racial identity models? It was hypothesized (1-b) that there would be a negative correlation between the immersion status on the POC and the SL-ASIA; adoptees with a new or growing awareness of belonging to a racial group different than their Caucasian parents would presumably align more strongly with an Asian-identification. Findings did not support this hypothesis, although there was a negative correlation, it was not significant. Also, it was hypothesized that there would be a positive correlation between the POC immersion status and the need to assimilate scale; it was presumed that there would be a shift in reference group from the white majority to Korean American as adoptees seek out opportunities to explore their Korean heritage. The correlation between the POC immersion status and the need to assimilate scale was not significant, although it was positive. Although these findings are not conclusive and are not to be construed as representative, they do suggest that perhaps adoptees experience the immersion process differently or to a less degree than do non-adoptees. For them, immersion may not mean the rejection of white culture or a high degree of own-group assimilation, but rather merely an increased exposure or affiliation with Korean culture and people. This possibility was supported with a positive correlation between the immersion status and the need for inclusion scale. After experiencing a dissonance producing racial event, adoptees’ immersion status is characterized by the need to have increased contact and affiliation with own-group, which does not necessitate a high level of assimilation. The likelihood that an adoptee would become highly acculturated into Korean culture is less probable than that of a non-adopted immigrant.
becoming highly acculturated into the dominant culture. This was substantiated by the findings of the sample group who were more Western- than Asian-identified.

**Asian American Identity**

Much of the conventional wisdom with regard to Asian American identity assumes a strong collectivistic, familial orientation. Research (Oyserman and Sakamoto, 1997; Yeh and Huang, 1996; and Troll, Bengston, and McFarland, 1979) has, for the most part, substantiated that thought. Oyserman and Sakamoto proposed that collectivism, characterized by interdependence and group connectedness, was central to an Asian American ethnic identity. They examined the relationships between an Asian American identity, collectivism, and a collective self-esteem. Their findings that the Asian American students were more individualistic than collectivistic and that both orientations were positively correlated to collective self-esteem indicated a more complex relationship between an Asian American identity and the embracing of traditional values. These young adults seemed to be able to integrate having a positive affiliation with being Asian and being more individuated than perhaps their parents’ generation. The saliency of collectivism as being integral to an Asian American identity seems somewhat incongruent when considering Korean adoptees. The valuing of interdependence is learned in a cultural context, usually within the family of origin and through socializing. Adoptees, not having been raised in Asian homes, have not received this transmission of cultural values. Is an Asian American identity predicated on the knowledge and sharing of cultural values? Huang (in Lee, 1997) had surmised that a collectivistic orientation is primary to Asian cultures, but he conceded that with the increased influence of Western individualism there has been a heightened focus on self-differentiation.
similar to the Asian American college students that Oyserman and Sakamoto studied, had a stronger need for within group inclusion then they did to assimilate or differentiate. Their identification did not seem to be derived from having to completely embrace traditional values or cultural practices.

Tse's (1999) model of ethnic identity in Asian Americans specifies four stages; *ethnic unawareness, ethnic ambivalence/evasion, ethnic emergence, and ethnic identity incorporation*. She concluded from her research that in stage four respondents identified more strongly with a generalized Asian American identity, rather than an ethnic-specific identity. This is consistent with other stage models which purport that individuals with an integrated or internalized identity tend to have an empathic connection to other groups with similar experiences with oppression (Cross, 1971; Helms, 1995; Sue and Sue, 1999). Findings in this study would suggest that this is congruent for adoptees as well; their identification as an Asian American is sufficient for understanding their experiences as a racial minority in this country. Racially charged experiences, such as teasing or exclusion, were probably based on their being Asian American, not specifically because they are Korean. This is reflected in the findings that adoptees in the immersion status of the POC did not have a high need to assimilate, which would be characterized by an increased level of cultural-specific involvement, but had a high need for inclusion, which is more indicative of a simple need to belong and be recognized as a member.

Another important consideration is the recognition of the impact of generation and immigration history. Troll et al. (1979) gave particular attention to the role of generation to ethnic identity in their transgenerational model. They proposed that placement within the family generationally, the developmental grouping of into life
Racial Identity and Ethnic Identity in Korean Adoptees

stages, and the generational age cohort, framed within a larger societal and historical context, all impacted one's ethnic identity. The term Asian and Asian American are used interchangeably in many contexts, however, differentiation is important. Asian American is an arbitrary term assigned to individuals of Asian descent whose family of origin immigrated to this country. It is, therefore, a political designation rather than a self-imposed identification. Asians in Asia do not necessarily share a collective identity. For instance, Japanese do not perceive themselves as being culturally affiliated with Pakistanis. Sensei (third generation) Japanese are more likely to identify with being Asian American than Issei (first generation), similarly third generation Chinese clearly distinguish themselves as ABC (American born Chinese). The assignment of traditional cultural knowledge and values as being correlated to Asian American identity is becoming less relevant as multi-generational families become more prevalent. A reconsidering of the definition of an Asian American identity to recognize what it is, a political racial designation, would better exemplify the experiences of all Asians in America. The use of cultural knowledge as a yardstick is an oversimplification of a very complex construct.

Although this study was not designed specifically for comparative purposes, two of the chosen instruments and some of the design structure were borrowed from Chang's (1997) research of Korean American adolescents. She explored the relationships between acculturation, ethnic identity, and wellness in her population. One important difference is that she chose to measure acculturation by using the SL-ASIA and ethnic identity, as defined by the Optimal Distinctiveness Theory, with the Need for Assimilation, Differentiation, and Inclusion Scale; which was inverse to the instrumentation in this
study. Chang’s purpose was to test the Optimal Distinctiveness Theory through the implementation of the SL-ASIA and the WEL Inventory. It is arguable whether the SL-ASIA measures ethnic identity or acculturation, however, for purposes of this study, the SL-ASIA has been interpreted to be an indicator of ethnic identity by measuring level of acculturation vis-à-vis degree to which one is Asian-identified or Western-identified or bicultural. The transracial adoptees’ findings were strongly reflective of their non-adopted peers in Chang’s study. In both studies there were significant negative relationships between the SL-ASIA and the need to assimilate and need for inclusion scales, thus for both groups the more Western-identified they were the less they needed to assimilate or be included in their own ethnic group. There was some variance in findings when it came to the relationship between the SL-ASIA and the need to differentiate; the non-adopted group had a significant negative relationship suggesting “that individuals can be acculturated to the majority culture and still not deny their culture or origin” (p. 117), while the adoptees had a significant position relationship. Perhaps the difference in the findings is a function of the non-adoptees ability to have informal non-deliberate associations with same-group members by default with family members, extended family, and friends, making differentiation less feasible as well as less desirable. On the other hand, it is very easy for adoptees to not affiliate and to differentiate since same-group association is usually a deliberate undertaking. While comparisons of these findings are intriguing, they are by no means conclusive. They do, however, bring to light their relevance and importance to furthering both adoptive and ethnocultural research.
Transracial Adoption Research

Paul Shinn, recognized as one of the first Korean adoptees in the United States, articulated at the KAAN (Korean American Adoptee and Family Network) conference in 1999 that “Some say blood is thicker than water. I believe that love is thicker than blood.” The importance of loving supportive families was substantiated in much of the current transracial adoption research with Koreans adoptees. Studies have considered self-esteem, self-concept, adjustment, and ethnic identity (Bagley and Young, 1981; Kim, 1984; Thompson-Isaacs, 1988; and Bergquist, 1997). These studies have found that adoptees are, for the most part, well adjusted and that the level of nurturance, love, and support in the adoptive home is primary to successful identity formation and the development of a healthy self-concept. While the findings in this research did not address the role of family directly, the identification of participants through adoptee-related organizations, groups, and informal affiliations would suggest that their development has been positively impacted by their adoptive families. This is especially true for younger adoptees who would have to rely on their parents’ support for such affiliations.

This study considered race and ethnicity as discrete constructs, which had not been attempted previously to any great extent with adoptees. Some studies presented ethnicity and race as a singular construct and used the terms interchangeably (Bagley and Young, 1981; Kim, 1984; Hayes, 1993). Extrapolating race from ethnicity afforded the opportunity to consider what these separate constructs mean to adoptees. They are clearly interrelated, but arguably not synonymous. Their relationship to acculturation became clearer also, as the role of race as a mediating factor in the process of
assimilation was apparent. Korean adoptees may become fully acculturated, but cannot be fully assimilated because of physical characteristics. The fact that American society views them as Asian Americans and reacts to them as such serves as constant reminders to these adoptees and predicates that an integral part of their identity be tied to their race. This study illustrates that adoptees do progress through a process of racial identity development, although it may look different than for other racial minorities and Asian Americans.

The more salient factor for adoptees seems to be own-group affiliation, both externally imposed or self-selected. For adoptees ethnic affiliation does not derive from a burning need to speak Hangul or to eat kimchee, but rather the cultural markings serve as a bridge or vehicle by which to connect with those who share their racial designation. The rich cultural heritage can provide a spiritual connection and promote ethnic pride, but is not enough in and of itself. That is why culture camps are so important, they are not so much about learning how to wear a hanbok or playing Korean games, but the opportunity to affiliate with other Koreans.

Limitations

The limitations of the study include the identification and accessibility of the target population, inability to establish a representative sampling, the availability of relevant instruments, and possible researcher bias.

This study, as is true with all adoption research, was based on an availability sampling which included snowballing techniques. Adoptees are not easily identified except through formal organizations such as adoption agencies, post-adoptive affiliations such as support groups or special interest groups, and informal networks.
younger adoptees who still reside in their parents’ homes is easier, although accessibility can be challenging since parental consent is involved. Of the more than 98,000 Korean adoptees who have come to this country the number of adoptees and families who maintain contact with their placing agencies, especially after finalization, is arguably a very small percentage. Similarly, adult adoptees (18 years of age and older) who establish contact, either formally or informally, with other adoptees and sustain that contact are probably the exception rather than the rule. All these factors placed limitations on the ability to identify and access possible research participants.

The sample group is presumed to not be representative of all Korean adoptees because of the nature of the sampling process. In order to ensure representativeness, a random sampling would have to occur, which was not possible with this population. Adoptees who are accessible through affiliation with post-adoptive support services such as special interest groups, culture camps, and conferences or have sustained informal relationships with other adoptees should not be considered typical. Or perhaps they are in a stage of their development which their peers may have not yet traversed, or conversely have traversed and no longer need to affiliate with. Motivations for such affiliations vary, however, the willingness to identify with their adoptive status at any given point in time may be reflective of their willingness to acknowledge and interest in adoption issues and/or concerns, either positively or not. Adoptees who choose not to affiliate as such may do so for many reasons, but certainly their absence creates a dirth in the sample group. Another threat to the representativeness of the sample group is the 5:1 ratio of female to male respondents. The overall gender distribution of Korean adoptees in this country is more much balanced with approximately 42 percent male and 58

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percent female, according to the South Korean Ministry of Health and Welfare (1999).

Clearly the male perspective captured in this study cannot be considered representative of all male Korean adoptees. The mere absence of male voice is notable, raising the possibility for conjecturing as to why they self-select from participation or are not as accessible. This greatly limits the appropriateness of generalizing findings to Korean adoptees as a whole. Findings should be considered in terms of increasing the understanding of transracial adoption rather than being conclusive or causal.

A limitation which became increasingly apparent through the data collection process was the inadequacy of the selected instruments for this population. The instruments were chosen because they had been used individually, either in original format or adapted version, in research with varying Asian populations. The anticipation of further comparative research was an important factor in instrument selection, as well as placing findings within the larger context of ethnocultural research. The experience of being transracially adopted precluded respondents from identifying with some of the underlying assumptions, such as knowledge of birth parents and cultural transmission in the home, which were made throughout the instruments. Respondents seemed to struggle with some of the forced choice options with which they were presented because of the irrelevancy to their experience. Some adaptations were made to the SL-ASIA prior to inclusion in the study although all concerns regarding the instruments could not be accounted for or anticipated without jeopardizing the integrity of the instruments. The language used was at times a little too sophisticated for some of the younger participants. Parents were advised in that situation to clarify without interpreting as much as possible, which invariably may have biased responses. Use of instruments normed on transracial
adoptees would have been more appropriate, however, the existence of such instruments which address racial identity, ethnic identity, and acculturation were not known to this researcher.

As a Korean adoptee and adoptive parent, I am aware of personal bias which may have unintentionally influenced this study. Deliberate measures were taken to address this concern to include the use of mail surveys, as opposed to personal interviews, to minimize researcher impact and the use of standardized objective measures to control for interpretative bias during data analysis. It is important to note that my personal experience with Korean adoption can certainly be viewed as a limitation as it has potential to pose a threat to objectivity, it also has opened doors for me in the identification of possible participants. Being viewed as a part of the adoptive community has been instrumental in gaining access to adoptees, however, I am also aware that the possibility exists that some adoptees may be more hesitant to share their experiences with me because I am adopted.

The limitations faced in this research process were not insurmountable and actually provide opportunities for further research which builds on or actively addresses some of the above-listed concerns. For example, the creation and/or norming of instruments on transracial adoptees and the broadening of the scope of ethnocultural studies to consider non-traditional families.

Recommendations for Further Research

While this study offers some insight into how racial identity, ethnic identity, and acculturation impact Korean adoptees, it leads to more questions than it answers. Opportunities for further research direction are seemingly endless both within the arena
of racial and ethnic identity and transracial adoption.

Models addressing identity development have attempted to better capture the experiences of racial and ethnic minorities. The inclusive models (Atkinson, Morten, and Sue, 1989; Sue and Sue, 1999; Helms, 1995) have offered progressively more sophisticated frameworks; portraying identity development as being a complex, non-discrete, multi-dimensional process. The application of these models to Korean adoptees generates questions about their universality and possible reconsideration or expanding of the conceptualization of racial and ethnic identity development. The inappropriateness of equating ethnicity and race becomes apparent as one considers whether shared cultural-specific knowledge is equivalent to shared experiences with oppression. The implementation of standardized instruments which have been used with non-adoptees allows for comparison opportunities, both for past and future research. Such comparisons would further the understanding of these processes and enhance the ability of adoptive parents and practitioners to provide opportunities which promote positive identity development.

The lack of knowledge about the role of race and ethnicity for transracial adoptees is glaring. Primary areas for research could include; the impact of the adoptive home, post-adoption services, and the adoptee as an adult. Questions which could be addressed include: What conditions act as protective factors and/or promote identity formation for adoptees? Previous research has substantiated the important role which parents have in the development of a positive self-esteem and sense of identity in their children (Kim, 1976 and Bagley, 1993a). However, parents and professionals need a more defined understanding of what being “supportive” and “open” means to adoptees. Also,
researchers who study crosscultural interpersonal communication emphasize the importance of understanding the dynamics of racial identity in exchanges. Helms (1995) developed a White Racial Identity model which specifies that the “general development issue for whites is abandonment of entitlement” (p. 184). Consequently, in order for whites to abandon entitlement, they have to first recognize that they are in fact privileged. White adoptive parents who have successfully grappled with their own racial development presumably would be better prepared to be supportive of their child’s.

Post-adoptive services often include opportunities for diasporic travel. Adoptees are traveling to Korea on Motherland tours sponsored by their adoptive agencies or on their own in record numbers; some are searching for their birth parents, others are just seeking information, and some simply want to visit their birth country. What then is the impact of this diasporic travel for adoptees on racial identity? Social workers find themselves having to respond to adoptive parents wanting to know when and if they should encourage their children to go on such trips. Little or no data is known about the efficacy or impact of Motherland tours, whether the immersion into Korean culture is a positive cathartic experience or is an isolating dissonance producing event. Invariably adoptees’ reactions will run the spectrum, however, research could extrapolate some of the factors; such as age, gender, previous exposure to Korean culture, which might act as mediating variables.

It is, or has been, easier to conduct research on adoptees while they are still in their parents’ home. However, the field necessarily needs to keep up with adoptees as they age and consider how racial and ethnic identity changes across the life cycle. The original cohort of Korean adoptees arrived in the late 1950s and early ‘60s and are today...
middle-aged with their own children, and possibly grandchildren. Research which focuses on the impact of transracial adoption in general across the lifespan would provide insight into how, when adoptees create their own families, they transmit racial and ethnic information to their children. Also, whether generational adoptee cohorts experience race and ethnicity differently based on presiding sociopolitical factors. It is evident that adoptees who were placed in the '60s might characterize their experiences as different than those placed today. The sustained prevalence of placements over the years, level of acceptance, and availability of post-placement services are all factors which have been influenced by sociopolitical factors. A comparative study of varied generational cohorts would provide rich data. Also, the occurrence of multi-generational adoptive Korean families is increasing, in fact at least one of our participants came from such a family. The assumption has been made that adoptees are perhaps better suited to be adoptive parents by nature of their adoptive status, but also because it would provide an in-race opportunity for placement. Research could explore both the impact on the adoptive parent and the child.

Clearly the possibilities for research direction are endless. Recommended areas of research would be those which have the greatest potential for enhancing pre- and post-placement services. Transracial Korean adoption began as a somewhat of a band-aid response to a profound social need. Little real informed consideration was given to the long-term impact on the lives affected. The need for research is primary, not only to evaluate the outcome of transracial adoption but also to ensure the quality and relevance of pre- and post-placement services.
Conclusion

This study sought to explore the relationships between race, ethnicity, and acculturation in adolescent Korean adoptees. It was unique in its consideration of adoptees' experiences as Asians in America, as opposed to only in relation to their adoptive status. While the findings could not be construed as representative, they provided some important insights into adoptees' perceptions.

In general, the sample group was characterized as embracing a dualistic racial identity while tending to be more Western-identified ethnically, and having a somewhat greater need for assimilation or inclusion into the Korean community than differentiation from it. While adoptees appear to be highly acculturated into the mainstream, they journey, as do other minorities, through a process of racial identity formation. Findings indicated that as adoptees have a greater ability to define a dualistic racial identity for themselves, embracing both their Korean heritage and western acculturation, they have an increased need for inclusion into their own ethnic group. Adoptive parents often mistakenly assume that because their child is not culturally Korean, s/he just “looks” Korean, they have no interest or connection to being Korean racially.

Adoptive parents and professionals have guessed that race and ethnicity might be significant for transracially placed adoptees, but the ensuing debates have been around the appropriateness of such placements, polarizing the adoptive community. As a result, little has been done to actually consider the experiences of the children who are affected and how to promote their positive development. The relevance of these questions are far reaching, transferring to other foreign adoptions to include China, the Philippines, India, and Vietnam. This study has generated far more questions than it has answered or
Racial Identity and Ethnic Identity in Korean Adoptees,

attempted to address. For this researcher, adoptee and adoptive parent, the posing of the questions is as significant as the answers because it necessitates that our collective voices be heard and that we start to claim and embrace our own reflections.
REFERENCES


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Gathering. New York, NY.


Racial Identity and Ethnic Identity in Korean Adoptees,


Nguyen, H. H., Messe, L. A., & Stollak, G. (1999). Toward a more complex understanding of acculturation and adjustment: Cultural involvements and


APPENDIX A

Parental Permission Form
November, 1999

Dear Parent,

I am doctoral student at the College of William and I would like your permission for your son or daughter to participate in a project. As a Korean adoptee and parent of a Korean adopted child, I believe this research will be helpful to him/her and other Korean adoptees. From the project, we will learn more about the relationship between acculturation, ethnic identity and racial identity in Korean adoptees.

Your son/daughter will be asked to complete a questionnaire packet. The questionnaires will take about 45 minutes to one hour to complete. Your son/daughter’s answers are private, and his/her name will not be connected with his/her answers.

I hope you will agree to help me with this study. Please sign the consent form for your son/daughter to participate. The consent form provides more information about the study. If you have any other questions about the study, you may call me at (757) 898-8013 or email me at ja_sook@yahoo.com.

Sincerely,

Kathleen L. Bergquist, MSW
APPENDIX B

Consent to Act as A Human Subject
THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY

Consent to Act as a Human Subject

Project Title:  

Principal Investigator: Kathleen L. Bergquist, MSW

Subject's Name: ______________________________

Date of Consent: ______________________________

I hereby consent to participate in the research project involving the study of the relationship between acculturation, ethnic identity and racial identity in Korean adoptees. The research will increase our awareness and understanding of the acculturation, ethnic and racial identity processes that Korean adoptees experience. By understanding the acculturation, ethnic and racial identity processes of Korean adoptees, helping professionals will be better able to assist Korean adoptees and their families.

I understand that there are no discomforts or possible hazards involved in the study for me. My participation in this study is strictly voluntary, and I am free to withdraw consent and discontinue my participation at any time.

I realize that the study will take approximately 45 to 60 minutes to complete. It will involve answering a questionnaire packet.

By signing this consent form, I agree that I understand the procedures and any risks and benefits involved in this research. I am free to refuse to participate or to withdraw my consent to participate in this research at any time without penalty or prejudice; my participation is entirely voluntary. My privacy will be protected and I will not be identified by name as a participant in this project.

The research and this consent form have been approved by the College of William and Mary's Institutional Review Board which insures that research involving people follows federal regulations. Questions regarding my rights as a participant in this project can be answered by Dr. Rick Gressard at (757) 221-_____. Questions regarding the research itself will be answered by Ms. Kathleen L. Bergquist who can be reached at (757) 898-8013. Any new information that develops during the project will be provided to me if the information might affect my willingness to continue participation in the project.

By signing this form, I agree to participate in the described project. I agree that research data gathered for the study may be published provided my name is not used.

Subject’s Signature

If the subject is a minor, or for some reason unable to sign, a parent or guardian must also complete the following:

Subject is ___________ years old or unable to sign because ___________. I grant permission for subject to participate in this study.

Parent/Guardian Signature  Witness to Signature

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APPENDIX C

Demographic Profile
Demographic Profile

Please circle the appropriate response:

1. Age: ____________________ (Please indicate)
   1. 11 to 14 years old
   2. 15 to 17 years old
   3. 18 to 25 years old

2. What is your gender?
   1. Male
   2. Female

3. What is your grade level?
   1. Middle school
   2. High school
   3. College or university student

4. Race
   1. Full Korean
   2. Biracial (Korean/White)
   3. Biracial (Korean/Black)
   4. Other _______________________

5. Race of adoptive parents
   Mother ________ Father ________
   1. White
   2. Asian (Korean)
   3. Asian (non-Korean)
   4. Black
   5. Hispanic
   6. Other _______________________

6. Age of arrival in the U.S.?
   1. 0 to 5 years old
   2. 6 to 10 years old
   3. 11 to 15 years old
7. How many years have you spent in the U.S.?
   1. less than 1 year
   2. 1-2 years
   3. 2-3 years
   4. 3-4 years
   5. 4-5 years
   6. 5-10 years
   7. 10-15 years
   8. 15-20 years
   9. over 20 years

8. Zip code ____________________
APPENDIX D

Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Scale (SL-ASIA)

Please respond to the following questions. Choose the one answer that best describes you and circle that answer.

1. What language can you speak?
   1. Korean only
   2. Most Korean, some English
   3. Korean and English about equally well (bilingual)
   4. Mostly English, some Korean
   5. English only

2. What language do you prefer?
   1. Korean only
   2. Mostly Korean, some English
   3. Korean and English about equally well (bilingual)
   4. Mostly English, some Korean
   5. English only

3. How do you identify yourself?
   1. Oriental
   2. Asian
   3. Asian-American
   4. Korean-American
   5. American

4. What was the ethnic origin of the friends and peers you had, as a child up to age 6?
   1. Almost exclusively Asians, Asian-Americans
   2. Mostly Asian, Asian-American
   3. About equally Asian groups and non-Asian groups
   4. Mostly Anglos, Blacks, Hispanics, or other non-Asian ethnic groups
   5. Almost exclusively Anglos, Blacks, Hispanics, or other non-Asian ethnic groups

5. What was the ethnic origin of the friends and peers you had, as a child from 6-18?
   1. Almost exclusively Asians, Asian-Americans
   2. Mostly Asian, Asian-American
   3. About equally Asian groups and non-Asian groups
   4. Mostly Anglos, Blacks, Hispanics, or other non-Asian ethnic groups
   5. Almost exclusively Anglos, Blacks, Hispanics, or other non-Asian ethnic groups

6. Who do you associate with now in your community?
   1. Almost exclusively Asians, Asian-Americans
   2. Mostly Asian, Asian-American
   3. About equally Asian groups and non-Asian groups
   4. Mostly Anglos, Blacks, Hispanics, or other non-Asian ethnic groups
   5. Almost exclusively Anglos, Blacks, Hispanics, or other non-Asian ethnic groups

7. If you could pick, who would you prefer to associate with in the community?
   1. Almost exclusively Asians, Asian-Americans
   2. Mostly Asian, Asian-American
   3. About equally Asian groups and non-Asian groups
   4. Mostly Anglos, Blacks, Hispanics, or other non-Asian ethnic groups
   5. Almost exclusively Anglos, Blacks, Hispanics, or other non-Asian ethnic groups
8. What music do you prefer?
1. Only Asian music
2. Mostly Asian music
3. Equally Asian and American
4. Mostly American
5. American only

9. What movies do you prefer?
1. Asian-language movies only
2. Mostly Asian-language movies
3. Equally Asian and American
4. Mostly English-language movies
5. English-language movies only

10. Where were you born?
1. Korea
2. U.S.
3. Other where?____________________

11. Where was your biological father born?
1. Korea
2. U.S.
3. Other where?____________________
4. Do not know

12. Where was your biological mother born?
1. Korea
2. U.S.
3. Other where?____________________
4. Do not know

13. On the basis of the above answers, circle the generation that best fits you
1. 1st generation = I was born in Korea or other country
2. 2nd generation = I was born in U.S., either parent was born in Korea or other country
3. 3rd generation = I was born in the U.S., both parents born in the U.S., and all grandparents were born in Korea or other country
4. Don't know what generation best fits because I lack some information

14. Where were you raised?
1. In Korea only
2. Most in Korea, some in the U.S.
3. Equally in Korea and the U.S.
4. Most in U.S., some in Korea
5. In U.S. only

15. What contact have you had with Korea?
1. Raised one year or more in Korea
2. Lived for less than one year in Korea
3. Occasional visits to Korea
4. Occasional communications (letters, phone calls, etc.) with people in Korea
5. No exposure or communications with people in Korea
16. What is your preference at home?
1. Exclusively Korean food
2. Mostly Korean food, some American
3. About equally Korean and American foods
4. Mostly American food
5. Exclusively American food

17. What is your food preference in restaurants?
1. Exclusively Korean food
2. Mostly Korea food, some American
3. About equally Korean and American food
4. Mostly American food
5. Exclusively American food

18. Do you...
1. Read only Korean language
2. Read Korean language better than English
3. Read both Korean and English equally well
4. Read English better than Korean
5. Read only English

19. Do you...
1. Write only Korean language
2. Write Korean language better than English
3. Write both Korean and English equally well
4. Write English better than Korean
5. Write only English

20. How much pride do you have in the Korean ethnic group?
1. Extremely proud
2. Moderately proud
3. A little pride
4. No pride but do not feel negative toward group
5. No pride but do feel negative toward group

21. How would you rate yourself?
1. Very Korean
2. Mostly Korean
3. Bicultural
4. Mostly Westernized
5. Very Westernized

22. Do you participate in Korean occasions, holidays, traditions, etc.?
1. All of them
2. Most of them
3. Some of them
4. A few of them
5. None at all

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APPENDIX E

The People of Color (POC) Social Attitudes Scale
### The People of Color (POC) Social Attitudes Scale

Janet E. Helms

This questionnaire is designed to measure people’s social and political attitudes concerning race and ethnicity. Since different people have different opinions, there are no right or wrong answers. Use the scale below to respond to each statement according to the way you see things. Be as honest as you can. Beside each item number, circle the number that best describes how you feel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>In general, I believe that Anglo-Americans (whites) are superior to other races.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I feel more comfortable being around Anglo-American (whites) than I do being around people of my own race.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>In general, people of my race have not contributed very much to American society.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sometimes, I am embarrassed to be the race I am.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I would have accomplished more in life if I had been born an Anglo-American (White).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Anglo-Americans (whites) are more attractive than people of my race.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>People of my race should learn to think and act like Anglo-Americans (whites).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I limit myself to White activities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I think racial minorities blame Anglo-Americans (whites) too much for their problems.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I feel unable to involve myself in Anglo-Americans’ (whites’) experiences, and am increasing my involvement in experiences involving people of my race.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>When I think about how Anglo-Americans (whites) have treated people of my race, I feel an overwhelming anger.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I want to know more about my culture.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>I limit myself to activities involving people of my own race.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Most Anglo-Americans (whites) are untrustworthy.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>American society would be better off if it were based on the cultural values of my people.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>I am determined to find my cultural identity.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Most Anglo-Americans (whites) are insensitive.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>I reject all Anglo-American (white) values.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>My most important goal in life is to fight the oppression of my people.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>20.</td>
<td>I believe that being from my cultural background has caused me to have many strengths.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>I am uncomfortable wherever I am.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>People, regardless of their race, have strengths and limitations.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>I think people of my culture and the White culture differ from each other in some ways, but neither group is superior.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>My cultural background is a source of pride to me.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>People of my culture and white culture have much to learn from each other.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Anglo-Americans (whites) have some customs that I enjoy.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>I enjoy being around people regardless of their race.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Every racial group has some good people and some bad people.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Minorities should not blame Anglo-Americans (whites) for all of their social problems.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>I do not understand why Anglo-Americans (whites) treat minorities as they do.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>I am embarrassed about some of the things I feel about my people.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>I'm not sure where I really belong.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>I have begun to question my beliefs.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>Maybe I can learn something from people of my race.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>Anglo-American (white) people can teach me more about surviving in this world than people of my own race can, but people of my race can teach me more about being human.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>I don’t know whether being the race I am is an asset or a deficit.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>Sometimes I think Anglo-Americans (whites) are superior and sometimes I think they’re inferior to people of my race.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>Sometimes I am proud of the racial group to which I belong and sometimes I am ashamed of it.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.</td>
<td>Thinking about my values and beliefs takes up a lot of my time.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>I’m not sure how I feel about myself.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41.</td>
<td>White people are difficult to understand.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.</td>
<td>I find myself replacing old friends with new ones who are from my culture.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.</td>
<td>I feel anxious about some of the things I feel about people of my race.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44.</td>
<td>When someone of my race does something embarrassing in public, I feel embarrassed.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45.</td>
<td>When both White people and people of my race are present in a social situation, I prefer to be with my own racial group.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46.</td>
<td>My values and beliefs match those of Anglos (whites) more than they do people of my race.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>47.</td>
<td>The way Anglos (whites) treat people of my race makes me angry.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>48.</td>
<td>I only follow the traditions and customs of people of my racial group.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>49.</td>
<td>When people of my race act like Anglos (whites) I feel angry.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>50.</td>
<td>I am comfortable being the race I am.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX F

Measure for Assimilation, Differentiation, and Inclusion
Racial Identity and Ethnic Identity in Korean Adoptees

Measure for Assimilation, Differentiation, and Inclusion

Please respond to the following questions. Choose the one answer that best describes you and circle that answer.

1. Can you imagine marrying a Korean?
   1. No, not at all
   2. No, probably not
   3. Yes, possibly
   4. Yes, in most cases

2. Given that you will remain in the United States, what kind of name would you give your child?
   1. Korean name only
   2. Korean and American names
   3. American name only

3. During my vacation, I would like to visit Korea
   1. Strongly agree
   2. Somewhat agree
   3. Somewhat disagree
   4. Strongly disagree

4. I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly other Koreans
   1. Strongly agree
   2. Somewhat agree
   3. Somewhat disagree
   4. Strongly agree

5. I have spent time trying to find out more about the Korean culture, such as its history, traditions, and customs.
   1. Strongly agree
   2. Somewhat agree
   3. Somewhat disagree
   4. Strongly disagree

6. In order to learn more about my Korean background, I have often talked to other people about my Korean culture.
   1. Strongly agree
   2. Somewhat agree
   3. Somewhat disagree
   4. Strongly disagree

7. When others try to speak to me in Korean in public, it embarrasses me.
   1. Strongly agree
   2. Somewhat agree
   3. Somewhat disagree
   4. Strongly disagree

8. I find it embarrassing when my Korean background gets known in a group of American peers.
   1. Strongly agree
   2. Somewhat agree
   3. Somewhat disagree
   4. Strongly disagree

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9. When in public, I do not want to be known as Korean by other Koreans.
   1. Strongly agree
   2. Somewhat agree
   3. Somewhat disagree
   4. Strongly disagree

10. My English embarrasses me when I speak to others.
    1. Strongly agree
    2. Somewhat agree
    3. Somewhat disagree
    4. Strongly disagree

11. I prefer going out with my Korean friends to my American friends.
    1. Strongly agree
    2. Somewhat agree
    3. Somewhat disagree
    4. Strongly disagree

12. I do not want to represent other Koreans in social organizations.
    1. Strongly agree
    2. Somewhat agree
    3. Somewhat disagree
    4. Strongly disagree

13. I like meeting and getting to know people from ethnic groups other than Korean.
    1. Strongly agree
    2. Somewhat agree
    3. Somewhat disagree
    4. Strongly disagree

14. I often spend time with people from ethnic groups other than Korean.
    1. Strongly agree
    2. Somewhat agree
    3. Somewhat disagree
    4. Strongly disagree

15. I have a desire to learn about Korean culture.
    1. Strongly agree
    2. Somewhat agree
    3. Somewhat disagree
    4. Strongly disagree

16. I have a desire to maintain my Korean identity.
    1. Strongly agree
    2. Somewhat agree
    3. Somewhat disagree
    4. Strongly disagree

17. I have a sense of belonging to the Korean culture.
    1. Strongly agree
    2. Somewhat agree
    3. Somewhat disagree
    4. Strongly disagree
18. My fate and future are bound up with that of my Korean culture.
   1. Strongly agree
   2. Somewhat agree
   3. Somewhat disagree
   4. Strongly disagree

19. I have a lot of pride in my Korean culture and its accomplishments.
   1. Strongly agree
   2. Somewhat agree
   3. Somewhat disagree
   4. Strongly disagree

20. If someone were to insult Korea, I would be personally offended.
   1. Strongly agree
   2. Somewhat agree
   3. Somewhat disagree
   4. Strongly disagree

21. When I am with a group of other Koreans, I feel that I am different from them.
   1. Strongly agree
   2. Somewhat agree
   3. Somewhat disagree
   4. Strongly disagree

22. I have a clear sense of my Korean background and what it means to me.
   1. Strongly agree
   2. Somewhat agree
   3. Somewhat disagree
   4. Strongly disagree