Interracial Adoption And Possible Long-Term Effects On Children

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Introduction

Since the early 1940s, several children have been adopted by American families. Research has indicated that American soldiers have adopted more than 3,000 Japanese children and about 845 Chinese children as a result of the war. As stated by Patricelli (2015), the majority of these children are orphans of war that had occurred in Asia and part of Europe. Most of these children were adopted by white American soldiers who took part in the Asia war. It is, therefore, evident that interracial adoption did not start the other year; it has existed for over sixty years. It is reported that the Korean War also created an opportunity for adoption, and several children were adopted from Korea by white American families. According to the census report, adoption has occurred in the United States since the 1940s, and several children from different nations have been adopted by American families and are living together as a family without any problem (Patricelli, 2015). It is approximated that American families have adopted more than 38,000 children from different parts of the world.

However, the rate of adoption has reduced since the 1970s, but it still exists in several households in the United States. According to Patricelli (2015), interracial adoption has a greater effect on the life and upbringing of children. Some people argue that interracial adoption benefits the parents who adopt the child, but it affects adopted children dearly. A survey conducted among the 372 adoptees indicates that the majority of adoptees, especially from Asia and Afro-Americans, usually have difficulty when it comes to adapting to a new life. And therefore, some of them end up suffering from a psychological disorder or mental problems (Alison, Xiang, & Richard, 2017). Studies have established that out of people who are being treated for mental disorders, 2% are children under the age of 18 years who are being raised by non-biological parents (Brodzinsky, 2012). It is, therefore, evident that interracial adoption causes mental health problems for the adoptee and this can be a result of the difficulty in adapting to a new environment.

Interracial adoption is where an individual adopts a child from a different race or ethnicity from a mixed race. For instance, an African American child is being adopted by a white family or parents, and a Hispanic child is being adopted by Asia or white American parents. Most adoptions that occurred during the early days occurred between Asia and white Americans and Chinese and white Americans as well, and therefore, interracial adoption is where an adoptee and adopted parents are of different races. It is also important to state that race is the grouping of human beings based on physical

appearance or shared social beliefs, genetics and ancestry. There are several races across the world, and the United States is one of the diverse countries with almost all races residing in the United States. So, interracial adoption is the adoption of children from other races rather than the adopted parents (Ferrari, Sonia, Daniela, & Rosa, 2015). This research paper, therefore, underlines the process of interracial adoption, barriers and long-term effects of adoption on children. It also illustrates the problem of adoption and provides solutions that can be applied to address the problem of interracial adoption and a barrier to interracial adoption. It further analyzes various pieces of literature on interracial adoption to find out the long-term effect of interracial adoption and how it affects the growth of interracial adopted children.

Statement Of The Problem

The interracial adoption of children can increase the chances of children developing chronic diseases, and therefore, it is proper to look into the whole issue of adoption. Studies have indicated that children normally accept the adoption willingly without knowing what it contains and only come to be shocked after an adoption has occurred. Research has also established that as the number of interracial adoptions increases, the black community started to ask whether there is an effort being made to reunite the adopted black children with their families. It is believed that African American children were adopted from pulverized families during the early days, and therefore, it is appropriate for those children to be reunited or introduced by their families. Some people argue that interracial adoption is diminishing the integrity of the children, and, therefore, it should be based on the social and cultural background of the children (Brodzinsky & Marshall, 2013).

Some people believe that children should be placed into adoption or in foster care based on their ethnic identity, and therefore, black families should adopt black children. It is argued that it makes it possible for a child to adapt to a new environment faster and live without developing any chronic diseases due to adoption. At present, it is difficult to count the number of children who are under adoption because there is no proper record of interracial adoption. Interracial adoption remains controversial, with several people criticizing it since the majority of people want adoption to be done based on the race or ethnicity of the people involved.

The number of children that require adoption continues to increase gradually in the U.S. and from other countries. Research has indicated that more than 100,000 children from Asia are in need of adoption, especially from Syria and other battlefield countries, and therefore, it is important to understand the long-term effect of interracial adaption on both the adoptee and the parents as well (Ramsey & Daniella, 2018). This would help in addressing challenges that undermine the process of interracial adoption in the United States. It would also establish proper procedures to be used during the adoption process to reduce the psychological impact and create a better life for the adoptees.

The psychological effect of adoption is a long-term effect that can result in a mental problem if the situation of an adoptee is not addressed appropriately. It is evident that adoptees have several issues

related to adaptation to a new environment and the condition and racial issues that should be solved to make sure that the adoptees are living comfortably with adopted families.

Solution

Interracial adoption has existed for decades, and several issues related to adoption have been addressed before to increase the efficiency of the process. However, it is important to address racial elements that can affect interracial adoption to make sure that there is tolerance and understanding among different races. Studies have indicated that the biggest barriers to interracial adoption are racial discrimination, intolerance, and the perception of certain races in society. Congress should amend the Adoption Act to remove social and cultural similarities as a method to determine the adoptive parents. Culture should not be a yardstick or a qualification for an individual to adopt children from child welfare or foster care.

Interracial adoption should be encouraged, and it should be done based on the ability to provide parenthood and not social and cultural factors. The barrier to interracial adoption should be removed so that individuals should be free to adopt any child without looking at social and cultural issues as a qualification for adoption. It would improve the rate of interracial adoption and hence improve racial interaction and even intermarriages in the country. However, the Child Welfare Association should not use social and cultural similarities as a benchmark and more efficiency of the law to remove such acts should be deployed as well. In order to improve interracial adoption, the adoptive parents should pick the child from Child Welfare or foster care, not from the parents directly. The information needed for the child or the adoptee should be obtained from the institution, not from individual parents.

Research has established that the positive long-term effect of interracial adoption is likely to be psychological disorders or mental health problems (Manzi, Lauran, & Rosa, 2014). It develops due to what the adoptee undergoes to adapt to a new environment, and therefore, it can be addressed appropriately to avoid such situations. In order to solve the psychological disorder or mental health problem, the process of adoption should be procedural, and the adoptee should be told the truth. This will make the adopted child adapt faster to a new environment and also stop asking questions which can create a lot of worries and other problems. The adoptive parents should be able to inform the adoptee about his or her culture, family background, and parents so that the adopted child does not take his or her time to investigate independently because such action can lead to a psychological disorder or trauma. Studies have also indicated an open discussion on race allows an adoptee to understand racial composition in the family, and this can help in limiting worries and questions in the family; hence, it can enhance integration and togetherness in the family (Alison, Xiang, & Richard, 2017).

Significant Of The Study

The research was done to provide an understanding of interracial adoption and its long-term effect on children. It provides a historical understanding of adoption since the end of World War and the latest adoption in the United States. It analyzes the effect of racial discrimination in the process of adoption, and therefore, the research can be used to understand the effect of interracial adoption and its long-term effect on society. It is possible that the study criticizes certain policies, and therefore, it can be applied by different interracial adoption stakeholders to enact a policy that can provide facilities quicker and safer adoption process. Therefore, the entire research provides an overview of interracial adoption of what happens to adopted children to parents with a different racial background (Haebich, 2015). This research can be used to drive policy and also to address the issue of racial discrimination, which affects the interracial adoption of children in society.

Limitation Of The Study

The limitations are conditions that cannot be controlled, and they influence the study or the result of the study as well. There was not enough time, and therefore, the study was conducted in a hurry to meet the deadline. The research would have required computer application and also more time to analyze the data and present it as well; therefore, time is a limiting factor for the study. Internet connection or internet link fluctuating time made downloading of various resources used to complete this study longer than expected, and therefore, it delayed the completion process. The need for finances for internet bundles was also a factor since the study required a stable connection, and this cost money as well.

Literature Review

Despite the diversity of the United States, most children live with biological parents, but adopted children and stepchildren form a significant part of American families. The U.S. Census Bureau's report *Adopted Children and Stepchildren: 2010* examined 64.8 million sons and daughters under age 18 living in households and found that adopted children and stepchildren together represented about 7% of that population. The report should not be interpreted as saying that 18.7 million Americans lived with adopted families or that it separately counted 2.5 million adopted children and 4.5 million stepchildren in the way previously stated. The denominator, age group, household relationship, and combined percentage must be kept clear when describing the Census findings.

In the early days, it was difficult to adopt children from any other race, but things have changed, and interracial adoption is increasing slowly. Nowadays, Americans are free to adopt a child of any race, and child welfare no longer considers race or social identity as a factor when it comes to the adoption of children. Racial tolerance and adoption laws have streamlined interracial adoption and made it possible for either race to adopt a child from any race. According to Hayme and Simon (2016),

Congress passed the Multiethnic Placement Act (MPA), which has made it possible by removing the race factor as a consideration for adoption. White Americans can adopt African American children, and African Americans can adopt White children as well. This has increased interracial adoption since 1997, and Americans can easily adopt other races without any difficulty. It is believed that not only parents of the same race can understand the needs of a child and provide better care. This has seen the adoption of black children to White families increasing tremendously over the last two decades.

However, the Native Americans' children are still not easy to adopt since the heritage of Native Americans is still being protected or governed by the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). The law requires that the tribe should only be placed under the care of a Native parent. It makes it illegal or taboo for an Indian child to be adopted by non-Native parents. This has made it impossible for other races dwelling in the United States to adopt a native or an Indian child. It is because most Native Americans do not want their children to be adopted due to certain cultural practices and beliefs that native children must live with a native parent. The Natives believe that a child raised by parents from within their community is best and better than a native brought up by a nonnative. This belief has made it difficult for non-Native American to adopt a native child. Therefore, the practice has reduced the rate of interracial adoption between Native Americans and other races.

The Native Belief and Indian Welfare Act has reduced the adoption rate among Native children, and therefore, most people do not adopt Native American and children who need care are usually taken to a native parent or homes instead of foster care. This has made the adoption rate to be below 5% based on the 2010 census report. However, the adoption rate between Whites and African Americans is high since there is no belief or law which prohibits it. For that reason, many blacks and whites are nowadays living together as brothers and sisters. As stated (Riley, 2017), the adoption has helped to address the issue of racial intolerance, and it is the best way to address racial discrimination, which has existed in the United States for decades.

It is evident that a significant number of Hispanic children are adopted by other races, Chinese since the end of the war, and Japanese and Korean children as well. The high percentage of adoptions between white Americans and Japanese and Koreans was a result of the Asia war, which left many children orphans, and American soldiers decided to adopt several of them after the end of the war. The adoption level is high among all races except the Native Americans because they have declined to give out their children to non-Native American for adoption due to cultural and social beliefs. Native Americans are culturally grounded, and exposing them to other cultures is not easy; therefore, adopting a Native American child is difficult compared to other races or ethnic groupings in the United States (Alison, Xiang, & Richard, 2017). Studies have shown that the recent racial hostility and political intolerance that target different races have affected interracial adoption (Riley, 2017). Though there are many people willing to adopt children from other races, hostility, demonstrations, and other utterances have scared away many families.

Long-Term Effect Of Interracial Adoption

The long-term effects of interracial adoption are both negative and positive, and they affect both the adoptee and the parents as well. Analysis of different kinds of literature shows that adopted children or adoptees usually suffer from psychological disorders. A report by the Child Welfare Association (CWA) stated that the change in a new environment affects 85% of children, and the introduction of new families usually affects their minds and trying to absorb the change and accept it (Morrison, 2014). According to Morrison (2014), the process of adoption takes approximately one year, and everyone is usually involved; therefore, it involves emotional exploration, which affects children's psychological disorders. Adopted children live with identity problems throughout their lives and develop self-esteem and life with guilt as well.

Psychological Or Mental Problems

Research has indicated that the number of adopted children attending clinical health treatment is high compared to non-adopted children. This is based on the percentage of adoptees in society, and therefore, interracial adoption can cause mental health problems or psychological disorders in the long run. Manzi, Lauran, and Rosa (2014) illustrated that studies that have been conducted discovered that 2% of individuals under the age of eighteen who are being treated for mental health-related problems are interracial adoptees. However, children who are being raised by their biological parents constitute only 5% of the outpatients (Manzi, Laura, & Rosa, 2014). It means that parents raised by their biological parents do not think a lot, which can make them develop psychological disorders.

The problem of mental health is caused by constant worries about their lost parents and their identity as well, and therefore, they tend to become guilty and feel they do not belong to society, which makes most of them end up developing a psychological disorder. Studies have also discovered that adopted children are usually found in trouble. In clinical settings, children who are adopted are the children who usually run away from home, commit significant mistakes and are even involved in crimes (Hayme & Simon, 2016). A study has shown that the number of adopted kids who are engaged in criminal activities is more than non-adopted children. On a large scale, a survey discovered that 5% of students who are involved in criminal activities in high school and other setups are adopted kids, and 15% are children who are living with their biological parents (Brodzinsky & Marshall, 2013). However, based on the population of adoptees and non-adopted children in society, the number of adoptees is higher, and therefore, it is a matter of concern that should be addressed.

It is evident that adoption is a bigger loss for adoptees than losing loving parents. It is because adoption subjects a child to a change of lifestyle, cultural practices and all aspects of life and adopts a new system that an individual has never witnessed. Therefore, it subjects a child to trauma, and that can lead to serious psychological problems if not addressed properly and timely. Most adopted

children grow up exposed to a lot of temptations, such as alcoholism and drugs, and they end up developing the disorder. It can be the reason many adoptees are present in clinical settings across the country.

Suffer Loss Of Identity

In the book “Being Adopted” by David Brodzinsky, the author noted that adopted children usually have it hard to deal with the loss of their identity. According to Brodzinsky (2012), adopted children live their lives thinking of their birth parents and searching for potential birth parents as well. The fact that physical appearance of adopted parents and adoptees usually makes adopted children question their identity constantly, and the interest in discovering an individual’s identity does not stop until the adoptee gets the truth. Adopted children constantly ask merely questions regarding their identity and about who they are, why, how and where their parents are. These questions do not stop until they become adults. They are usually interested in knowing who their uncles and aunts are and whether individuals resemble any of their family members and both parents. Most of them are interested to know their cultural backgrounds, social class, and education of their parents. Brodzinsky (2012) also noted that adopted kids usually wonder about the kind of conditions they would have been living in if they were living with their biological parents.

However, these numerous questions adopted children live with make it difficult for the majority of them to be psychologically stable and, therefore, some from a psychological disorder. The adoptee can react to the loss of their culture through anger, anxiety and also through the numbness of fear. Research has shown that some of them constantly mourn the death of their brothers, sisters and even parents, and this can create psychological disorders or mental health problems. Bodzinsky (2012) stated that adopted kids sometimes do not believe they cannot be able to speak their mother, and some of them tend to believe that they are denied the opportunity to speak their mother tongue, and therefore, they continue to mourn the death of their mother tongue. This automatically affects the growth of a child and can lead to stress and even a mental problem.

Racial Identity Crisis

Research has established that children who are brought up in a racially diverse environment grow up asking several questions, and, therefore, he or she become much more aware of the environment. In most cases, adopted children can live their lives wondering where they belong, and this psychological torture can create mental health problems in the long term. Again, children keep wondering why they were given up for adoption by their parents and what would have happened if they were not given up for adoption, and numerous unanswered questions usually can lead to psychological or mental problems (Patricelli, 2015).

Adopted a child may feel that they are betraying the family who adopted him or her, and therefore,

they fail to express their feelings by fearing that they will hurt their adoptive family. Most of them live in denial for fear of betrayal, which makes them suffer in silence for a long time. It is more appropriate for the adoptive family to provide counseling and proper parenting to the adoptees so that they do not keep worrying about their biological parents. A report from Child Information Gateway illustrates that adoptees may feel rejected, and therefore, it makes some of them feel grief and a sense of abandonment sometimes in their lives (Ferrari, Sonia, Daniela, & Rosa, 2015).

The Benefit Of Interracial Adoption

Interracial adoption bridges heritage and embraces diversity. Raising children from different ethnic or racial backgrounds can improve racial tolerance and create understanding among different races in society. Studies have indicated that children tend to identify their identity through art, music, and books, and interracial adoption can give students an opportunity to develop their identity, and this can help in getting rid of racial profiling or discrimination in society. Studies have also discovered that interracial adoption can facilitate dialogue and embrace diversity as well. This is because interracial adoptees can adapt to a different culture and practice the same culture. Therefore, interracial adoption can be the best way to build a united society, and the future can exist without racial discrimination or racial intolerance if we decide to adopt interracial adoption.

Interracial adoption provides an opportunity for children to learn about other people in society; hence, it enhances cohesion and builds understanding with other people or races in society. Children who have been adopted by parents from different races are well-prepared to handle identity crises (Papke, 2013). It is noted that children develop in stages and at every stage, there is something significant which they learn. However, a child can quickly learn about another race until he or she becomes familiar with practicing that particular race. Therefore, it is easy to build a free society where racial discrimination does not exist through the interracial adoption of children.

Methodology

The study was conducted using several academic journals, peer reviews, books and other relevant online documents. In order to obtain accurate and detailed materials, Google Scholar and Sage Journal were used as the main sources of information to obtain academic journals and the peer review used to complete the research. First, a search was conducted using keywords such as “interracial adoption and long-term effect and interracial adoption of children.” The search produced several results which are relevant articles of about fifty different articles. However, the articles were then selected based on their relevance to the topic and the year of publication. Based on the analysis of each article, fifteen sources were decided to be the best based on the date of publication, relevancy to the topic, and the author’s knowledge and qualifications.

In addition, books and library resources were utilized to complete the research paper. The library was

based on the materials available from the website of the university and the books as well. Several materials were obtained and analyzed, and a few were used to complete the research paper. Most importantly, each article and source used was properly verified to make sure that it is authentic and also relevant to the topic so that a detailed research paper could be concluded. Some of the materials used were online Newspapers such as the New York Post, Washington, and Forbes because most of their articles are properly researched and authentic as well.

Results

The research revealed that interracial adoption has both negative and positive long-term effects on children. It is established that children who are adopted or adopted have high self-esteem. According to Ramsey and Daniella (2018), adoptees grow up asking different questions concerning things around them, and therefore, these children have high self-esteem compared to children who were raised by their biological parents. Ramsey and Daniella (2018) stated that interracial adoptees usually experience psychological adjustment, and this can be as a result of a certain situation or what transpires throughout their lives. The adopted children become mature faster because their minds are constantly thinking of their lives, and therefore, a good percentage of them reason better than children who were raised by their biological parents (Ramsey & Daniella, 2018). The self-esteem of adopted children is enhanced due to an experience they have gone through, and they can handle many responsibilities compared to children who were raised by their biological parents.

The study also discovered that international and local adoption does not put the life of a child at high risk. Several children have been adopted and are living peacefully with their adopted parents, and therefore, the fear of interracial adoption is factious and should be ignored. The process of adoption is usually transparent, and therefore, it is legally binding, which makes it difficult for anyone to mistreat an adopted child. Research has also found that most adopted children live a decent and happy life, and their adopted parents are usually supportive and provide parent love as a biological parent (Ferrari, Sonia, Daniela, & Rosa, 2015).

It is also established that there should be proper measures to address racial issues because it negatively affects the interracial adoption of children. With racial intolerance, children living with adopted parents from a different race will automatically become afraid and start wondering where they should go if the racial utterances continue to persist. Research also found that interracial adoptee has long-term behavioral changes and emotional problems, which can affect an individual for a period. However, research fails to measure the racial experience of the adoptee in order to understand the influence of race factors in the adoption and the adoption process of children.

The findings indicate that discrimination and race usually play a role in the overall adjustment of interracial adopted children. It is also established that challenges that are faced by immigrants are like the challenges that interracial adoptees experience in their first years. Racial issues have been around for decades, and their contributions towards the adoption of children are very magnificent

since it determines the type of family and adaptability as well. It is also established that some organizations such as Child Information Gateway (CIG) and Child Welfare Association wanted to make it a policy that social and cultural factors are the essential foundation that should be considered when giving a child for adoption. It is apparent such a law could have acted as a barrier to interracial adoption, which could have done away with gains that have been made towards establishing a racial tolerance society (Leslie & Jocelyn, 2013).

Recommendation

It is recommended for interracial adoption to happen when a child is still very young. This is because research has established that children who are adopted when still young adapt faster and grow up happily with fewer problems, which usually affects adoptees. When a child is adopted when still young, he or she grows up adopting social factors or cultural practices of the adopted family, and therefore, they do not have a problem living with the adopted family. Therefore, it is recommended to adopt a child when still very young. It is recommended to administer an adoptee to a new culture in phases at the same time being truthful about an adoptee's identity. Parents should tell the adoptee the truth about an individual background and culture and reason for adoption so that a child does not spend his or her entire life wondering why he or she is not white while parents are white. This is likely to limit chances of getting mental health problems or psychological disorders, and therefore, the lifestyle of adoptees would be better compared to when the truth is a shield from them.

It is highly recommended to understand the history of the adoptee before making the final decision to proceed with the procedure of adoption. This is because if the parents of the adoptee were addicts or had some weird behavior that might affect the adoptee, then it is good to know. It will allow various measures to be taken to limit the effect of such behavior and train the adoptee a good behavior. Understanding the history of adoptees also helps in solving certain hereditary diseases at early stages before they can be incurable. Therefore, understanding the history of the adoptee is essential for the process of adoption and also to avoid any further damages that can be caused by any hereditary condition and to avoid the long-term effects on a child (Alison, Xiang, & Richard, 2017).

Conclusion

Interracial adoption has made a significant improvement in the United States since it started in 1945. Several American families live with other races together as a family without any discrimination, and interracial adoption has been accepted and is practiced by all races. Research has found that interracial adoption is an essential element that can be used to create harmony and tolerance among different races. It is because where different races live together, understanding is created, and therefore, there are few chances of conflict. The research also established that the long-term effect of interracial adoption is a mental health problem or psychological disorder, and therefore, it should be addressed well to solve problems related to interracial adoption. Adopted children think about their

lives, question their background, and, every day, wonder why they were adopted or given out. According to a study, such constant thinking can develop into a psychological disorder, and it is, therefore, required that adoptive parents should provide truthful information to adoptees regarding their backgrounds so that they do not leave their lives regretting (Papke, 2013).

Most importantly, this research analyzed various issues that usually affect the interracial adoption of children and provided the detailed long-term effect of the practice. It also provides a history of interracial adoption, starting from the Asian War when American soldiers adopted Korean children to some of the latest interracial adoptions in the United States. It has provided the problem statement and offers a solution that should be applied to address issues that are being raised as factors that affect interracial adoption globally and locally, especially in the United States.

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