

Using Self-Portraits in Phototherapy to Identify Effects of Transracial Adoption on Identity Development

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Abstract

Currently, there exists a lack of knowledge about the specific effects of identity development in transracial adoptees. As the frequency of transracial adoption rises, the call for research follows accordingly. Knowing that it has particular effects on both the adoptee and the adoptive family, the implications for the use of the results reaches far, affecting the individual, the family, the community and society at large. The logistics surrounding transracial adoption produce profound effects that reach across continents. Confounded by race, culture, ethnicity and adoption, the identity development of the adopted individual is at once unique and complex. Conducting this study, and asking the question, "What are the effects of transracial adoption on identity development?" allows one to better understand the unique experience of the transracial adoptee and his or her sense of self, and opens the doors to further research.

This study seeks to answer the question, "How can self-portraits in phototherapy aid in identifying the effects of transracial adoption on identity development?" It explores literature on race, culture and ethnicity. It investigates literature on adoption, transracial adoption, identity and identity development, and stereotypes. The study also looks at phototherapy and the use of self-portraits as a modality for self-exploration. This study examines the lives and experiences of five Korean adopted individuals transracially adopted into Caucasian families through verbal and artistic process.