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## The Antagonist of the Sino-Children

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THE ANTAGONIST OF THE SINO-CHILDREN

A Thesis Project

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree Bachelor of Asian Religions and Cultures with  
Honors College Graduate Honors at Western Kentucky University

By

Danielle O. Earley

\*\*\*\*\*

Western Kentucky University 2019

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## ABSTRACT

My research declares that the One-Child Policy has had a huge impact on foreign adoption and causes Chinese adoptees to have similar patterns of behavior, such as unique identity issues despite different life experiences. In addition, I researched effective coping mechanisms for adoptees and hypothesized that conversing and openness with adoption is beneficial. This topic is crucial for aiding scientific understanding of psychological processes in adopted individuals as well as aid others and adoptees themselves on how to effectively cope with the unique adoption experience. I personally deem this topic important not only because I was born in China, but also because the One Child Policy personally affected me by causing me to attain orphan status which led to my adoption.

Using my adoption status, I interviewed around 50 other Chinese adoptees and analyzed existing research in attempt to understand the broad impact on these adoptees. I am aware that others have researched this topic, but most focus on ramifications in China of the One Child Policy, not the impact it has on those adopted abroad. Furthermore, most adoption work are written through the adopted parents' perspective. My work will solely be based on adoptees experiences focusing on coping mechanisms.

Keywords: One-Child Policy, China, Adoption, Adoptee, Coping, Thesis

Dedicated to my family, friends, professors, and fellow adoptees

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Finally, I would like to thank my family, friends, and fellow adoptees who made this project possible in the first place. I would have never been able to dream of completing a CE/T like this without the support of so many adoptees who were willing to be interviewed and answer more personal questions. They are amazing people and I truly love the adopted community. I also want to thank my family who were always there for

me and cheered me on through the entirety of my project. They gave me the perseverance I needed to complete my project in a timely manner.

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## CHAPTER 1

### RESEARCH QUESTION

My research declares that the One-Child Policy has had a huge impact on foreign adoption and causes Chinese adoptees to have similar patterns of behavior, such as unique identity issues despite different life experiences. In addition, I researched effective coping mechanisms adoptees may use to deal with issues such as love, trust and identity issues. This research question is important as adoption is very popular within developed countries like America, and most children adopted from China go to America. Therefore, understanding how to regard adoptees from China is important as the transition may be difficult for them. This research is helpful for aiding scientific understanding of psychological processes in adopted individuals as well as aid others and adoptees themselves on how to effectively cope with the unique adoption experience. In addition, this information may be helpful to anyone working in a field related to China as the One-Child Policy and adoption in China has affected the Chinese population greatly. The number of people affected by this One-Child Policy can be seen just by one personal story of a Chinese adoptee herself.

This thesis will first address my personal story of my adoption focusing on my struggles and the coping mechanisms I utilized. For example, I state how identity, love,

and trust issues were some of the hardest struggles I faced and how I overcame them. I follow with background information on the One-Child Policy in China for those who are not familiar with this policy or the ramifications of this policy on China. Then I go on to describe other literature on adoption and how mine is unique. For example, other literature usually focuses on the ramifications within China and not on those adopted abroad. If they do mention the impact that the OCP has made on Chinese adoptees abroad, they usually are written from a non-Chinese adoptee perspective or only have a few cases mentioned. In contrast, I have around 50 cases of Chinese adoption stories taken from the Chinese adoptees' perspective only. Following the literature review, I describe my hypothesis in my research and the research design. For instance, I mention how I interviewed 52 adoptees and the resources that I utilized. I then explain the results of how the adoptees responded to each of the 15 questions I asked them. Many results surprised me, one of them being that most adoptees had an overall positive view of their adoption experience even with all the difficulties they faced because of it. Lastly, I describe the impact this research will have for society and other adoptees as well. In addition, I briefly mention the impact it has made on me in helping me attain a much fuller and broader perception on adoption while finding a wonderful community to relate to.

## CHAPTER 2

### PERSONAL STORY

*“A difference we have in this world, which others have been set free, is the fear of being left by everyone we meet. The pain inside of me is hard to believe. The pain of being left by those who are supposed to love you is indeed the hardest woe to explain as I speak...”-Danielle Earley, Life of an Adoptee*

My story begins in Wuhan, China in Hubei Province. Little did I know that the efforts of my biological parents to keep me alive included leaving me at the doors of an orphanage. This planted the seeds of rejection into my little heart. At the orphanage I was raised by Honglin, an amazing caregiver who taught me the basics of love and trust that hopefully every kid learns as a toddler. For me, she was the only one I knew to call mom as she filled the hole in my heart my biological parents left. I was very content until age two and a half, the time of my adoption. As a young child, I did not know the meaning of adoption and could only understand that my caregiver was leaving me as well, just like my biological parents. Not only was the only woman I knew as mother being taken away from me, but also was the country I called home. On the plane heading to LaGrange, Kentucky with my new Caucasian family, abandonment and rejection were the only souvenirs that I brought with me from China.

In my new home in LaGrange I struggled to learn how to love and trust my new family. I was introduced to holding time. Holding time consisted of my father holding me for hours and telling me “I love you” and “I will never leave you” while I kicked and screamed for him to let me go. In my heart, I believed these words could not possibly be true, as memories of being left remained vivid during holding time. After four years of repetitively doing this, I began believing my father would not leave me like my past guardians. I let him into my heart, but my trust issues did not end then. Every time my mother would go to run errands, I would block the door to prevent her from walking out. I was terrified that once she walked out, she would never come back. Furthermore, to guarantee my parents would never think of leaving me, I tried to become the most obedient child I could be. I was afraid that if I messed up, or was not the perfect child, they would leave.

Although these love and trust issues were difficult, the hardest issue I have had to deal with, and still deal with, concerns my identity. Once I came to America, I was determined to be only American. In my mind, I was Caucasian, just like the rest of my family and the people I saw around LaGrange, Kentucky. If anyone told me I was any other race, I would deny it. Also, I did my best to avoid the topic of China and adoption. Whenever I was asked questions such as “Who are your favorite parents, your adoptive parents or biological parents?” or “Why did your parents leave you?” or “Do you really eat dogs?” or “Do you like rice because you’re Chinese?” I would reply curtly. I was very sensitive to these questions and frequently would change the topic.

With these experiences in mind, I seek to analyze the effects of the One-Child Policy on foreign adoption. I approach this topic with the assumption that Chinese adoptees have similar psychological stresses, such as unique identity issues, despite their different life experiences. In addition, I analyze effective coping mechanisms for such issues, arguing that openness to adoption is healthy when dealing with adoption. In this thesis I place an emphasis on coping mechanisms as this has been an issue for me and other adoptees.

### Personal Struggles

During the first part of my life, I was reluctant to accept my Chinese identity. Although my adopted parents enrolled me in a Chinese school, bought me traditional clothes, added chopsticks to their collection of silverware, celebrated the Chinese New Year, and tried their best to learn the language, I rejected this Chinese part of me. My parents even kept in contact with Honglin, my caregiver, by sending letters and Skyping. I soon became familiar with the question “Would you like to Skype with Honglin and talk to her?” And every time I answered “no.” To me, all this effort was meaningless and would only bring pain to my heart. Therefore, I continued avoiding my birth culture and gradually became angered by their question. My parents stopped asking me if I wanted to keep relations up with my caregiver, until age fourteen.

The moment when the tables finally turned for me to accept my Chinese identity is a day I will never forget. I was sitting in my room doing homework when my mom entered and asked if I wanted to talk to Honglin. Exasperatedly, I answered “No”, assuming she already knew the answer by now. But I quickly realized that this question,

even though sounding the same, carried a different weight now. My mother asked again with tears in her eyes and continued to explain that this would be the last opportunity I would have to ever talk to her again as she was dying of cancer. She went on to clarify the only thing Honglin would love to do is talk with me before she died. I did not have the heart to say no to this last request. As a translator was already present in the Skype conversation, I was able to converse with the only woman I called 妈妈 (mama-mother) for the first time in twelve years. The realization of how amazing and sweet of a person she really was quickly dawned on me. I quickly regretted ignoring her for so many years and came to love her for everything she had done for me. Although I had rejected her, she had been keeping up with my accomplishments and was just as proud as my adoptive parents for what I had achieved in America.

When she died, I resented myself for distancing myself from her. I wanted to give her one last meaningful gift, no matter how hard to give, one that would mean the most to her: to accept my Chinese heritage. From this moment on, I promised myself that I would stop avoiding my birth culture, and do everything in my power to learn as much about the place where Honglin and I were born. But most of all, I wanted to learn how to forgive those in my past and come to love China as I love America.

*“This hardship expressed cannot be real. The difficulty of belonging to two or more worlds has a fee on a life that could wish nothing more than to be accepted in the word “we”. This wish has become a plea. But people still go on with their daily lives, not caring to read, the insignificance and loneliness that I feel as an adoptee.”-Danielle Earley, Life of an Adoptee, p.1*



After this gift was given, I faced a new identity issue. Now that I accepted my birth culture identity along with my American identity, I found it harder to fit into the everyday categories that others seem to fit themselves into easily. For example, how to answer the question “Where are you from?” can be more complicated than the question intended. I never know if they mean the country I was born or the state in which I have lived most of my life. If you asked me this question when I was younger, I would indefinitely have said “I am American and I am from Kentucky.” But whenever I have answered this way, they would reply with “No, I mean, where are you really from?” Now that I had finally accepted my Chinese heritage, I could easily say that I am Chinese American. But, which parts of me are American and which parts, Chinese. Memories deep in my heart told me I was Chinese. Even though I was only there for the first two years of my life, some Chinese habits and expectations lingered.

For example, whenever I enter a building my first reaction is to take my shoes off. In addition, making direct eye contact is still uncomfortable for me at times and I feel uneasy when my American superiors have to remind me to look at them when they’re talking. On the other hand, I have also become familiar with American culture. I know the ways, beliefs, language, and cultural values in my brain, but not so much in my heart. In my heart, Chinese culture still exists, which I have realized even more as I have studied Asian religions and cultures and Chinese. This confusion has made it difficult for me as I never totally feel like I fit in with Americans, but also never totally feel like I fit in with Asians. When I was younger, I realized I could never fully get rid of the Chinese in my Chinese-American identity as many Americans see me as Chinese upon first

impression. Furthermore, because I still hold their culture deep in my heart, I can never fully fit into American culture. Later, I thought that because I look Chinese and hold their culture in my heart, I could finally get rid of the American in my Chinese-American identity and completely fit in if I learn Mandarin perfectly and live in China for a while. But now, I am realizing that this too cannot be easily accomplished as I did not grow up there and cannot yet speak the language as a native.

*“Why was I uprooted from a place I held so dear? Why does it seem that I can’t hold on to it? Why won’t it fight to keep me, accept me as its child like it once did before I was taken away?” I miss you so much. Why are you so far from me? I want to claim you as mine forever, just like I hope you will for me. I wish circumstance in life never made me leave you or you me. I miss you so much. You will forever remain in my heart.”-Danielle Earley, Life of an Adoptee, p. 2*

Still to this day, I sometimes cry at night because all I want is to fully be accepted back into the Chinese culture that rejected me at such a young age. Sometimes, even though I logically understand it would have not been better for me to grow up in an orphanage and love America and what it has given me, I wish I stayed in China and grew up there. I don’t want to be told my Chinese is good like any other foreigner. I don’t want to be seen as an outsider because I have lived in another country for most of my life. Most of all, I don’t want to be told, “You would not understand because you’re not Chinese.” I hurt because I feel like I have been a foreigner all of my life. I hurt from the pain of feeling like a foreigner in the place I grew up and the place I was born.

## CHAPTER 3

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The reason why I have termed myself a foreigner is because of China's One-Child Policy. China's One-Child Policy (OCP) was enacted by Deng Xiaoping in 1979 to counterbalance the flourishing population of China. This policy forbade many Chinese families from having more than one child in hopes that with fewer mouths to feed, China could successfully develop into an economically developed country. Thus, many slogans and sayings were spread throughout the country at the commencement of this policy to convince families to have fewer children. For example, Karin Evans mentions in her book the saying "Eight-Four-Two-One". (Evans, 98) This saying refers to how the Chinese family should be shrinking from having eight great-grandparents, four grandparents, two parents, to one child. The OCP slowly became more and more reinforced, causing many pregnant women to go into hiding. If more than one child was found in the household, the family could be fined a large amount of money or even severely punished. Although this policy is termed One-Child Policy, some families were allowed to have more than one child, but only with a 生育证 *shengyu zheng* (birth permission paper). Since the policy was enforced by each province, the level of enforcement varied throughout China. In some provinces the parents could pay a fine to

have an additional child. But in other provinces, such as Fujian (Evans, 102), police would drag pregnant women who wanted to keep their babies out of the household and into hospitals to be sterilized, thus killing the baby. In addition, the ethnic minorities could have more than one child as China wanted to preserve their 56 ethnic minority groups.

China changed the policy to the Two-Child Policy in 2016. Nevertheless, decades of the One-Child Policy had already generated unforeseen ramifications, not only on the culture and society of China, but also on foreigners' perceptions of China.

One of the ramifications of the One-Child policy include an escalated number of abortions and infanticide which led to a great gender imbalance in the Chinese population. Many Chinese families wanted to ensure their only child would be male. Chinese history has always put an emphasis on the male gender's superiority due to Confucian teachings, such as "Women and people of low birth are very hard to deal with. If you are friendly with them, they get out of hand" (Evans, 85). In the minds of the Chinese, having a male child instead of a female was also more practical as they lived in an agricultural society where the strongest and fittest were more likely to survive. Therefore, once many Chinese families found out their child was a girl, they would secretly kill or abandon her and try again for a boy. These actions have led to a high population of Chinese men without a Chinese woman to marry.

Another huge ramification the OCP has had on Chinese society is that it produced many kids known as "小皇帝". According to the Pin Pin Chinese Dictionary, this term is

literally translated to “little emperor” or Xiao Huangdi. When the Chinese use this term, they are referring to the many little boys who have grown up alone and been spoiled by their parents, aunts, uncles, and grandparents who had no other children to dote on. Sadly, even if this spoiling had good intentions, this has caused these little emperors to become more selfish with a lack of understanding of teamwork, cooperation, and sharing that children with siblings usually learn. This not only raises barriers for these little emperors when finding jobs, but also when finding a spouse.

Regarding these negative ramifications just mentioned because of the OCP, it leads one to question if the One-Child Policy was even necessary. Many articles ask this exact question. Some say it was a necessary evil to prevent the Chinese economy from going downhill. For example, Kenneth Weiss elucidates this idea in the *Los Angeles Times*. He says “by reducing the number of dependents per household and freeing more women to enter the workforce, population control efforts have helped lift hundreds of millions of people out of poverty and contributed to China’s spectacular economic growth.” But others are skeptical, which can be seen in the article “China’s One-Child Policy: Necessary Evil or Historic Mistake?” by Ethan Goffman. He mentions a quote by Amartya Sen who explains, “the two most potent factors that induce fertility reduction globally are women’s schooling and women’s paid employment,” therefore indicating the population control measures were not necessary and could have been fixed by increasing women’s education and employment opportunities. But whether the OCP was or was not a necessary evil, most everyone can agree it has a stigma attached to it.

Though the One-Child Policy indeed has this negative connotation, one is also able to see the silver lining after taking a deeper look at its impact. The silver lining includes helping to build bridges between two distinct cultures and showing how the bonds of love can be stronger than the bonds of blood. One can see this silver lining when analyzing the positive and negative influences of the OCP on the culture of China, particularly on the Sino-Children personally affected, and on international relations. Simply looking at the numbers of Chinese children adopted abroad can give a sense of this impact. According to the data from Deborah D. Gray's book *Nurturing Adoptions*, there were 7,906 Chinese adoptees who came to America just in 2005 alone, making China the top country with the most international adoptions to America. In fact, China has been able to hold this position since 2005. In her book, she shows the table below of the statistics for the fiscal year 2005 of the number of different ethnicities of adopted children into the U.S.

*Top Six Countries from Which Children Were Adopted to the U.S.*

<b>Top Six Countries from Which Children Were Adopted to the U.S.</b>	<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>China</b>	<b>Russia</b>	<b>Guatemala</b>	<b>Korea</b>	<b>Kazakhstan</b>	<b>Ethiopia</b>
	2005	7,906	4,639	3,783	1,630	755	441

**Figure 3.1. Top Six Countries from Which Children Were Adopted to the U.S.**

Source: *Nurturing Adoptions* by Deborah D. Gray., page 23.

In addition, the chart below shows the top six countries that hold Chinese adoptees from 2001-2010. According to Peter Salman who has created this table, America has held the most Chinese adoptees from 2001-2010, totaling over 40,000. Even though the statistics stop at year 2010, it is safe to say that America still holds a significant number of Chinese adoptees within its borders still today. This information helps give one an idea of the huge impact the OCP has had on foreign adoption.

*Top Six Countries that hold the most Chinese Adoptees*

Country	2001	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
US FY	4,681	7,044	<b>7,906</b>	6,493	5,453	3,909	3,001	3,401
Spain	941	2,389	<b>2,753</b>	1,759	1,059	619	573	584
Canada	618	1,001	973	608	658	427	451	472
Netherlands	445	<b>800</b>	666	362	365	299	283	306
Sweden	220	<b>497</b>	462	314	280	206	248	184
France	130	<b>491</b>	458	314	176	144	102	100
Total <sup>a</sup>	<b>7,753</b>	<b>13,402</b>	<b>14,496</b>	<b>10,745</b>	<b>8,744</b>	<b>5,972</b>	<b>5,085</b>	<b>5,471<sup>b</sup></b>
CCAA Total <sup>c</sup>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>14,221</b>	<b>10,648</b>	<b>7,858</b>	<b>5,531</b>	<b>5,294</b>	<b>n/a</b>

Notes: <sup>a</sup> In 2006, the China Centre for Adoption Affairs reported links with sixteen countries. The table above shows the top six countries. The totals include children sent to Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, New Zealand, Norway and the UK, but no data for Singapore.

<sup>b</sup> In 2008, the China Central Adoption Authority (CCAA) announced an agreement to send children to Italy from 2009. In 2010, there were 116 adoptions.

<sup>c</sup> Figures for 2005–09 are those provided by the CCAA to The Hague Special Commission of June 2010. These include Singapore – see Selman (2012a: table 1.5) for full statistics from CCAA. Source: Annual totals are calculated from data on adoptions from China in statistics provided by the six countries – see Appendix 1. Overall totals are based on data from fifteen countries.

**Figure 3.2. Top Six Countries that hold the most Chinese Adoptees.** Source: Research

Gate, “The Global Decline of Intercountry Adoption: What Lies Ahead?” by Peter Salman.

Furthermore, this silver lining will further be explained in the concluding paragraphs that analyze the results of this research. Even if one can still not see this, this topic remains significant as many Chinese orphans with birth defects, female orphans, and others have had to pay the price for this policy. I personally know the effects and struggles of handling these ramifications as I was one of them.



## CHAPTER 4

### LITERATURE REVIEW

While analyzing the effects of the One-Child Policy on foreign adoption with my hypothesis being Chinese adoptees have similar patterns of behavior, such as unique identity issues, despite different life experiences, I became aware of major differences between my research and theirs. I have realized that most research focused on the ramifications in China of the One-Child Policy, not the impact it has had on those adopted abroad. For example, Karin Evans explains in her book, *“The Lost Daughters of China”*, her journey with her husband to adopt a girl from China. She goes into wonderful detail of the process by adding in adoption policies, statistics, reasons for these statistics (such as why there are more Chinese girls being adopted than boys), background, and history of adoption, as well as the culture of China as it relates to adoption. In addition, she explains the process of the tour group she was involved in to adopt her child and the barriers she had to face. This would be a very good book to read for those thinking about adopting from China and know little about how the process works.

As for coping mechanisms and the post-adoption life, she only briefly explains the post adoption issues 3 or 4 years past her daughter’s adoption. Sadly, because her daughter is still a toddler, readers are not able to fully understand the obstacles she has

had to face herself as she is not able to express herself yet. Karin Evans does address adoption issues and coping mechanisms, but only briefly from page 174-194. She also talks about many resources for adopted parents to help their children find community with other adoptees.

Another fine example of a book that focuses on the ramifications in China of the OCP, not the impact it has on those adopted abroad is, *“Wanting A Daughter, Needing A Son”* by Kay Ann Johnson. Johnson does a wonderful job explaining how the One-Child Policy led to abandonment and how the history of adoption policies in China has affected Chinese orphans. But she barely talks about international adoption or coping mechanisms that Chinese adoptees must face themselves. She only talks about international adoption in terms of the increase of international adoptions and how the funding has led to improvement in orphanages. In fact, she talks about how the Chinese orphanages are run quite differently from what the documentary *“The Dying Rooms”* by Kate Blewett and Brian Wood depicts. She mentions how most orphanages really care about the children and try their best to meet all their emotional and physical needs. She declared that the cause of an Orphan death was not deprivation, but instead low-funding. Therefore, the orphanage staff only had the choice of picking and choosing the babies that seemed most likely to live to spend their measly funding on, unintentionally leaving the other children to fight for themselves. Many of the books and articles I have read talks about how many reporters, researchers, and parents of adoptees have walked into Chinese orphanages and have seen nothing like what was reported in this documentary.

In addition, Kay Ann Johnson places a huge focus on domestic adoption and the problems that intranational adoptees and their families face. On the other hand, I am one of the few who is trying to analyze the adoptees perception on their experience of China and how it has impacted them. Therefore, this book is excellent for explaining the adoption process within China and the history and ramifications of the OCP within China.

Additionally, most works concerning international adoption are written through the adoptive parents' perspective or someone who has experience with adopted children and how they viewed the effects of adoption on adoptees. For example, the book "*Nurturing Adoptions*" by Deborah D. Gray is not written by an adoptee, but by a clinical social worker specializing in attachment, grief, and trauma who grew up in an extended family with many adopted members. In her book, she explains many issues that children may face due to past trauma or neglect and the effective coping mechanisms that should be utilized to help these kids become successful. She also provides information on coping mechanisms for the family members of the adopted child so they can be better prepared for their new family member. I would definitely recommend this book to parents of adoptees as it would help them better understand the psychological processes behind their behavior. There are similar claims made elsewhere of her experience with adopted kids (Ex: *Twenty Things Adopted Kids Wish Their Adoptive Parents Knew* by Sherrie Eldridge). Therefore, following the psychological explanation and responding to it in the manner she describes is very applicable. As this book is not written from a Chinese adoptee's perspective herself, there is valuable information left out on more

particular issues that Chinese adoptees may face due to China's culture and history or because of the Asian standards put on them because of their looks. For example, she cannot provide deep insight on the pressure that some Chinese adoptees feel to learn Chinese.

*"Motherbridge of Love"* by Josee Masse is a wonderful children's book illustrating the identity confusion many Chinese adoptees have from knowing two different mothers. I was personally impressed by the deep insights she offered. Although her poetic style works well to explain to Chinese children about their identity, Masse writes from an adoptive mother's perspective and cannot bring the unique insight on adoption that books written by Chinese adoptees can.

*"Crossing the Blue Willow Bridge"* by Nancy McCabe is also a book written through the adoptive parents' perspective or someone who has experience with adopted children. In this book, Nancy takes us through her journey with her adopted child Sophie as they try to find the people Sophie was close to in China. She explains profoundly her own feelings as a parent of a Chinese adoptee and how it at times seemed to clash with her daughters' feelings. This would be a marvelous book for parents of adopted Chinese children who want to or plan to try to look for birthparents or other significant people of the past with their adopted children as they can be better prepared for their own personal feelings that may arise in the process.

Lastly, I have realized through my research that most previous research has focused on the experience of adoption on the adoptee and understanding how they feel. Barely have any emphasized coping mechanisms utilized by them to deal with these

feelings. Furthermore, if there is a story told by a Chinese adoptee of how they used coping mechanisms to deal with adoption issues, it usually just focuses on her story and not a collaboration of many Chinese adoptees' stories. The book *"Lucky Girl"* by Mei Ling Hopgood is a perfect example of this. Her story explains the process of how she was adopted and became integrated into American life. It also briefly summarizes her younger brothers' similar experiences who were also adopted, although from Korea. This story goes into deep detail on how she goes to reunite with her Taiwanese birth parents and tries to become a part of their lives. Although Hopgood shares some valuable information on how she feels as an adoptee—going from avoiding her birth heritage to accepting it—there is more information on how she feels about accepting her birth family. In some ways, this story can resemble the story of Kung Fu Panda 2 where Po the panda finally finds his birth dad and his mixed feelings with having two different families and lives. But in other ways it is quite different as it describes her feelings about finding her birth family more deeply and does not try to always put a happy atmosphere on everything. I believe this book is more helpful for adoptees who may be considering looking into their birth families instead of looking for coping mechanisms to deal with possible adoption issues. She does not go into much detail of coping mechanisms as most of her life she tries to deny her Asian identity, but it is a very inspiring story that has left me deeply considering whether I too want to search for my birth parents and their family.

*"At Home in this World"* by Jean MacLeod is another example of a book that focuses on the feelings of a Chinese adoptee but not the coping mechanisms utilized to deal with these feelings. This book is a lyrical reflection of a pre-adolescent girl on her

knowledge of her Chinese adoption. She talks about many of the same issues and feelings I faced before and after adoption, and describes my thoughts almost exactly. Although this explanation on Chinese adoptees' thoughts and feelings is good, this book doesn't talk much about coping mechanisms she used to deal with these thoughts and feelings. Furthermore, it only talks about her individual adoption story and not multiple Chinese adoption stories as each adoption story could have a marginal difference.

Furthermore, Diane Rene Christian's book "*An-Ya and Her Diary*" does a wonderful job at looking at the adoptees' experience on adoption, mentioning issues and showing the coping mechanism of writing to help her handle some of these issues. In this book, a Chinese adoptee writes about her experiences in life pre-adoption and post-adoption in journal format. It is an endearing way to hear about her struggles, but since she is only around 12-14 years old when writing this journal, it is only possible to get a pre-teen's perspective on being a Chinese adoptee. In addition, because it is a book focusing on An-Ya and her diary, you do not get to hear from other Chinese adoptees.

In summary, many works on adoption have overlooked the impact the One-Child Policy has on those adopted abroad, the perspective of the Chinese adoptee themselves, and the coping mechanisms that an adoptee can utilize for resolving their adoption issues. In addition, many works have been unable to provide a big sample of cases of Chinese adoptees who describe their experience of adoption. But their works are still very important as they are able to provide many examples of the adoption process and the perspective of adoptive parents.

## CHAPTER 5

### HYPOTHESIS

My personal experience and understanding of the effects and struggles of handling the ramifications of the One-Child Policy led me to research these effects more deeply. My research question analyzes the effects of the OCP on foreign adoption, with my hypothesis being Chinese adoptees have similar patterns of behavior, such as unique identity issues, despite different life experiences. Furthermore, I researched effective coping mechanisms that adoptees may use to deal with issues such as love, trust, and identity. I then hypothesize that conversing and openness with adoption would appear as the most potent method for dealing with these adoption issues.

## CHAPTER 6

### RESEARCH DESIGN

The methods I have used to research this project is quite different from past research. Not only do these methods include collecting data on various books and academic sources on the personal, social, and cultural effects of the One-Child Policy, but also include utilizing resources that are not available to everyone. As an adoptee myself, I have more opportunities to interact with others with this same background. For example, I have special access in certain Facebook groups made exclusively for adoptees. I have been able to utilize these resources and contact many more adoptees than someone without this background. Other studies only have a few cases; I have a much larger sample.

I conducted open-ended interviews with Sino-American adoptees and originally contacted individuals adopted from other Asian countries such as South Korea. By contacting them, I was hoping I would be able to see more clearly the distinctive impact of the OCP on Chinese adoptees by comparing these adoptees to others who were not affected by this policy. Sadly, I was not able to get enough data on adoptees from other Asian countries and thus solely focus on the data from Chinese adoptees. The participants chose the interviewing procedure based on their level of comfort and convenience. I conducted most interviews through email, while others were through text messaging,



phone calls, and Skype. Additionally, I have also utilized graphs, Word Cloud, and charts to display the data to benefit the visual learners in my audience.

In order to get credible results for my hypothesis, I asked fifty adoptees fifteen questions that can be split up into four different categories: background information, identity, coping mechanisms, and comparison questions. Under background information, I asked general questions such as gender, age, and the country from which adopted. Other background questions included in the survey that may be less expected were: “Do you or your parents have a religion?”, “what is the race of your family?”, “do you have siblings?”, “are any of them also adoptees?”, “describe the area in which you grew up”, and “describe the diversity of the community in which you grew up”. The purpose of asking these latter questions were to discover the amount of interaction the adoptees may have had with their race growing up and any variables that may have affected their coping mechanisms in dealing with adoption.

The identity questions were: “Do you have a positive or negative perspective of China (Explain)?”, “what were your feelings and thoughts as a result of either encouragement or discouragement of your birth culture?”, “do you identify or avoid your birth culture or in the past have you avoided your birth culture?”, “do you feel like you have a connection with people of Asian descent (Explain)?”, and “use five words to describe your life as an adoptee”.

Under coping mechanisms, questions about how the adoptee as well as the adopted family coped with the adoption were asked. For example, the questions were: “Did your family encourage or discourage knowledge and involvement in your birth

culture?”, “if there have been struggles that you associate with your adoption, what are they?; what methods have you utilized to deal with the struggles of adoption?”, and “which methods would you deem as successful for coping with the struggles of adoption?” Inquiring about how the family of the adoptee coped with the adoption is crucial as it could have had negative or positive effects on how the adoptee themselves coped with the adoption.

The last category is comparisons; the question is: “To what extent do you think your experience is different from children adopted from America or another country?” This question was asked to discover each adoptee’s perspective on the possible dissimilarities of adoption from China vs. other countries because of policies such as the One-Child Policy, demographics, and other societal/cultural traits. This perspective is important as my hypothesis includes the belief that adoptees from China have a unique perspective of adoption versus adoptees that have been adopted from other areas.

## CHAPTER 7

### RESULTS

Now that I have explained the methods I have used to research the effect of the One-Child Policy on foreign adoption, I will now give some background information on the adoptees I have interviewed to see if this has any correlation with the results which I will discuss next. As mentioned, this research was done by interviewing fifty adoptees. If all the interviewees' responses do not add up to fifty, it is likely because the interviewee decided not to answer the question or they did not answer in full detail. Most of these adoptees interviewed were adopted from China. The exceptions to this include two adoptees from South Korea and one adoptee from Taiwan. The information I collected from them is still included in every question as I did not want to make them stand out. If there was a significant difference in their responses I briefly mention them to describe a possible difference between Chinese adoptees vs. adoptees from other countries.

Regarding gender, I interviewed two cisgender men, forty-nine cisgender women, and one transgender man. Thus, the majority of the adoptees in this survey, specifically forty-nine, are cisgender female which is not unusual as most adoptees are biologically female. The average age of this group is around 22 with only a couple of outliers such as an adoptee at age 51 and two in their early 30s.

Before continuing to explain the background of these adoptees and later their responses to my questions, it is important to state that the categories used are only for the sake of being able to see the broader picture more clearly. But sometimes these categories do not really work as they can obscure the complexity of adoption and the emotions hidden behind it.

The racial diversity of the families of the adoptees is also statistically interesting. Sixteen adoptees were adopted by an all Caucasian family with no other adopted siblings, while five were adopted into a mixed family with no other adopted siblings. Twenty-three were adopted by an all Caucasian family but had other adopted siblings of the same race. The other six adoptees had adopted siblings, but they were not the same race as them. I note this because they may have been the only East Asian in their family, but they were not alone in being adopted.

*Family background of Chinese Adoptees*

Caucasian Family (No other adopted siblings)	Mixed Family (No other adopted siblings)	Caucasian Family (Adopted East Asian siblings)	Mixed Family (Adopted non-East Asian siblings)
16	5	23	6

**Figure 7.1. Family background of Chinese Adoptees** which includes the diversity of the family.

Analyzing the religious background of the adoptees is also important as certain religious practices may have influenced how the adoptee or their family coped with certain adoption issues. In addition, being religious may have had an impact on families deciding to adopt in the first place. The religious background of these adoptees was difficult to categorize as many of the answers varied. For example, many adoptees stated that they had a religion but were not currently practicing it. Other adoptees have stated their parents each had a separate religion while they believed in another. Therefore, I will decipher the religious background by first analyzing the parent's religion and then the adoptees religion. Each individual parent's religion is marked because of parents having separate religions. Another important note is that Catholicism is under the category of Christianity since they are the first organized church. The religion categories are: Christian, Jewish, Atheist, Agnostic, and other. I will then further divide them into categories of practicing and non-practicing. Finally, I will analyze the top three most occurring categories in these answers and observe if they have influenced coping mechanisms for adoption in any way.

In reference to the parents' religions, 37 said they were Christian, 16 said they were Jewish, zero said they were Atheist, four said they were agnostic, and one said they were other. On the other hand, the adoptees' responses to their religious beliefs are: 16 said they were Christian, six said they were Jewish, 10 said they were Atheist, seven said they were agnostic, and six said they were other.

*Religious Backgrounds of Chinese Adoptees*

Parents	Christian:	Jewish:	Atheist:	Agnostic:	Other:
Religions:	37	16	0	4	1
Adoptees	16	6	10	7	6
Religions:					

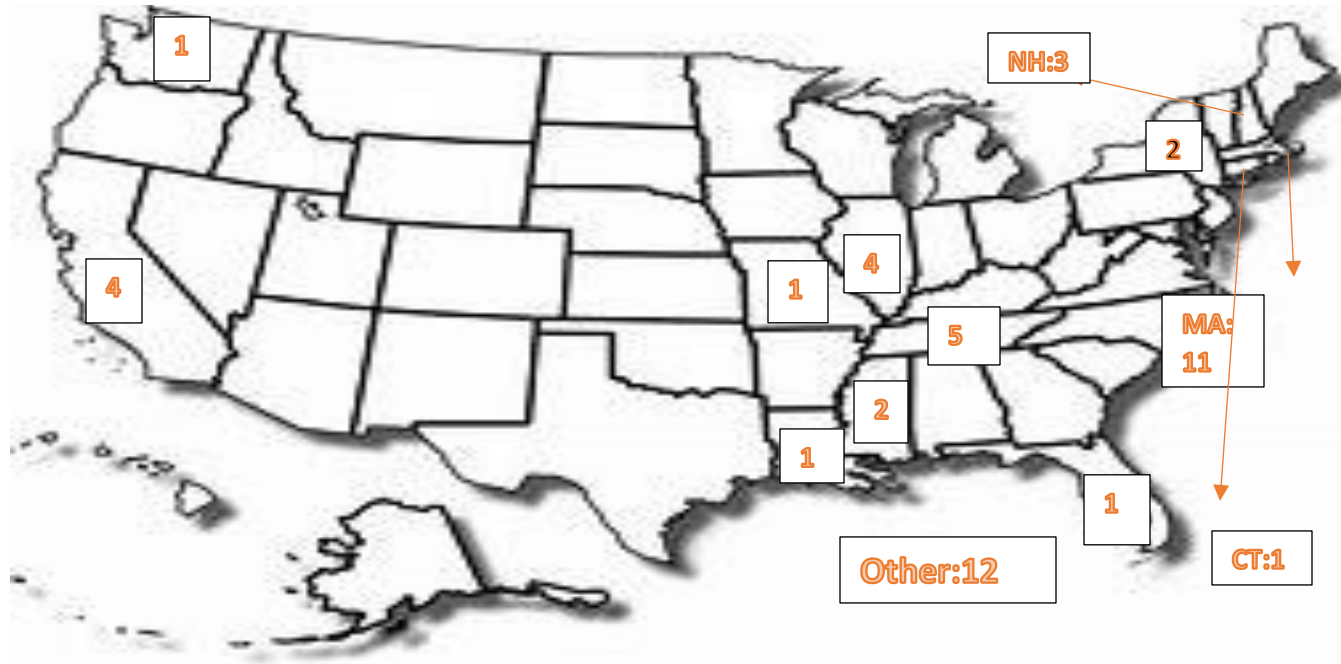
**Figure 7.2. Religious Backgrounds of Chinese Adoptees,** the other category includes religions that were not mentioned by many adoptees

There were 19 adoptees said that they were currently practicing their religion while 16 said they were religious but not currently practicing their religion. The last 10 adoptees stated they were non-religious. I also put agnostics under the category of religious but not practicing as they do believe that there could be a higher power. The most occurring categories when only analyzing the adoptees' responses instead of their parents' religious belief is Christianity and Atheism. Although, when analyzing the religion they grew up in, the most popular categories are Christian, Jewish, and agnostic. When analyzing the relationship between adoptees practicing religion and how they perceive China or deal with adoption, religion did not seem to play a huge role. Religion did not really influence if they had a positive or negative perspective of China, although Christianity was the only religion mentioned to have helped with coping with adoption.

These responses were very diverse, and I struggled to divide the adoptees into categories as some have moved around frequently while growing up and others have grown up in a completely different country. I have decided to divide this category into those who have grown up around other Asians and those who have not. This is an important categorical divide as being separated from individuals of the same race may have affected the emotions and sense of identity of the adoptees. I will also give a summary of the American states these adoptees grew up in and briefly mention the other countries these adoptees have lived in.

Most adoptees grew up in the United States with the exception of three as who grew up in either Japan, The Netherlands, or Vietnam (the parents of these adoptees are not necessarily American, and some may have been American parents who moved). Knowing this, I can say my research specifically reflects the experiences of Chinese adoptees in America. The adoptees grew up in America mostly reside in the eastern part of the U.S., with only five residing in the western half. The adoptees who reside in the west of the U.S. include four who grew up in California and one who grew up in the state of Washington. In the eastern part of the U.S., 11 adoptees resided in Massachusetts, making Massachusetts the state where most of the adoptees interviewed grew up. Tennessee comes in second with five, Illinois following with four, New Hampshire with three, New York and Alabama with two each, and Missouri, Louisiana, and Florida with one each. The other 12 adoptees moved frequently within their lives. (*See Figure 7.3*)

*The Demographic of Interviewed Chinese Adoptees*



**Figure 7.3. The Demographic of Interviewed Chinese Adoptees**, the other category includes adoptees who have moved a lot or who live in a different country.

Twenty-one adoptees mentioned how they grew up in a very diverse area with many races and did not feel like one of the only East Asians. Sixteen stated that they grew up in an area that consisted mostly of Caucasians and maybe one other race that doesn't include East Asians. Therefore, they frequently felt as if they were the only East Asian in their area most of the time with maybe only one or two other Asians in the area. The other fourteen stated that their area was diverse with a lot of different races, but the



East Asian race was still excluded, or they have moved so much that they were able to experience diversity on many levels.

When analyzing if growing up in a racially diverse place would affect an adoptee's identity issues, there was surprisingly no correlation. Overall, adoptees still had identity issues involving their Chinese American identity despite the location in which they grew up. Many adoptees who have lived in predominately white areas have mentioned how they felt a little more isolated and seemed to receive more racist jokes. But according to the adoptees' responses, as long as you are able to help your adopted child get in contact with friends their age of the same race and adoption status, the predominately white environment will not play such a big impact on them.

The results to the prompt "Use five words to describe your life as an adoptee" were very intriguing. In order to provide a clear visual of these results, I have created a word cloud which frames the most frequently used words in a bigger font while less common used words are framed in a smaller font.



long time. Not until recently have I been able to see the silver lining of adoption and appreciate my background. Now, I would also likely respond with “unique” as one of the five words to explain my adoption experience, but I had no idea that other adoptees were also able to see it more positively.

The results of the identity question “Do you have a positive or negative perspective of your birthplace? (Explain.)” are also quite interesting. In this question, many adoptees responded with a more neutral perspective of their birthplace. Therefore, I have divided the responses into three categories: those who stated a positive perspective, those who were neutral, and those who had a negative perspective. There were 14 adoptees who stated they had either a definite positive perspective or an overall positive perspective, 25 adoptees stated they had an overall neutral perspective, and 10 adoptees stated they had either a definite negative view or overall a more negative view of their birthplace. The reasons for their responses are quite intriguing. The positives they mentioned about China were: the culture, the values, community, family spirit, simplicity of life, fast economic and technological development, fast-paced lifestyle, nice citizens, and wonderful tourist sites. But the negatives they mentioned about China were: the policies, the stigma of inferiority it has in American perspective, inferiority of women in Chinese society, pollution, government, child-trafficking, academic pressure, political issues, overcrowded, memories about their difficult past, and poverty rates among the Chinese. This response resonated with me because I would also answer similarly as I have a very complex view of China because of its flaws and strengths.

The first coping mechanism question I asked was “Did your family encourage or discourage knowledge and involvement in your birth culture?” This question is very important as some adoptees’ feeling towards their birthplace may have changed due to how the parents handled their adoption. Forty-one adoptees stated their parents encouraged knowledge and involvement in their birth culture. This included celebrating Chinese holidays, giving them lessons in Mandarin, and cooking Chinese meals. Five adoptees stated that their family neither encouraged nor discouraged knowledge and involvement in their birth culture and two adoptees said their family discouraged knowledge and involvement in their birth culture. I was not very surprised by this result as I have heard many stories of parents being encouraging and maybe overly encouraging of their adoptees’ involvement in their birth culture.

The second coping mechanism question was “What were your feelings and thoughts because of either encouragement or discouragement of your birth culture?” I will analyze the results of this question by dividing the adoptees into four categories: positive feelings, neutral feelings, negative feelings, and other based on their parents’ encouragement/discouragement. The other category includes adoptees who expressed different feelings as a child and as an adult.

For example, out of the 41 adoptees whose parents encouraged their involvement in their birth culture, 18 expressed positive feelings, four expressed negative feelings, eight expressed neutral feelings, and 11 were in the other category. Out of the five adoptees whose parents neither encouraged or discouraged involvement in their birth culture, one adoptee expressed positive feelings, one expressed neutral feelings, two

expressed negative feelings, and one belonged in the other category. Out of the two adoptees whose parents discouraged them, one had neutral feelings while the other had negative feelings towards it. Out of the 11 adoptees who belonged to the other category, seven of them (including the one in the category of parents neither encouraging or discouraging them) stated negative feelings as a child and later appreciating their parents' encouragement in being involved in their birth culture. Three adoptees stated having negative feelings and then feeling neutral about their parents' encouragement in their birth culture. Out of the last two adoptees, one stated a positive feeling to parents' encouragement at a younger age which turned to a negative feeling as an adult, while the other had a positive feeling as a child and then a neutral feeling as an adult.

This question is important as it may give light to parents of adoptees in how they should regard their adopted child's birth country. Many of the adoptees mentioned how they appreciated that their parents taught them where they came from and how to live as a different race in a white-dominated society. In addition, they showed appreciation that their parents helped to sustain their connection to China and were more involved and interested in their life. They also expressed how this encouragement helped them understand the meaning of adoption. The negative feelings associated to either parents' discouragement/encouragement of their birth culture were making them feel too different and isolated or forcing them to participate in activities that they were not interested in.

*The Feelings of Chinese Adoptees Toward Their Parents Encouragement vs. Discouragement*

Encouraged: 41	Positive: 18	Negative: 4	Neither: 8	Neutral: 11
Discouraged: 2		1		1
Neither: 5	1	2	1	1

**Figure 7.5. The Feelings of Chinese Adoptees Toward Their Parents Encouragement vs. Discouragement**, if I added my answer to these statistics I would say I feel positive about my parents' encouragement.

I was not too surprised generally from these results as I have felt the same with the majority. The one thing that did surprise me were the stories of adoptees having positive feelings as a child and later negative or neutral feelings as an adult. This surprised me because I originally thought that the parent's encouragement in involvement in their birth culture would frustrate adoptees since they were little kids and just wanted to fit in. Only later, when becoming adults, would I guess that they would be able to think maturely on why their parents encouraged them in a particular way and end with a positive perspective.

The next coping mechanism question I will discuss is if there have been struggles that you associate with your adoption, what are they?" Seven adoptees stated that there were no struggles that they associated with adoption. Instead, they associated their struggles with normal obstacles in life that everyone faces. For example, some of these adoptees mentioned how everyone faces identity issues which does not make the identity issues they face unique. The other 45 adoptees described struggles they associated with adoption that seemed to fit under other four categories: identity, ignorance, love and trust, and isolation. Since these adoptees stated that there were several struggles they went through because of adoption, they will be included in several of these categories. Therefore, the number for these other categories may be larger than the number of adoptees I interviewed. The number of times adoptees stated they struggled with identity issues is 18. This includes which nationality, race, and culture one identifies with, as well as difficulty in not knowing one's past. The number of times adoptees stated they struggled with ignorance issues is 17. This includes how others have perceived these Chinese adoptees, insensitive or stereotypical questions, and how they may have inadvertently responded to their perceptions inappropriately. For example, many adoptees mentioned encounters where people have asked "do you like rice because you are Asian?" or asking "where are you really from" after an adoptee answers a place in America. But Chinese adoptees are also faced with insensitive reactions from some Chinese Americans and Chinese people. For example, many felt uncomfortable with the fact that they are expected to know Chinese and if not, they were not allowed to have China as part of our identity. But these examples are just the more common ones

mentioned among the adoptees. But these examples are just the more common examples mentioned among the adoptees.

The number of times adoptees stated they struggled with love and trust issues is 17. These include problems with relationships to other people because of possible fear or anger they still hold from adoption. Lastly, the number of times adoptees stated they struggled with isolation issues is 16. This includes feeling isolated and alone in their experience, looks, and background. The only statistic that I was remotely surprised by was the number of adoptees who felt there were no struggles due to adoption. I originally believed that all adoptees would feel that adoption had at least some negative impact on them.

*The Struggles of Adoption*

Identity	18
Ignorance	17
Love and Trust	17
Isolation	16
No issues	7

**Figure 7.6. The Struggles of Adoption.** I would say I struggled with all these issues because of adoption.



The last coping mechanism question is “what methods have you utilized to deal with the struggles of adoption; and which methods would you deem as successful for coping with the struggles of adoption?” Most of the methods that the adoptees used fall under eight distinct categories: having a good support system and talking to them, self-learning and analysis, artistic expression, adoption groups, therapy, ignoring, religion, and harm. The first five categories mentioned were the most successful techniques for coping. Twenty-nine adoptees stated that self-learning and analysis was the most beneficial for coping. This includes analyzing how one feels about their adoption and why they may be feeling certain emotions. Furthermore, this category includes reading books and articles on adoption in order to learn more about themselves and the adoption experience. The category that seemed the most beneficial for adoptees is having a good support system and talking to them. Twenty-seven adoptees stated that this mechanism was effective for them. This support system includes friends and family who are open to listening and empathizing with their emotions. The second most effective coping mechanism is adoption groups. Twenty-one adoptees stated that talking with other adoptees helped them. The next most effective strategy was therapy with a number of 16. Finally, the last most effective coping mechanism is artistic expression which has a number of 13. This category includes drawing, writing, singing, or even humor. By humor, I mean making jokes on adoption in order to loosen the tension that may arise from talking about adoption. The other three categories: ignoring, religion and harm only had a number of one. The category of ignoring refers to trying not think about adoption which will prevent any negative emotions from arising with it. The category of religion includes faith helping to deal with possible adoption issues. Also, the category of harm

includes self-harm, and harm of other people or things through words or actions. I was not surprised by these results either as I have utilized a number of these coping mechanisms myself.

*The Most Successful Coping Mechanisms for Adoption*

Self-learning and analysis	29
Good support system	27
Adoption groups	21
Therapy	16
Artistic Expression	13

**Figure 7.7. The Most Successful Coping Mechanisms for Adoption,** I personally used my good support system and artistic expression the most to cope.

This next question is, “Do you identify or avoid your birth culture? In the past have you avoided your birth culture?” Twenty-five adoptees stated that in the past they did avoid their birth culture, nine stated that they identified with it, and sixteen adoptees stated that they were in between. Some adoptees mentioned that they put in between because they may identify with certain parts and avoid other parts. As for in the present, eight stated that they avoid their birth culture while ten said that they identify with it. This leaves the number for those who stated in between at thirty-two which is a very significant change. The statistics describing adoptees feelings of identification did not

surprise me as I also vehemently avoided my birth culture at a young age but ended in accepting it.

*Chinese Adoptees Feelings of Identification with their Birth Culture*

Past	Identify: 9	Avoid: 25	Other: 16
Present	10	8	32

**Figure 7.8. Chinese Adoptees Feelings of Identification with their Birth Culture, I** would definitely go into the categories of avoiding in the past and identify later with my birth culture.

The last identity question is, “Do you feel like you have a connection with people of Asian descent (Explain)? These answers varied and some of the categories should be not taken as an absolute yes or no. This will be explained later. Therefore, the easiest categories I could come up with are those who said yes, those who said no, those who were in between, those who stated it was just with other Asian adoptees, and those who stated that it was only with Asians in the same generation as them. Six adoptees stated “yes” that they felt they had a connection with Asians. 22 adoptees said “no” they did not feel a connection. But it is important to note that just because they felt no connection does not mean there were no feelings towards other Asians. For example, some adoptees felt they wished they felt a connection with other Asians. 12 adoptees said they felt in

between, nine expressed just feeling a connection between adopted Asians, and two said they only felt a connection between Asians in the same generation as them.

*Connection between other Asians*

Yes	6
No	22
Between	12
Other Asian Adoptees	9
Asians of the same generation	2

**Figure 7.9: Connection between other Asians, I would say I feel a strong connection to East Asians.**

I was shocked by these statistics as I originally hypothesized that there would be some feeling of connection to China among all Chinese adoptees as it played such a key role in the beginning of their lives.

## CHAPTER 8

### IMPACT

The impact that this thesis will make on society includes a better understanding of the positive and negative effects that adoptees may or will face due to the OCP. Adoptees themselves will be able to have a better understanding on how to cope with these effects and be able to feel less alone as they realize others also have been greatly affected by this policy. They may also have a better sense of community as they relate to the researcher or the people being interviewed, all of whom have experienced the same situations as them. The knowledge that is expected to result from this research is a better understanding of the diversity of people affected by the One-Child Policy and the effective strategies they use to cope with this effect. Furthermore, one will be able to better understand strategies that are ideal and not ideal for coping with the effects of the One-Child Policy. It will also help the community understand how to deal with these individuals better in order to build up community relationships. This research could further help anyone who is involved or knows of anyone involved in adoption, whether from China or outside of China, as some of the stories and experiences of Chinese adoptees may relate to adoptees from different countries. Furthermore, my project aids society by connecting the growing literature on adoption to the broader political and historical work on modern China

This research has already impacted me greatly as I have been able to find a wonderful community who understands the issues that I face daily and are sincerely supportive. I have also benefitted from this research as I have attained a broader perspective of adoption and how different environments can affect an adoptees' experience.

## CHAPTER 9

### CONCLUSION

In summary, the knowledge I hope one attains from this research are the broad range of answers the Chinese adoptees gave on their feelings of accepting their birth culture. The knowledge attained from this research can definitely be helpful in the future when interacting with Chinese adoptees and having the understanding as to how destructive vague assumptions of Chinese adoptees can be as we all are different. Therefore, it would be best not to mention how they identify or try to question Chinese adoptees on their answer when surprised by their response. For example, if one happens to ask “Where are you from?” and they follow with an answer not related to an Asian country, do not follow with “Where are you really from?” If a Chinese adoptee answers this way, it is usually because they are either uncomfortable with their identity or do not identify with being from China as they were raised elsewhere. If a Chinese adoptee is open and invites one to ask questions involving China, then one may ask freely. But as my data has shown, dealing with ignorant questions was one of the biggest struggles that we adoptees face daily, so tread lightly when asking questions out of curiosity. In the case of the U.S., treat them like any other Caucasian living in America as these questions often make us feel like an alien to our own country and uncomfortably points out how we look different.

I hope that future work on adoption includes a comparison between adoptees' experiences from different countries. For example, the differences that could possibly arise from being adopted from China vs. South Korea. It would be very interesting to see if cultural differences had a substantial effect on adoptees behavior and emotions. The small sample of information from other Asian adoptees that I have received seemed to display a difference in how adoptees were perceived in their new country, based on the perception that country placed on their birth country. Another big difference were the adoptees' feelings towards feminism in China since the ratio proportion of male vs. female adoptees skews significantly more female than in other Asian countries. Furthermore, there seemed to be a trend in adoptees mentioning how birth records are much harder to find in China than in other Asian countries. But these are not scientifically proven yet as I did not have a large enough sample, so I omitted these statistics from my research.

Additionally, I hope that there will be more work on adoption that includes detailed information from interviews with birth parents who have given up their children. As an adoptee, I believe knowing the thoughts and processes behind my adoption story would not only help relieve prolonged curiosity, but also help me either continue to heal or help me have a more realistic approach to my past.

Lastly, I would like to provide some advice that could not be put into statistics to end how I feel parents reading this should help their Chinese adopted kids. From what I have learned in this research, I recommend adoptee parents try their best to expose their



Chinese adoptees to other Chinese Americans so that they don't feel as isolated in their appearance. Hanging out with other Chinese adoptees has had a good impact on many. I also suggest keeping artifacts of the Chinese culture around the house and to always be open to studying and learning about the Chinese culture and language, as well as teaching it to all your kids. I want to emphasize the fact that I said teaching the Chinese culture to all your kids. Many Chinese adoptees felt even more isolated when parents only focused on teaching the Chinese adoptee about the Chinese culture and not their other siblings. Also, do not force them to learn about the Chinese culture and language, let it be their own decision. Always keep the opportunity open and information at hand in case they choose to learn more.

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