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A 100-year retrospective study: Asset-based Perspective of Adoptees' Academics

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Abstract

Adoption is heavily studied through a deficit lens. Language, beliefs, stereotypes, and deficit perspectives in research have all impacted adoption laws, policies, and clinical practice. Few studies have investigated the academic achievement of children that are adopted (adoptees) without beginning with the premise that adoptees have diminished performance. In this 100-year retrospective study, we investigate the impact of adoption on academic achievement, taking an asset-based perspective. We found that adoptees are viewed as less academically successful than their non-adopted peers; yet, evidence only supports this claim in the context of children whose pre-adoptive environment included institutional deprivation. When removed from impoverished environments, adoptees catch-up academically. By using an asset-based perspective, we explore internationally adoptees' academic strengths. Given that the academic achievement of adoptees is heavily studied in the context of literacy but extremely sparse in other academic domains (e.g., science), we provide evidence of adoptees' language acquisition advantage.

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