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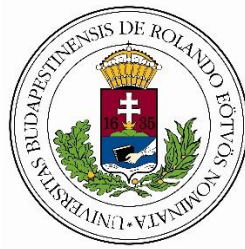
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SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL AND INTERCULTURAL ASPECTS OF ADOPTIVE
FAMILIES

THESES OF THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

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1. INTRODUCTION

Academic literature about adoption is mainly concerned with the legal, individual psychological, and the family psychological projection of adoption. Meanwhile, its social psychological effect and especially its intercultural approach remain untouched by current Hungarian scientific literature. Until now, the psychological problems of the adopted child and the relationship between the adoptive parents and the adopted child have been the main focus of psychology, although we cannot read much about the societal aspects of adoption.

The objective of the doctorate dissertation is twofold: on the one hand the introduction of the intercultural and social psychological aspects of the adoptive families' societal surroundings, thus the examination of the adoptive families' societal context. On the other hand, its perceptions' examination from the families' point of view. Our objective is the exploration of opinions, stereotypes in society that are formed in concern with the adoptive families, and the relation of society to these families, especially when they adopt a child with a different ethnicity from the parents' - in Hungary, this means non-Roma families adopting a Roma child – how they feel about this, and what opinion do the parents have.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The members of the adoption triangle, which is also usually called as the adoption triad in psychological respect, that is the adopted child, the adoptive family and the biological parents also have a unique path in life (Pavao, 2012), whose intersection is encompassed by a certain societal context. During adoption, they are all facing problems deriving from society from different standpoints. The published psychological pieces of literature are mostly focusing on the adopted child and the adoptive parents' parent-child relationship, although the systematic approach of the societal context and inequality factors serving as the cause of adoption from both sides seem to be a neglected domain. We have realized during the adoption's examination from a societal, and social psychological point of view that questions regarding the societal sex, ethnicity, and social class emerged – sometimes even crossing each other (Neményi & Takács, 2015). Intersectionality is an approach method according to which inequality factors intertwine and do not exist in parallel with each other (Sebestyén, 2014). It worth considering the societal context in which adoption takes place in today's Hungary, and detailing those dimensions coming from societal inequality, which most of the time participate in the process of adoption in an intertwined manner.

Even though there is no empirical research in connection with adoption's present stereotypes in our country, we assume based on the research of attitudes about adoption in the United States (Dave Thomas Foundation For Adoption, 2013) that there is a certain stereotypical image about the participants of the adoption process domestically as well, who can become the victims of stigmatization along with the stereotypical roles imposed on them. The biological mothers can encounter with strong disdain, resulting in their alienation after their most of the time concealed pregnancy, with a traumatic experience which they will still keep in secret (Herczog, 2001). The adoptive parent has more representations: either they are pitied, as "he/she could not have a child" or he/she is admired for "being able to do such a noble act". (Foli, 2010). The latter is especially true if they adopt an older, a handicapped or a Roma child. In many cases, the adopted child is considered special, but people think that there are more problems with him/her than with a child who grows up with their biological parents (Dave Thomas Foundation For Adoption, 2013). These stereotypes existing in our society make the adoption process more difficult, for all three participants of the triangle.

Interethnic families and such family constructions are receiving more attention nowadays, which mostly means the adoption of Roma children by non-Roma parents in Hungary. (Szilvási, 2005). International academic literature calls these family types "transracial" (Goar et al., 2016, Yngvesson, 2010, Lancaster & Nelson, 2009), though seeing the novelty of this phenomenon, only a few Hungarian pieces focus on this family model.

Brubaker (2015) brings attention to a discourse according to which it is inaccurate and dangerous to call adoptive families with parent and child from different ethnical backgrounds 'transracial', since 'transracial' adoption does not inhere the ethnical change of the adoptive parent or the adopted child. Raible, the main researcher of 'transracial' adoption enters into a debate with this view – he argues that this process is able to bring a change of identity among the adoptive parents or siblings. (Brubaker, 2015, Raible, 2008).

It is also important to clarify that race and ethnicity are socially constructed, not objective and inherited, but fluid constructions. The objectification of race and ethnicity is problematic (Annamma, 2012, Raible, 2005). It is necessary to understand this nature of ethnicity and race in order to understand how the ethnicity of the interethnic adopted child and the adoptive parent is built, and how they reflect ethnic conflicts in wider society. As much as we speak about a socially constructed concept when speaking about ethnicity, we cannot ignore it, since it has a strong effect on the life of interethnic adoptive families (Annamma, 2012).

Many researchers have been analyzing the question of ethnical identity in the case of social minority groups, which they usually connect Phinney's (1996) ethnical identity, model. Ethnic identity is a dynamic, multidimensional psychological construction when someone regards him/herself as a member of a certain ethnical group (Phinney, 2003). They have observed in biracial families – mainly in Afro-American and Caucasian marriages with mixed children (O'Donoghue, 2005) – that those individuals belonging to the dominant ethnic majority of society who are in close connection with a person living with a member of an ethnical minority group also develop a certain ethnical identity.

In one of his works, Selman (2002) describes international adoption as a migration process, calling it silent migration. For this reason, we consider a model of acculturation for describing the identity change of adoptive parents. From the acculturation models, we are applying Sussman's (2000), in which the individuals feel and perceive in case of an additive identity change that their norms, values, and behavior is more similar to the host country, they feel themselves closer to people living there. Thus, until they live in a foreign country their identity will be complemented with the local identity. Such an additive identity can form in students studying abroad, who then return home, where their existing identity is accompanied by the identity of the target country. We imagine the formation of identity of the parents who adopt a Roma child in a similar way, which thereby exists as an added identity while keeping their majority identity.

The examination of the ethnic identity of the adoptive parents is already in the perspective of international literature (Johnston et al., 2007; Tigervall & Hübinette, 2010; Vonk, 2001), although it has not been analyzed domestically.

3. AIMS

It is visible from the theoretical introduction that there are more undiscovered areas of adoption domestically, especially regarding its social psychological and intercultural dimensions. There has not been much research of attitude in connection with the adoptive families in Hungary, (Neményi & Takács, 2015), moreover there are no novel scientific examinations regarding adoption's social psychological aspect, while its interethnic aspect is topical. As a result, this dissertation aims to act as a gap-filler in these realms.

Based on the above-mentioned considerations, the general objective of the dissertation is the following:
- The unearthing of attitudes and deeper background factors in connection with the general inequality problems towards the participants of adoption and the Roma and non-Roma adopted children, the Roma or non-Roma adoptive parents, and generally in connection with the adoption of Roma children in the Hungarian society.
  - The analysis and demonstration of the social psychological dimensions of domestic adoption.
  - What kind of stereotypes exist concerning the participants of adoption?
  - What kind of factors determine interethnic adoption's acceptance?
- The conceptualization of identity of those parents who adopt a Roma child, and their children.
  - How does the parent's Roma identity-construction look like? Their own opinion about this and passing it down to their child.
  - How does their ethnic identity look like, and what kind of background factors influence it?
- The empirical analyses intend to contribute to the followings:
  - Giving information about interethnic adoption within the domestic pre-adoption programs' schedule.
  - Building the peculiarities of interethnic adoption into adoption methodology.
  - Helping the operation of civil services working with adoptive families, and through this indirectly aiding adoptive families regarding their questions and preoccupation concerning interethnic adoption arriving from society with the help of this examination.

According to the objectives, the dissertation includes five analyses, through which we received an answer for each hypothesis.

4. METHODS AND RESULTS

4. 1 First study: Intersection and Adoption

Aims
The aim of the first analysis has been the examination of domestic adoption from of social psychological point of view and the determination of the research's main focus points and objectives. Moreover, its objective was to determine what kind of discriminative problems arise from the practice of adoption on an institutional and systematic level, through intersectional paradigm.

Methods
In the first research we have collected theoretic information partly from the existing scientific literature, and partly empirically based on interviews with professionals about how and societal

processes emerge in the process of adoption – or as its result -, how does the adoption's social judgement looks like, and what kind of institutional inequalities may derive from it. We have complemented the domestic scientific literature with segments of interviews conducted with professionals and information provided by them for the more detailed introduction of the problems outlined above. We have conducted 10 interviews with professionals between 2015-2016 with the Hungarian Scientific Academy Sociological Institute's researchers, with the psychologists of civil and state organizations who provide pre-adoption programs, the psychologists of the "Mózeskosár" Organization, the child protection professionals of the Family, Child, Youth Organization, the "SOS Gyermekfalvak", furthermore with the practical professionals of the "Ágacska" Fund, Romadopt Klub, and Örökbe.hu.

Results and discussion
We have been looking for an answer in our research whether our interviewees think that there are structural inequalities within the institution of adoption. We have approached this with the paradigm of intersectionality. According to the interviews, we can observe structural discrimination especially in the case of interethnic situations, and problems on the gender, and social-class level.
The most visible act of discrimination coming from the nature of the system can be seen in its preference of married couples against single parents, and those same-sex couples, who are forced to apply as single parents.
The topic of social class-mobility also suggests injustice on a societal level. The encounter of the biological parents who most of the time have a bad background – obviously not in a generalized manner, as there are exceptions in all cases – mainly middle-class adoptive parents is a considerably difficult situation. Most children hence grow up at a different living standard, within different conditions and in another social class than what they would have grown up with their birth parents.

Even though the system does not allow the adoptive parents to signify their ethnic/ancestry preferences on their application, in theory, it is visible that reality shows it differently to a great extent (ranging from 66% to 80%), which calls our attention to the phenomenon's discriminative nature.

As a result, the practice of adoption is encompassed with societal problems from the social psychological standpoint from both sides. In most cases, the main factors of intersectionality, social classes, social gender and social differences coming from ethnicity exist, in many cases these factors emerge combined with each other or multiplied (Neményi & Takács, 2015).

4. 2 Second study: Stereotypes of Adoptive and Interethnic Adoptive Families

Aims
The aim of this study is to present the stereotypes that emerge in society toward adoptive families. Our purpose is to reveal what kind of stereotypes exist in society toward adoptive parents, and how the general social attitude looks like towards such families, especially when parents adopt a Roma child.

Methods
The questionnaire comprises of several parts and has been made available online for the respondents. Participation was voluntary. The research involved 222 people, out of which 180 were female (81.1%) and 42 (18.9%) were male. The average age of the respondents is 35.49

(SD = 11.96) years. The study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education and Psychology at Eötvös Lóránd University.

Results and discussion
The findings published in the international academic literature made us assume that in Hungary we will also find a certain amount of ambivalence in terms of attitudes towards adoptive families. This dual judgment is especially valid for adoptive parents, who are associated with the stereotype of being kind-hearted, as well as receiving pity from the community, while the children are more associated with a lower level of satisfaction, less happiness and with a higher level of school and behavior-related problems.

The results also reflect the general belief that adopted children are more prone to deviance than their non-adopted counterparts. Society tends to presume that there is a difference between adopted and non-adopted children in terms of school problems or adaptation. Our assumptions relating to how children are associated with certain deviances were supported, as most of these are connected to adopted children, especially to adopted Roma children. (figure 1).
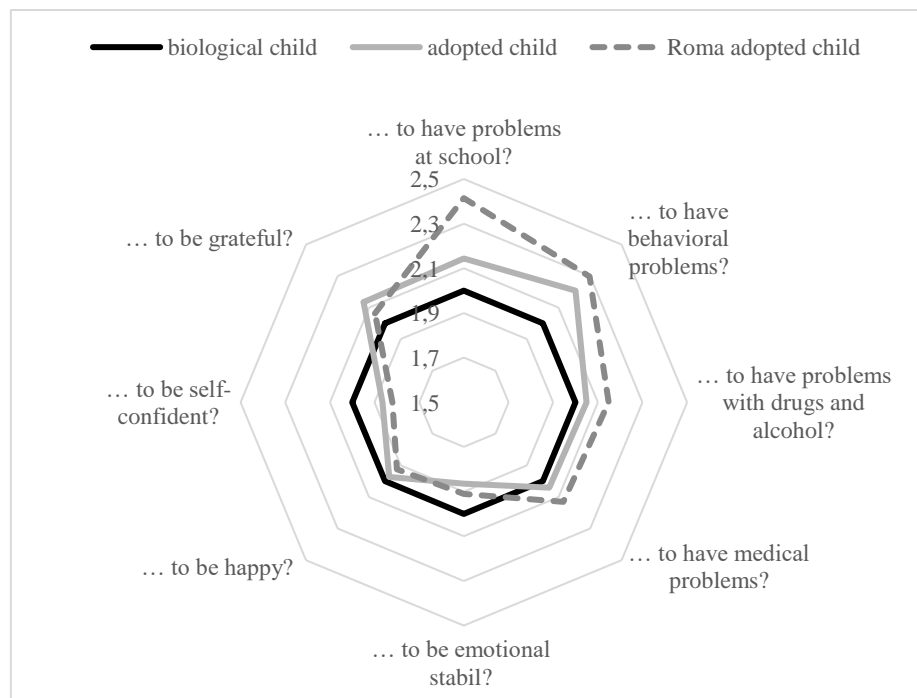

Figure 1. The stereotypes connected to Roma and non-Roma adopted children (p < 0,05)

In this study, we analyzed the stereotypes of adoptive parents using the concepts of the stereotype content model (Cuddy et al., 2007). In contrary to our assumption, we found that there is no difference in terms of parental warmth and authenticity between adoptive and not adoptive parents. Our initial assumption was that parenting ability and parental authenticity could be questioned in the case of adoption (Neményi & Takács, 2015), however, this was not confirmed in this research. As for the other aspects of the stereotype content model (Cuddy et al., 2007), our initial assumptions proved to be correct, as adoptive parents are viewed friendlier and more kind-hearted. Initially, we did not focus on the issue of whether these perceptions are higher in the case of adoptive parents or the parents who adopt a Roma child, but our results show that parents who adopt a Roma child are considered nicer and friendlier.

Ambivalent feelings toward adoptive parents have been analyzed in this study by examining what respondents associate with various feelings based on the stereotype content model (Cuddy et al., 2007).

We initially presumed that this ambivalence can be found in the categories of admiration, pride, and contempt, but the findings only partly support this assumption. In terms of admiration and contempt, there was no difference between the various groups of parents – not adoptive parents, adoptive parents and adoptive parents with a Roma child. However, there were differences related to the admiration-disgust ratio, which we did not assume at the beginning. The feeling of admiration was associated more with the adoption itself, while disgust was associated more with the adoption of Roma children. The association of feelings linked to admiration with adoptive parents may stem from the stereotype that adoption is a noble social act (Foli, 2010). Disgust, even if this seems an overwhelmingly negative term, was strongly associated with the adoption of Roma children. The clear association with this strong emotion is probably down to anti-Roma stereotypes.

The four feelings linked to pity and jealousy revealed differences between not adoptive parents, adoptive parents and parents adopting a Roma child. Based on our results, we can claim that in accordance with our assumption, there is less envy and jealousy of adoptive parents. On the other hand, there is a significant amount of pity and sympathy toward them. Pity – as we expected at the beginning – is felt more toward parents adopting a Roma child, while sympathy is felt more toward adoptive parents who do not adopt a Roma child. This feeling of pity may result from the fact that society is likely to consider that parents adopting Roma children have to deal with problems rooting from their Roma identity and the social difficulties it causes, in addition to the stigmatized nature of the adoption itself (Bogár, 2011).
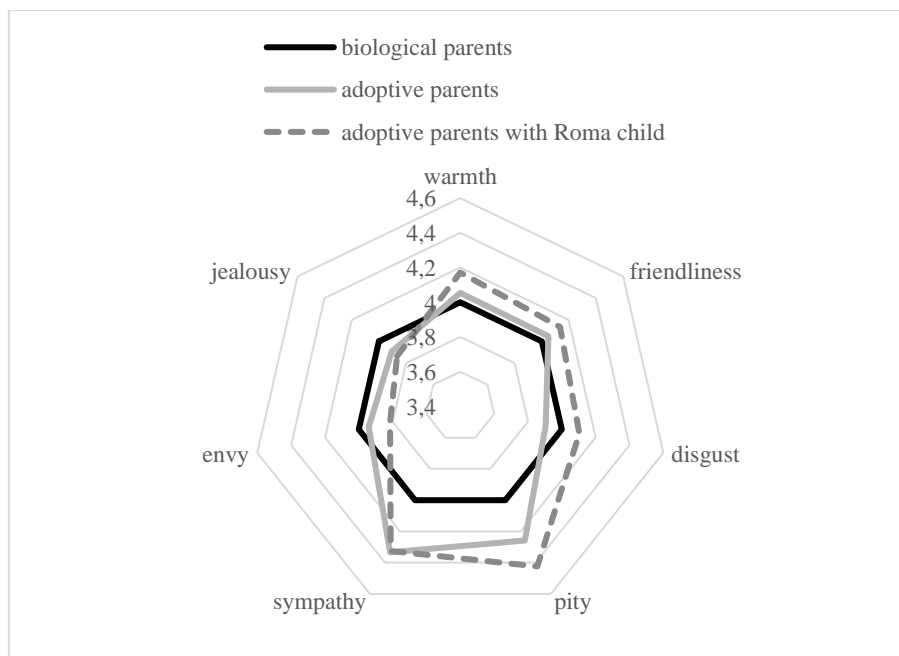

Figure 2. Stereotypes in connection with adopting parents of Roma and non-Roma children (p < 0,05)

4. 3 Third study: Attitudes Toward Interethnic Adoption

Aims
Foreign academic literature and research have already been concerned with the measuring of the acceptance of interethnic adoption (Dave Thomas Foundation For Adoption, 2017, Monathy, 2014), but researchers in Hungary have not touched upon the study of the question. In this research we have undertaken to investigate the attitude towards adoption of Roma children. Our goal is to study the attitude towards interethnic adoption compared to regular adoption, and the main social psychological background factors, values and demographic factors that influence the acceptance or the rejection of interethnic adoption.

Methods
The research has been authorized and certified by the Pedagogy and Psychology Institute of the Eötvös Lóránd University's Research and Ethical Committee. 1088 people participated in the proportionately layered representative online civil study conducted in 2017. We have asked a company specialized in market research to collect a proportionately layered representative sample to Hungary's population, to gender (men = 49 %), to age (min. age = 18; max.=64) to city (capital city = 20,9%, county capital = 19,7 %; city = 31,0; village = 28,4%,) to education (primary school = 22,6 %; vocational school or adult training = 23,8 %; secondary school graduates = 31,5 %; university graduates = 22,0 %). The questionnaire has been sent to the respondents in an e-mail through the e-mail list of the company. We have analyzed the result with SPSS 20 and Amos 24 statistic programs.

Results and discussion
The dichotomy of admiration and pity is also present in public life in connection with the general perception of adoption at the same time, which makes the life of the adoptive family a lot more difficult. (Foli, 2012, Neményi & Takács, 2015). We have emphatically presumed this in the case of interethnical families, where the hardship of stigmatization for the adoptive families is coupled by the general fight against anti-Roma attitudes. Even though the necessity of international adoption and toleration come into the picture due to the high level of infertility (Mohanty, 2014), we presume because of the general dismissive relations in Hungary that the interethnic adoption is a less supported family construction. (Simonovits & Bernát, 2016) Based on the results of our research, our assumption has proved to be correct, claiming that generally adoption has more wide-ranged support and is accompanied by more positive feelings than interethnic adoption.

We can conclude from the preliminary outcomes concerning the acceptance of interethnic adoption, that the Hungarian society would refuse it to 64,1% and accept the adoption of Roma children by non-Roma parents to 35,9%. This data almost exactly shows the same outcome than another study conducted in 2013 among people waiting for adoption in Budapest, where 66% of people applying to adopt signify their ethnic preference. (Neményi & Takács, 2015). According to the present research, the most pressing reason behind this refusal (based on the responses of 53,7% of the respondents) is that due to the hereditary Roma/gypsy traits, Roma children can have unfavorable personalities. This is followed by those reasons that place the child's interest to the first place, even though these are still refusing answers: he/she could not defend her/him from the discrimination of the surroundings (45,5 %), could not provide the Roma/gypsy culture to the child (37,2 %). According to one-fourth of the respondents (25,2%), the family would not be able to accept the origins of the child, while almost another one-fourth would refuse to adopt a Roma child due to their visible difference (skin color, racial traits). A

fractional proportion of the respondents, 12,2 %, would refuse to adopt a Roma child because then the process of adoption will be visible to others.

Our assumptions have been met, as females, those who have higher education, live in the capital city, and who are older seem to be more tolerant towards the adoption of a Roma child, and also towards Roma people in general. (Keresztes-Takács and companions, 2016, Murányi, 2006).

Our original presumption according to which essentialism, anti-Roma attitudes and negative attitudes towards adoption determine the attitude shown towards the Roma adopted child, which are embodied by the stereotypes against the adopted Roma child, have been justified based on the model. We suppose direct and indirect connections between the determining factors of attitude shown towards a Roma child's adoption and its background factors. We have tested our hypothesis with the help of a path model. According to this, essentialism is in direct relationship with the attitude towards interethnic families, thorough more background factors, while anti-Roma attitudes and the general attitude towards adoption are in a direct and indirect relationship. Moreover, those who adopt a Roma child, and the stereotypes about the Roma child are in direct relationship with the variable outcome. Our hypothesis has been mainly justified, as certain indirect factors are indeed in connection with the outcomes, even though we suppose the indirect relation of essentialism. In contrast to this, this factor has a direct impact on our outcome variables. Essentialism defines the attitude for adoption in a way that those who follow a more essentialist view are less tolerant towards the adoption, and to the same extent towards interethnical adoption. The relationship between essentialism and anti-Roma attitudes is strengthened by the previously received result, that interethnic adoption is mostly not supported with reference to genetic factors. In this process, anti-Roma attitudes have a serious intermediary role, as they not only influence the stereotypes but the acceptance of the interethnic adoption itself as well. Anti-Roma sentiments have a stronger impact on the adopted Roma child, and stereotypes concerning him/her rather than on the parents. The attitude towards adoption is determining in the stereotypes connected to participants of adoption, but it has an even stronger determining force on the support of interethnic adoption. These stereotypes directly regulate the attitude towards the Roma child's adoption.
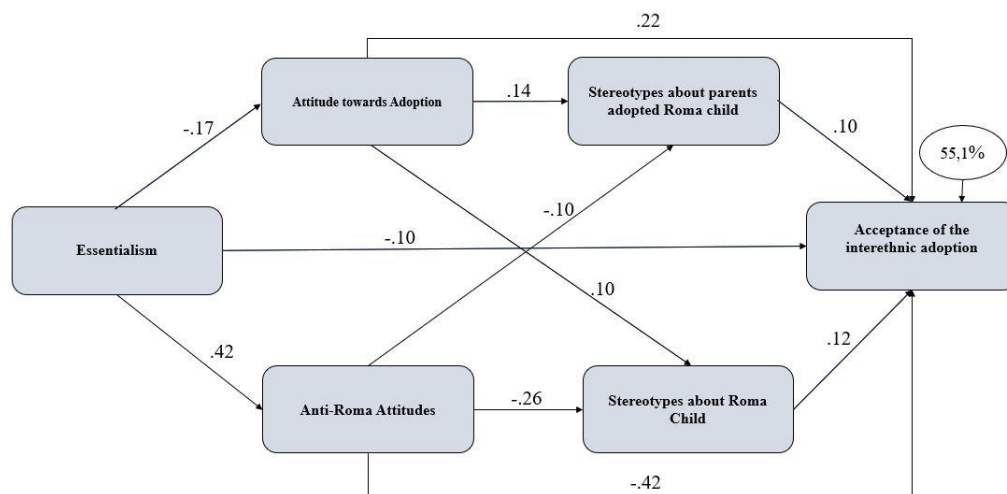

Figure 3: The SEM model of the background factors determining the adopted Roma child's refusal. (The arrows used on the image significant regression weight, thus betas.) The insertion indicators of the model: Khí square = 8,71, p > 0,5, RMSEA=.034, PClose=.758, CFI=.994, TLI=.969

4.4 Fourth study: Roma Identity Perception of non-Roma Parents adopting Roma Children

Aims

The aim of this study is to introduce the image of those Hungarian people, who will "supposedly" adopt a Roma child or children, but they do not consider themselves Roma about Roma people. This research examines the supposed conceptualization of Roma identity and its emergence in a family, which originally does not have Roma ancestry. The most significant aim of the research is to observe what kind of content, and meaning do these people connect to Roma identity, and how important they consider this to be passed on their children.

Methods

The survey has been filled out by 153 parents who adopted a Roma child, out of which 133 are female (86,93%), and 20 (13,07%) is male. The average of the respondents' age is 42,93 (Min=27, Max= 63 years) years. Our questionnaire also included questions regarding their demographic background factors that we used to inquire about the respondents' age, gender, where they live (capital city: 47,1%, small city near the capital city or agglomeration: 18,3%, county capital: 9,2%, town in the countryside: 10,5%, village: 13,7%, other: 1,4%), education, (vocational school: 5,9 %, school-leaving exam: 4,6%, adult certification: 5,2%, Bachelor's degree: 27,5%, Master's degree: 6,4%, doctorate or higher: 10, 5 %) and financial status (below average: 8,5%, average: 52,9%, above average: 38,5%). Apart from this, we enquired about the respondents'' marital status (77,1% married, 2,6% in a relationship, 12,4% single, 6,5% divorced, 1,4% other). Beyond the standard statistics, we held it necessary to ask them about the number of their children (69,9% - one child, 25,5% - two, 3,9% - three, 0,7 % - four children), and at what age were they adopted (average 1 year, min=0, max=5 years) and through which organization (63,3% "TEGYESZ", 26,1% "Gólyahír" Foundation, 3,3 % "Fészek" Foundation, 3,3 % "Magánutas", 5,9 % other). The research has been authorized and certified by the Pedagogy and Psychology Institute of the Eötvös Lóránd University's Research and Ethical Committee. During the elaboration of the examination we found out that there is a similar study going on at the Arts Department of the University of Miskolc, and it would be contra-productive to send the same survey to the same groups of parents, so we chose to cooperate with them.

Results and discussion

Roma identity is a socially created concept, still taking it into consideration is important, since in their everyday life interethnic families are facing problems connected to this phenomenon (Annamma, 2012). The main goal of this research was to study the content and meaning that interethnic adoptive parents bind to Roma identity, and how important they think it is to hand this over to their child. This is important because the way interethnic adoptive parents feel and define the child's ethnicity is the way the child will later on define him or herself (Scherman és Harré, 2004).

As we have presumed, those parents who adopted a Roma child tend to describe the Roma identity in a static and descriptive manner. We are talking about associations regarding stereotypes or cultures. These can be considered as positive stereotypes, or associations useful for the possible introduction of the identity. As we expected, these play a significant role when describing Roma identity. The cognitive elements, hence the knowledge connected to the culture, like traditions, habits thus have a major part in the formation of identity, and they do not identify the notion of identity with the possible inherited traits from the Roma birth parents. At the same time – as we presumed – there are positive stereotypes about Roma people in the minds of these people, which they identify with the Roma identity, or one of its elements. As

a result, they compensate for the existing negative stereotypes in society within their microenvironment.

Apart from these, perceptions about the social psychological Roma identity, thus the components of the ethnic identity also emerged among the responses in a great proportion, when they consider Roma identity only as a segment of the identity construction. Besides these factors, race traits and the question of origin has been mentioned several times in the answers, which signify a kind of unchangeable traits of "Roma life". According to the opinions, if it is visible that someone is Roma, they cannot avoid the creation of a Roma identity, thus the static perception of identity surfaces again. During the examination of parents adopting a Roma child, we have read about the identity-forming power of the Roma environment, the minimalization of differences and the negative stereotypes about Roma people – even though they emerged in a smaller proportion compared to greater categories. These, as we assumed, have been mentioned fewer times.

Even though the group is heterogenic concerning its socialization strategy, still, most of the parents can determine the strategy by building a stereotype. It is a common occurrence, that the majority of the adoptive parents form stereotypes, and they use this romanticized Roma-image to turn towards their child's identity and to help in the creation of their identity. They bind physical traits, skills, and attitudes – such as race traits, great sense of rhythm, vivid mentality, etc. – to Roma origins using these romanticized Roma-images, and use it to positively validate it in the child.

4.5 Fifth study: Interethnic Adoption: Identity and Cultural Competence for Adoptive Parents

Aims
The aim of the study is to analyze the non-Roma parents' relation, who adopt a Roma child, to their own Roma ethnical identity, and to determine which factors predestinate the creation of this new form of identity. The origin of the child, his/her external traits, his/her Roma identity considered by his/her surroundings, and the time spent with the child can all be a determining factor about the extent this new additive Roma identity is formed in the parent (Sussman, 2000, Hughes and companions, 2006, O'Donoghue, 2004). However, we assume that the cultural competencies of the interethnical adoptive parent, thus the cognitive ethnical awareness, their multicultural plans with the child and their survival skills all have a moderation effect on this phenomenon (Vonk, 2001).

Methods
The sample and the procedure are the same, as in the case of the fourth analysis.

Results and discussion
The model serving as the basis of this study shows us that the theory of the "self-extended" of Aron and his co-workers (1991) – according to which in an intimate relationship, like the parent-child connection, the boundaries of the self become blurred, thus the traits of a person can become the traits of the other -, moreover the notion of the additive identity in Sussman's (2000) cultural adaptation model can be applied in families adopting a Roma child.
It is a basic hypothetical question, whether the social group membership of the child and the months/years spent with the child determine the parents' additive ethnical identity through their cultural competencies in such a strong way that they proclaim/consider themselves Roma in

certain situations, hence identification is not only present on the level of attitude, but on the level of behavior as well.

Time spent with the child influences racial awareness, more precisely the more time they spend with the adopted child the less sensitive they become to the ethnic differences in society.
The possible explanation the outcome, which is in opposition with our assumption is that racial awareness is a process, which requires more effort at the beginning then it is present in the individuals' lives in an automatic way that they become less and less aware of it (Howell, 1982). The social group membership of the child determines the racial awareness of the parent, even if to a small extent, thus it shows how they perceive the existence of other ethnicities in the majority society. From an ethnic perspective, the more awareness a parent has the more they can develop multicultural awareness and a more wide-ranged survival, or tackling strategy, which has been proven right within the premises of our study analyzing parents adopting a Roma child. Multicultural plans positively, while survival skills negatively impact ethnic identity, and Roma identification stemming from this. More precisely, the more someone is prepared and prepares his/her Roma child for the possible atrocities and the unfavorable attitude of society, the less they will proclaim themselves Roma. It is possible that a certain kind of survival mechanism will take place if someone realizes and perceives prejudice existing in society, about which they also notify their children so that the less they can identify themselves with the social group to which these negative stereotypes are connected.
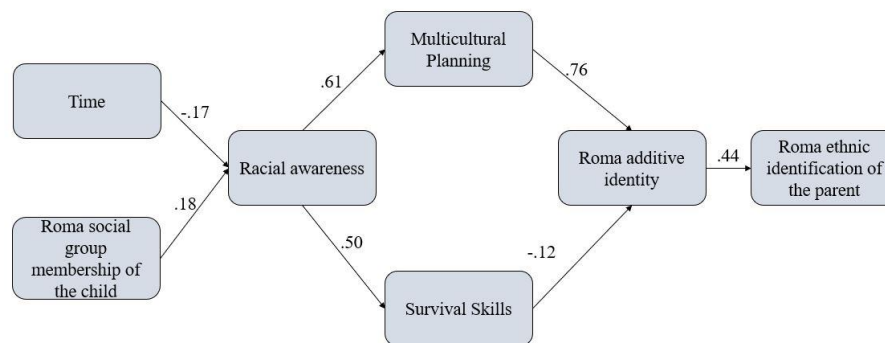

Figure 4: The SEM model about the determining factors of the parents' ethnic identification. . (The arrows used on the image significant regression weight, thus betas.) The insertion indicators of the model: Khí square = 19.12, p > 0.05, RMSEA=.049 (Lo=.000, Hi=.099), PClose=.465, CFI=.980, TLI=.971

5. CONCLUSION

All things considered, we can see that the participants of adoption are affected by stereotypes existing in society, which make the process of adoption harder from a psychological point of view. The social psychological aspect of interethnic adoption places both the parents and the adopted child's ethnic identity into a different perspective. International academic literature mainly specifies the identity of Afro-American or Asia children and parents (Maldonado, 2005, O'Donoghue, M., 2004, Johnston, 2007), while today interethnical adoption means the adoption of Roma children in Hungary (Szilvási, 2005). These families need to tackle the effects imposed by society, internalize it, and build their society in a unique, prejudiced social context (Keresztes-Takács, 2016).

The process of adoption is encompassed by several societal problems from a social psychological point of view. Most of the time, the social differences between certain social classes, social sexes, and differing ethnicities can be accounted as the reason for adoption, thus its origin. However, in many cases, these are present in combination with each other or

multiplied. We cannot claim based on the interviews of professionals that the following situation would be true to all adopters, but it is certain that Roma women from low social classes, with bad financial situation and negative background circumstances widely represent themselves among the birth parents, which counts as a predictive factor.

Our results indicate that the stigma of adoption puts its mark on the image of adoptive parents and adopted children in Hungary. The stereotypes and misconceptions existing in the Hungarian society about adoption, analyzed in this study, serve as foundations for the stigmatized situation of adoptive families, especially if we talk about interethnic adoption, when the families need to tackle the common anti-Roma attitude in parallel with the public judgment of adoption itself (Keresztes-Takács et al., 2016).

The common view that an adopted child is different from the others exists in our society about adopted children (March, 1995, Miall, 1996, Clark-Miller, 2005). This otherness emerges in the eyes of society in connection with certain problems, like proneness to deviance, or in that they are not as happy, confident and stable than those peers who were not adopted. Even though there are no differences in the judgment of parent-child bonding among the children.

There are seemingly opposing feelings and stereotypes about the adoptive parents, which have been indicated by the stereotype-, and feeling-connection research, in the case of interethnic and non-interethnic families as well. The judgment of parents adopting a Roma child seems to be the most contradictory, whereas in parallel with kind-heartedness and friendliness appears the feeling of disgust, pity, and disdain at the same time. There are more moderate, but similar results regarding the adoptive parent. Even though we do not have comparative research regarding the stereotype content model, we can claim that there are twofold feelings concerning the adoptive families in other societies, and in ours as well. The result of Clark-Miller (2005), according to which the perception of adoptveg parents and their children is more negative and less supportive than the non-adoptive parents', domestic perceptions are similar.

We have held it necessary to analyze the background factors of the acceptance of interethnic adoption. Foreign research showed that there are mainly positive attitudes connected to adoption itself (Dave Thomas Foundation, 2013, Mohanty, 2014), while we presume a negative attitude in case of interethnic families as they need to tackle common anti-Roma attitudes in line with discrimination against adoptive families.

 The hypothesis proved to be correct, according to which adoption has a more wide-ranged public support, more positive feelings are connected to it, then to its interethnic counterpart. Our assumptions also proved to be right regarding demographic dimensions, according to which women are more prone to view interethnic adoption with a more positive attitude than men. Furthermore, higher education also predestines a more positive attitude. Those people who live in the capital city or are elder are more acceptable towards adopting a Roma child than people living in the countryside.

The central question of interethnic adoption is the family and the participants' self-definition, and identity, which are the foundations of adoption itself, the social discrimination deriving from it, whether the adopted child is viewed as Roma or not by the non-Roma adoptive parents, and the socialization strategy they choose. Our study has shown that it is most people from the middle-, higher-middle social class, who live in the capital city or in the vicinity to strive for the creation of a supposedly harmonic relationship for their adopted Roma child with the social phenomenon that the majority of society counts him/her as a member of the Roma group - many

times even the adoptive parents – to which they connect either positive or negative stereotypes. (Keresztes-Takács & Erős, 2018).

In our study, which was based on the self-extended model (Nobles, 1973) and Sussman's acculturation model (2000), we can observe that these models can also be applied to domestic interethnic families too. The psychological identification of those parents who adopt a Roma child to the child's social group can be so intense (Wright and companions, 2006), that the non-Roma parent partly associates himself/herself with the group and forms a certain kind of additive Roma identification. Intercultural competencies have significant mediating effect in the whole process, just like racial awareness of the adoptive parents, their multicultural plans and the chosen tackling strategy play a strong determining role in the parents' Roma ethnical identity. The more parents support and allow their child to get involved in Roma culture, the more they get involved in it and associate themselves with it (Lee and companions, 2015). The strategies the parent in connection with the child's Roma identity, or the extent to which they perceive ethnical differences existing in society (Vonk, 2001) has an impact on their own ethnic identity. They can identify themselves so much with this social group to proclaim themselves Roma in certain situations.

6. THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION AND APPLICATION POSSIBILITIES

The analyses contribute in a great extent to institutional studies about attitudes regarding adoption and play a gap-filling role in the experience of adoptive parents' status, which can already be found in international academic literature, but seems negligible in Hungary. Furthermore, the theoretical contribution of our study is that it maps a so far undiscovered realm in academic literature, such as the formulation of ethnic identity of the parents who adopt a Roma child.

Apart from theoretical usage, the results of the interethnic adoption study can be applied in practice as well. The relevant results can be built into the schedule of pre-adoption programs for those parents who are waiting to adopt a child, which contributes to the more effective and efficient preparation of the future parents. This research data can also be useful for those civil services who work with adoptive parents and support them – not those services who intermediate – for the deeper understanding of the adoptive family.

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