

92 percent of families with adopted children are satisfied with their decision

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Ninety-two percent of families with adopted children are satisfied with their decision. Credit: Bea&Xema

Two separate surveys six years apart have been used to analyse the level of satisfaction with adoptions in Andalucía. The study shows that 77.7% of families are happier after the process and variables that make it more difficult have been identified, such as the age of the children when arriving, multiple adoption and previous experiences of abuse. There is a significant link between the parents' assessment and that of the children.

"We wanted to know to what extent adoptions in Spain are providing children who need it with a healthy family environment that promotes their development" Yolanda Sánchez-Sandoval, a researcher from the

University of Cádiz (UCA) states. In order to assess that, a comprehensive questionnaire was sent to families with adopted children in Andalucía, which was employed, amongst other uses, to assess family's [satisfaction](#) with the decision as a measurement of success.

The results show that, although their lives have been not been free of difficulties, these families are happy with the adoption. "Generally speaking, they are very satisfied with their decision and its implications on their family and personal lives" Sánchez-Sandoval affirms.

77.7% of families stated that their lives have been happier as a result of the adoption and 91.9% consider its repercussions to be positive. However, 37% consider family life to be more complicated in their situation.

The children's opinion of their lives is also linked with that of their parents. "When the parents are more satisfied with the adoption, we found that the children are also happier with their own lives" the researcher declares.

Variables linked with satisfaction

In the study, which is published in the journal *Psicothema*, they identified some variables that are linked with difficulties in adoption, for example, if the children were older when arriving at the home, if they were adopted alone or with a sibling, or if they had previous experiences of abuse.

Adopting a child that they already knew before also affects the process. "Those who adopted children that they had a relationship with before were less satisfied, probably due to the reason for adoption. These families may have felt somewhat obliged, or reflect more on the decision" Sánchez-Sandoval analysed.

The satisfaction is also lower in cases where the parents have a higher level of education. "They have higher expectations" the author says. The mothers are less affectionate and caring, and the children are less caring and have behavioural problems.

Second survey six years later

393 families participated in the first questionnaire (69.19% of families that adopted during this period). In the second one, the sample was reduced to 272 families in Andalucía who had adopted domestically in the previous seven years. "We did two questionnaires six years apart, when they had been living together for an average of 11.22 years, and a separate one with the children at school" Sánchez-Sandoval explained.

The majority of families contacted were two-parent families (90.5%) and at least half of them had basic studies. 72.9% had one adopted child, and in 13.5% of cases, two biological siblings had been taken in.

48.4% were girls, 10% had a disability, 11.7% had a chronic illness and 8.1% belonged an ethnic minority group. The average age of the children when they first went to live with the families was 1.85 years and 60% of the children were less than a year old.

As well as having a mainly positive assessment, the study shows that families that reported complications in the first questionnaire felt the same way in the second one. "Satisfaction is stable over time" the author says.

The opinions of those involved

Satisfaction with adoption is not a widely studied phenomenon. However, according to the author, this study gives an image of

integration. "It is an assessment by those involved regarding the success of the process" she states.

The author had wanted to use the questionnaire to study the families' satisfaction with adopted children over time, identify relationships between the parents' and children's judgement of the process and of the variables linked to it.

"Some characteristics can complicate the adopting processes. However, with compensating resources, conflicts can be prevented and these children's adaptation can be made easier" Sánchez-Sandoval believes.

"Post-adoption [family](#) intervention in children with serious behavioural problems improve parents' satisfaction."

More information: Yolanda Sánchez Sandoval. "Satisfacción con la adopción y con sus repercusiones en la vida familiar". *Psicothema*; 23. 630-635. 2011.

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