

# Biological family searches by international adoptees

A study into the searches for international  
adoptees from Sri Lanka and Indonesia



Anouk de Mol  
June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020



Specialist help in case of  
unwanted pregnancies and  
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Utrecht University

## Biological Family Searches by International Adoptees

A study into the searches for international adoptees from Sri Lanka and Indonesia

Anouk de Mol (6007821)

Masterthesis Sociology: Contemporary Social Problems  
Utrecht University

First reader: dr. M.D. Brons

Second reader: J. Lohman

Internship supervisor: dr. S. Bolt

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**Utrecht University**



## Abstract

The adoption of a child from Sri Lanka or Indonesia by Dutch couples or individuals was legally made possible in 1973. In total, 3416 Sri Lankan and 3071 Indonesian children were adopted by Dutch couples and individuals. In the past few years, multiple signals of fraudulent practices related to intercountry adoptions came forward. A frequent signal is the incorrect information about the biological family in the adoption papers. This incorrect information makes it unlikely or even impossible for adoptees to find their biological family. This research explores and identifies the factors that play a role in the search for biological family. The study is commissioned by Fiom. The sample consisted of 63 searches by adoptees for biological family in Sri Lanka and Indonesia. Logistic regressions show that the presence of official documents with identifying information are positively related to a successful search. However, adding several barriers that served as moderating factors (including signals of potential fraud) did not show any influence on this positive relation. A plausible explanation for this, is the small sample-size. Based on these, and other results, several policy recommendations were made.

*Keywords:* intercountry adoption; Sri Lanka; Indonesia; biological family; adoptees; (un)successful searches; Fiom

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# 1. Introduction

Dilani Butink (28) was adopted from Sri Lanka by her Dutch parents, when she was two days old. She started her search for her biological mother by the age of 23, in which she discovered that her birth was not registered anywhere in Sri Lanka. Moreover, she found that the signatures on her birth-documents did not match, indicating forgery. Consequently, she is unable to find her biological mother. On the 18<sup>th</sup> of May, 2020, Butink filed a lawsuit against the Dutch state and the permitholder who arranged her adoption. She holds them accountable for the negligence in overseeing and verifying correctness not only in her adoption, but also in those of many other adoptees (Pols, 2018; Van der Mee, 2020).

Another party that filed a lawsuit against the Dutch state is the MijnRoots foundation. This foundation was found by adoptees from Indonesia. They represent the interest of Indonesian adoptees and facilitate searches for biological family in Indonesia. In 2018, this foundation accuses the state of negligence related to adoptions from Indonesia in the 1970's and 1980's. The organization demands that the state has to support searches for biological relatives financially (Pols, 2018).

In the past few years, multiple signals came forward about fraudulent practices in especially Sri Lanka and Indonesia (Otten, 2017-a, 2017-b, 2018). The Dutch government started an ongoing research, into intercountry adoption [ICA] procedures between the Netherlands and Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka in the period from 1967 until 1998 and the role of the Dutch government within this process (Rijksoverheid, 2019). This was the reason for Fiom to request a critical view into the searches in these countries that they have facilitated. Fiom is a Dutch organization that, among other services, facilitates (inter)national searches for biological family (Fiom, n.d.-d). The searches are all documented as files, which enables practice-oriented research. Fiom's request focusses on whether signals of fraudulent practices in the adoption came forward during the search.

So far, previous research focused predominantly on the effect of adoption on the development of adopted children (Van Berkel and Kaptein, 2004). Some research is conducted into searches for biological family, but mainly about the psychological and demographic characteristics (Feast and Howe, 1997; Godon, Green, and Ramsey, 2014; Kraus, 1982; Müller and Perry, 2001; Tieman, van der Ende, and Verhulst, 2008; Wrobel, Grotevant, and McRoy, 2016). To my knowledge, the factors that influence the success of a search have not yet been studied. This study aims to fulfill this knowledge gap by exploring and identifying the field of factors that play a role in the search for biological family, which is the scientific relevance of this research.

According to exploratory research, the available official documents related the adoption, that include names and addresses from the biological family, are the starting point of a search for biological family (Van der Heij and Hendriks, 2017). Assuming that this personal information is correct, it is expected that the more information is available, the more likely a search is successful. Yet, barriers may weaken this positive relation. The media accentuate that fraud is a major cause for adoptees being unable to find their biological family. Still, Wrobel et al. (2013) emphasize that other factors might play a role as well. Therefore, it is decided to look from a broader scope. Besides fraud, other possible barriers will be identified.

This leads to the main research question: *1. To what extent do factors influence the success of the search for biological family in Sri Lanka and Indonesia?* To answer this question, two sub-questions are constructed: *1.1 To what extent does the completeness of information influence the success of the*

*search? 1.2 How do completeness of information and the identified barriers relate to each other in their influence on the success of the search?* These questions will be answered based on quantitative analyses.

It is essential that this research is carried out now. Within Fiom, files related to international searches are retained for a maximum of ten years (based on the closing-date). After this period, the files are destroyed. In this research, the files related to Sri Lanka and Indonesia from the past ten years will therefore be studied. The possibilities to search for biological family are limited, due to the often incorrect birth-information and the lack of cooperation in these countries for carrying out the searches. In 2014, Fiom stopped the service to search in Sri Lanka and since 2017 also in Indonesia. This means that after a few years, Fiom has no files anymore that can be used for investigating the factors that influence the success of a search in Sri Lanka or Indonesia. It is important to uncover this to be able to determine the influence of fraud and other factors (G.M.M. Groot, personal communication, March 12, 2020).

Based on this research, recommendations will be made that enable Fiom to recognize signals that predict the success of a search. The societal relevance of this research is that more realistic expectations about searching can be set and can be managed by the counselor. To come up with recommendations, the following policy question is: *2. To what extent can this research contribute to the quality of counseling of adoptees that search for their biological family internationally?* To answer this question, I will assess how the results of the study can contribute to the quality of counseling: *2.1 How can knowledge about factors that influence the success of the search for biological family contribute to the quality of counseling for seekers by Fiom?* In addition, I will also focus qualitative features that could not be captured in the measurements of this research but which I think are opportunities for policy improvement: *2.2 Besides the factors, what are notable features in the searches for biological family?*



## 2. Theoretical background

### § 2.1 Background information ICA

#### § 2.1.1 ICA history

Adoption is an ancient phenomenon (Van Wamelen, 2014) of which the interests have always been two-folded (Cuthbert, Spark, and Murphy, 2010). On the one hand adoption can be understood as a public possibility that fulfills a public need, referring to children who need a caring family. On the other hand are the private desires from prospective adoptive parents. These two interests are the fundament of the historical realization of adoption policy and are attempted to be balanced.

The first Dutch law within the framework of adoption policy, was introduced in 1956 (Werdmuller, 2017). This law enabled that the child that is adopted, legally no longer has ties with the biological parents (Hoksbergen, 2012). Although that adoption was permitted by law ever since, emotional ties between biological parents and their children may still exist (Hoksbergen, 2006).

In the Netherlands, adoption from Sri Lanka and Indonesia is legally permitted since 1973. During the 1980's, there was a high demand from Dutch citizens to adopt children from these countries. Since having a child as an unmarried mother was strongly stigmatized in these cultures, illegitimate children were giving up for adoption. A common reason for unmarried pregnant women for giving away their child, was to save their own reputation and the one of their families. Adoption made it possible to hide the pregnancy for these women (Jordal, Wijewardena, and Olsson, 2013).

Between 1973 until now, 3416 Sri Lankan children were adopted and brought to the Netherlands (Adoptievoorzieningen, n.d.). In 1983 the Indonesian government banned ICA's, due to the discovery of malpractices. Nowadays, adoption is only allowed under specific requirements. Between 1973 and 1984, 3071 adoptive children came from Indonesia to the Netherlands (Adoptievoorzieningen, n.d.).

#### § 2.1.2 Searching for biological family

Every adopted person will encounter the question whether to search for biological family. The feeling of harming the loyalty towards the adoptive parents, the uncertainty about the consequences of a search or the satisfaction with the identity of being an adopted child can be factors that lead to doubt about starting a search or to the decision not to start a search at all (Sobol and Cardiff, 1983; Van der Heij and Hendriks, 2017).

The literature on international adopted people showed a variety of motives for adoptees to search for their biological family. Godon et al. (2014) pointed out that the motive to start a search begins from the awareness of dissimilarity from their social environment. This fits the model of normality: "[the connection] with others who are racial similar and who may serve as potential role models and sources of information that contribute to their ethnic identity development" (Godon et al., 2014). Within this model, the search for origin is seen as a part of human psychological development (Feast and Howe, 1997). Additionally, Triseliotis, Feast, and Kyle (2005) stated that international adoptees often face difficulties related to the experience of belonging and identity. This stimulates the motivation to deepen into the information about their family origin.

Another motive to search for biological family is because of curiosity; Wrobel and Grotevant (2019) called this the Adoption Curiosity Pathway model. The information gap between what adoptees desire to know, and what they actually know, stimulates curiosity and is the motivation to start a search for biological family (Wrobel et al., 2016).

According to Müller and Perry (2001), countries with accessible documents about the adoption, 50% of the adoptees starts a search for their biological family. They emphasize that in Western countries, the gender role socialization process leads to the fact that women are more likely to start a search for their biological family than men. This process refers to the fact that women are more involved in what it means to raise children and attach more importance to maintaining contact with family members (March, 1996; Wrobel et al., 1996).

### § 2.1.3 Fiom

A search for biological family, like Dilani Butink did, can either be done independently or be facilitated by organizations. Fiom is one of these organizations in the Netherlands and advises to search with the help of a counselor, in order to avoid or assist in possible unpleasant situations (Fiom, n.d.-d). In the Convention of the Universal Rights of the Child (UNICEF, 1989), it is stated that it is in the best interest of humans to have information about their descent. Therefore, in the Netherlands insight in the documents about the adoption is free of charge for adoptees and are subsidized by the state.

Fiom was found in 1930 with the aim to construct a national regulation concerning grants of private institutions for unmarried mothers and their children. The organization also strived for the legislation of (inter)national adoptions. According to Hoksbergen (2006) during the fifties, the societal attitude in the Netherlands of mothers who gave up their child for adoption changed positively; their pain and sorrow were more acknowledged. This change created more openness around the theme 'adoption' and subsequently led to an increased interest for the search of biological family in the seventies. Organizations, such as Fiom, started to help in these processes.

To make international searches more effective, Fiom started a cooperation with the International Social Service [ISS] in the fifties and officially merged with the organization in 1999. ISS is a network that is represented in 120 countries and aims to unite biological families across borders (ISS, n.d.). Using this network, Fiom tries to find biological family abroad up to the second degree (parents, grandparents, children, grandchildren, (half-)siblings) (Van der Heij and Hendriks, 2017) and since 2007 offers the service to help in the international search for biological family (G.M.M. Groot, personal communication, March 12, 2020).

In the past eight years (2012-2020), 417 ICA related searches have been carried out by Fiom. From this number, 158 were successful, which means that the searched person was found. In 76 cases, ISS was unable to find the person. In 85 cases, the seeker withdrew prematurely or there was insufficient information to start a search. Right now, 98 cases are still ongoing. For Fiom it applies that from all the adoptees that search for (inter)national biological family (934 seekers), 45% is male and 52% female (from the remaining 3% the gender was unknown).

### § 2.2 Success of the search

According to Fiom (n.d.-b), there are five possible outcomes of international searches for biological family: the searched person wants contact, does not want contact, passed away, does not respond or cannot be found. However, while scanning several files, two additional options were found; 'no contact

can be made with the searched person or the searched person passed away, but other biological family members want contact' and 'the seeker withdraws prematurely'. The option that the searched person does not respond is only applicable to searches performed through letters. Since the searches in Sri Lanka and Indonesia were carried out by a correspondent who performed the search physically (G.M.M. Groot, personal communication, March 12, 2020), this outcome was excluded. This resulted into six final possible outcomes (see Figure 1).

Strictly speaking, a search can only be considered as successful when a DNA-test confirmed that the found person is biologically related (Hill, 2017). DNA-tests are able to determine (distant) family relationships (Fiom, n.d.-a). Due to fraudulent practices (§ 2.4.1) and inadequate administration (§ 2.4.3) within ICA's, the names within official documents may not lead to the actual biological family. The found family may mistake the seeker for another child who has been given up for adoption, but it could be that the family pretends to be the biological family, hoping that this will provide them with financial benefits, as comes forward in the Zembla broadcast (Otten, 2017-a, 2017-b, 2018).

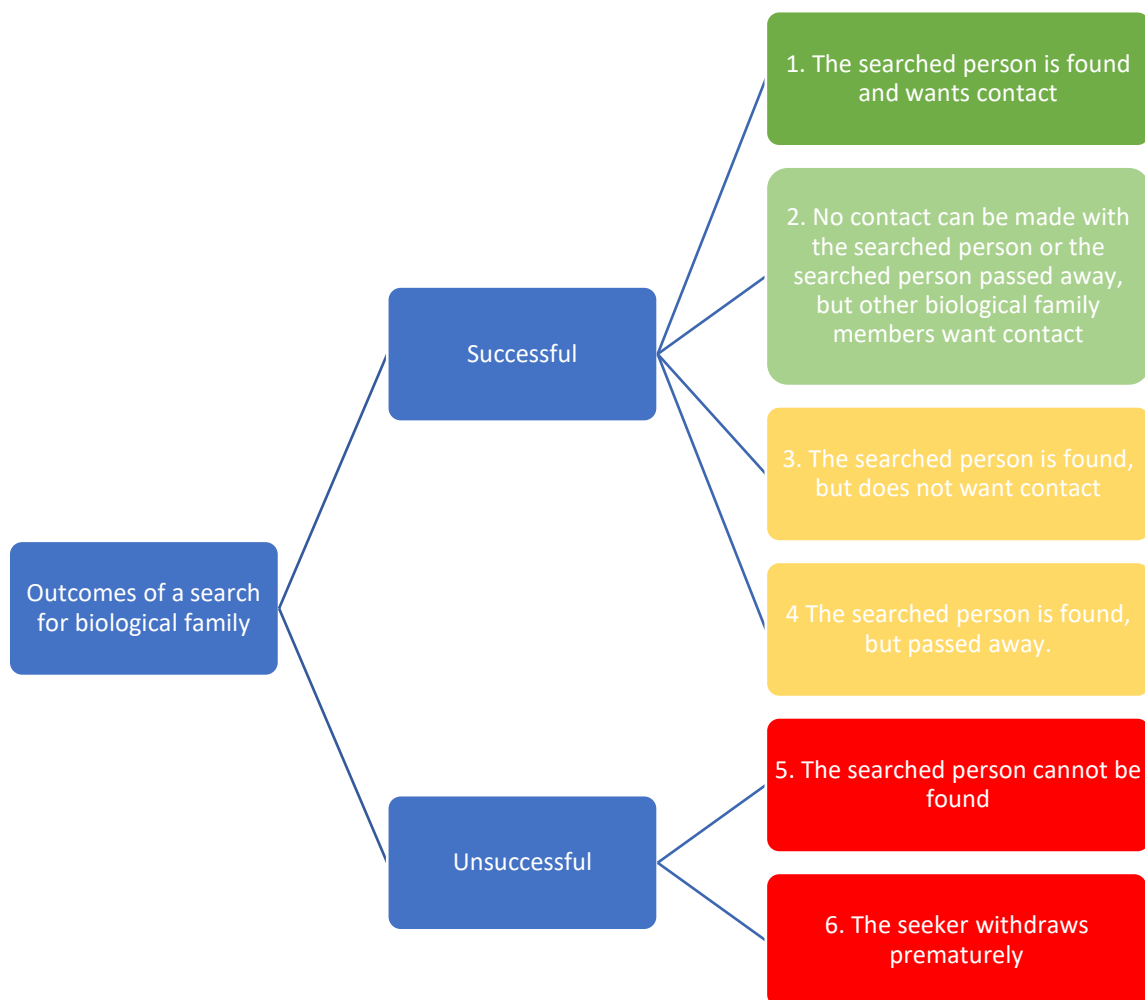


Figure 1. Possible outcomes from the international search for biological family.

### § 2.3 Completeness of information

The information that the adoptees have about their adoption is the foundation of the search for biological family (Van der Heij and Hendriks, 2017). It consists of official documents and photos from which information about the searched person(s) can be gathered. This foundation will differ, depending on how much information the seeker possesses and passes on to ISS to start the search. Yet, the quality of this personal information is prone to fraud (§ 2.4.1) and inadequate administration (§ 2.4.3). According to Van der Heij and Hendriks (2017), the completeness of this information depends on the extent to which information about the adoption has been collected and recorded in the past.

To find the specific person an adoptee is searching for, basic information is required, such as the last name (Weerkamp et al., 2011). Kraus (1982) emphasized that researchers in the United States recommended to open the available birth records for adult adoptees to provide them with background and identifying information when they ask for this. The reason for this is to offer searching adoptees a beneficial start. Van der Heij and Hendriks (2017) stated that when information about the adoption is incomplete, the search for biological family will be more complicated. Together, this leads to the following hypothesis: *[H1] The more complete the information, the more likely a search has been successful.*

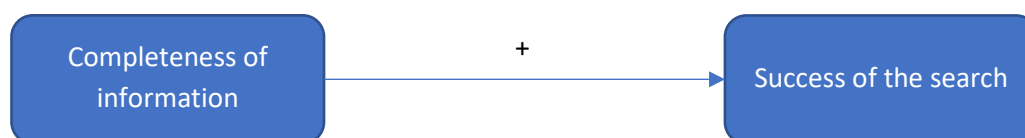


Figure 2. A schematic path model of H1.

### § 2.4 Barriers

Even when information is considered as complete, it is possible that a search is unsuccessful. Other barriers can be involved that weaken the main-effect between *completeness of information* and *outcome of the search*. This influence can be defined as a moderation-effect. Based on a short scan of ten files and the literature, four possible barriers were found (see Figure 3): *signals of potential fraud* (Smolin, 2004), *inaccessibility* (Aijaz, 2006; Kim and Ball-Rokeach, 2006), *inadequate administration* (Bandyopadhyay, Pathak, and Dentinho, 2020; Janowski, Estevez, and Baguma, 2018) and *pregnancy out of wedlock* (Tieman et al., 2008). Although an overarching theory does not exist, separate theories that relate to each barrier were found.

#### § 2.4.1 Signals of possible fraudulent practices

According to Fulwider (1999), fraud can be defined as a criminal action within legitimate businesses through which someone can gain value by the intentional misrepresentation of certain matters. He stated that indicators of fraud are hard to recognize, but also emphasized that in fraudulent cases certain “red flags” are often present. One of these indicators is the missing or altered data within documents; the incorrect registration of (personal) data.

For an ICA, prospective adoptive parents must pay money for several services. Due to the growing demand for foreign adoptive children in the 1970’s and 1980’s, combined with the market-oriented interest of society, people were incited to set up illegal practices to meet this demand and

benefit financially from it (Smolin, 2004). The rise of these fraudulent practices within ICA's can in sociological terms be defined as an unintended consequence of the adoption policy (Garfield, 2004). Due to the growing demand and the illegal practices, the two interests on which this policy is based (§ 2.1) were unbalanced. The private interests from prospective adoptive parents were mainly provided, which seemed to be beneficial for unlawful stakeholders who set up these fraudulent practices. The scale on which these fraudulent practices have taken place is unknown (Smolin, 2004). In the Routine Activity Approach, which is based on the rational choice theory, Cohen and Felson (1979) argued that crime is dependent upon the convergence of three elements: motivated offenders, suitable targets and the absence of capable guardians against violations. This suits the illegal practices within ICA.

Currently, more and more signals came forward about doubtful practices in Sri Lanka. Adoptees who started a search for their biological family often found that information in their files was incomplete or incorrect. In their broadcast 'Adoptiebedrog', the Dutch scientific program Zembla revealed that large-scale falsification of personal data has taken place in the 1970's and 1980's. Due to illegal practices, babies were taken away from mothers and offered for adoption. Through this, those involved in these illegal practices could gain lots of money paid by uninformed prospective adoptive parents (Otten, 2017-a, 2017-b). Also, in Indonesia there was a high demand for adoption children by foreigners during the 1970's and the beginning of the 1980's, especially by the Dutch. Back then, there was no adoption law that forbid the illegal practices within ICA procedures. This enabled intermediary services to make financial profits by providing foreign people who were willing to adopt an Indonesian child. Some of these intermediary agencies changed the names and addresses in the official documents and sometimes even stole babies from their birthmothers (Otten, 2018).

During the search, adoptees often find out that information within their adoption documents is incorrect. Also, due to the increasing media attention in recent years, specific names of controversial persons and organizations have emerged. The presence of these signals could indicate the involvement of potential fraudulent practices. Even when the information is considered as complete, fraud might weaken this positive effect on success and can therefore be perceived as a barrier. This results into the following hypothesis; [H2] *The positive relation between complete information and the success of the search is weaker when signals of potential fraud are involved.*

#### § 2.4.2 Inaccessibility

ISS has worldwide contacts with whom they collaborate to conduct a search for biological family. These contacts are called 'correspondents'. They carry out the physical part of the searches, commissioned by ISS and the seekers. The fact that places are not physically accessible for the correspondent, can be a limiting factor in the search. The Communication Infrastructure Theory is a framework that distinguished local communities based on having communication measures or not (Kim and Ball-Rokeach, 2006). Infrastructures are a physical form of access between people from different (local) communities (Aijaz, 2006). Communities that have proper infrastructure services, differ from communities that do not have these services in terms of accessibility. This influences the correspondent's ability in conducting the search.

Lasantha Sander Breeman, adopted from Sri Lanka when he was eight months old, currently organizes searches for biological family. He mentioned that the Sri Lankan road network has greatly improved since the end of the civil war in 2009 (personal communication, May 22, 2020). According to Edwin de Jong, a Dutch Anthropologist who carried out multiple studies in Indonesia, this improvement

of infrastructure in the past decade is also the case in Indonesia (personal communication, May 12, 2020). For both countries applies that even remote parts of the country are accessible due to the realization of proper ways and suitable means of transportation. When it comes to natural phenomena that make access to certain areas more difficult, these events happen sometimes but never take longer than a few weeks. This implies that eventually you can get anywhere in Sri Lanka and Indonesia if you have the time. However, the principle of having the time is not always applicable on the correspondent who works on behalf of several adoptees at the same time. Therefore, it is decided to still take *inaccessibility* into account as a barrier.

The presence of inaccessible places during the search of the correspondent, might weaken the positive influence of completeness of information on the success. This results in the following hypothesis: *[H3] The positive relation between complete information and the success of the search is weaker when inaccessibility is involved.*

### § 2.4.3 Inadequate administration

The comprehensive administration of citizens, where they live and how they are related, will be helpful in the search for biological family (Bandyopadhyay et al., 2020; Janowski et al., 2018). However, some countries have an inadequate administration system. When this information is not available, the search for a specific person might be complicated. Haque (1999) mentioned that before the year 1999, the administration in Asian countries was mostly poor. Since the seekers of which the files are used in this research are all born before this year, their birth information in the country of origin might be inadequate.

Yet, Breeman pointed out that the national administrative overview of citizens in Sri Lanka is of high quality, which was set up during the VOC-time and after that, maintained by the British. Generally, the administration of citizens is reliable. Still, he emphasized that personal information within adoption files is indeed often incorrect and falsified information. He stated that from all the adoption files from Sri Lanka, an approximate amount of 90% contains no useful information for a search. This information is often (partly) made up.

De Jong confirmed the occurrence of an inadequate comprehensive citizen administration in Indonesia (personal communication, May 12, 2020). In small villages, there do exist administrative-bureaucratic systems that register citizens. Archives of paper documents are usually not well taken care of and either affected by the tropical weather conditions or even completely destroyed during the past decades. Yet, in small villages there exists a collective memory through which people know who lives or has lived there in the recent past. However, this does not apply to the bigger places. Due to changes in the population composition of the cities (increased number of citizens and immigrants), there does not exist such a collective memory in (parts of) the city. During his reign as president of Indonesia, Suharto (1967-1998) implemented a new citizen-administration-system. After his resignation, his administrative system faded away as a new, more decentralized, administrative system was built since 2001. However, in many of the decentralized systems, historical (pre-decentralized) data is lacking. This points out that it is not very likely that a comprehensive central citizen-administration-system of the past decennia is still existing in Indonesia. This complicates the possibilities to search for a specific person.

Even if there is complete fundamental information (official documents and photos), the presence of an inadequate administration system will weaken this effect. This leads to the following

hypothesis: [H4] *The positive relation between complete information and the success of the search is weaker when inadequate administration is involved.*

#### § 2.4.4 Pregnancy out of wedlock

In Sri Lanka, giving up a child for adoption was socially rejected. However, conceiving a child out of wedlock or the birth of a child by an unmarried mother was even more stigmatized (Jordal et al., 2013). In Indonesia, the stigma on giving up a child was less persistent, due to the prevailing Muslim belief in which social and economic justice and compassion were valued. From this perspective, adoption was seen as a justified opportunity to offer children in need a better life (Bennett, 2018). Still, giving birth to a child that is conceived out of wedlock or the birth of a child by an unmarried woman was strongly rejected in Indonesia (ISS Netherlands, personal communication, April 25, 2020). Therefore, it might be that biological mothers who conceived a child out of wedlock, tried to be anonymous when they gave up their child for adoption or that they do not want to be confronted with their biological child out of shame. This means the social environment of a distant mother was often unaware of the pregnancy. To protect these women from the prevailing stigma, personal information is not released easily (Tieman et al., 2008). This makes it hard to receive personal information about the biological family and complicates the search for a specific person.

In the short scan on several files, it came forward that pregnancy out of wedlock is a common reason to give up a child for adoption. It is expected that when it comes to an illegitimate child, it will influence the positive relation between completeness of information and the success negatively. This results into the last hypothesis: [H5] *The positive relation between complete information and the success of the search is weaker when a pregnancy out of wedlock is involved.*

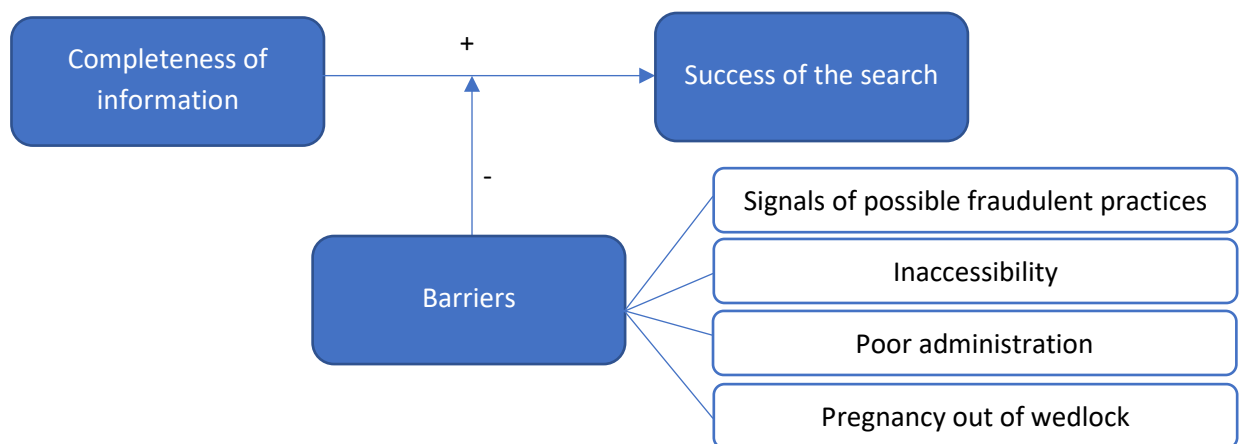


Figure 3. A schematic path model of the expected moderation effect (H2 – H5).



## 3. Methods

### § 3.1 Data source and the sample

The files related to searches in Sri Lanka and Indonesia, that are stored by Fiom, were used to construct a dataset. For this study, qualitative information in the files was used to gather data to investigate an unknown field of science (Heaton, 2008). Encoding qualitative information into a certain category, simplifies the information and makes the final data therefore quantitative. The categories for each variable were determined, based on what was found in the literature. However, while collecting the data, it appeared that the literature did not cover all options. Therefore, additional themes that occurred in the files for at least three times were included as a category.

This way of constructing a dataset implies that a desk-research was conducted (Saunders et al., 2011); the use of already existing information for the construction of a dataset. Since the dataset is based on documented information, the study is defined as an archive research. To capture this information into a quantitative dataset, Microsoft Excel 2016 was used. When the data-gathering was finished, the document was transferred into an IBM SPSS Statistics (version 26.0) document, so it could be analyzed statistically.

The files used for this research are closed, which means that the search has stopped. An approximate amount of three-quarter is physical and a quarter is digital. The files contain the following: first the general background information that is asked when seekers submitted a request for a search by Fiom. Since it is not mandatory to answer all the questions in the application form, the amount of background information differs between seekers. Second, it is also requested to send copies of official documents regarding the adoption. Because seekers do not always have all these official documents or do not send everything, the number of official documents differs per seeker. Third, the file contains the e-mail exchange between the seeker, the counselor, the Fiom-ISS casemanager from the Netherlands and the correspondent. The amount of this reporting via e-mail depends on many factors, such as the difficulty of the search or the wishes from the seeker.

### § 3.2 Ethical and privacy considerations

Within this research, secondary data was studied. For using this data, it was complicated to receive an informed consent from the seekers. Besides the fact that asking for informed consent would take a lot of time, it could cause emotional damage or distress (Jol and Stommel, 2016). According to the General Data Protection Regulation (EU, 2016) and legislation from Fiom, personal information can only be provided without this consent when it concerns scientific research purposes. Additionally, this information must be anonymized in such a way that it cannot lead to the individual person and must serve a public interest.

To ensure anonymity (Lawrence Neuman, 2014), personal information that was irrelevant for this study was excluded from the dataset. When it comes to confidentiality, data was only released in an aggregate form and the dataset was not publicly accessible. Moreover, the dataset was saved in an extra secured digital environment from Fiom. This environment was only accessible for involved researchers, who could access the document with a password. It will be saved in this environment for ten years and after that, will automatically be destroyed.



### § 3.3 Inclusion criteria

In the first place, only searches that have been performed in Sri Lanka or Indonesia were relevant for this research. Second, according to the rules that Fiom maintains regarding the storage of search files, only files that were administratively closed for (less than) ten years ago were used. It turned out that 89 files in the archive met these requirements and thus can be used in this research. Third, not all information within these files was relevant for this study. Information that suited the topics mentioned in the chapter 2 were gathered (completeness of information, signals of possible fraudulent practices, inaccessibility, inadequate administration and pregnancy out of wedlock), supplemented with general background information (age, sex and the date of starting and closing the search). Fourth, because data was retrieved from the official documents, it was important to understand the information mentioned in these files. For me to be able to understand this information, it must be translated to English or Dutch. Mostly, a translation came with the original documents. In three files, there was no translation of these documents and therefore had to be excluded, leaving 86 files. Lastly, to focus on the process of searching, it was important that the search was started. The start of a search for biological family was defined by the request from ISS to the correspondent to start the search. It is possible that seekers withdrew before this request was sent, or that the search could not be started because there was not enough information. When this was the case, these files were not useful for this research. This excluded 20 files and left a sample of  $N=66$  (Sri Lanka  $n=38$ , Indonesia  $n=28$ ).

### § 3.4 Operationalization

#### § 3.4.1 Dependent variable: Success of the search

To answer the main question of this research the dependent variable must be defined; *success of the search*. Therefore, the e-mail exchange in the file had to be studied. Through this, the possible outcomes of the searches could be determined and categorized. Six categories were made that represent the outcomes (see Table 1).

Table 1

*Frequencies from categorical outcomes of the search (N=66).*

	Frequency	Percentage
Outcome of the search		
1. The searched person is found and wants contact	25	37.9
2. No contact can be made with the searched person or the searched person passed away, but other biological family members want contact	5	7.6
3. The searched person is found, but does not want contact	1	1.5
4. The searched person is found, but passed away	3	4.5
5. The searched person cannot be found	29	43.9
6. The seeker withdraws prematurely	3	4.5
Total	66	100

The outcomes of searches for biological family were complex, especially when it came to the presence of contact between the adoptee and the biological family and the death of a searched person. Because contact and death are factors that have nothing to do with the process of the search, it was decided to define the outcomes of the search as a binary variable; successful or unsuccessful. On the other hand, finding or not finding the searched person was a relevant indication for this. Therefore, it was decided to take the outcome 1, 2, 3 and 4 together and define this as successful (1) and outcome 5 as unsuccessful (0). These five options together cover the outcomes of a completed search. However, the sixth option refers to a search that was started but never been completed, because the seeker prematurely stopped the search. Since a fully conducted search is a prerequisite for determining the influence of factors, the three cases with this outcome were excluded in further analyses, which left a definitive sample of  $N=63$  (Sri Lanka  $n=38$ , Indonesia  $n=25$ ).

As mentioned in the previous chapter, a DNA-test is advisable when a person is found. Six from the 34 successful searches were confirmed by such a test. This means that only from six cases, it can be said with certainty that they found their biological family; 18% from the successful searches. Due to this low number of biological-confirmed searches, a DNA-test was not included in this study as a requirement for a search to determine the outcome. The extent to which this is limiting for this research, will be discussed in chapter 5.

#### § 3.4.2 Independent variable: Completeness of information

First, the predicting variable (*completeness of information*) from the expected main-effect (see Figure 2) will be explained. As mentioned in § 2.5 this refers to the foundation of information at the beginning of the search. How extensive this information was, depends on the official documents or photo's that came with the child when it was adopted. The documents that can be included in the file are a birth certificate, waiver document, passport of the baby, an order of the court or a photo of the searched person. The presence of these five documents within the files was measured by five separate variables. For the analyses, these five variables were taken together to measure *completeness of information* on a ratio-scale. The presence of 0/5 documents refers to relatively incomplete information, whereas 5/5 documents means that information was relatively complete.

#### § 3.4.3 Barriers

##### Signals of potential fraud

To test the moderation effect (see Figure 4), four barriers will be explained in terms of how they will be measured. The first one was to measure the earlier mentioned 'red flags' of *signals of potential fraud*. This construct consisted of two separate items<sup>1</sup>. First, the presence of irregular notations of names, dates, places that were mentioned in the files. When these irregularities occurred, it was notated under the variable *irregularities* with 1 (yes) or 0 (no). Second, Fiom owns an overview of names from people and organizations who are being suspected of involvement in fraudulent practices. This list was drawn up for Sri Lanka by a Swiss interest group (Back to the Roots, 2018) and for Indonesia by ISS in collaboration with Fiom (ISS/Fiom, 2004). During the data-

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<sup>1</sup> These two items were not taken together to measure the concept *signals of potential fraud*, due to a Cronbach's alfa of .16, which is considered as inadequate.

gathering, for each file all the names of the people and organizations involved were notated. After that, it was checked whether there were any suspicious names using the search-function in Excel. When the suspicious names in the files came forward, it was notated under the variable *suspicious names* with yes (1) or no (0).

### Inaccessibility

Next is the presence of *inaccessibility* in the country where the search took place. This binary variable refers to the presence of complaints from the correspondent that came forward in the file, about the inaccessibility of places that were important in the search for biological family. When these kinds of complaints came forward, it was noted under this variable with yes (1) or no (0).

### Inadequate administration

*Inadequate administration* refers to the presence of complaints from the correspondent in the file that specific people cannot be found due to an inadequate administration system in the village, state, or country. Therefore, this binary variable could be answered with yes (1) or no (0).

### Pregnancy out of wedlock

The last barrier is whether the child was conceived out of wedlock or not, which is primarily measured by the variable *relationship in which the child was conceived*. How the variable was distributed is shown in Table 2. This variable was decoded into the binary variable *pregnancy out of wedlock*. Since ‘out of marriage’ and ‘prior to marriage’ both refer to a pregnancy out of wedlock, these two answers were taken together into the category *yes* (1). The categories *within marriage*, *other* and *unknown* were taken together into the category *no* (0).

Table 2

*Frequencies from relationship in which the child was conceived (N = 63).*

	Frequency	Percentage
Relationship in which the child was conceived		
Out of marriage	40	63.5
Prior to marriage	4	6.3
Within marriage	10	15.9
Other	0	0
Unknown	9	14.3
Total	63	100

### § 3.4.4 Control variables

In the research of Wrobel et al. (2013), *age* and *sex* were selected as control variables. To measure the age of the adoptee, the date of the request from ISS to the correspondent was subtracted from the birthdate of the adoptee. It therefore refers to the age of the adoptee when the search was started. The reason to take *age* into account as a control variable, was because the younger the seeker is, less

time has passed since the actual adoption, which might increase the chance of available information that leads to the biological family.

Previous research pointed out that there are differences in behavior and attitude during the search for biological family; female seekers are more interested to meet their biological family than men (Humphrey and Humphrey, 1989; Leeding, 1980). Accordingly, women might be more driven during the search for their family. Therefore, the sex of the seeker was included as a control variable. In all the files, the gender could be easily categorized as female (1) or male (0).

## § 3.5 Method of analyses

### § 3.5.1 Logistic regression analysis

*Success of the search* as a binary dependent variable, and *completeness of information* measured on a ratio-scale as the independent variable, pointed out that a logistic regression was suitable (Field, 2018). The rule of thumb to apply this analysis, is that the correlation between predictors should not be significant ( $p > .05$ ). When it turns out to be significant ( $p < .05$ ), Pearson's  $r$  must be checked. When Pearson's  $r > .80$ , a problem with multicollinearity is suggested (Allen, Bennett, and Heritage, 2014). After checking for multicollinearity, it turned out that none of the predictors correlated problematically. Another assumption before applying the logistic regression analysis, was to check for logit linearity, which tests the linearity between the continuous variables that were involved (*completeness of information* and *age*) and the dependent variable. According to the statistical test, it was assumed that linearity of the logit was not problematic for the dataset (Allen et al., 2014). Together, this meant that the logistic regression could be applied. How the analyzes were exactly performed, can be found in the syntax, shown in Appendix A.

### § 3.5.2 Additional qualitative aspect

The focus in this study was mainly on the quantitative aspect. Still, the files contained much relevant information that could be used for qualitative desk-research (Irwin, 2013). In this study, qualitative information refers to the elaborate information about the search, that could not be analyzed statistically. Especially regarding *suspicious names*, additional qualitative information was useful to identify the exact involvement of suspicious persons or organizations. As mentioned in § 3.4.3, the names of involved people and organizations were notated. Afterwards it was determined whether suspicious names were involved, using the suspected list. This information could also be used qualitatively. From the unsuccessful cases, the multiple involvement of particular suspicious names was checked. Subsequently, it was assessed whether a pattern became visible of the involvement of particular names in unsuccessful searches.

## 4. Results

From the files ( $N=63$ ) 54% was successful, in 25% irregularities occurred, in 37% suspicious names were found, in 8% inaccessibility was mentioned, in 8% inadequate administration was present, 70% concerned a pregnancy out of wedlock and in 67% the adoptee was female (see Table 3). The descriptive information of each country separately can be found in Appendix B.

Table 3

*Descriptive statistics of the variables ( $N=63$ ).*

	Range	Mean	Standard deviation
Success of the search	0/1	.54	
Completeness of information	0/5	3.13	1.14
Irregularities	0/1	.25	
Suspicious names	0/1	.37	
Inaccessibility	0/1	.08	
Inadequate administration	0.1	.08	
Pregnancy out of wedlock	0/1	.70	
Age	15/38	26.82	5.90
Sex	0/1	.67	

### § 4.1 Main effect

It was important to test whether the expected effect of *completeness of information* on *success of the search* (distribution shown in Table 4) of the search was indeed positive and statistically significant. Therefore, a logistic regression was conducted.

Table 4

*Distribution of (un)successful searches under the extent of completeness of information ( $N=63$ ).*

	Completeness of information						Total
	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Success of the search							
Successful	0	0	7	10	11	6	34
Unsuccessful	2	3	3	14	7	0	29
Total	2	3	10	24	18	6	63

First, only the effect of *completeness of information* was tested on the *success of the search* (Table 5, model 1). This turned out to be statistically significant. Second, it was investigated whether this positive effect still existed when the two control variables were added into the model (Table 5, model 2). These results confirmed that there was indeed a significant positive influence of *completeness of information* on *success of the search*, as expected in the first hypothesis [H1]<sup>2</sup>. Practically, this meant that having more official documents increases the chance of finding the searched person. Although this relationship turned out to be statistically significant, some caution is

<sup>2</sup> This significant main-effect with control variables was not found when the two countries were measured separately.

needed in determining it; the amount of explained variance is considered as weak (Field, 2018), which means that it is plausible that other factors also had an influence on *success of a search*.

Table 5

*Main-effect for predicting success of the search by completeness of information (N=63).*

	Model 1	Model 2
Constant	-1.88* (.88)	-1.69 (1.53)
Completeness of information	.65* (.27)	.70* (.28)
Age		.00 (.05)
Sex		-.54 (.60)
Cox and Snell R <sup>2</sup>	.11	.12
Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup>	.14	.16

\*  $p \leq .05$ , \*\*  $p \leq .01$

## § 4.2 Barriers

To determine whether the barriers influenced the positive relation between *completeness of information* and the *success of the search*, each barrier was tested separately using a logistic regression. To measure a moderation-effect, a new variable needed to be computed where the moderator (barrier) and the independent variable were multiplied with each other. This is called 'the interaction-effect'. Besides the two control variables, the independent moderating variable needed to be added into the model as well. Due to the relatively small sample-size, it was decided to add each barrier separately as a moderator into the model. When too many variables will be added, the chance of finding a significant outcome will be rather small (Field, 2018). When it turns out that the interaction-effect is significant ( $p \leq .05$  or  $p \leq .01$ ) in the model, it can be concluded that that moderator influences the positive relation between *completeness of information* and *success of the search*.

In Table 6, the outcomes of the moderators measured with the use of a logistic regression, are displayed. In each case the interaction-effect turned out to be not significant ( $p > .05$ ). This means that, based on these outcomes, H2, H3, H4 and H5 are rejected. It appeared that the significant positive effect of *completeness of information* on the *success of the search*, was not weakened by the barriers found and operationalized in this research. The insignificant outcomes also came forward when Sri Lanka<sup>3</sup> and Indonesia<sup>4</sup> were measured separately. Additionally, it was tested whether these barriers had a direct effect on *success of the search*. This resulted in non-significant results for the total sample and for both the total sample and Sri Lanka and Indonesia measured separately ( $p > .05$ ).

<sup>3</sup> It is not possible to measure *inadequate administration* as a moderator for Sri Lanka separately, because the variance within this variable is too low.

<sup>4</sup> It is not possible to measure *inaccessibility* as a moderator for Indonesia separately, because the variance within this variable is too low.

Table 6

*Influence of each moderator on the success of the search (N=63).*

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Constant	-1.66 (1.61)	-1.75 (1.62)	-1.52 (1.56)	-1.65 (1.65)	-1.32 (2.13)
Completeness of information	.72* (.34)	.70* (.35)	.72** (.28)	.70* (.29)	.68 (.42)
Age	.00 (.05)	.01 (.05)	-.01 (.05)	.00 (.05)	-.01 (.05)
Sex	-.52 (.61)	-.54 (.62)	-.52 (.61)	-.55 (.61)	-.52 (.64)
Irregularities	-.39 (2.05)				
Irregularities *					
Completeness of information	.01 (.59)				
Suspicious names		-.22 (2.04)			
Suspicious names *					
Completeness of information		.02 (.60)			
Inaccessibility			-1.41 (6.63)		
Inaccessibility *					
Completeness of information			.18 (1.91)		
Inadequate administration				.04 (2.61)	
Inadequate administration *					
Completeness of information				.06 (.77)	
Pregnancy out of wedlock					-.36 (1.87)
Pregnancy out of wedlock *					
Completeness of information					.04 (.57)
Cox and Snell R <sup>2</sup>	.13	.12	.13	.12	.12
Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup>	.17	.16	.17	.16	.16

\*  $p \leq .05$ , \*\* $p \leq .01$ 

### § 4.3 Qualitative aspect

In 23 cases (37%), names from the suspect list came forward. From this number, ten searches were unsuccessful, of which five cases were from Sri Lanka and five from Indonesia. In the five cases from Sri Lanka, the same suspicious name appeared three times. This name was not mentioned in other cases. In the Indonesian unsuccessful cases, three names were found, but these names also occurred in successful cases.





## 5. Conclusion and discussion

This research aimed to answer the main research question: *To what extent do factors influence the success of the search for biological family in Sri Lanka and Indonesia?* Two sub-questions contributed in answering this main question. These questions were answered with the use of existing archive data, consisting of 63 files with qualitative information about searches for biological family by Sri Lankan and Indonesian adoptees.

Regarding the sub-question 1.1 (*To what extent does the completeness of information influence the success of the search?*) results show that *completeness of information* has a positive effect on *success of the search*, as was expected. This corresponds to other studies that, although this information of the searched person is prone to fraud (Smolin, 2004) and inadequate administration (Janowski et al., 2018), the more complete this information is, the greater the chance of success in the search for biological family. This finding is in accordance with the expectations of Van der Heij and Hendriks (2017). Although the outcomes of this research confirm that this is a helping factor in a search, it also appears that *completeness of information* is most likely not the only predicting factor. Other unidentified factors may play predicting a role as well, such as the seekers' expectations, their searching activity, and the transparency from their adoptive parents. These possible predictors could not be captured within this study.

With regard to sub-question 1.2 (*How do the completeness of information and the identified barriers relate to each other in their influence on the success of the search?*), results show that none of the barriers did influence the positive effect of *completeness of information* on *success of the search*. This is not in accordance with the expectations based on the literature.

When it comes to the construct of *signals of potential fraud*, in 16 cases (25%) *irregularities* were found and in 23 cases (37%) *suspicious names* occurred. According to the literature, when such signals occurred in the adoption procedure, the information in the official documents will be unreliable (Fulwider, 1999), making it almost impossible to find the biological family (Smolin, 2004). The plausible reason for not finding an effect is that in this study, searches that contained signals of potential fraud were not necessarily unsuccessful. A first possible explanation is that the concept of fraud is hard to recognize (Fulwider, 1999). Therefore, it might be that the maintained *signals of potential fraud* in this study, did not indicate fraud in reality. Another explanation might be that seekers have found the searched persons, mentioned within the file, but that these persons are not the actual biological family. Only a DNA-test can prove this, but unfortunately only a few seekers actually performed one.

Second, it was already stated by Breeman and De Jong that *inaccessibility* is not much of a problem anymore in Sri Lanka and Indonesia, which might explain the low rate of cases that report the presence of inaccessible places. This low rate might be the reason for not finding a limiting effect from this barrier on the positive relation between *completeness of information* and *success of the search*.

Third, it was expected that during the search, it would be hard to gather information that would lead to the searched person, due to an *inadequate administration* related to adoption in Sri Lanka and Indonesia (E. de Jong, personal communication, May 12, 2020; L.S. Breeman, personal communication, May 22, 2020). However, it turned out that there was a low presence of complaints about this in the files. It is expected that this low presence is the reason for not finding a negative influence on the relation between *completeness of information* and the *success of the search*. A

possible explanation for this result is that inadequate administration is not a limiting factor in the search for biological family. Another reason might be that inadequate administration related to adoption is no longer the case in these countries at all, which would reject the theory from Haque (1999).

Finally, when the adoptee was conceived from a *pregnancy out of wedlock*, it was expected that it would be hard to receive information about the biological family during the search, out of protection for the prevailing stigma of unmarried mothers in Sri Lanka and Indonesia (Bennett, 2018; Jordal et al., 2013; Tieman et al., 2008). However, this did not have any effect on the relation between *completeness of information* and *success of the search*. A first explanation might be that in reality there does not exist such a protection for women who conceived a child out of wedlock, which rejects the theory from Tieman et al. (2008). Another explanation is that, due to a low variance within this variable (70% of the cases concerned a pregnancy out of wedlock) no effect could be found.

Based on the outcomes, question 1.2 can be answered. The presence of one of these barriers does not lead to a smaller chance of success of the search in the files that are used within this research. Together, this gives an answer on the main question; the only factor that was found to be influential in the *success of the search* is the predictor *completeness of information*.

## § 5.1 Limitations and recommendations for further research

The present study was performed with a small sample size (total  $N=63$ , Sri Lanka  $n=38$ , Indonesia  $n=25$ ), which limits the use in terms of reliability. Using small samples in statistical analyses reduces the chances of finding an effect. This might be a reason that none of the barriers seemed to be influential on the relation between *completeness of information* and *success of the search*. Even when a statistical effect is found, the probability that this is caused only by chance is high. This means that the likelihood that it reflects a real effect in the population is low (Button et al., 2013). Additionally, it is unknown whether this sample represents the population. The population of this research exists of Dutch adoptees from Sri Lanka and Indonesia, who started a search for their biological family. Since searches for biological family can be facilitated by other organizations or can be done independently, the actual size of the population cannot be determined. It is plausible that the number of files used in this study will cover just a part of the total number of searches for biological family in Sri Lanka and Indonesia. To more broadly apply these findings, a greater sample size is needed. Therefore, the first recommendation for future research is to perform a similar study using a greater sample.

Second, in this research a low number of successful searches was confirmed by a DNA-test, which is considered as a limitation. A DNA-test is a condition for determining a biological relation (Hill, 2017). Only six conducted DNA-tests of the successful searches were positive. This leaves 28 cases in which it has not been proven that the found person is biologically related. Through this, the searches will be defined as successful, while in reality this is possibly not the case. Therefore, a second recommendation for future research is therefore to use only DNA-confirmed searches as outcomes that will be considered as successful. This will create a realistic picture of how many searches were actually successful and will improve the internal validity.

Furthermore, it might be that within this quantitative study, some qualitative information is lacking. Since I did not spoke to any of the adoptees who searched for their biological family, there are no personal stories behind the numbers. For future studies it is interesting to focus on this aspect of

the subject. Interviews with adoptees who searched for their biological family may offer some unique insights in how they experienced the search and what they perceived as barriers.

As far as is known, this study is the first to empirically explore the field of influential factors on the success of the search for biological family. It offers a research design that can be used in future studies on the influences on the success of searches for biological family. Furthermore, this research offers a societal and scientific confirmation that providing adoptees with information about their adoption, is a helping factor in finding biological family. This study emphasizes the importance of making and keeping birth records easily accessible to adoptees who want to start a search (Kraus, 1982) and that this contributes to the knowledge about the family origin of adoptees (UNICEF, 1989).

## § 5.2 Policy advice

To be able to come up with useful policy advice, an overarching policy question was constructed at the beginning of this research: *2. To what extent can this research contribute to the quality of counseling of adoptees that search for their biological family internationally?* To answer this question, two sub-questions were made. After the data-gathering, analyses and the interpretation of the results, these policy-questions can be answered.

To answer sub-question 2.1 (*How can knowledge about the factors that influence the success of the search for biological family contribute to the quality of counseling from seekers by Fiom?*) a policy advice is made related to expectations management from the seeker. This research emphasizes that *completeness of information* comes out as an important predictor of the *success of the search*. This is already monitored by the counselors from Fiom; when there is too little information about the searched person, no search will be started. The results of this study confirm that this approach is useful. The policy advice is therefore that this should be continued.

Another advice for Fiom, derived from the qualitative approach, is to watch specific names of people involved in the adoption procedure. Although the presence of *suspicious names* turned out to be not significant in this research, it was found that a few names come back repeatedly in unsuccessful searches. This list of names was handed over to Fiom.

The final advice relates to the second point in the previous paragraph. It is important that DNA-tests will be considered the only way to determine a familial relationship. Currently, the choice whether to perform a DNA-test when a person is found, is up to the seeker. Emotional and financial considerations might be personal reasons for not doing a test. However, DNA-testing must be considered and acknowledged as a required part in determining the outcome of the search. When DNA-tests are integrated in the process of searching for biological family, numbers regarding the success of searches for family will be more reliable. I realize that doing such a test is costly. However, especially regarding the current societal issues related to ICA, a (partial) reimbursement from the Dutch government will be appropriate. This for the purpose of both scientific and societal interests.



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## Appendix A: Syntax

GET

FILE='/Users/anoukdemol/Downloads/DATABESTAND DEFINITIEF.sav'.

DATASET NAME DataSet1 WINDOW=FRONT.

DATASET CLOSE ALL.

OUTPUT CLOSE ALL.

VARIABLE LABELS

country "country of the search"

search\_fiom "has the search been started by Fiom?"

age "age seeker when the search started"

sex "sex of the seeker"

completeness\_info "completeness of information"

success "successfulness of the search"

dna\_test "outcome dna test"

irregularities "presence of irregularities within information about the searched person or the adoptee?"

susp\_names "presence of names or organizations from the suspected list?"

administration "complaints about an inadequate administration in the country of the search?"

inaccessibility "presence of complaints from the correspondent about the inaccessibility of important places for the search?"

relation\_cc "relationship between biological parents in which the child was conceived".

VALUE LABELS country 0 "Indonesia" 1 "Sri Lanka"

/search\_fiom 0 "no" 1 "yes"

/sex 0 "male" 1 "female"

/completeness\_info 0 "incomplete" 5 "complete"

/success 1 "person is found wants contact" 2 "No contact with person or passed away, other family want contact" 3 "person found but does not want contact" 4 "person is found but passed away" 5

"person cannot be found" 6 "seeker withdraws prematurely"

/dna\_test 1 "positive" 2 "negative"

/irregularities 0 "no" 1 "yes"

/susp\_names 0 "no" 1 "yes"

/administration 0 "no" 1 "yes"

/inaccessibility 0 "no" 1 "yes"

/relation\_cc 1 "out of marriage" 2 "prior to marriage" 3 "within marriage" 4 "other" 5 "unknown".

\*only files where the search was started\*

FREQUENCIES search\_fiom.

FILTER BY search\_fiom.

FREQUENCIES search\_fiom.

\*recode DNA-test variable"

FREQUENCIES dna\_test.

RECODE dna\_test (1 = 1) (2 = 0) (ELSE = 99) INTO dna\_test\_new.

MISSING VALUES dna\_test\_new (99).



```
VARIABLE LABELS dna_test "outcome dna test".
VALUE LABELS dna_test_new 1 "positive" 0 "negative".
FREQUENCIES dna_test_new.
```

\*recode success into a binary variable\*

```
FREQUENCIES success.
RECODE success (1 2 3 4=1) (5=0) (6=99) INTO success_new.
MISSING VALUES success_new (99).
VARIABLE LABELS success_new "outcome of the search".
VALUE LABELS success_new 1 "successful" 0 "unsuccessful".
FREQUENCIES success_new.
```

\*recode relation in which the child was conceived into a binary variable\*

```
FREQUENCIES relation_cc.
RECODE relation_cc (1 2 = 1) (ELSE = 0) INTO poo_wedlock.
FREQUENCIES poo_wedlock.
```

\*making an equal N\*

```
SELECT IF NOT MISSING (success_new).
```

\*descriptive statistics from all the variables involved\*

```
DESCRIPTIVES country age sex completeness_info success_new dna_test_new irregularities
susp_names administration inaccessibility poo_wedlock.
FREQUENCIES country sex completeness_info success_new dna_test irregularities susp_names
administration inaccessibility poo_wedlock.
```

\*descriptives countries separate\*

```
MEANS TABLES=age completeness_info BY country
/CELLS=MEAN COUNT STDDEV.
```

```
CROSSTABS
/TABLES=country BY success_new irregularities susp_names inaccessibility administration
poo_wedlock sex
/FORMAT=AVALUE TABLES
/CELLS=COUNT ROW
/COUNT ROUND CELL.
```

\*check for assumptions logistic regression analysis\*

\*multicollonearity:\*

```
CORRELATIONS
/VARIABLES=completeness_info age sex administration inaccessibility irregularities susp_names
poo_wedlock
/PRINT=TWOTAIL NOSIG
```

/MISSING=PAIRWISE.

\*logit linearity\*

COMPUTE Ln\_completeness\_info=LN(completeness\_info).

COMPUTE Ln\_age=LN(age).

LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success\_new

/METHOD=ENTER age completeness\_info Ln\_completeness\_info\*completeness\_info Ln\_age\*age

/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).

\*main effect\*

CROSSTABS

/TABLES=completeness\_info BY success\_new

/FORMAT=AVALUE TABLES

/CELLS=COUNT ROW

/COUNT ROUND CELL.

LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success\_new

/METHOD=ENTER completeness\_info

/METHOD=ENTER age sex

/SAVE=PRED PGROUP COOK LEVER DFBETA ZRESID

/CLASSPLOT

/CASEWISE OUTLIER(2)

/PRINT=GOODFIT CI(95)

/CRITERIA=PIN(0.05) POUT(0.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(0.5).

\*models with the moderation effect\*

\*signals of fraud (separately and as a scale)\*

COMPUTE completeness\_irregularities = irregularities \* completeness\_info.

LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success\_new

/METHOD=ENTER completeness\_info

/METHOD=ENTER age sex

/METHOD=ENTER irregularities completeness\_irregularities

/SAVE=PRED PGROUP COOK LEVER DFBETA ZRESID

/CLASSPLOT

/CASEWISE OUTLIER(2)

/PRINT=GOODFIT CI(95)

/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).

compute completeness\_susp\_names= susp\_names \* completeness\_info.

LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success\_new

/METHOD=ENTER completeness\_info

/METHOD=ENTER age sex

/METHOD=ENTER susp\_names completeness\_susp\_names

/SAVE=PRED PGROUP COOK LEVER DFBETA ZRESID

```
/CLASSPLOT  
/CASEWISE OUTLIER(2)  
/PRINT=GOODFIT CI(95)  
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).
```

\*making a scale for fraud (irregularities + suspicious names)\*

```
RELIABILITY  
/VARIABLES=susp_names irregularities  
/SCALE('ALL VARIABLES') ALL  
/MODEL=ALPHA.
```

```
COMPUTE fraud_signals = irregularities + susp_names.  
FREQUENCIES fraud_signals.
```

\*irregularities and suspicious names taken together (despite a too low Cronbach's alfa)\*

```
COMPUTE completeness_fraud_signals = fraud_signals * completeness_info.
```

```
LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success_new  
/METHOD=ENTER completeness_info  
/METHOD=ENTER age sex  
/METHOD=ENTER fraud_signals completeness_fraud_signals  
/SAVE=PRED PGROUP COOK LEVER DFBETA ZRESID  
/CLASSPLOT  
/CASEWISE OUTLIER(2)  
/PRINT=GOODFIT CI(95)  
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).
```

\*pregnancy out of wedlock\*

```
COMPUTE completeness_poo_wedlock = completeness_info * poo_wedlock.
```

```
LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success_new  
/METHOD=ENTER completeness_info  
/METHOD=ENTER age sex  
/method=enter poo_wedlock completeness_poo_wedlock  
/SAVE=PRED PGROUP COOK LEVER DFBETA ZRESID  
/CLASSPLOT  
/CASEWISE OUTLIER(2)  
/PRINT=GOODFIT CI(95)  
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).
```

\*administration\*

```
COMPUTE completeness_administration = completeness_info * administration.
```

```
LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success_new  
/METHOD=ENTER completeness_info  
/METHOD=ENTER age sex
```

```

/method=enter completeness_administration
/SAVE=PRED PGROUP COOK LEVER DFBETA ZRESID
/CLASSPLOT
/CASEWISE OUTLIER(2)
/PRINT=GOODFIT CI(95)
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).

```

\*inaccessibility\*

```

COMPUTE completeness_inaccessibility = completeness_info * inaccessibility.

```

```

LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success_new
/METHOD=ENTER completeness_info
/METHOD=ENTER age sex
/method=enter inaccessibility completeness_inaccessibility
/SAVE=PRED PGROUP COOK LEVER DFBETA ZRESID
/CLASSPLOT
/CASEWISE OUTLIER(2)
/PRINT=GOODFIT CI(95)
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).

```

\*direct effect of each barrier on successfulness\*\*\*

```

LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success_new
/METHOD=ENTER irregularities
/METHOD=ENTER susp_names
/METHOD=ENTER inaccessibility
/METHOD=ENTER administration
/METHOD=ENTER poo_wedlock
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).

```

\*\*\*main-effect and interaction-effects for SRI-LANKA\*\*\*

```

FILTER BY country.

```

\*assumption check for a logistic regression analysis\*

```

CORRELATIONS
/VARIABLES=completeness_info age sex administration inaccessibility fraud_signals poo_wedlock
/PRINT=TWOTAIL NOSIG
/MISSING=PAIRWISE.

```

```

LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success_new
/METHOD=ENTER age completeness_info Ln_completeness_info*completeness_info Ln_age*age
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).

```

\*main-effect\*

```

LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success_new

```

```

/METHOD=ENTER completeness_info
/METHOD=ENTER age sex
/SAVE=PRED PGROUP COOK LEVER DFBETA ZRESID
/CLASSPLOT
/CASEWISE OUTLIER(2)
/PRINT=GOODFIT CI(95)
/CRITERIA=PIN(0.05) POUT(0.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(0.5).

```

\*moderation-effects\*

```

LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success_new
/METHOD=ENTER completeness_info
/METHOD=ENTER age sex
/METHOD=ENTER irregularities completeness_irregularities
/SAVE=PRED PGROUP COOK LEVER DFBETA ZRESID
/CLASSPLOT
/CASEWISE OUTLIER(2)
/PRINT=GOODFIT CI(95)
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).

```

```

LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success_new
/METHOD=ENTER completeness_info
/METHOD=ENTER age sex
/METHOD=ENTER susp_names completeness_susp_names
/SAVE=PRED PGROUP COOK LEVER DFBETA ZRESID
/CLASSPLOT
/CASEWISE OUTLIER(2)
/PRINT=GOODFIT CI(95)
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).

```

```

LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success_new
/METHOD=ENTER completeness_info
/METHOD=ENTER age sex
/METHOD=ENTER fraud_signals completeness_fraud_signals
/SAVE=PRED PGROUP COOK LEVER DFBETA ZRESID
/CLASSPLOT
/CASEWISE OUTLIER(2)
/PRINT=GOODFIT CI(95)
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).

```

```

LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success_new
/METHOD=ENTER completeness_info
/METHOD=ENTER age sex
/method=enter poo_wedlock completeness_poo_wedlock
/SAVE=PRED PGROUP COOK LEVER DFBETA ZRESID
/CLASSPLOT
/CASEWISE OUTLIER(2)
/PRINT=GOODFIT CI(95)
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).

```

```

LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success_new
/METHOD=ENTER completeness_info
/METHOD=ENTER age sex
/method=enter administration completeness_administration
/SAVE=PRED PGROUP COOK LEVER DFBETA ZRESID
/CLASSPLOT
/CASEWISE OUTLIER(2)
/PRINT=GOODFIT CI(95)
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).

```

FREQUENCIES administration.

```

LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success_new
/METHOD=ENTER completeness_info
/METHOD=ENTER age sex
/method=enter inaccessibility completeness_inaccessibility
/SAVE=PRED PGROUP COOK LEVER DFBETA ZRESID
/CLASSPLOT
/CASEWISE OUTLIER(2)
/PRINT=GOODFIT CI(95)
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).

```

\*direct effect of each barrier on successfulness\*

```

LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success_new
/METHOD=ENTER irregularities
/METHOD=ENTER susp_names
/METHOD=ENTER inaccessibility
/METHOD=ENTER administration
/METHOD=ENTER poo_wedlock
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).

```

FILTER OFF.

\*\*\*main-effect and interaction-effects for INDONESIA\*\*\*

```

RECODE country (1 = 0) (0 = 1) INTO country_reverse.
FREQUENCIES country_reverse.
FILTER BY country_reverse.

```

\*assumption check for a logistic regression analysis\*

```

CORRELATIONS
/VARIABLES=completeness_info age sex administration inaccessibility fraud_signals poo_wedlock
/PRINT=TWOTAIL NOSIG
/MISSING=PAIRWISE.

```

```

LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success_new
/METHOD=ENTER age completeness_info Ln_completeness_info*completeness_info Ln_age*age
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).

```

\*main-effect\*

```
LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success_new
/METHOD=ENTER completeness_info
/METHOD=ENTER age sex
/SAVE=PRED PGROUP COOK LEVER DFBETA ZRESID
/CLASSPLOT
/CASEWISE OUTLIER(2)
/PRINT=GOODFIT CI(95)
/CRITERIA=PIN(0.05) POUT(0.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(0.5).
```

\*moderation-effects\*

```
LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success_new
/METHOD=ENTER completeness_info
/METHOD=ENTER age sex
/METHOD=ENTER irregularities completeness_irregularities
/SAVE=PRED PGROUP COOK LEVER DFBETA ZRESID
/CLASSPLOT
/CASEWISE OUTLIER(2)
/PRINT=GOODFIT CI(95)
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).
```

```
LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success_new
/METHOD=ENTER completeness_info
/METHOD=ENTER age sex
/METHOD=ENTER susp_names completeness_susp_names
/SAVE=PRED PGROUP COOK LEVER DFBETA ZRESID
/CLASSPLOT
/CASEWISE OUTLIER(2)
/PRINT=GOODFIT CI(95)
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).
```

```
LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success_new
/METHOD=ENTER completeness_info
/METHOD=ENTER age sex
/METHOD=ENTER fraud_signals completeness_fraud_signals
/SAVE=PRED PGROUP COOK LEVER DFBETA ZRESID
/CLASSPLOT
/CASEWISE OUTLIER(2)
/PRINT=GOODFIT CI(95)
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).
```

```
LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success_new
/METHOD=ENTER completeness_info
/METHOD=ENTER age sex
/method=enter poo_wedlock completeness_poo_wedlock
/SAVE=PRED PGROUP COOK LEVER DFBETA ZRESID
/CLASSPLOT
```

```
/CASEWISE OUTLIER(2)
/PRINT=GOODFIT CI(95)
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).
```

```
LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success_new
/METHOD=ENTER completeness_info
/METHOD=ENTER age sex
/method=enter administration completeness_administration
/SAVE=PRED PGROUP COOK LEVER DFBETA ZRESID
/CLASSPLOT
/CASEWISE OUTLIER(2)
/PRINT=GOODFIT CI(95)
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).
```

```
LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success_new
/METHOD=ENTER completeness_info
/METHOD=ENTER age sex
/method=enter inaccessibility completeness_inaccessibility
/SAVE=PRED PGROUP COOK LEVER DFBETA ZRESID
/CLASSPLOT
/CASEWISE OUTLIER(2)
/PRINT=GOODFIT CI(95)
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).
```

FREQUENCIES inaccessibility.

\*direct effect of each barrier on successfulness\*

```
LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES success_new
/METHOD=ENTER irregularities
/METHOD=ENTER susp_names
/METHOD=ENTER inaccessibility
/METHOD=ENTER administration
/METHOD=ENTER poo_wedlock
/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(.5).
```

FILTER OFF.

\*\*\*additional tests, distribution of barriers as successful/unsuccessful\*\*\*

\*presence of irregularities - unsuccessful searches\*

```
CROSSTABS
/TABLES=irregularities BY success_new
/FORMAT=AVALUE TABLES
/CELLS=COUNT ROW
/COUNT ROUND CELL.
```

\*presence of suspicious persons - unsuccessful searches; to search for specific names\*



CROSSTABS

```
/TABLES=susp_names BY success_new  
/FORMAT=AVALUE TABLES  
/CELLS=COUNT ROW  
/COUNT ROUND CELL.
```

SPLIT FILE SEPARATE BY success\_new susp\_names.  
SPLIT FILE OFF.

\*inaccessibility - unsuccessful searches\*

CROSSTABS

```
/TABLES=inaccessibility BY success_new  
/FORMAT=AVALUE TABLES  
/CELLS=COUNT ROW  
/COUNT ROUND CELL.
```

\*inadequate administration - unsuccessful searches\*

CROSSTABS

```
/TABLES=administration BY success_new  
/FORMAT=AVALUE TABLES  
/CELLS=COUNT ROW  
/COUNT ROUND CELL.
```

\*pregnancy out of wedlock - unsuccessful searches\*

CROSSTABS

```
/TABLES=poo_wedlock BY success_new  
/FORMAT=AVALUE TABLES  
/CELLS=COUNT ROW  
/COUNT ROUND CELL.
```

## Appendix B: Sri Lanka and Indonesia separately

Table 10

*Descriptive statistics of the variables for Sri Lanka (n=38) and Indonesia (n=25).*

	Range	Sri Lanka (n=38)		Indonesia (n=25)	
		Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation
Success of the search	0/1	.50		.60	
Completeness of information	0/5	3.05	1.16	3.24	.48
Irregularities	0/1	.21		.32	
Suspicious names	0/1	.26		.52	
Inaccessibility	0/1	.11		.04	
Inadequate administration	0/1	.03		.16	
Pregnancy out of wedlock	0/1	.82		.52	
Age	15/38	23.23	4.10	32.27	3.56
Sex	0/1	.71		.60	