

JIMMA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND
HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
MA PROGRAM IN SOCIOLOGY AND FAMILY STUDIES

*Domestic Adoption: Its Practices, Opportunities and Challenges in
Adama City, Oromia/Ethiopia*

**A THESIS TO BE SUBMITTED TO DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY,
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES, JIMMA
UNIVERSITY FOR PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
OF MA PROGRAM IN SOCIOLOGY AND FAMILY STUDIES**

By: Heran Ejara

October, 2017

Jimma, Ethiopia

JIMMA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND
HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
MA PROGRAM IN SOCIOLOGY AND FAMILY STUDIES

*Domestic Adoption: Its Practices, Opportunities and Challenges in
Adama City, Oromia/Ethiopia*

By: Heran Ejara

Advisors: 1. Nega Jibat (Ass. Professor)

2. Teriku Ayele

October, 2017

Jimma, Ethiopia

JIMMA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND
HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
MA PROGRAM IN SOCIOLOGY AND FAMILY STUDIES

*Domestic Adoption: Its Practices, Opportunities and Challenges in
Adama City, Ethiopia*

By: Heran Ejara

APPROVED BY:

Advisor

Signature

Date

Advisor

Signature

Date

Reader

Signature

Date

AKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to God, who is always good and make things done in His time. Without His mercy, I could not make a step further.

I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to Mr.Nega Jibat (my thesis proposal principal advisor), and Mr. Tariku Ayele (Co-advisor) for their advice, endurance, critical comments and constructive suggestions throughout the course of my thesis work.

All my dearest family and friends, I can't thank you enough for all your support. I am very grateful for having you all in my life.

Most importantly this study would have never happened without the generosity of the individuals, parents and staffs working in adoption agency I interviewed. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to you all for welcoming me at your work place and at your home and for sharing all information without any reservation. I am indebted to all of you.

TABLE OF CONTENT

Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	i
TABLE OF CONTENT	ii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....	v
LIST OF TABLES	vi
<i>ABSTRACT</i>	vii
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Statement of the problem	3
1.3 Research Questions	5
1.4 Objectives of the Study	5
1.4.1 General Objectives	5
1.4.2 Specific Objectives	6
1.5 Significance of the study	6
1.6 Scope of the Study	6
1.7 Limitation of the Study	7
CHAPTER TWO	8
LITRATURE REVIEW	8
2.1 Conceptualization of Terms	8
2.2. Theoretical Framework	9
2.2.1 Ecological System Theory	9
2.2.2 Family System Theory	10
2.2.3 Attachment Theory	11
2.3. Empirical Literature review	12
2.3.1. Concepts Related to Adoption	12
2.3.2. Adoption and Its Benefits	13
2.3.3. Adoption and Its Challenges	14
2.3.4 Global and National Trends of Adoptions	15

2.3.5 Domestic Adoption as one of Alternative Child Care Service.....	16
2.3.6 International and Legal Frame Work for Domestic Adoption	17
2.3.7 Facts and figures with regards to OVC and Domestic Adoption.....	18
CHAPTER THREE	19
RESEARCH METHOD.....	19
3.1 Study Site	19
3.2 Study design.....	20
3.3 Methods of data collection.....	20
3.4 Sample Size.....	21
3.5 Data collection Procedure	22
3.6 Data Analysis Techniques.....	22
3.7 Ethical Considerations	23
CHAPTER FOUR.....	24
RESULTS	24
4.1 Characteristics of Informants.....	24
4.1.1 Characteristics of Informants from adoptive parents	24
4.1.2 Characteristics of Informants from community members.....	26
4.1.3 Characteristics of key informants from adoption agencies	27
4.2 Participants perception about domestic adoption.....	28
4.3 Opportunities and challenges of domestic adoption	32
4.3.1 Motivation behind adopting child	32
4.3.2 Opportunities or enabling factors.....	33
4.3. 3 Challenges in adopting child domestically	35
4.4 Societal perception about adoption in the eyes of adoptive parents	42
4.5 The practice of domestic adoption	44
4.5.1 Pre-Adoption Training	45
4.5.2 Post-Adoption Follow-up.....	45
4.5.3 Support System for Adoptive Parents	46
4.6 Ways of improving domestic adoption in our country.....	46
CHAPTER FIVE	51
DISCUSSION	51
5.1 People’s Perception about Domestic Adoption.....	51

5.2 Reasons for Adopting Child.....	52
5.3 Opportunities and Challenges of Domestic Adoption	53
5.3.1 Opportunities.....	53
5.3.1 Challenges.....	53
5.4 Practices of Domestic Adoption	55
CHAPTER SIX.....	57
CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS	57
6.1 Conclusion	57
6.2 Implications.....	58
REFERENCES	61
APPENDICES	65
Appendix I:	65
Instruments of data collection.....	65

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACPF:	African Child Policy Forum
BoWCYA:	Bureau of Women Children and Youth Affair
CRC:	Child Right Convention
DRC:	Democratic Republic of Congo
FDRE:	Federal Democratic Republic Of Ethiopia
FGD:	Focus Group Discussion
FHI:	Family Health International 360
ICA:	Inter country Adoption
MoWA:	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
MoWCYA:	Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affair
OBoWCYA:	Oromia Bureau of Women, Children and Youth Affairs
OVC:	Orphan and Vulnerable Children
UNAIDS:	United Nations Program on HIV and AIDS
UNCRC:	The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
WCAO:	Women’s and Children’s Affairs Office
WHO:	World Health Organization

LIST OF TABLES

Lists	Pages
Table 1: Characteristics of Adoptive parents	25
Table 2: Characteristics of Other Community Members	26
Table 3: Characteristics of Key informants	28
Table 4: Practices of Domestic Adoption in Adama	44

ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to investigate the practices, opportunities and challenges of domestic adoption in Adama city. Qualitative research method was used. In depth interview, key informant interviews and document review were employed to collect data from first hand informants. A total number of twenty five (25) informants were interviewed and participated in the study in there convenient place and time. These include six (6) adoptive parents in the case of in depth interview, thirteen (13) individuals from community member and six (6) key informants from three adoption agencies (one governmental and two nongovernmental agencies) were interviewed. To interpret the data which is gathered through primary and secondary sources, I use thematic analysis method. The data gathered revealed the perception of community members about adoption, the enabling factors and challenges of domestic adoption before and after adoption, how peoples perceive domestic adoption, the practices of adoption in Adama city and ways of improving the practice of domestic adoption according to participants. As the finding of the study, conditions in which parents can adopt a child without any payment, the current government attention given to domestic adoption, norms and practice of Guddifachaa and other factors such as the presence of adoption agencies or child care centers which facilitate domestic adoption, the simplicity of the eligibility criteria by the government and the legal framework, the presence of children who are in need of a caregiver and easy accessibility of child care centers are some of the opportunities to adopt children domestically. On the other hand, fear of being open, lack of support from family members, the tedious process of adoption, lack of transparency in some adoption agencies, excluding disabled children, physical and psychological condition of the adopted child and misconception about the issue of adoption in most of community members are the factors raised in the study as a challenge which hinder the practice of domestic adoption. Based on the results, the study provides some recommendations relevant for practitioners, adoptive parents, government sector offices and academic institutions to promote domestic adoption

in

Ethiopia.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Like most developing countries in Africa, in Ethiopia, there has been a strong culture and religious belief of caring for vulnerable children by nuclear and extended family members and by community and faith-based organizations. Provision of care to orphaned, abandoned and vulnerable children has been seen as the responsibility of the extended family system among most of the ethnic groups in the country (Abebe & Aase, 2007).

However, in the past few years they have been challenged to provide care to all in need as the number of children and the pressure on traditional childcare have continued to increase (Family Health International 360 [FHI], 2010; United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS [UNAIDS], 2010). The capacity of the extended family which has been the forefront in providing caring for these children is decreasing (FHI,2013). Thus, the need to arrange special care to optimize their physical, mental and psychosocial wellbeing of these children has become unquestionable.

Cognizant of this need, the international child protection community has committed much effort to developing standards and guidelines to promote family-based alternative care for children deprived of their family environment. As part of this effort, in 2009, the Ethiopia government has revised the 2001 Alternative Child Care Guideline pursuant to The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, the laws of the country and in consultation with childcare institutions, concerned professionals and children. The revised Guidelines among others provide the minimum conditions for services to be provided by concerned stakeholders. The major alternative child care programs and arrangements designed for the vulnerable children in the guideline include: Community-Based Childcare, Reunification and Reintegration Program, Foster Care, Adoption and Institutional Care Service (MoWA, 2009).

Adoption is one of effective alternative care which still raises highly emotive issues because of its fundamental implications for the meaning of familial ties. It is a childcare and protection

measure that enables an unaccompanied child to benefit from a substitute and permanent family care (MOWCYA, 2009).

Adoption can be either domestic or inter-country. According to the guideline inter-country adoption is an adoption that involves a change in the child's habitual country of residence, whatever the nationality of the adopting parents. It also includes an adoption that involves parents of a nationality other than that of the child, whether or not they reside and continue to reside in the child's habitual country of residence, whereas, domestic adoption is an adoption that involves adoptive parents and a child of the same nationality and the same Country of residence (MOWCYA, 2009).

Literatures have mentioned the strengths and drawbacks of various care arrangements. For the purpose of this paper, studies related to both international and domestic adoption will be focused. For instance, there is criticism on international adoption equating it with child trafficking (Smolin, 2004), commodification of children (Graff, 2008 cited in Breuning, 2009). Others also noted the expensive and lengthy nature of the cost of international adoption (Maldonado, 2006; Roby & Shaw, 2006). Mezmur (2009) reveal post cross country adoption follow-up problem while the Ethiopian national guideline raises the sustainability issues of other institutional care arrangements (MoWA, 2009).

Because of the aforementioned problems and other reasons, many developing countries including Ethiopia are resorting to local alternatives such as domestic adoption. In order to make this inclination more workable, it is imperative to know the challenges and opportunities of domestic adoption. Cognizant of these and its newness to the countries current endeavor in promoting the welfare and protection of children under difficult circumstances, this study will focus on domestic child adoption.

Although Johnson (2002) did not explicitly refer to the benefit of domestic adoption, he revealed that compared with children placed in a foster care, adopted children generally do better provided that they have families who are competent, loving and socio-economically better. Supporting the regulated type of international adoption, Bartholet (2007), also noted that children are denied of their most need of having potential supportive parents due to the negative and limiting nature of government regulations.

However, others such as (Smolin, 2007) view that choosing inter-country adoption as the primary response to the extreme poverty of the birth family is a violation of international law. Because the international law clearly stated that the first priority should be to keep families together. Opponents of international adoption argue that children are best served by remaining in their community of origin, where they can enjoy their racial, ethnic and national heritage, and that they are put at risk when placed with unrelated adoptive parents in foreign countries (Bartholet, 2005).

In Ethiopia, compared to inter-country adoption which is a recent phenomenon, domestic adoption-locally known as- *madego* or *gudifacha*, is as old as living memory recalls. However, domestic adoption of a child following the legal procedures is probably as recent as inter-country adoption.

Although the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs at Federal and Regional level has taken the lead in following up the adoption cases, there appears to be a lack of proper documentation that shows the trend, challenges and opportunities of those who adopt children locally. In this regard one national study documents that “there is a general lack of understanding of the relevance of domestic adoption (i.e., the relevance of legally formalizing the relationship between a caregiver and an unrelated child for whom they are caring on a permanent basis) ” (FHI, 2010, p.15). Thus, as part of finding and improving sustainable alternative care, domestic adoption has gained momentum in the country.

Therefore, without addressing the above issues, it would be difficult to bring the desired change in the community in general and in the adoptive parents and adopted children in particular. Focusing on domestic adoption of children in Adama, the study tries to find out the practices, opportunities and challenges of domestic adoption.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The effect of poverty and HIV/AIDS pandemic has brought number of orphans and abandoned children seeking for support in Ethiopia. In the Alternative Childcare Guideline (MoWA, 2009), the government stipulated the importance and expansion of adoption services as one alternative form of child care who are left abandoned due to various reasons. Thus, many institutions increased to facilitate inter-country adoption. Recognizing the slow

development of local initiatives to promote legal domestic adoption, the government states its concerns as "... while inter-country adoption is taken as an alternative form of childcare, local adoption seems largely neglected or utterly out of the focus of attention of many adoption service provider organizations". (MoWA, 2009, p.38)

Although there seems positive development in upbringing children at local level like the case of Oromia (Faith to Action Initiative, 2014), there are still problems that hinder the smooth practices of adoption works and affecting the experience of adoptive parents. Absence of strong monitoring system to follow up the adoption processes, weak institutional capacity of adoption agencies to handle local adoption cases, and the tedious process of adoption (Bunkers & Kauffman, 2012) are the major challenges in the adoption area. The current domestic adoption procedures are also perceived as cumbersome and intimidating for Ethiopian families interested in formal adoption (FHI, 2010).

In addition to these, inability of parents to provide emotional support adopted children often need mainly due to lack of information on the problem (Sengendo&Nambi,1997), lack of openness among adoptive parents, preference of adoptive parents towards a given sex (Duressa, 2002), unwillingness of parents to adopt children with disabilities(Perry & Henry, 2009), low awareness level of the public about adoption and lack of the necessary preparation before adoption are some of the challenges believed to influence the effort initiated to bring the desired changes in the area of domestic adoptions.

Correspondingly, many scholars have conducted researches on the issues of alternative childcare for orphan and vulnerable children in Ethiopia. To mention a few; '*Guddifachaa* practice as child problem intervention in Oromo society' by Dessalegn, (2006) which the study objectively adhered to collect and document valuable socio-cultural practices data in solving the problems of children, particularly *guddifachaa*; why it is practiced, whether its practice is community based problem intervention system and factors influencing *guddifachaa*. The other conducted research is 'Community response for orphan and vulnerable children in Guagua town' by Yohannes, (2006),The major objective of Yohannes (2006) was to come up with inputs for designing community-based programs and strategies to address the problem. Also 'Birth families and inter-country adoption in Addis Ababa Ethiopia' by Brittingham, (2010) research is aimed at

establishing the circumstances in which birth families relinquish their children for inter country adoption in Ethiopia.

In addition to these, there is also a research conducted on ‘Improving care options for children in Ethiopia through understanding institutional child care and factors driving institutions’ by (FHI, 2010) and Ayalews’ (2002), *Guddifachaa*: adoption practice in Oromo society with particular Reference to the Borana Oromo. The study (Ayalew, 2002) is to document the indigenous *Guddifachaa* practices as ethnographic document by investigating and examining the beginning, use, practice and kind of *Guddifacha*, in general and its role as advancing child protection and care and support in Oromo culture and ‘Child adoption: trends and policies’(UN, 2009) and ‘Policy practice of Inter country Versus Domestic Adoption by child care Institutions’ by Tariku Ayana (2015) which is aimed to compare and contrast domestic and inter country adoption through examining policies and practices in addressing OVC problems in Adama city administration.

However, as far as the scanning of these literatures goes, none of these researchers analyzed specifically the opportunities and challenges of formal domestic adoption deeply based on the experience of adoptive parents, adoption agencies and other community members. This study is therefore, is intended to understand the practices, opportunities and challenges of domestic adoption in Ethiopia specifically in Adama city.

1.3 Research Questions

The study answered the following questions

- How do participants in the study view formal domestic adoption?
- What motivated parents to adopt child?
- What are the opportunities and challenges of domestic adoption?
- How is domestic adoption practiced in Adama city?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1.4.1 General Objectives

The general objective of the study is to investigate the practices, opportunities and challenges of domestic adoption in Adama city.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

- ✓ To assess participants view towards domestic adoption in Adama city
- ✓ To identify the motivation behind adopting a child
- ✓ To identify the opportunities and challenges of domestic adoption in Adama city
- ✓ To examine the practices of domestic adoption in the town with reference to the legal and policy principles of the country

1.5 Significance of the study

The findings of the study are believed to be helpful in the following ways: Firstly, this research is important for those parties involved in promoting domestic child adoption by identifying the major challenges of domestic adoption, and provoke them to devise meaningful interventions before, during and post adoption. Thus, it paves the way for institutions to strengthen their intervention based on empirical findings. Since the topic under study is a recent phenomenon, it gives better understanding on the challenges and opportunities of domestic adoption and insight for the future intervention on domestic adoption. It will also help in future policies regarding adoptions in local context and even set as platform for other groups in the adoption circle to be studied on child adoptions and other related matters.

Secondly, apart from adding some value on the field of adoption in the country's initiatives, the results of the study will serve as a reference point for further studies to be carried out in the area of domestic child adoption.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study focused on the practices, opportunities and challenges of domestic adoption in Adama city with limited subjects focusing on the few adoptive parents contacting through three adoption agencies and key informants from the government and non-government agencies.

The study followed a qualitative research approach, involving the use of the semi structured and unstructured in depth interview method. Although domestic adoption is a broad area to be covered involving different parties such as the agencies, adoptive parents, birth parents and children, this study focused only on the practice, opportunity, and challenges of domestic adoption from only the agencies and adoptive parents point of view.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

As most qualitative studies the major limitation of this study was unable to draw generalizations, since it conducted in a particular area and only little number of adoptive families, adoption agencies and community members participated.

Adoptive parents who participated in the study were those who were assumed to be positive and open about the adoption at least anonymously and those who were traceable from the contact information on their file by the help of adoption agencies. Thus these samples may not be the true representation of all adoptive families as each family may have their own unique experiences. And also data generated from the interview with other community member may not represent the perceptions of the communities who live in the study area.

Lack of books and previous researches in the area of domestic adoption and lack of well documented files in the adoption agencies was also the other major pitfalls in this research. In addition, time constraint and lack of finance was the other limitation of this study which hinders the researcher from an in depth investigation of the issue.

CHAPTER TWO

LITRATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptualization of Terms

Alternative care: for the purpose of this study alternative care is defined as care for orphans and other vulnerable children who are not under the custody of their biological parents. It includes adoption, foster families, guardianship, kinship care, residential care and other community-based arrangements to care for children in need of special protection, particularly children without primary caregivers (UNICEF, 2006).

Adoption: adoption is a social and legal process whereby a child is legally and permanently placed with a parent or parents other than their biological mother or father (Alternative child care guidelines, 2009).

Domestic adoption: domestic adoption is an adoption wherein the adoptive parents and the adopted child are of the same nationality and have the same country of residence (Alternative child care guidelines, 2009).

Biological Parent/s: biological parent/s is defined as a child's natural parent not the people who adopted him/her (Oxford, 2010).

Child: a human being below the age of 18 years.

Double/full Orphan: double/full orphan is defined as a child who lost both of his/her biological parent/s regardless of the cause of the loss (Alternative child care guidelines, 2009).

Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC): Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) are defined as children whose survival and development is jeopardized by certain circumstances and are therefore in need of alternative childcare services (Alternative child care guidelines, 2009).

Family-based care: family-based care is defined as a form of care arranged for a child that involves living with a family other than his/her birth parents. The term encompasses fostering, kinship care, child-headed households, and adoption (ACPF, 2012).

Adopted child: a child who has been legally adopted by means of a judicial or administrative process.

Adoptive parents: an individual who has legally assumed the parental rights over, and responsibilities for, another person through adoption.

Challenges: constraints or problems which impede the practice of domestic adoption

Opportunities: prospects or impetus and enabling environment that help adoption to smoothly practiced

2.2. Theoretical Framework

This paper tries to explain the phenomenon under study from the perspective of the following theories: Ecological System Theory, Family System Theory, and the Attachment Theory.

2.2.1 Ecological System Theory

The ecological approach focuses on the reciprocal relationships between and among children, their adoptive parents, and extended family members and their connection with the broader surroundings. Bronfen brenner originally divided the ecological environment into four nested system: Microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem. And later the fifth system, chronosystem, which focuses on time and socio-historical conditions, was included (Bronfen brenner& Morris, 1998).

Thus, in analyzing adoptive parents in relation to domestic adoption issues, the study believes that there are many factors that influence parents decision or plan to adopt; to make contact with agencies and concerned government office that provide or facilitate adoption and information, parents expectation and relationship with their significant others and the surrounding. The processes that they have gone to adopt and adopting the child, the response of the community towards their action, the existing law and procedures to be followed in adopting the child and even the background and behavior of the adopted child will affect the success of adoption experience.

It is obvious that, at least theoretically, the ultimate goal of adoption is to find a family home environment for the child who has no parents or guardian who could take care of him/her. As stated in the literature, “Adoption is not about finding children for families; Instead, it is about finding families for children” (Sclafani, 2004, p. 191). Thus for adoption agencies, getting a prepared parents who are willing to adopt a child should be given due emphasis. In Bronfen brenner’s ecological systems theory, parents have a place in the microsystem because they immediately and directly impact the child's development and adoption agencies and government sector offices have placed in the exosystem (Bronfen brenner, 1979).

The exosystem is the third layer. According to Krishnan (2010), although the child does not directly encounter the system, it impacts his development. The system contains micro and meso systems, and thereby impacts the wellbeing of all those who come into contact with the child. Further, the policies and decisions that are made at a wider level can also indirectly impact the child.

With this in mind, this paper sought to examine the practices and procedures of domestic adoption in the town with reference to the legal and policy principles of the country and assess participants view towards domestic adoption.

2.2.2 Family System Theory

Family system is a conceptual model focusing on relationships between family members (American Psychological Association, 2007). Patterson (2002) defined a family system as comprising of two or more individuals acting as a whole unit and the relationship patterns that affect each part. These relationships are reciprocal and constantly evolving (Shaffer, 2000). Family systems theory is the study of these interactions and focuses on family behavior. Communication, interaction patterns, separateness, connectedness, loyalty, independence, and adaptation to stress are all things that are studied as it relates to the entire family and not just to the individuals in the family (Christian, 2006).

It is presumed that when childless couples or any other parents adopt children, there is a change within the family structure and pattern of relation among family members. The role of parents and interaction among family members will increase. And this will definitely affect the experience of adoptive parents positively or negatively. According to Patterson (2002) families

need to achieve balance in order to be more resilient for such kind of changes. This can be reflected in family cohesiveness, flexibility and communications. Thus the study will try to see the experience that adoptive parents came across after adopting a child in order to identify the challenges of domestic adoption domestically. Using the family systems perspective would allow the multiple attachments within that adoptive family to be taken into account as well as the complex systems of interactions that occur within any family.

2.2.3 Attachment Theory

In his theory of attachment, John Bowlby (1980) describes the importance of a long-term, secure relationship between a child and caregiver. This relationship and the way the child is treated within it has a powerful influence on the child's development and personality functioning. According to the theory, if the care giving environment is consistent, positive, and aims to meet the child's needs, then the infant is apt to develop a 'secure' attachment. If, on the other hand, the caregiving is typically inconsistent, or negative, then the attachment pattern that is most likely to develop is an 'insecure' one, either avoidant or resistant.

Although many literatures stated the negative attachment experience of parents and adopted child, Singer, et al. (1985) proved that healthy secure attachments are just as possible in adoptive families as biological ones. According to these researchers, the most important factors to create secure attachments in the parent -infant relationships were the confidence and competence of the parents to responsively care for adopted children. The uncertainty and anxiety from the parent would be expected to disrupt the secure socio emotional relationship with the infant.

On top of the responsive nature of the environment to the need of the adopted children, the age of adopted children during adoption, the process of adoption parents have gone, and the prior contact parents had with the adopted child might affect attachment experience of the adoptive parents positively or negatively.

2.3. Empirical Literature review

2.3.1. Concepts Related to Adoption

Adoption and its related practices go beyond all cultures and have existed over centuries. In many countries of the world, adoption is a recognized social welfare response for children who are denied of their parental care and support (Roby, 2007). Historical records in Ethiopia also revealed that adoption has been exercised among the Oromo and Amharic ethnic groups since the 15th century (FHI, 2010).

Adoption is about the provision of families for those children who cannot be cared for within the families into which they are born. It is most commonly defined as the legal and social process whereby a permanent parent-child relationship is established between persons (usually) not related by birth due to the birth parents' inability or unwillingness to care for the child (Matthew, 2004). Adoption can be categorized as formal versus informal adoptions, related versus unrelated adoptions, domestic versus inter-country adoptions, and foster care adoption (Raquel et al., 2006). Formal adoption refers to legally approved adoption that entails permanent transfer of parental rights and duties from biological to adoptive parents. Related adoption includes adoptions by relatives as well as stepparents, while unrelated adoption refers to the rest. Unrelated adoption, especially of young infants, is considered to be a close substitute for child bearing, while it is less likely to be the case for related adoption, especially for stepparent adoption. Depending on the type of contact they have, adoption can also be categorized as closed and open adoption.

In the past half a century in the United States, adoption has been transformed from a shameful secret to a widely recognized and accepted way to form a family (Miller, nd). This has been getting acceptance in the other world as well including our country Ethiopia. Even the adoption terminology has evolved to avoid judgmental and hurtful terms. For instance, the term birth parent is preferred to real, natural or biological parents (with the connotation that adoptive parents are unreal and unnatural). The adoption decision is better described as making an adoption plan (Adamec & Miller, 2006).

2.3.2. Adoption and Its Benefits

Being the key figures in the adoption triangle; the child, adoptive parents and the birthparents are believed to benefit from adoption (Stolley, 1993). Its vitality is unquestionable particularly for those childless couples seeking children and children in need of parents. Supporting this, research reveals that adoption as a superior means of promoting normal development in children permanently separated from birth parents (Johnson, 2002). Having a potential to reverse children's developmental deficits, an adoptive family is found to be a good environment for healing emotional and physical trauma of children particularly those who have suffered neglect and abuse in their early life.

Adoption can offer a permanent family for children who have no prospect of remaining with parents or relatives. Research also has demonstrated that for those children particularly coming from orphanages, an adoptive family environment can support improved developmental outcomes (Faith to Action, 2014)

For adoptive parents adoption provides the satisfying experience of parenting, and research shows a high level of satisfaction from this particular kind of parenting (Bartholet, 2007). Adoption, particularly that of the international one, brings new resources into the sending countries in the form of orphanage fees or other support targeted to help the children left behind. It could also provide significant numbers of nurturing homes for these vulnerable children who could suffer on the street or in poor institutional care.

An adoptive home does provide most children an environment that cultivates normal childhood development and a successful transition through adolescence to adulthood. Supporting adoption and its practices, Johnson (2002) stated that "Adoption is a time-honored and successful service for children and parents" (p. 51). As long as the nature of adoption is open, Neil (2010) also noted that adoption is important and has a contribution in helping the child to deal with issues of identity and loss; and its possibility to help the child deal with their dual connection to both the adoptive parents and the birth parents.

Compared to the modest difficulties experienced, adopted children are benefiting a lot from having a permanent family or adoptive parents. On the part of the adoptive parents, Daniluk and Hurtig-Mitchell, (2003) suggested that despite they are experienced feelings of loss due to

their infertility, the possibility and expectation of raising a child through adoption offered them a sense of renewed hope.

2.3.3. Adoption and Its Challenges

Although the process (and cost) varies considerably depending on the type of adoption, the challenge may start before the actual adoption takes place. In this regard, Miller (nd) mentioned that “Most parents agree that the process is circuitous, laborious, and complex. Delays, frustrations, and uncertainties are common places. The process may take years than anticipated”. (Miller, nd, p.136). Others also stated challenges related to follow-up support of post adoption. Despite there are parent support networks and groups for adoptive parents, many parents still do not feel they have enough post-adoption support (Gunnar, Bruce, & Grotevant, 2000).

For instance, Zamostny et al. (2003) found out that adoption generates core psychological themes for the birth parents, the child and adoptive parents and (e.g., loss and grief, relationship and intimacy challenges). Research findings revealed that parents particularly that of fathers had difficulty committing to and feeling affection for their adopted child (Milleman, 2011). Similarly, Severson (1994) also mentioned that adoptive fathers have shown major difficulty of bonding with their adopted child and lack of biological tie with the adopted child was reported as the main barrier to their emotional attachment. Another study also suggested that men’s difficulty adjusting to their infertility adversely impacted their ability to bond with their adopted child (Baumann, 1999).

McKay and Ross (2010) conducted a qualitative study using semi structured interviews to explore parents’ experience after the child has been placed. In their research, the major issues related to challenges of adoption were: “isolation and fear,” “parenting related obstacles,” and “lack of support” (2010, p. 606). In the same study, because they were up-bringing another person’s child, adoptive parents felt more responsibility (McKay & Ross, 2010).

Integration with the adoptive parents is one of the other major problems arising among the adopted children (Brodzinsky & Pinderhughes, 2002). Study reveals that the attachment problem will be greater for children who had experienced inadequate institutional care and had the history of abuse in their birth parents (Dozier & Rutter, 2008). Children who have attachment

problems and lately placed at the older age will also be at risk of feeling insecure regarding their belongingness in their new families (Biehal, Ellison, Baker, & Sinclair, 2010).

Another research by Foliand Thompson (2004) also indicated that there are challenges faced by some adoptive parents. Unresolved feelings about infertility and adoption, diminished self-confidence as a parent, uncertainties about the physical and psychosocial background of the child, expectations of the child, acceptance of extended family, delays in attachment; misdirected support by professionals during family crises; post adoption depression are the major ones.

Literature noted that as long as there is transparency among children and adoptive parents regarding the adoption issue, there will be positive impact on the psychosocial development of the children. Some researchers such as (Brodzinsky, 2006) have linked parental openness about adoption with better child emotional and behavioral development. The openness of adoptive parents can be determined by the type and level of contact they have with members of the child's birth family (Brodzinsky, 2006; Neil, 2010). In order to avoid or minimize potential challenges occurring as the result of adoption, Brodzinsky (2005) suggested that adoptive parents can help children to manage their feelings about adoption through being open when they are at ease with their own feelings.

Parents lack sufficient information about their adoptive child and pre-adoption education(Gunnar et al., 2000) which affects their parenting role. In relation to parenting, when parents experience the challenges of raising an adopted child “often the parent is feeling a great sense of inadequacy or failure in their ability to parent” (Golding, 2007, p. 77).

2.3.4 Global and National Trends of Adoptions

Every year many thousands of children are adopted globally either domestically or through international adoption arrangement. As per the United Nations (UN) estimate in 2005, there were approximately 260,000 adoptions globally, of which 127,000 took place in the United States alone. It also estimates that an average of 220,000 domestic adoptions are carried out annually, but that 86% of these take place in just ten countries (UN, 2009). Domestic adoption rates have generally been declining in the developed nations mainly due to an increasing shortage of adoptable children while increasing in developing countries due to government campaigns and incentives to promote the practice (UN, 2009).

According to the African Child Policy Forum (ACPF) (ACPF, 2012), global trends in inter-country adoption indicate that in the year 2004 a total of 45,298 children were adopted worldwide. This number declined by a third to 29,095 in the year 2010. The number of adopted children in 2011 has been estimated at approximately 23,000 indicating a further decline globally. Conversely, in Africa, the proportion of inter-country adoption nearly tripled from 2,254 in 2003 to 6,349 in 2010, making up 22% of the total number of inter-country adoptions worldwide. Ethiopia, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), South Africa and Mali are the top five sending countries in Africa while USA, Italy, France, Spain and Canada are the top receiving countries (ACPF, 2012; UN, 2009). According to Selman (Selman, 2012), over 33,000 inter-country adoptions involving African sending countries took place between 2004 and 2010. However, since over 57% of those cases originated in Ethiopia, it is clear that the practice is not evenly spread.

In 2010 alone, a total of 4,397 children were adopted from Ethiopia positioning the country the second largest sending country next to China (ACPF, 2012; Breuning, 2013). Apart from the increasing number of children that need the adoption services, literature noted that after the close of adoptions from Guatemala, some adoption agencies shifted strategies to Ethiopia as the next source of babies for inter-country adoption (Rotabi & Gibbons, 2011). This might have contributed to the increase in international adoption in Ethiopia for the past few years.

However compared to the local adoption trend which is increasing in the country, the figure in international adoption has shown a further decline starting from 2012. For instance, according to the U.S. State Department for the year 2013, adoption from Ethiopia has shown a marked decline from 1,568 in 2012 to 993 in 2013. On the contrary, formal domestic adoption, although still in a very nascent stage, is gaining momentum in the country. A case in point can be Oromia Region, where a total of 724 formal domestic adoptions occurred in a single year Oromia Bureau of Women, Children and Youth Affairs (OBOWCYA), 2012, cited in Faith to Action Initiative, 2014).

2.3.5 Domestic Adoption as one of Alternative Child Care Service

The importance and expansion of adoption services as one alternative form of care is necessary as a lot of children are left to fend for themselves owing to the dire poverty and the spread of

HIV pandemic in the country. Local adoption seems largely neglected or utterly out of the focus of attention of many adoption service provider organizations (Alternative Child Care Guideline, 2009). The general objective of adoption is providing an orphaned and destitute child a chance to grow up in a familial environment along with parental care and emotional bond while his/her basic needs are also addressed at the same time as further stated in the guide line. The guideline also insists child care institution and adoption service providers (ASPs) to advocate for local adoption and to sensitize the public regarding the issue. According to the alternative child care guideline designed by the Ministry of Women, children and Youth affair (MOWCYA) office in the year 2009 prospective adoptive parents should fulfill the following major criteria in order to be considered eligible for perusing domestic adoption.

- Ethiopian by nationality
- At least, twenty five years of age and at most 60 years of age (when Adoption is made by two spouses, it is sufficient for one of them to be of twenty five and above years of age);
- Able to produce a document from a relevant authority certifying that he/she has an income that is sufficient to raise the child;
- Able to produce a document from a relevant authority certifying that he/she is free from any incurable and/or contagious disease and mental health problem;
- Able to produce a document from a relevant authority certifying that he/she is free from any criminal activities;
- Able to produce a marriage certificate or prove otherwise if the potential adoptive parent is married or is living with a partner as per legally recognized relation;
- Able to produce the consent of the applicant's spouse to adopt the child, in cases when the applicant is married or living in a legally Recognized bondage.

2.3.6 International and Legal Frame Work for Domestic Adoption

According to the Convention of the Rights of the Child (art. 21), as well as to the UN Declaration on the Protection and Welfare of Children (art. 17) and the Hague Adoption Convention (Preamble and art. 4), international adoption should be considered as an option if other arrangements (with priority to kin and adoptive families) cannot satisfactorily be arranged for the child in her or his country of origin (Buck, 2011).

Ethiopia has not yet signed and acceded to the Hague convention yet. As an initial step towards building a _Hague friendly ‘or Hague aligned system. Prior areas of reform include: 1.revision and adoption of necessary laws 2. Development of service and accreditation standards and 3.Establishment of an independent central authority to oversee alternative child care programs (UNICEF, 2014). The agreement of adoption shall be made between the adopter and the guardian of the adopted child (Revised family code of Ethiopia, 2000) (Art190).

Article (195) of the revised family code talks about the irrevocability of adoption once it is signed and approved by the court. Unless, the adopter, instead of looking after the adopted handles him as a slave, or in conditions resembling slavery, or makes him engage in immoral acts for his gain, or handles him in any other manner that is detrimental to his future, the court may revoke the adoption (Revised family code of FDRE, 2000)

2.3.7 Facts and figures with regards to OVC and Domestic Adoption

According to Addis Ababa city Women, Children and youth affair bureau there are nearly 5 million orphan and vulnerable children in Ethiopia and Addis Ababa alone comprises about 100,000 orphan and venerable children. Data from the BOWCYA and the orphanage show that formal placemat of OVC to domestic adoption boosted in the past 5 years and reached its pick in 20 14 where 115 children were placed for local adoption. Since 2010 two hundred sixty four children were placed for local adoption in Addis Ababa. As per the annual reports the placement was 14 children in the year 2010, followed by 19 children in the year 2011, then 44 children in 2012, 72 was in 2013 and 115 children in the year 2014. There is high number of OVC and high concentration of child care institutions in Addis Ababa .Studies show that most of the 100,000 OVC in Addis are not born in the city rather came from other regions of the country mainly from Oromiya , Amhara and SNNPR.

According to an assessment done by BOWCYAO there are 35 private and 3 government orphanages in Addis Ababa. Statistics from the office shows that only 3 of the private orphanages had placed children not more than 10 for domestic adoption in the last 5 years. The three government orphanages operating in Addis Ababa are Kibebe tsehay, Ketchene Medhanealem and Kolfe. Kolefe is a home for male children and Kechene for female children who are older than eight years of age.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHOD

The study examined the practice, challenges and opportunities of domestic adoption. Specifically, the study sought to assess participants view towards domestic adoption in Adama city, examine the practices and procedures of domestic adoption in the city with reference to the legal and policy principles of the country and identify the opportunities and challenges of domestic adoption in the country.

The purpose of this chapter is, therefore, to describe the methods selected to accomplish the goal and objectives of this study. The chapter opens with a description of the research design followed by a description of the sampling procedure, data collection procedures, data analysis and finally the ethical consideration taken to undertake the study.

3.1 Study Site

In order to explore the practice, challenges and opportunities of domestic adoption, the site was Adama city. The main reason for selecting these places was: first, they are close to the researcher's area of residence thus proximity is considered. Secondly, the organizations/agencies which are promoting domestic adoption are implementing domestic child adoption in the selected site. Thus, accessibility of study participants through these agencies was also taken in to account.

In addition to the above reasons, location of adoption agencies which have relatively better experience in child domestic adoption, availability of adoptive parents who are willing to participate in the study and the limiting time constraint of the researcher was the other bases for selecting the study site. Information was gathered from adoptive parents, adoption agencies and Oromia Bureau of Women, Children and Youth.

Description of the study area

Adama is located 100 km to the south east of Addis Ababa which is situated 1600-1700 meters above sea level and in Latitude from 8° 33.8'N to 8° 36'N and a Longitude from 39° 01' 57"E

to 39021”15E in the Rift valley of warm climate. Its average annual weather conditions are 21 degree centigrade with small amount of rain from June to September.

Based on figures from the 2007 Population and Housing Census results of Central Statistical Agency, this city has an estimated total population of 222,035 of whom 109,659 were males and were 112,376 females. Adama is the modern city that has road crossing to the seaport and has a railway line. All these natural and human made attributes make Adama and its surroundings a base for investment in several sectors, such as hotels, recreation centers, small and heavy industries etc. that is why Adama is considered as one of the leading cities pf the country. (Yosef, 2011)

3.2 Study design

The study uses a qualitative research method. As stated in the objective part, to explore and better understand practices, challenges and opportunities of domestic adoption, a qualitative design was chosen. Apart from this, according to Creswell (2003), if a concept or a phenomenon needs to be understood because little research has been done, then it merits a qualitative research. Similarly, Donalek (2004) on his part emphasized that the qualitative approach is employed when to study areas in which there is little research. It is clear that domestic child adoption is one of the areas where we know little about particularly in the context of Ethiopia.

3.3 Methods of data collection

For the purpose of this research, instruments such as in depth interview, key informant interviews and document review was employed to collect data from first hand informants This study was also employed primary data collection methods of unstructured in-depth interview, semi-structured interview with adoptive parents, other community members and key informants respectively..

Unstructured interview was employed as a major tool of data collection in this study. Individual in-depth interviews were conducted with adoptive parents. The researcher also prepare an interview guide composed of open ended questions that would enable to address the research questions and will collect qualitative information using the interview guide.

This research also used a variety of secondary data from published and unpublished materials that are available in this area of concern. Different reports from UN and other development actors' publications that focus on children, different researches, publications and articles focusing on alternative child care in general was used. Besides, different national and international policy documents, strategy papers and guidelines that have been developed in the area was used in order to see the role of stakeholders including the government towards addressing the issue at hand.

3.4 Sample Size

In qualitative inquiry, sample size depends on what you want to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what's at stake, what will be useful, what will have credibility, and what can be done with available time and resources as well as data saturation (Marshall, Cardon, Poddar & Fontenot, 2013).

There is no easy answer to the question as to how many participants are required for a qualitative study. It really does depend on the study. Generally speaking, there will be both theoretical and practical considerations. Theoretically, optimal numbers will be determined by the research topic and question—what you are wanting to find out, from whom, and the likely variability of experience of the phenomenon under investigation (Darlington and Scott, 2002).

As many qualitative researchers and writes argue there is no hard and fast rule as to how many samples would be taken for a qualitative study. Therefore, purpose of the study, time, resource, data saturation and interest to participate was the determinant factor for the sample size taken for this study.

For this study a total of twenty five (25) respondents were participated. These include thirteen (13) individuals from community members, six (6) adoptive parents, and six (6) key informants which is four (4) coordinators from both selected nongovernmental adoption agencies and two (2) from governmental agency. Detail information was collected from these participants using different qualitative data collection methods. All participants were selected purposively. The individuals from community member were selected based on the criterion they fulfill to adopt a child. Adoptive parents was also selected from the agencies they get such services and key informants are selected from non-government and government offices based on their role and

contribution to the issue at hand by using purposive sampling techniques.

3.5 Data collection Procedure

First, the purpose of the study and eligibility criteria to participate in the study was briefed to agencies representative to get access to the study population. Once the participants selected with the support of agencies and of course with personal connection and have agreed to take part in the study, data were collected at participants' convenient time and places to keep the safety and privacy of the participants.

Most researchers go into in-depth interviews with some kind of interview guide or list of topics to cover at some stage during the interview. This can serve as a useful reminder of core aspects of the research question to be asked about. In-depth interviews should, if at all possible, be taped (Darlington and Scott, 2002).

Following the consent of the participants, because of the participant's unwillingness to be tape recorded, detail field note taking was utilized. Having their permission, telephone call will used to obtain any missed information during the interview process or data that need further clarification.

The development of trust between researcher and participant is an essential part of the research process. Participants in a research project share about personal, and perhaps traumatic, experiences that requires a great deal of trust—trust that the researcher was listen, will treat participants fairly, will respect their limits about what they want to say, and will deal with the data fairly (Darlington and Scott, 2002).

Good relationships with respondents were established right from the initial contact. The researcher was flexible with schedules and very tolerant with multiple cancelations of appointments, delayed responses for texts and emails.

3.6 Data Analysis Techniques

First, the researcher transcribed the data and read all participants responses that are collected from the interviews to get a general sense of the whole ideas presented. Thus, initially informants' interviews was examined separately to identify the key themes in relation to the

processes, benefits of domestic adoption, the challenges involved in adopting children or being adoptive parents and any other pertinent issue arise in the middle of the study.

Second, significant statements and phrases pertaining to the phenomenon being studied were extracted from each transcript. Meanings were therefore formulated from the significant statements. Then the meanings were organized into themes, and these themes eventually into theme categories. The meaningful and similar segments were coded together then thematically analyzed and interpreted both during and after the field work. Finally, the information obtained from the participants were triangulated to draw major findings, conclusions and recommendations.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Before and while conducting the research, the researcher gave due consideration to ethical issues in order to keep best interests of the participants and respect their dignity than merely focusing on fulfilling the objectives of the research. The permission process was finalized prior to the actual data collection. The respondents then asked whether or not they are willing to participate in the research.

The issue of confidentiality of the respondents' response was kept safe. The researcher gave due respect to the respondents' freedom to choose to participate in the research or not as well as to choose to discontinue participation at any time. Whenever appropriate, the researcher was providing the respondents pertinent information about the planned research including the purpose of the research, the likely benefits of the research, the procedures to be undertaken, the duration, and that participation in this research is voluntary and that the participant may withdraw consent at any time.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

As already mentioned in previous chapters, the major objective of this study was to investigate the practices, opportunities and challenges of domestic adoption in Adama city. This chapter presents the major findings of the study gathered from all the respondents. As it is stated in the methodology part, six adoptive parents, thirteen community members and six key informants from three adoption agencies (one from governmental and two non-governmental agencies) were interviewed. The findings will be presented in line with the research questions.

In this chapter demographic information of informants, how participants view domestic adoption, opportunities and major challenges of domestic adoption, and also key informant's response about domestic adoption and its practices in Adama city are explored in depth.

4.1 Characteristics of Informants

4.1.1 Characteristics of Informants from adoptive parents

As stated in the Table 1, from six respondents those who adopted child domestically two of them are male and the other four are female among which three are married, two single and one divorced. Based on their educational background, there is one Masters Degree holder and first degree holder, two completed high school, one attended up to grade seven and one is illiterate. According to their monthly income, all respondents from adoptive parents earn more than 3000 ETB per month and three of them adopted a girl, two of them adopted a boy and one of adopted parent adopted twins (one male and one female). Among these six respondents three of them have biological child and three of them have no biological child.

Table 1: Characteristics of Informants from adoptive parents

No of Informants	Sex	Age	Marital status	Occupation	Educational background	Monthly income (ETB)	Sex of adopted child	Current age of adopted child	Age at the time of adoption	No of biological child in the house (Sex)
P1	M	43	Married	Private business (selling dairy product)	Up to grade 7	10,000	Female	5	2	1 (F)
P2	F	51	Married	housewife	Illiterate	6,000	Female	6	1 year and 3 months	0
P3	F	40	Married	Governmental employee	Masters degree	4,000	Male and Female (twins)	4 years and eight months	1 year	0
P4	M	50	Married	Artistic works	High school completed	5,000	Male	4	2	2 (1 female and 1 male)
P5	F	37	Divorced	Nongovernmental employee	Degree	6,500	Male	5		2 sons
P6	F	48	Single	Private business (Selling bread, enjera and so on)	12 completed	3,500	Female	6	2	0

4.1.2 Characteristics of Informants from community members

As the Table 2 shows, eight female and five male informants are participated in the study which their age ranges from twenty six to sixty one. Based on their marital status, six of them are married, four of them are single, two of them are divorced and one of them is widowed. In order to their educational background, there are two masters degree, five degree holders, one medical doctor, one diploma, one twelve completed, one completed elementary school and two illiterate. From these thirteen respondents eight of them have biological child and the rest five have no biological child.

Table 2: Characteristics of informants from community members

No of informants	Sex	Age	Marital status	Occupation	Educational background	Monthly income (ETB)	No of biological child in the house
I1	M	32	Married	Health professional	Medical Doctor	7,000	1
I2	F	37	Single	Private business(boutique)	Firs Degree	10,000	0
I3	F	56	Married	Private business (shop and rent house)	Up to grade 6	6,000	3
I4	F	50	Divorced	Private business (shop)	Twelve completed	3,000	0
I5	M	61	Married	Works in government organization	First Degree	4,500	2

I6	F	27	Married	Works in NGO	First Degree	5,500	1
I7	M	35	Single	Running family business	Masters degree	30,000	0
I8	M	33	Single	Works in NGO	Masters Degree	36,000	0
I9	F	26	Single	Teacher	First Degree	3,500	0
I10	M	48	Widowed	Daily laborer	Illiterate	4,400 average 200 per day)	1
I11	F	30	Divorced	Nurse	First Degree	4,000	1
I12	F	60	Married	Private business (Hotel and Dairy products)	Illiterate	45,000	5
I13	F	41	Married	Government employee	Diploma	3,000	2

4.1.3 Characteristics of key informants from adoption agencies

Key informants were selected from three adoption agencies, of which one governmental and two nongovernmental agencies which two of them are female (one single and one married) and four of them are male (one single and three married), when we look at their educational background, two respondents were masters degree and four were first degree holder.

Table 3: Characteristics of key informants from adoption agencies

No of Informants	Sex	Age	Occupation	Educational background	Work experience on the issue of adoption
K1	M	58	Works in nongovernmental child adoption agency	Masters degree	8 years
K2	M	41	Works in Adama WCAO	First Degree	6 years
K3	F	53	Works in nongovernmental child adoption agency (Founder)	Masters degree	5 years
K4	M	37	Works in nongovernmental child adoption agency	First Degree	3 years
K5	M	46	Works in nongovernmental child adoption agency	First Degree	5 years
K6	F	34	Works in Adama WCAO	First Degree	4 years

4.2 Participants view about domestic adoption

Informants from the community member were asked whether they know the concept of domestic adoption or not and according to their response, all of them know the existence of legal domestic adoption through different means. One of the respondents (I11) know the practice when she got a chance to volunteer at the orphanage, I4 and I12 know the practice from a person they closely know who adopt child domestically whereas, I1 knows because of work exposure, and concept

of domestic adoption is not new for I5 and I8 because the organization they work for closely works with child welfare program. Three informants (I2, I6, and I9) have an idea of legal domestic adoption because of their educational background. As of two of informants (I10 and I13) answer they know the concept of legal domestic adoption via media and the other two informants (I3 and I7) are not sure from where they first know the issue of legal domestic adoption.

The informants were also asked if they prefer domestic adoption as an alternative to which eight of them responded that they have no interest and five of them are interested to adopt child domestically. Those who have no interest in domestic adoption have reported different reason.

The reasons behind having low interest to adopt child domestically are summarized as follows

Low income: As some of the informants reveal, feeling of fear that their income is not enough to adopt additional child other than their biological child/children limits them from having interest to adopt child. One of the informants, states the scenario as:

Now a day it's too difficult even to grow our own child. They need a lot of things and we parents are responsible to fulfill all necessary things for them in order to make them grow in a good way. The same is true for adopting child. If we (I and my wife) decided to adopt a child, it means we are full responsible for that child as well as the child also has to get all necessities and this is impossible for us based on our current income level.

Fear of unfair treatment: According to one of my informant fear of giving differential treatment for biological children and the adopted child is the reason behind not having interest to adopt child. The informant emphasizes that:

It's undeniable that adopting a child is a best practice which has to be strengthened in all communities whether for the benefit of child by getting parent or the benefit of parents by getting child. But, even if it's a holy practice which is accepted by our creator (God), it will also expose to engage in unfair activities which are sin and not accepted in front of God. As I understand, taking a child to adopt means accepting as biological child and the parent have to give equal

affection and love for the adopted one as they give or care for their biological child... and I am not sure that I can be that type of parent for my adopted child.

Fear of disappointment: Two informants share the idea that: they have no interest to adopt child because of fearing disappointment by the adopted child. One of my informant with no biological child stated that:

...since I am not lucky to have my own (biological) child, adoption would be a good option. It can make you feel as if you have full family, and naturally children's are gifted in making parents happy but it's not long lasting. One of my relative took a child to adopt and after a while she (the adopted child) understood that she is adoptee and her parents who she has known for long period of time are not her biological parents. She immediately started searching for her real mother and father. After long time she found her biological father and she abandoned her adoptive parents to live with her father. Have you imagined how it hurts? My relative was really disappointed too much at a time... then I realized that whatever you do your best for your adopted child, he/she is not yours and its true proverb that "Yesew lij yesew new".

Hating long process: some of informants consider procedure of adoption as a long process and they are not interested to adopt child hating the exhaustive process. The following is quoted from an informant:

Adopting a child is one of a humanitarian activity which saves the life of a child by making them grow in a familial environment but it's not as such simple. It has along and exhaustive process. I have information that almost all parents who decided to adopt and started the process complain the lengthy of the process and tired of getting here and there again and again. I wish I could have a child for whom I take the responsibility as a parent but not through that process. It can be my relative's child who is not able to live with his parents or other possible options which is not exhaustive.

The above mentioned reasons reported as inhibiting factors from having interest of domestically adopting children in Adama City represent economic, psychosocial and

bureaucratic constraints to positively perceive and/or practice *guddificha*. The other five informants who are interested to adopt were also asked why they have not adopted a child until this interview time and their responses are summarized as follows.

Waiting till settling: Some of informants raised the issue of not settling (settling by marriage life, settling by place of residence and also settling by income level) as a reason for not adopting child still now even if they are very interested to adopt. One of informants explains it as,

In fact I am interested to adopt a child. But now I am not stable in many ways. I have no plan to live here (a place where I live now) constantly. I want a change. I want to live better life than this. That's what my future adopted child deserves and I am sure I will succeed this in the near future.

This quotation informs us that having a positive perception for practicing domestic adoption alone is not a sufficient condition though it is necessary. There is a possibility of postponing to become an adopting parent till fulfilling a perceived precondition for adopting a child. Among others, ensuring a status of living whereby it is likely to lead a better life for oneself and one's family affects [people's current decision to adopt

Waiting for spouses consent: informants also mentioned that, they are waiting for the consent of their spouses as a main reason for not adopting till now even if they are interested in adopting a child. A male informant explains his concern of getting cooperation from his wife as:

Even if I am really interested in the issue of adoption, I didn't adopt a child still now because, adoption is not made by the interest and decision of one individual especially when you are married. Your spouse also has to be interested in the issue otherwise it can't work out or be successful. Honestly speaking my wife is not against adoption she also loves doing humanitarian activities as I do but she is not ready to adopt a child at this time. So I have to wait for her till she is fully motivated to adopt.

Given adoption takes the existence of family into context and also involves rights of husband and wife with regard to admitting a new member to ones' family, having similar interest and committing oneself to give care and childhood status for the adoptee by the couples are quite essential conditions to practice it. In the above quotation, we notice that both husband and wife have similar interest to adopt a child but there is mismatch between the two as of when it should happen. Therefore, in addition to the income level of a certain family, timing in the course of marriage life affects when a family can adopt a child even when they have interest to adopt.

In addition to these reasons, key informants revealed that inability to fulfill the criterion of adoption (Presented in Chapter 2, P_17.) is also a factor for not adopting a child for some individuals who are willing to adopt a child. According to these key informants, there are people who are really disappointed when they understand that they can't adopt a child. A key informant complains the criteria saying *"Of all, children need love and good heart. And for sure, I can give love for my adopted child from the bottom of my heart. But what you are asked to fulfill is other staffs which are not more than love"*.

4.3 Opportunities and challenges of domestic adoption

In this section, the responses of adoptive parents about their motivation behind adopting a child, and also opportunities and challenges of domestic adoption in the eyes of adoptive parents and key informants from adoption agencies are summarized respectively.

4.3.1 Motivation behind adopting child

From the informants, three of them mentioned primary infertility (unable to give birth from the beginning) and one informant stated secondary infertility as reason behind their decision to adopt. Others invoked their religious duties or moral obligation to help others in need.

Primary infertility: As one out of three informants narrated:

...It took me too long to take adoption as an alternative. I was always complaining for my inability to give birth and debating with my creator asking "Why do you punish me like this? What is my fault? I know you can do a miracle, so why don't you make me hug my child as my friends do?"... I used to cry for a

long period of time...even if I have an idea about adoption, I never thought that it has such amazing feeling.

Secondary infertility: As male informant who mentioned secondary infertility as a motivation behind adopting a child stated:

I and my wife were intended to have three children. But unfortunately after we gave birth to our daughter, my wife got some health problem and a Dr told us, she can't give birth any more. At a time, we were really disappointed and thought as there is nothing we can do to have another child....after a while.one of my friend told me about adoption and after discussing with my families we decide to adopt.

Religious duties or moral obligation: Three of the informants raised the issue of religious duties and moral obligation as a reason behind their decision to adopt a child. As of the participants said

Since I was working in a child care center, I don't think that others know the situation of children without family care more than I do... My exposure to the issue helped me to immediately take an action of adopting twins.

The other participant also shared the same saying

"After I saw those adorable kids in the orphanage without parental support, I thought it is a good deed if I take one child and it pleases God".

In addition to the above reasons that are mentioned by the adoptive parents, key informants revealed the preference of other sex than their biological child is also the motivation behind adoption.

4.3.2 Opportunities or enabling factors

The other major question in this study was whether there are opportunities or enabling conditions to adopt children at domestic level or not. Although few of them have mentioned about the tedious nature of the adoption process, majority of the respondents from adoptive parents and key informants agreed on the existence of enabling environment to adopt children in the country. The followings are what the participants raise as an enabling factor:

No payment: As respondents state, absence of payment is one factor that has to be taken as an opportunity. As one adoptive parent says:

Yes. I can say there are opportunities which make domestic adoption possible in our country and I can start with having no payment for the adoption center like the international one. Children have to be freely given for the parents who take care of them with responsibility not with payment. If so, I can't say that they are given rather it's possible to say they are sold.

By supporting this idea the other informants from key respondents also said:

During the adoption process, what expected from prospective parents was only fulfilling the criteria and the necessary documents. Regarding payment, it's for free which is appropriate and appreciative.

Government attention: The attention that the government gives for the issue of domestic adoption now a day's including the existing legal frame work is mentioned by majority of the informants especially key informants as another and major opportunity which strength the practice of domestic adoption. As one of the informants from adoptive parents stated:

The decision of the government to promote local adoption is a good opportunity for potential adoptive parents... It is good to facilitate adoption locally for the children. It helps them grow in their own country; in their own culture and language...nobody has information on the fate of internationally adopted children...

In addition to this idea, the other participant among the key informants (Governmental adoption agency) also appreciates the current stance of the government as follows:

Before few years ago, no one has given attention to children who are taken abroad through adoption even if it's known that inter country adoption has a negative effect on the child's life. But now it's different from as the government is working on strengthening the practice of domestic adoption for the wellbeing of our children. We all are concerned about the issue and we are working on it.

Norms and Practice of *Guddifacha*: According to the informants, existence of *Guddifacha* as part of our culture itself can be taken as an opportunity to strength and improve the situation of domestic adoption in our country. One of the key informants from nongovernmental adoption agency (founder of adoption agency which works only on domestic adoption) narrates

We Ethiopian have a precious culture of helping others which are in need of support. We can take our traditional adoption practice 'Guddifacha' as an example. For me the only difference between domestic adoption and the cultural adoption 'Guddifacha' is, the former one passes through legal process and the latter through cultural process. I am sure most of our societies who are capable to support are interested in helping disadvantaged children if they are well informed.

The other key informant from other nongovernmental adoption agency also supports the above idea as follows

There are a lot of individuals who have a big heart to help orphans. We are living in a society which can be touched easily and is ready to support helpless peoples without any pre condition... even here in our organization there are many individuals who came to take a child as adoption but not succeed to take because of different reasons such as fail to fulfill the required criteria and so on.

In addition to these, the presence of adoption agencies or child care centers which facilitate domestic adoption, the simplicity of the eligibility criteria by the government and the legal framework, the presence of children who are in need of a caregiver and easy accessibility of child care centers are some of the cited good opportunities to adopt children domestically by the participants.

4.3. 3 Challenges in adopting child domestically

In relation with the challenges, the study participant among adoptive parents gave information not only depending on their own experience but also based on that of their friends or relatives who have adopted children domestically and key informants also mentioned the challenges of

domestic adoption based on their years of experience on the issue . The responses are summarized in two categories: pre adoption challenges and post adoption challenges.

4.3.3.1 Pre adoption challenges

Fear of being open: As per the information obtained from the informants the challenge of being an adoptive parent begins with fear of being open to tell and discuss about the issue with families and even with spouses. As one of the informants from adoptive parents speaks:

Honestly speaking, the challenge to adopt a child starts from the process of deciding... As adoption comes to my mind as an option I was afraid to discuss it with my families. I thought they would laugh at me when they hear about it because I know we are not familiar with the issue of legal adoption... and it took me months even to raise the idea and argue with them.

Informants among the key informants also raise the issue of openness as follows:

Most parents who come to take a child for adoption want to keep it secret... I remember last year one of adoptive parents came here from Dire Dawa nine months earlier to start the process. As she told me, she preferred to take a child from here (Adama) for the sake of keeping the secret and all her neighbors know as she was pregnant and came here to give birth. It's clear that they are forced to hide the issue because of the negative attitude of the community they lived in....For me it's difficult to improve the practice of domestic adoption unless we break the silence and secrecy of the issue.

Lack of support from families: According to the responses, in addition to fear of being open, lack of support from their families is also another challenge that takes place before the adoption process started. For instance one of the informants said

Although I and my wife discussed and decided to adopt a child, our parents were not agreed on it at all. Especially my wife's families totally rejected the idea by raising different reasons such as their daughter should not suffer by raising others child rather it's better to give birth for her second child.

Misunderstanding the purpose of adoption: as some of key informants mentioned, misunderstanding the purpose of adoption can also be taken as a challenge. It's obvious that adoption is the best way in giving child for parents and of all in giving parent for children who are in need. But according to key informants some individuals lack awareness about this. One of the informants clearly stated this issue as follows:

...some individuals come here and tell us that they want to adopt a girl between six up to ten years old. As we always do, we ask them the motivation behind their decision to adopt a child; the surprising answer comes next... they want a child to help their old mother by working home works such as boiling coffee and the likes. They want them as a maid not as a child. ...I will show them the proverb that is written in bold Amharic words on our wall which says "Tirf tiwliid yelenm" which means "we have no extra generation" to make them understand how children are valuable and precious. They are here waiting for a parent who really cares for them.

In addition to the above challenges there are also individuals who came to adopt a child and then hesitate or stop the process when they understand the legal frame work of domestic adoption. According to the key informants, the issue of inheritance is the reason behind hesitation of most prospective adoptive parents.

The tedious process of adoption: Four of the informants reported that prolonged and tiresome adoption process was their challenge. One of the adoptive parents explains the scenario as: The process was long and tiresome. She complained that:

The process was very challenging. I don't feel some of the service providers are efficient... I always had to dig out what is required and I was not told most times... You are not given the right directions, as to how long the process normally takes and what the requirements are. This is not something you should find out by yourself, you have to be informed...generally speaking, it was very difficult for me to go out of the office several times to finalize the process.

As the other informant also mentioned the tiresome process of adoption as:

When I first start the process, I never expected that it would be as such boring. Maybe it could be my expectation which makes me feel like that...I heard as the process ends in three to five months but due to different inappropriate reasons it took me about 2yaers to end the process and to take my child to home.

In relation to the above idea key informants from nongovernmental adoption agency argues that the process of domestic adoption should not be taken as a challenge rather the challenge can be the less value that the prospective parents have for the children. One of the key informants who have five years of experience on domestic adoption narrates this as follows:

I know there are parents who complained the process of adoption as it is tiresome and unnecessary. Frankly speaking this makes me upset and always disagree with this kind of parents. I tried to explain for those who complain the process as we are talking about the life of a child: even the lengthy of the process is not sufficient to make sure the future wellbeing of the children. Parents who really care for the safety of the child would understand the process rather than complaining...

The criteria: Even if most of informant appreciate the existing criteria which have to be fulfilled by the adoptive parents, two of the informant from adoptive parents are not happy in some criteria and there was also a respondent who argued the criteria as it is not enough by mentioning some criteria which have to be added. As one of the informants expressed her doubt on the criteria which focuses on medical requirements that states adoptive families must be free from any communicable disease. She said:

I think some of the criteria are unfair as it stigmatized individuals living with HIV/AIDS. I wonder why they are not allowed to adopt while they have the heart and the potential.

In addition to these the other respondent said:

From the children aspect I don't think the criteria is sufficient. There are some criteria which have to be added for the safety of the adopted child. For example,

home study should be required. Adoptive parent's background, living standard and conditions should be explored in depth. Taking training should also be set as one criterion

Lack of transparency by adoption agencies: According to the informants from adoptive parents, selecting the right organization which avail children for adoption is also taken as a challenge. Some of the adoptive parents have experienced frustration with few of the existing agencies that facilitate local adoption for potential adoptive parents. It took them so long to finalize their adoption process due to lack of transparency and less attention of the agency.

Some orphanages are not welcoming for Ethiopians... they prefer 'ferenj'-white people to adopt the child. This may be related to the income they get from foreigners... I observed in four orphanages including the government center... you will see white people visiting the children... I think the perception of people's working in that sector has to be changed... they are taking adoption as a business and have wrong perception that 'Habesha'-Ethiopians will take the child not to properly adopt rather to use the child's labor for household chores...some are not willing even to show us the children...this is really discouraging!

By supporting this idea one of the key informants who is a founder of an agency which works only on domestic adoption narrates her experience as follows:

When I first decided to work only on domestic adoption, almost all people around me including those who work on child care organizations laughed at me and told me as am really fool person. The only reason they raised is the issue of fund and profit... this issue have to be considered as a humanitarian activity not as a business but as I observed, only few people can understand and have this kind of mentality.

There are also other key informants who raised the issue of transparency as a challenge for successful adoption process. According to the informants, some agencies fail to give the necessary attention to make clear the background of the child who comes to the orphanage and prepare fake documents in order to make them ready for adoption. But this kind of procedure

can't go longer as expected and can create challenge on the smooth process of adoption. The sudden existence of biological families of the children who are in process of adoption is one of the consequence comes from lack of transparency of the concerned bodies including kebeles and both government and non-government adoption agencies.

Excluding disabled children: My key informants revealed that the choices of prospective parents are also a challenge when it involves exclusion of children with disability. According to key informants from adoption agency, most of the time prospective parents prefer infants/children below one year old, healthy and good looking. In order to understand the selection of the child on the adoptive parent's point of view, they were asked how they pick their adopted child during the adoption period. According to their response, based on their age, all of them preferred a child below two years old. Their reason for preferring this age was to create attachment as of earlier age. Based on sex, majority of them prefer girls but it's not always possible to get a child that exactly fulfills the interest of adoptive parents. in regards of appearance, three of the informants from adoptive parents were prefer simply a good looking baby and two of them were wishing to have a child who looks closer to their family member and the other one adoptive parent have not worried about the look of the child. But, based on the health condition of a child all adoptive parents share the same idea that they want a healthy child who is not ill and disabled.

4.3.3.2 Post adoption challenges

Health condition of the child

With the exception of one adoptive parent, all of the participants among adoptive parent reported that the health condition of the children they adopted was not good at the time of the adoption. One of the informants said the following:

I saw my child for the first time at the court...she looked weak and unhealthy. She started vomiting on the way to go home on that very first day from the court. ...I took her hospital and the doctor recommended vitamins and other medicine which have nutritional values. Her health has improved a lot later...her slow development process was also the other challenge I faced at the moment...

Another adoptive parent also added:

My son used to be sick a lot and had lost his immunity. I had to take him to a hospital several times. He also had a severe rash on his body. He was not in a good condition. It was challenging to restore his health.

Difficulty to adapt to the environment: as few informants state, after they took their adoptive child, adapting to the new environment become difficult and challenging for the child. Particularly one of the adopted parents explains the situation as follows:

...He used to cry a lot for no reason at all. He won't stop no matter what we do. He didn't want to be left alone. He had a serious fear of abandonment. He doesn't even want the light to be off. I think he had formed a strong attachment with his prior care givers and now fails to adopt to the new environment easily...He still sleeps with us.

Continuous question from the communities: Dealing with random questions raised by the community such as “I don't remembers your wife being pregnant”, “your child doesn't totally look like you or your spouse”, “is that your child?”, “When was he born?” and the likes are also major challenges for adoptive parents, especially for those who adopt due to infertility and want to make it secret.

Societal conception about children who came from orphanage: My informants raised the issue of societal misconception regarding adopted child. According to some informants, the community they live in assumes that those who do not have a parent or come from orphanage are the one who misbehave and spoil other children. They think such children are purposeless.

Follow up process: even if some of the respondents mention the follow up process positively, majority of them were not comfortable with it. Especially those parents who do not want to make open their adoption case for others were not willing to welcome the visit from the agency, police and staff of Women and Children Affair. For instance one of the informants said:

There were times when journalists come to my home without my willingness just to satisfy the needs of the agencies.. Social workers sometimes ask you unnecessary questions like 'Is that because of your inability to get birth that you

decided to adopt? ...why visitors claim they kept the child with us as if we are there to give the child stewardship service ...and come to monitor us?

The other adoptive parent also raise the issue of post adoption follow up as follows:

I understand the purpose of follow up well. The situation in which the child lives has to be known for the safety of the child. But frankly speaking am not comfortable with the way they interact with us when they visit us. They made me feel like he is not my child and I am simply taking care of their child.

Based on the follow up process key informants also mentioned some challenges they face from the adoptive families such as: misinterpreting the purpose of follow up, failure to give full information about the child and lack of tolerance.

4.4 Societal view about adoption in the eyes of adoptive parents

In response to the question related to the perception of the community towards adoptive parents and adopted children, parents have experienced and received different opinions from people around them. As it's tried to understand from the experience of adoptive parents, even if the opinion or attitude of the surrounding community varies because of different reasons, the purpose behind their adoption can take the major part. The attitude of the community for those who have biological children and other parents who could not give birth so far is different. According to the responses, some are encouraged by people in their surrounding as they are doing a noble job while some are dismayed by others for their decision to adopt a child.

The people who are in favor of the adoption are mainly based on their opinion from spiritual and moral background. They believe that these adoptive parents have done recommendable job which was not dared by many of other people. They were appreciated for supporting nonrelated children who are in need of parental environment. One of the participants with biological child describes the perception of the community around them positively as follows:

Almost all people around me know as I have an adopted child and most of them are happy with it. They appreciate me in many ways and tell me as I am doing a wonderful job... one of my neighbor are inspired to adopt a child who are in need

of parental care and the same is true with my cousin who are now on process to adopt child domestically.

Another adoptive parent also tries to mention the acceptance of the community around him as follows:

There might be peoples who do not accept adoption and used to discourage parents who have adopted child; however, based on my experience, I never see this kind of rejection from people around me. Of course, I don't know what they say or feel behind me. But they are really supportive and encouraging in front of me. They have good interaction not only with me but also with my children.

On the contrary, one of the participants mentioned that people around us fear the inclusion of new family member as if we are creating competitor on our biological children. Their concern was inheritance. Another single women adoptive participant also described that the societal perception forced her not to let her adopted child to play with the other kids fearing they might hurt her child. She narrated her' opinion regarding her experience after adopting her child as follows:

...sometimes I feel like people don't understand the true meaning of legal adoption. They still consider my adopted child as an orphan who simply lives in my home. They never know how I feel about her and how it hurts me when they saw her like a stranger. I used to fight with my neighbors because of her. But now I decided not late her play outside even if I know this will be difficult for my daughter.... I wish I could go somewhere and live with new people who do not have idea about me and my adopted daughter. .

As can be seen from the above experiences, unlike the adoptive parents themselves, people are viewing adopting a child mostly from the challenging aspect. Particularly for those parents who have biological children, people assume conflict between adopted and biological children on inheritance is inevitable. Some even forget the very nature all children that require special protection and care and having them is a source of losing one's own privacy. People assume children who come from institutions are source of problems among the

family as well as have always behavioral problems. This misconception is a challenge for the promotion of domestic adoption.

4.5 The practice of domestic adoption

Previously, the responses of community members, adoptive parents and key informants were presented based on the questions raised for them. In this section, the practices of domestic adoption in three adoption agencies (two nongovernmental and one governmental adoption agencies) for the last four years is presented based on the information gathered from the agencies which is presented in Table 4;

Table 4: Domestic adoption practice for the last four years

Agencies	2013G.C		2014G.C		2015G.C		2016G.C		Total		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Total
Agency 1	2	2	2	3	3	4	7	13	14	22	36
Agency 2	3	5	1	1	8	15	-	-	12	21	33
Agency 3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

The above table tries to show the number children placed in domestic adoption for the last four years based on the data gathered from three adoption agencies. Agency 1: placed total number of 36 children which 14 of them are male and 22 female in domestic adoption from 2013-2016.. Agency 2: also placed around 33 children (12 male and 21 female) for domestic adoption from 2013-2015G.C. unfortunately Agency 3: has stopped placing children in local adoption due to lack of human resource and is now working only in collaboration with other non-governmental agencies.

The above data shows that the number of children is increasing from year to year and also it shows that the number of female children is more than that of male children who are adopted domestically. Similarly, key informants also revealed that most prospective parents prefer female

children than men and raise different reasons for their preference such as “female child is good in helping her families especially her mother at home or other place in different ways”.

4.5.1 Pre-Adoption Training

All parents stated a need for trainings prior to adopting a child. However, none of the adoptive parents received pre adoption trainings. They expressed a need for trainings on basics of adoption, the Ethiopian legal frame work for domestic adoption, how to handle social pressures, how to tell a child about adoption, how to do it, when is the right time to do it, how to educate children about being a single mother (for single mothers). Despite the fact that all parents haven't taken any training prior to becoming an adoptive parent they try to prepare themselves using various ways such as reading related books, asking the experience of other adoptive parents and browsing. As one of the adoptive parents mentioned:

After deciding to adopt a child, the next step we have done is preparing ourselves psychologically. Then we start asking different individuals who have an idea about adoption and read the Ethiopian legal framework for domestic adoption... After we found the necessary information on the issue, we finally see ourselves well prepared.

4.5.2 Post-Adoption Follow-up

According to the key informants post placement reports along with pictures should be sent to BOWCYA and the orphanage after 6 month the child is adopted and every year until he/she is 18 years old. They also indicated this reports should be compiled by professional social workers. They also suggest reports have to be written after a brief visit of the child at the adoptive parent's home. They also added that this may discourage many adoptive parents as most of them want to keep the matter privately.

All of the adoptive parents reported that they don't send the reports regularly and as per the agreement. The main reason for not doing so is being busy in life. The other reason for most of the parents is they don't want any reminders of the fact that their child is adopted.

4.5.3 Support System for Adoptive Parents

The participants were asked if there is a system which is designed to support adoptive parents. All the adoptive parents and the key informants stated that there are no formal network and support systems special set up for adoptive parents. According to adoptive parents the only support they get is from relatives and families and none of them have contact with other adoptive parents in order to share experiences. But one of key informants revealed that

Even if it's not formal and frequent, our agency prepares coffee ceremony which include some adoptive parents who are close to us and have necessary discussion which are helpful for them and also for us in many ways... it helps us to create strong relationship with adoptive parents and know the situation of children closely.

4.6 Ways of improving domestic adoption in our country

In this section responses of both adoptive parents and key informants on how to improve the current condition of domestic adoption in our country are summarized as follows.

To put the written set of laws and policies into practice: as some informants state, the problem is failing to properly practice the existing rules and the lesser attention of some individuals working on the area of adoption. According to these informants the government has to give due attention not only on formulating laws and policies rather there should have to be strong follow up on how it is being practiced at the lower level. As one of key informants from nongovernmental adoption agency states even government bodies give more attention and collaborate actively with those who work on inter-country adoption than domestic adoption. The reason behind giving less attention on domestic adoption by most workers on the area according to the informant is that, they get some amount of money in an illegal way from inter-country adoption process and they take this activity not as a humanitarian activity rather as a business.

More media coverage has to be done: Some informants from adoptive parents and key informants mentioned more media coverage about the issue as one way of improving domestic adoption. Based on the question raised about the media coverage about domestic adoption, all informants from adoptive parents and key informants agree on less or no media coverage about

the issue and they raise it as a factor for the communities' perception and less understanding about domestic adoption. As one of key informants from non-governmental agency states:

...now a days if you ask every individual including kids about HIV, for sure almost all of them have an idea about it and they will tell you at least the main information..., this is a result of media coverage. We heard about HIV many times in different types of media. As to me this kind of media coverage is needed from concerned bodies to promote domestic adoption in a better way. People should have to know about the services and understand it well.

By supporting the above idea one of adoptive parents explained his idea as follows:

Currently, there is better promotion of domestic adoption when compared to the previous time and condition, but it's too little when compared with its necessity. All people have to understand what domestic adoption mean, why to adopt and how to adopt in different ways especially through media. There should have been specific programs about adoption and adoptive parents have to share their experiences with others to create better understanding.

The wellbeing of children in an orphanage has to be protected: As to the respondents from adoptive parents, even if an orphanage is a better place for children when related to their previous condition, there are some problems with the orphanage in treating the children well. Adoptive parents especially those who take a child with a bad health condition complain an orphanage by less attention they give to the children.

Improving the existing laws which discourage domestic adoption and encourages inter-country adoption: one of the key informants from non-governmental agencies narrated her experience as follows:

If the government is talking about giving due attention about domestic adoption, rules also have to be formed to encourage it...last year there were a couple who wanted to adopt a child and they started the process. They came from a town which is far away from Adama so that things have to be finished as soon as possible. But when we went to the court, it was closed until September because it

was summer time when the court is closed for two months....I started begging them to do this as a special case but no one accepted me. They refused by telling me that the court is open in summer season for inter-country adoption only.... I got nervous when I hear this and start arguing with them but they showed me a written law to convince me... these kinds of laws really discourage us (agencies who work on domestic adoption) and the issue itself.

Strengthening the legal adoption by combining with the cultural way of adoption ‘Guddifachaa’: According to the informants, strengthening the legal adoption process by joining with the cultural way of adoption could be a better way to create deep understanding on the community about domestic adoption and also helps to make the issue stronger because our community gives more value for cultural aspects. One of the study participants among the key informants raises the idea if including the cultural ways of adoption into the legal one based on the experience of the adoption agency she works for as follows:

Adoption is not a new concept in our country, especially in Oromo culture it was practiced for a long period of time...so it can't be too difficult to combine the legal and the cultural ways of adoption. For instance, we can take the experience of our organization as an example. In our organization, first we make sure if the prospective parents fulfill all necessary documents, screening their background and taking to the court is followed as others also do, what makes us different is, after the court decided we have ceremony similar to the cultural gudifacha ceremony before taking the child to their home....we invite different concerned bodies including the judge itself and elders then we follow a procedure that was used in Oromo cultural ways of giving ones child to another(Gudifacha). Our organization believes as this is important especially for the children by increasing their values. We expect that parents who take their adoptive child in this kind of ceremony, in front of all this respected individuals from government and non-government organizations have given more value for the child they are going to adopt when compared with those parents who take their adopted child from the court.

To formulate uniform criterion similar from one adoption agency to another: as tried to understand from respondents, even if there is common criterion which is clearly written in the guideline clearly, some agencies add few other criterion based on their organizational rules and this creates less uniformity of criteria from one agency to another. Based on the criteria written in the guideline, informants express their idea in different ways. Some of them complain against few criteria which are included in the guideline and other complains the less uniformity from agency to agency.

Based on this issue key informants were asked about the criterion they put for prospective parents. Although key informants from two agencies (a governmental and nongovernmental) use same criterion which is written in the guideline, key informants from non-government agency revealed as their organizations make some changes on the existing criterion by adding few other. One of key informants from this non-government agency emphasized that:

Our criteria for prospective parents are same with that of written on the guideline but we make some changes by adding another criterion which our organization believes in as it is essential for children. Educational background! We believe that educational background of parents have an effect on the future lives of children. So that we only accept those individuals who at least completed their regular education. This also shows that how much we give value for our children and how children are precious in our organization. As there are individuals who complain this idea, there are also individuals who accept our way of looking and appreciate us.

Recognizing individuals who engaged in humanitarian activities: As some of the key informants' state, the government and also other bodies have to give recognition for individuals' working on humanitarian activities in varies ways in order to encourage such practices. They cite some American and European countries experiences as example. According to these informants, appreciation can be expressed in different ways such as facilitating conditions which gives priority to these individuals in different social services. As one of informants reveals

I know a lot of individuals who quite there high salary jobs and leave there cozy life style just to help vulnerable societies. They are doing such blessed activities

by passing through different challenges which discourages them. I know they are doing this because they have a good heart not to get recognition but I think it should be much better if they are appreciated and supported... the government or other concerned bodies can appreciate them in many ways. For example by making especial ID card and giving for them which then help them in getting priority in every sector of social services.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

In this section, the major findings will be discussed in relation to similar studies done both at the local and international level. The findings that would be emphasized here are those related to the research questions that were set forth in the first chapter. Accordingly, the perception of peoples about domestic adoption, themes that related to the adoptive parents' motives to adopt a child, the challenges and opportunities of domestic adoption and the practice of domestic adoption in Adama town will be discussed.

5.1 Participants view about Domestic Adoption

The data revealed that the idea of domestic adoption is not new for almost all peoples but only few of them have detail information about the issue which they got through different method but only very few of them got the awareness through media. This indicates that there is less media coverage about the issue. As tried to understand from the data, it's not a matter of educational background or income level or family size which makes individuals interested to help a needy child by adopting. In line with this, Bunkers & Grove (2014) also found that a significant percent of families that adopt children were of low income working in the informal sector. A study from USA also indicated that contrary to popular opinion about wealth and its relationship to suitability for adoption, significant number of adopted children live in homes with low income-levels (Kreider, 2003).

According to the finding, what matters to adopt a child for those who are interested in it but not yet is, being stable in place of residence and capital, getting spouses consent, and fulfilling the criterions which are expected from prospective adoptive parents to start the process of adoption. In other way there are also individuals who are not interested to take a child by adoption at all. Fear of unfairly treating the adopted child, assuming the adoption process as exhaustive and tiresome, fear of disappointment by the adopted child in the future and feeling inability to manage the existing resources when new individual joins the family are the main reasons behind the less or no interest individuals have to adopt a child.

Based on the reasons raised by individuals or families who have less or no interest of adopting a child domestically, it's easy to understand that peoples have less understanding about the issue of domestic adoption and most of them are taking the wrong impression about the issue from other peoples around them. This can be an indication that strong awareness raising programs is needed in order to create a community who truly understands adoption and motivated to help vulnerable children by making them live in familial environment.

5.2 Reasons for Adopting Child

According to the findings, one of the motives behind adopting a child is primary infertility. Infertility brings negative impact on the marital life of most parents so; they took adoption as a solution and decide to adopt. They also satisfy their need for having a child and heal their sense of being purposeless by adopting a child. This is consistent with other findings (Buchanan, 2004; Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2010& Peterson, 2013). In Bunkers and Groza (2014) study, participants have also mentioned that the major reason for wanting to adopt was infertility (61%) followed by a desire to help the child (44%). Another study also noted that about 80% of non-relative adoptions are motivated by infertility (Fisher, 2003 cited in Kleven, 2012).

Religious duties and moral obligation is also the reason for some parents. There are parents who gates satisfaction by doing humanitarian activities such as helping children without parental care by adopting them and also to get spiritual blessing by fulfilling such religious duties. Studies also supported this finding viewing that adoption is a humanitarian act and an appropriate response to the extensive poverty in most developing countries and for children who are deprived of parental care (Bartholeth, 2007; Roby, 2007).

The study also revealed that secondary infertility or wanting a sibling which means fulfilling the interest of having more children than they actually have and sex preference or the desire to have different sex than their biological children.

5.3 Opportunities and Challenges of Domestic Adoption

5.3.1 Opportunities

As shown in the study, there are opportunities which can be used to strengthen domestic adoption in our country. Being for free to adopt a child is one enabling factor for prospective parents. The current government attention on the issue is the other major factor which helps domestic adoption to better practiced in our country. Now days a government is giving due emphasis on adopting a child locally by understanding the benefits it have for the child's wellbeing when compared with other alternative child care system including inter-country adoption.

The study also indicates that our precious culture of helping each other especially those who are in need is the other enabling factor for improved domestic adoption practice. By making the society aware about the number of children without parental care at the orphanage and make them understand the positive impacts and benefits of raising them in a familial setting; it can be possible to bring a desired change. According to the gathered data, the availability of adoption agencies and needy children without parental care in the orphanage also can be a positive factor which invites prospective parents in one or another way.

5.3.1 Challenges

The study tries to identify the pre adoption and post adoption challenge separately. Based on the findings, fear of being open because of less acceptance of the community about the issue, lack of parental support, and some individuals less understanding about the purpose of adoption are challenges which hinder the improvement of domestic adoption and can be solved or eliminated through creating awareness in the society. Similarly the research conducted by McKay and Ross (2010) also revealed that lack support by others were the main challenge and obstacle for adoptive parents.

The other major challenge revealed in the study is the tedious and tiresome process of adopting a child. The lengthy of the process will have an impact by making prospective parents give up on the process and by creating negative attitude on the other parents or individuals. FHI (2010) also cites evidence which suggest that the current domestic adoption procedures are perceived as

cumbersome and intimidating for Ethiopian families interested in formal adoption. Supporting the same finding, Bunkers and Groza (2014) also mentioned the bureaucratic barriers and unprofessionalism of the public agency staff to adoption.

The finding of this study clearly showed that, there is lack of transparency in adoption agencies. In addition, agency staffs shows unequal attention and treatment for foreigners and Ethiopians which discourage domestic adoption. In this regard, Bunkers et al. (2009) mentioned that because of the income generated, international domestic adoption is negatively affecting domestic adoption by putting pressure on the availability of young healthy children to be placed internationally rather than domestically. This kind of inclination also violate the UN child rights instruments regarding adoption which states priority should be given to placement in domestic adoption before inter-country adoption.

The other major challenge shown in the study is excluding disabled children or children with special need. Parents always prefer a healthy and good physical shape to adopt. All adoptive parents and also agency staffs who took part in the study showed the less interest of peoples on adopting disabled children. The finding of the current study was contrary to the recent thought of finding a family to meet the child's needs (Levy & Orlans 2014) the current domestic adoption in Ethiopia is finding children for the family's needs.

In the findings, even if some parents have appreciated the existing family laws and adoption criteria set by the government, there are also parents who believe that some adjustments are needed for better adoption practice.

The study also revealed post adoption challenges of domestic adoption and according to the findings; health problem of the adopted child is one of the problem that adoptive parents faced after taking the child home. It was a challenge and frustrating to take those unhealthy kids to home. Although most of the adopted children were in good condition at the time of the study, parents reported that children were in a poor health condition at the time of the adoption. Few parents are not sure about the medical history their adoptive children have gone (whether they have taken the required vaccine in their infancy period or not).Consistent to this finding Foliand Thomson (2004) revealed that uncertainty about the physical and psychosocial background of the child was one of the challenges of some adoptive parents.

In addition to the physical health condition of the child, there is also difficulty to easily adapt the new environment and new family so that the child might misbehave until they adapt it. However, the problem became minimal for those who adopt a child at infancy stage because of the less time the child spent at orphanage. A research by Shapiro, Shapiro, & Paret which focus on children who have been adopted from institutions emphasizes the detrimental effects institutionalization has on children. It also draws further attention to the challenges that arise for the parents of these adopted children. The challenges adoptive parents face included: behavioral and emotional problems, attachment issues, and cognitive challenges, history of sexual abuse, issues surrounding personal and racial identity, changes in the family dynamic, and reunion with biological parents (Shapiro, Shapiro, & Paret, 2001).

The other major challenge is the negative perception of some of the community. This study reveals that the adoptive parents should have to deal with the discouraging reactions of some individuals and continues unnecessary questions from the society. Similarly the research conducted by McKay and Ross (2010) also revealed that lack of support by others were the main challenge and obstacle for adoptive parents.

5.4 Practices of Domestic Adoption

Based on the gathered data, the number of children placed in local adoption is increasing from year to year which has a positive implication for the improvement of domestic adoption practice. However, it's undeniable that this number is still too small when related to the numbers of children placed in the orphanages and still needs further effort to serve more children who are in need.

This can be done by identifying the core challenges which might hinder the practice and improvement of domestic adoption, by taking the best experiences of western society and by developing helpful programs which can minimize the challenges that adoptive parents and adopted children face and to better promote the issue.

The study revealed that there is lack of supportive programs such as pre adoption training, post adoption follow up and networking and support programs. This kind of programs will smooth the practices of adoption by creating well trained adoptive parents and insuring wellbeing of adopted children. Other researchers like McKay & Ross describe how families can benefit a lot from

networking with other families and receiving post adoption services and supports. Consistent with the finding of this research they also stated these services are most of the time accessible for inter country adoption and not for domestic adoption (McKay & Ross, 2010)

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Conclusion

A lot have been said how domestic adoption is a much better resort than either institutional care or inter country adoption. Since, it gives children a chance to be raised in a familial setting knowing their culture and norms. Obviously, little was done on public awareness. All adoptive parents also agreed that there is a lot to be worked on public awareness regarding domestic adoption. Simply promoting domestic adoption on the media is worthless because people want to see the lived experience. Adoptive parents can't actually come forward to media or public and share their experience about adoption because there is a great social pressure from the society. Social pressure is the result of lack of knowledge that a real family can be formed through the miracle of adoption.

All adoptive parents and key informants agree that the stigma on adoption should be stopped at some point because it is not fair and it is not right. The society should accept adopted children as adoptive families have accepted them. We should work on integration and advocacy not only for other people to consider adoption but also for the society to accept adopted children in a similar way they accept biological children. People should not be ignorant and point out that a child is adopted in every social events or occasions. The current societal attitude is discouraging parents from considering adoption.

Adoptive parents also agreed that government policies and adoption agencies program interventions should create conducive environment for potential and existing adoptive parents and this can be done in the form of giving maternity leave for adoptive working mothers, better economic and livelihood opportunities for parents, priorities for social services such as education and health.

In addition to these, the finding also shows as some individuals working in the area of adoption are not welcoming for Ethiopian prospective parents and also there is lack of skilled staffs about the issue. It is clear that this kind of gaps negatively affect domestic adoption so that Continuous

professional development programs should be devised for staff working at the adoption agencies and sector government office.

6.2 Implications

Domestic adoption is considered to be a better resort for OVCs but it is a less promoted and encouraged practice. Although the number of children placed for inter country adoption has dramatically declined in the past few years and the number of child placed for domestic adoption have shown progress the numbers are not still comparable. This shows that there is clearly a lot to be done in the area. Furthermore finding of the study show that, even though there are many private orphanages in Adama, only finger counted children are placed for domestic adoption over the years. This study has come up with some indications for the development of the service and for more children to benefit from the outcomes.

Advocacy

If domestic adoption promoted and advocated, many children could benefit and find a permanent home and loving parents. The study indicated that adoptive parents need the public to be supporting and understanding. The public should also be trained and educated domestic adoption is one of the alternative child care services which can make a needy child live in a familial environment and that it is formally facilitated by the government. People should also be informed that adoption is a choice and adoptive parents choose to build their family through adoption and this should be acknowledged and respected. Stake holders should work together with Medias and religious organizations to advocate for adoption.

Trainings

The study clearly shows there is a visible gap in this regard. Adoptive parents got through all the adoption process and take the adopted child home without any prior training taken on the matter. This makes the adoptive parents pass through different challenges pre, during and post adoption. Because, most of the challenges they face and the uncertainties they live with are resulted from lack of knowledge and expertise in the area. Trainings specifically about adoptive parenting should be rendered for prospective adoptive parents.

Counseling / consultations

The study showed that there are no prior or post counseling services rendered for adoptive parents or for prospective adoptive parents. None of the participants mentioned anything about receiving such services but they indicated their need for professional consultations and guidance at some point. Since adoption is a lifelong commitment a need for counseling and consultations may arise at any point of their path. Therefore, these services should be readily available for adoptive/prospective adoptive parents. Free telephone line only dedicated to give information and consultations could be of a great help since parents in need of help can get the services without the need of showing up and anonymously.

Network and Support Systems

The study indicated there are no network and support systems for adoptive families. Almost all parents want to network with other adoptive families and share their experiences. Forums and platforms should be facilitated for adoptive families and also prospective parents to share their experiences and support each other.

Home studies and post placement

Reports are important components when thinking about adoption. Home studies show the overall readiness and commitment of adoptive parents to parent a child. Post placement reports are also essential for evaluating the progress and wellbeing of adapted children. The study indicated that home studies were never set as a requirement and post placement reports are not consistently sent and are compiled by the families themselves.

Social workers should take the responsibility in doing assessments and compile home studies along with responsible government bodies. They should also assist adoptive parents work on post placement reports and train them about the relevance.

Implication for Social Policy

Ethiopia had signed and ratified various international child right conventions. The Alternative child care guideline was also issued in 2009. Since then a lot of effort have been exerted to promote domestic adoption. The number of children placed for domestic adoption is showing a significant progress. Currently, there are adoptive parents on waiting list waiting to be matched to a child and that is a promising progress.

Although, there will be no point of promoting adoption if children are still being abandoned at the other side. The finding of this study indicated that abandoned children will later have to deal with unresolved issues of who they are because there was no record regarding the birth families. The gap in policy, laws and procedures should be bridged to minimize the number of children being abandoned.

Ways should be paved for mothers who are incapable of raising their children to relinquish them than abandoning them. Not encouraging them in a way to place their children in orphanages but helping them have the option and also making sure they are really incapable of raising the child.

Finally; Orphanages, adoption service providers, religious institutions, social workers and other stake holders should also work in collaboration to prevent children from abandonment and to find permanent home for those who are under institutional care.

Implication for Further Researches

This study tried to spark a light on the practices, opportunities and challenges of domestic adoption in Adama town. The limited number of research in the area indicates that there are still uncharted areas with regard to the practice of Ethiopian domestic adoption.

Other areas like what is behind the child preference of adoptive families. Why male children, school age children, older children and children with special needs and disabilities are not preferred for adoption. It would be helpful to design evidence based trainings for prospective adoptive parent to widen their child preferences at least a little bit and also help these children have a loving home out of the institution.

On the other, the reason behind birth mothers abandoning their children under difficult circumstances is also an issue that needs to be researched. This will intern help to design evidence based interventions to prevent children from being abandoned.

So much have been said and assumed about public perception and knowledge about adoption but knowledge and awareness level of the public is also something that needs to be researched.

REFERENCES

- Abebe (2009) 'Orphanhood, Poverty, and the Care Dilemma: Review of Global Policy Trends,' *Social Work and Society* 7:70-85.
- Abebe, T. and Aase, A. (2007) 'Children, AIDS and the Politics of Orphan Care in Ethiopia: The Extended Family Revisited', *Social Science & Medicine*, 64(07), pp2058–2069.
- Ansell, N. & Young, L. (2004) 'Enabling households to support successful migration of AIDS orphans in southern Africa.' *AIDS Care*, 16 (1): 3-10.
- AyalewDuressa (2002) *Guddifachaa: Adoption Practice in Oromo Society with Particular Reference to the Borana Oromo*: M.A Thesis, Addis Ababa University, Social Anthropology Department, Addis Ababa, Unpublished
- Bartholet, E. (2007). International Adoption: The Child's Story" (2007). Harvard Law School Faculty Scholarship Series. Paper 27. http://lsr.nellco.org/harvard_faculty/27
- Beckstrom, J.H. (1972) 'Adoption in Ethiopia Ten Years after the Civil Code'. *Journal of African Law*, 16: 145-168
- Berk, Laura E. (2009). *Child Development*. 8th ed. United States of America: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Buck,T.(2011) *International Child Law* .New York : Rutledge ,Retrieved from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_adoption
- Bunkers, K. and Kauffman, Z. (2012). De-institutionalization of Street Children in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Retrak Report, March 2012.
- Csaky,C. 2009. KeepingChildren Outof Harmful Institutions–*Why we should be investing in family-based care*. London: Save the Children UK
- Desmond, C.&Gow, J. 2001. *The cost-effectiveness of six models of care for orphaned and vulnerable children in South Africa*. Durban: University of Natal Health Economics and HIV/AIDS Research Division.

- Dessaleng, Negeri. (2006). *Guddifacha Practice as Child problem intervention in Oromo Society: the case of Ada''a Liban District*. M.A. thesis, school of Social Work: Addis Ababa University, Unpublished
- Devereux, Stephen (2006) 'Cash Transfers and Social Protection,' accessed 16 November 2010 at <www.sarpn.org.za/.../Cash_Transfer_Devereux_Oct2006.pdf>.
- Ennew, Judith (2003) 'Difficult Circumstances: Some Reflections on 'Street Children' in Africa,' *Children, Youth, and Environments*, Vol. 13, No. 1.
- Evan Donaldson institute (2002) National adoption attitude survey, P: 3
- Faith to Action Initiative (2014). Children, Orphanage and Families. A Summary of Research to help Guide faith-based action.
- Family Health International; Children's Investment Fund Foundation; and UNICEF (2010) "Improving Care Options for Children in Ethiopia through Understanding Institutional Child Care and Factors Driving Institutionalization" Accessed 9 July 2010 from <www.fhi.org/en/CountryProfiles/Ethiopia/res_eth_institutional_care.htm>.
- Family Health International, (2010) "Improving Care Options for Children in Ethiopia through Understanding Institutional Child Care and Factors Driving Institutionalization,"
- G.Biamba, J.Beard, M. I. Brooks, M. Bresnahan, and D. Flynn, 2010 "The Scale , Scope and Impact of Alternative Care for OVC in Developing Countries : A Review of Literature,".
- Getnet Tadele, Desta Ayode, Weldekidan Kifle. 2013. *Assessment of Community and Family Based Alternative child care services in Ethiopia*.
- Howell, Signe (2006) *The Kinning of Foreigners: Transnational Adoption in a Global Perspective*. New York: Bergahn Books.
- Madhavan, Sangheeta (2004) 'Fosterage Patterns in the Age of AIDS: Continuity and Change,' *Social Science and Medicine* 58: 1443-1454.
- Maldonado, S. (2006) Discouraging racial preferences in adoptions, *UC Davis Law Review*, 39, 1415–1480

- Mathambo, V. and A. Gibbs (2008) ‘*Qualitative Accounts of Family and Household Changes in Response to the Effects of HIV and AIDS: a Review with Pointers to Action,*’ Joint Learning Initiative on Children and HIV/AIDS.
- Mezmur, B. (2009). FROM ANGELINA (TO MADONNA) TO ZOE’S ARK: WHAT ARE THE ‘A – Z’ LESSONS FOR INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTIONS IN AFRICA? *International Journal of Law, Policy and the Family*, Vol. 23, No. 2, Published by Oxford University Press
- Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, 2001. *National Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- MOWCYA, (Ministry of Women children and Youth Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia) (2009). *Alternative Child Care Guideline on Community-Based Childcare, Reunification and Reintegration Program, Foster Care, Adoption and Institutional Care Service, Addis Ababa*.
- Negeri, D. (2006) ‘*Guddifachaa Practice as Child Problem Intervention in Oromo Society: The Case of Ada’a Liban District,*’ MSW Thesis, Addis Ababa University.
- Perry, C. & Henry, M. (2009). Family and Professional Considerations for Adoptive Parents of Children with Special Needs. *Marriage & Family Review*, 45:538–565, 2009
- Population Census Commission of Ethiopia (2007) ‘*The 2007 Population and Housing Census of Ethiopia: Statistical Report at National Level*’.
- Population Institute (2009) ‘*Population and Failing States: Ethiopia*’. Accessed 11 November 2010 <www.populationinstitute.org/external/files/Ethiopia.pdf>.
- Roby, Jini L., and Stacey A. Shaw. (2006). “The African Orphan Crisis and International Adoption.” *Social Work* 51(3):199–210.
- Save the Children UK (no year) ‘*a National Plan of Action for Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Ethiopia*.’ Accessed 12 November 2010 <www.africanchildinfo.net/.../Summary%20of%20Policy%20and%20Legal%20Framework%20go...>

- Seelig, J.M. and Andargatchew Tesfaye (1994) '*Child Welfare Issues in Ethiopia,*' *International Social Work*, 37: 221-237.
- Smolin, D.M. (2004). Inter-country adoption as child trafficking. *Valpariso University Law Review*, 39 (2), 2004.
- UN General Assembly, 2010. "*Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children: Resolution adopted by the General Assembly,*" vol. 53, no. 53. pp. 1–23
- UNICEF, 2006. "*Children without Parental Care: Child Protection Information Sheet,*"
- Varnis, Steven (2001) '*Promoting Child Protection through Community Resources: Care Arrangements for Ethiopian AIDS Orphans*', *Northeast African Studies* 8(1): 143-158.
- Wegar K. (2000) Family ideology, and social stigma: *Bias in community Attitudes, Adoption research, and practice, Family Relations*. Vol.49, No 4, pp: 363-370

APPENDICES

Appendix I:

Instruments of data collection

Jimma University

College of Social Science and Humanities

Department of Sociology

Interview Guides for Adoptive Parents

My name is Heran Ejara. I am a graduate student at Jimma University in the School of Sociology. I am doing a thesis focusing on the practice, challenges and opportunities of domestic adoption. The purpose of my study is to understand the practices, opportunities and challenges of domestic adoption in Adama Town. The interview will last approximately thirty minutes and will be conducted at your convenient place. To save time and not to miss any information, the interview will be audio taped and assigned a unique identification number. Because of your participation you will be contributing to important research that has never been conducted in the country and the results may assist implementing agencies & professionals to render the necessary pre and post adoption support for potential and present adoptive parents. All the information you will provide will be kept confidential and the raw data will be filed in a safe place where only the researcher can access to the document and finally the recorded voice will be destroyed.

If you are willing to participate, shall I proceed to the questions? Thank you!

I. Socio demographic Characteristics of the informant and the adopted child

a. Sex: _____

b. Age: _____

c. Marital status: _____

d. Occupation: _____

- e. Educational background -----
- f. Household average monthly income (you may want to know main source of income to if it is different from the occupation mentioned above) -----
- g. Sex of adopted child: _____
- h. Current age of the adopted child: _____
- i. Age of the child at the time of adoption _____
- j. Presence of biological child in the house: _____, if yes, how many _____
- k. Presence of the biological parent(s) of the child

II. Interview Guide related Adoption and its process

1. What motivated you to adopt your child?
2. [If married] who initiate the idea to adopt the child, husband or wife?
3. Where was the child before being adopted? What was your reason to select this particular child compared to the others?
4. What process have you gone through to adopt your child? What went well? And what was difficult?
5. Do you think the eligibility criteria are encouraging to adopt a child in the country? If yes, what makes you say so, if no, why not?
6. What issues do you think should be considered among potential adoptive parents before domestic adoption takes place?

III. Interview Guide related to Opportunities & Benefits of Adoption

1. Could you tell me your first reaction when the child joins your family? What did you feel about it? How did the family react to the experience?

2. Could you tell me some of the benefits you have gained (personally/or as a family) by adopting a child?
3. Did you know someone who has adopted a child or any personal experience with adoption before you decide to adopt a child? If yes, had you get a chance to discuss about it? Why?
4. What opportunities do you think exist for both potential& existing adoptive parents in adopting children locally? (e.g., government, agencies, community, and family level)
5. Based on your experience, how do the communities perceives an adopted child and adoptive families? How does that affect your relationship?
6. What do you suggest for future to strengthen the exiting opportunities to promote domestic child adoption in the country?

IV. Interview Guide related to challenges of Adoption

1. Could you tell me about your pre-adoption expectations compared to your post-adoption reality? How was that for you, how did you feel about that?
2. How would you characterize your relationship with your child over time? What feelings did and does that bring up for you?
3. Have you faced any challenges as a result of being adoptive parents? If yes, from where and why do you think that happens?
4. How do you manage some of the challenges you have faced or facing? Or what are your coping mechanisms?
5. Considering your experience as an adoptive parent, would you recommend others to adopt children? Why yes or no?
6. What would you propose in tackling problem related to domestic adoption starting from the process and improve the situation of the adopted children after adoption?

7. Please tell me about anything you feel is important to understand your adoption experience that you feel has been missed on the previous questions

V. Interview guide for key informant in Adama town WCAO office

1. How many OVC are there in Adama currently?
2. How many orphanages operate in Adama currently (both government and private?)
3. When did formal placement of OVC for domestic adoption started?
4. How many children are served by domestic adoption since then?
5. How many orphanages are placing children for local adoption in Adama?
6. Comparing Adama with other regions, who is currently placing a very significant number of OVC to domestic adoption?
7. Comparing domestic adoption with other forms of child care alternative services, which one serves more ovc?
8. If fewer children are served what do you think is the reason?
9. What is the role of Adama city Women and Children Affairs office in relation to domestic adoption?
10. Which children are usually referred to domestic adoption (relinquished or abandoned?)
11. What is the most common age and sex of children who are referred to local adoption?
12. What criteria are set to be met by the prospective adoptive families?
13. What is the overall procedure to finalize the process? (Paper works, court hearings, other procedures, trainings, counseling, home studies)
14. What are the challenges faced until the adoption process is finalized? (Faced by both the orphanage and adoptive parents)

15. After the process is finalized, do adoptive parents submit post placement reports or any other follow up reports?
16. What are the typical adoptive families?(Age, occupation, living standard, single/couple, have children/don't have children)
17. What are the most common reasons /motivations of adoptive families for considering domestic adoption?
18. What are the main challenges faced while rendering the services?
19. What is the most common challenges adoptive families face during the adoption process?
20. What challenges do adoptive parents report after the process is finalized?
21. Where do adoptive families usually seek for help? (Probe for any kind of service, networks or support systems, also probe for any support from family or friends)
22. From your experience working with Ethiopian adoptive parents what kind of services do you suggest they should get? Or any support they should get to prepare them more?
23. Do you have any suggestion for any intervention to promote domestic adoption or to encourage others to consider domestic adoption?
24. Currently, are there any strategies set by the government to encourage domestic adoption?
25. Is there anything we haven't talk about or is there anything you would like to add?

VI. Interview guide for key informant in orphanage

1. When did the institution start operating in Adama?
2. What services are rendered by the institution?
3. How many OVC are there in Adama currently?
4. When did it start placing children for local adoption?
5. Is this the only orphanage placing children for local adoption in Adama?

6. How many children are placed for local adoption so far from the Institution?
7. What other alternative child care services are considered by the institution?
8. Comparing domestic adoption with other forms of child care alternative services, which one serves more OVC?
9. If fewer children are served what do you think is the reason?
10. Which children are usually referred to domestic adoption (relinquished or abandoned?)
11. What is the most common age and sex of children who are referred to local adoption?
12. What criteria are set to be met by the prospective adoptive families?
13. What is the overall procedure to finalize the process? (Paper works, court hearings, other procedures, trainings, counseling, home studies)
14. What are the challenges faced until the adoption process is finalized?(faced by both the orphanage and adoptive parents)
15. After the process is finalized, do adoptive parents submit post placement reports or any other follow up reports?
16. What are the typical adoptive families? (Age, occupation, living standard, single/couple, have children/don't have children)
17. What are the most common reasons /motivations of adoptive families for considering domestic adoption?
18. What are the main challenges faced by the orphanage while rendering the services?
19. What is the most common challenges adoptive families face during the adoption process?
20. What challenges do adoptive parents report after the process is finalized?
21. Where do adoptive families usually seek for help?(Probe for any kind of service, networks or support systems, also probe for any support from family or friends)

22. From your experience working with Ethiopian adoptive parents what kind of services do you suggest they should get?

23. Do you have any suggestion for any intervention to promote domestic adoption or to encourage others to consider domestic adoption?

24. Is there anything we haven't talk about or is there anything you would like to add?