

## Adoption Laws as a Means of Social Control

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### Abstract

*According to Hindu tradition, sons are crucial and a dead parent's soul can only attain heaven if that person has a son to light the funeral pyre, and salvation can be achieved through sons who offer ancestral worship (Vlass of, 1990). Since then, reforms that accompanied Independent India from 1947 brought about changes in the social legislation and policies. The papers ought to determine the effectiveness of such laws as a means of social control, thus focus was on need & effectiveness of adoption as a socially organized sector, current challenges and future trends of adoption.*

### Introduction

The attitude towards adoption in India has changed significantly in two decades. Prospective adoptive parents are beginning to understand the legal and social processes of adoption. Interestingly enough, the records of ICCW show that between 2001-2009, of all domestic adopted children, 78% were female children, and 22% male children raising concerns touching on societal imbalances.

### Research Aim

The chief aim of this paper is to investigate the progress adoption laws are making with regards to social control in India. It may also serve as a guide for governments, societies or legislative bodies experiencing the same bottlenecks in implementing adoption laws.

### Adoption

Adoption is the establishment of a parent-child relationship through a legal and social process other than the birth process. It is a process by which a child of one set of parents becomes the child of another set of parents or parent (Ananthalakshmi, Sampoorana, Mushtaq, Sheelajayanthi, & Charulatha, 2001). Adoption policies and social reformation could have evolved due to the fact that India during those times was ruled by the British. These changes also had a positive impact on family policies

concerning children's well being (Apparao, 1997).

### Need and Effectiveness of Adoption

A basic assumption important in adoption is that every child has a right to parental love, protection and family. Several studies dealing with children have established the connection between early family experience and its significance in the social and emotional development of the child. Out of all the alternatives open for rehabilitation of orphaned and abandoned children, adoption offers the soundest solution, for it ensures that the child is wanted, protected and loved.

### Inter- Country Adoption

Since the availability of children for adoption is far more than the homes that can be found locally, foreign placement has its place. Prior to 1970 not many Indians wanted to adopt an unrelated, child whose parentage was unknown. The parents who adopted kept it as a family secret due to the social stigma involved in barrenness and adopting an unrelated child. (Mahtani, 1994). This prejudice and social stigma in the Indian family and social system created an opportunity for inter-country adoption to gain momentum. For nearly two decades, there was a progressive increase in intercountry adoptions and they were not reliably documented (Hoksbergen, 1986).

**Research Methodology**

Schneider (2014) considers the methodology as the central component as it is the part of text that outlines the procedures and mechanisms used by a researcher in retrieving raw data. Since the current paper yearns to find out whether adoption laws are a means of social legislation, there was dire need to conduct a study that would help build more theory and literature. The approach, as Mauther, Birch, and Miller (2002, p. 27) describe, refers to the mechanism with which researchers conduct a study. The paper used the quantitative approach, as it is faster, less time-consuming, and easier to analyze and replicate as opposed to the qualitative strategy. The technique enlisted for this study was the random selection method and data analysis was through tabulation of the results depending on how many people selected a particular answer choice.

**Results and Discussion**

**Marital Status**

Demographic questions about marital status basically tell the researcher about the household composition (New Mexico Statistical Analysis Center 2006, p. 14). Such data helps a researcher approximate the number of occupants a household has. In this study, for example, knowing the number of occupants every household has helps guess the need for adoption as per household. Table 1 below displays the results for the respondents' marital status (household composition).

**Table 1: Marital Status (Household composition)**

Answers	Percent	Count
Separated	4.00%	2
Prefer not to say	10.00%	5
Single	20.00%	10
Living with partner	20.00%	10
Divorced	10.00%	5
Married	30.00%	15
Widowed	6.00%	3

As demonstrated in Table 1 above, most respondents are indeed married or living with a partner; this translates to a high likelihood of wanting children in the house, hence, more chances to engage in adoption practices. These stats serve as an

indication that more homes in India do need to get involved in adoption practices.

**Do you believe in Adoption Practices?**

This question sought to find out how many households, so far believe in adoption practices and legislation. Table 2 below displays the results for this question.

**Table 2: Do you believe in Adoption practices?**

Answers	Percent	Count
Yes	30.00%	15
No	70.00%	35

Only 15 respondents believe in adoption while 35 do not. More efforts should be put in to ensure that the region realizes importance of adoption laws and its ability to act as social legislation.

**If no, why not?**

This question sought to find out the reason why most of the households don't believe in Adoption.

**1. The Adoption process is too rigid and expensive**

A total of 5 people reported costs and tedious process as one of the reasons why they don't get involved in adoption. These stats imply that the government needs to review the pricing and process strategy of adoption systems and reduce it so as to achieve higher participation amongst the people. There are various ways with which the government could tackle this namely: penetration strategies, reasonable pricing, and psychology pricing, as well as reducing the processes of adoption.

**2. I already have my own children and see no need for Adoption**

A total of 15 respondents said that they already have their own children and see no need for Adoption, this is a very poor perception that seems to have ingrown among the residents of India and also other areas as well. The government can fund more marketing campaigns through TV ads, radio commercials, press releases, social media contests, as well as information sessions in sponsored public events; to specifically educate people about adoption, and its proven benefits.

### 3. There have been negative speculations about the Adoption system

17 respondents said that one of the reasons why they do not get involved with Adoption and its practices yet is because there have been negative speculations about them. What needs to be done about the negative perceptions people have is simply more education and information dissemination to enlighten people about the adoption process and its systems.

### 4. I have thought about it but not yet done anything.

18 respondents complained that they had previously thought about it but not yet done anything. It seems that there might either be a lag in operations or miscommunications between adoption agencies and their clientele. Hence the need to switch up in client communication through keeping the lines of communication open, for example through increasing customer service calls, emails, friendly reminders, social media, and blog posts (Frolova 2014, p. 40). This way, adoption agencies will be creating a two-way communication channel between themselves and the client so as to constantly monitor their customers' feedback.

### Limitations to the Study

The study, so far, has been successful. It has managed to fulfill its aims and research objectives as discussed above. The main limitation encountered was the conflict between the choices of data collection method. It was really hard to choose between using either a qualitative research strategy or a quantitative one. However, some of these methods were overlooked because of time constraints.

### Recommendations for Future Research

The study recommends facilitation of a qualitative data research for more in-depth evaluation and analysis of adoption laws, systems as well as practices, not just in India, but also in other jurisdictions as well. This will enable future researchers delve deeper into people's abstract thoughts, ideas, suggestions, and apprehension about the issue at hand.

### References

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