

**ADDIA ABABA UNIVERSTIY**

**School Of Graduate Studies**

**Domestic Adoption: Trend, Progress and Challenges straining  
the progress of Domestic Adoption: - The case of selected  
institutions: In Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

**A Thesis Submitted To School Of Social Work**

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## **Declaration**

I, LemlemEshetu declare that this thesis is my own work for the partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of social work. I also declare that this paper has never been presented in other university, the resources used employed for the thesis are fully acknowledged.

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**Table of Contents**

Acknowledgment .....I

Abstract.....II

Acronyms .....III

List of Tables .....III

1 Chapter One.....1

1 Introduction.....1

1.1 Background.....1

1.2 Statement of the problem.....3

1.3 General Objective.....6

1.3.1 Specific Objective.....6

1.4 Research Question.....6

1.5 Significance of the Study.....7

1.6 Challenges and Limitation of the study.....7

2 Chapter two.....9

2 Literature Review.....9

2.1 Introduction.....9

2.2Global trends and progress of local Adoption.....10

2.3Local Adoption in Ethiopia .....13

2.4 Challenges of local Adoption.....	18
3 Chapter three.....	20
3 Research Methods .....	20
3.1 Research Paradigm.....	20
3.2 Research Design .....	21
3.3 Study Area.....	21
3.4 Study Participants.....	22
3.5 Data Collection Tools.....	22
3.6 Data Collection Procedure.....	24
3.7 Data Analysis.....	25
3.8 Quality Assurance.....	26
3.9 Ethical Consideration.....	26
4 Chapter Four.....	28
4 Finding and discussion.....	28
4.1 Introduction.....	28
4.2 Background of Participants .....	28
4.3 Demographics of Institutions.....	29
4.4 Progress of local adoption practice in urban areas specifically in Addis Ababa.....	31

4.5 Challenges straining local adoption practice .....	35
4.6 Improvements in local adoption practice .....	39
5 Chapter Five.....	41
5.1 Discussion.....	41
6 Chapter Six.....	45
6 Conclusion and implication of the study .....	45
6.1 Conclusion .....	45
6.2 Implication for social work practice.....	47
6.3 Implication for further Research .....	48
Reference.....	49
Appendixes.....	52
Appendix A: Informed consent form of research participants .....	52
Appendix B: Interview guide for Key informant interview .....	53
Appendix C: Key informant interview Questions.....	55
Appendix D: In-depth interview Questions.....	56

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Abstract

The study was conducted to explain the trend and changing dynamics of local adoption since the banning of inter country adoption. Descriptive qualitative design was used to explain the trend and changing dynamics of local adoption from different perspectives. Ten participants took part in the study conducted who were from three different institutions that work on the practice of local adoption, and key informant interview, observation and document review was employed to collect the data. The study was conducted to serve as a tool on showing the practice of local adoption since the banning of inter country adoption up to current time, so that service providers that work in relation with local adoption can use on their day to day implementation. The study finding indicates the dynamics of local adoption practice has changed and updated its implementation level. It also shows local adoption practice has went through different challenges which are showing progress through time, though it needs more improvement and attention. The study also indicates local Adoption practice had different challenges which are constraining it from showing progress, but this constrains haven't been addressed by responsible organs rather they are being ignored leaving high number of children to become orphaned and vulnerable. Moreover, the study has also indicated further Improvements that should be done on understanding the implementation of local adoption and addressing its major problems to improve its practice and reach out for those children who are orphan and vulnerable who need the love and care of a family.

*Key Words: Adoption, Local Adoption, Inter country Adoption, Adoption service providers.*

Acronyms

AAWCA Addis Ababa Women and Children Affairs Office

AIDS Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome

ASPO Adoption Service Provider Organization

HIV Human Immunodeficiency Virus

ICA International Child Adoption

MOLSA Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs

MOWCYA Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs

OVC Orphans and Vulnerable Children

UN United Nations

UNAIDS United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS

UNCRC United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

UNDESA United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

List of Tables

Table 4.1 Demographics of research participants.



## **Chapter One**

### **1 Introduction**

#### **1.1 Background**

Adoption is a system whereby a man or a woman assumes the parenting of another, typically a child, from that person's organic or felony father or mother or mother and father and in so doing, completely transfers all rights and responsibility, alongside with filiation, from the biological parent. Adoption is supposed to impact an everlasting change in repute as such requires social recognition, both thru criminal or religious sanction. Historically, some societies have enacted particular laws governing adoption; where others have tried to obtain adoption through much less formal means. Notably by means of contracts that targeted inheritance rights and parental responsibility without an accompanying transfer of affiliation, however the modern adoption gadget is governed with the aid of complete statues and regulations. (M. Schechter, 1990; David Brodzisky, 2010).

In Ethiopia adoption has been practiced traditionally on different regions of the country by way of elevating young people who are family and non-relatives to them that are dealing with difficulties with exceptional comparatively cheap and household issues. For example, "traditional Guddiffachaa" which is a term derived from Oromifa language, literally ability "to bring up", "to foster" or "to rear", it is originated from Oromo people in the early 1800's, simply like guddiffachaa there are also other traditional child raising systems like Yemarlij or Honey child, Yetutilij (Breast child) and Adera child (Beckstorm, Joan. H 1972; AyalewGebre, 2007).

This exercise seems to be well set up among many nations and nationalities of Ethiopia; for example, Oromo, Kafa, Zay, Yem, Konso, Sidama, WarraDube, Gedio, and Amhara (as Madego)

“Guddiffachaa” was legally recognized in a modern sense, under the Ethiopian Civil Code as a section of the country’s civil law in 1961 (Beckstrom, Joan. H, 1972; MOLSA, 1991). Which was one of the toddler raising systems which is fine and needed to be promoted that have reached to its cutting-edge state by way of passing via specific development and exercise systems over time. At first it was once centered solely on adoption of a child who is associated to the adoptive dad or mom with kinship or son of a brother, it only focus on succession, the right to humans property and to obtain labor pressure in the pastoral and agricultural economies however after being legally diagnosed the practice of “Guddiffachaa” was based totally on the prohibition of the interest of the adoptive dad and mom and emphasize more on the interest of the child. So the most important focal point of the find out is the verify the development of domestic adoption and its development on its exercise activities, so the finding helps to see what has been done with in this development and what more ought to be carried out on the difficulties of local adoption.

## 1.2 Statement of the problem

In Ethiopia children have 16 percent of the total population with a number of 96 million.

According to UNAIDS, Ethiopia has the highest percent of AIDS orphans in Sub-Saharan Africa concerning about 886,820 children. Those orphans are pressured to go through worst types of works to fulfill their needs and some others are left out due to poverty which is a foremost hurdle for our country to overcome, causing children to be exposed to dwelling living conditions.

Adoption being one of the major alternative child care system for OVC, hence it was given more focus on inter-country adoption rather than adopting children locally. Local adoption in general was neglected attention by Adoptive institutions and responsible government offices and policy makers. The main purpose of adoption service is to cater for the proper care and development of orphans and destitute children by placing them in a substitute and suitable familial environment. (Ministry of Women's Affairs - May, 2009)

The united nations convention on the rights of the child (1989), the Hague Convention on the protection of children and in respect inter country adoption(The Hague Permanent Bureau, 1993), and The Guideline for Alternative care of Children (2009) have provided comprehensive, rights based framework and guideline for developing domestic adoption and alternative, family based care program. It stated that Domestic adoption is a critical component of any child protection system and a core part of the range of alternative care options that the United Nations and other international organizations recommended be developed, resourced and made accessible to children without parental care. (Kelly M. Bunkers, 2014)

In Ethiopia most of the researches done on local adoption focuses more on the challenges instead of the trends and changing dynamics of local adoption practices, for instance:- (Hiwot, 2017)

conducted a research explaining about the major challenges for the lower rate of domestic adoption in Ethiopia. This includes lack of awareness of the community, lack of accountability and coordination of the adoption process and agencies using ICA (international child adoption) as a source of income is the other factor. The efforts being exerted to implement domestic adoption are encouraging, as a permanent, domestic and family based care option but a lot of work is needed to be done to promote the practice. More work should be done by including all concerned bodies to give priority for awareness raising campaigns and different regulations as a best way of safeguarding the best interests of orphanage children.

(Simegn, 2017) conducted a research that explained about the experiences and challenges of local adoptive parents, like living with fear and uncertainties because of the unwelcoming society they live in to, being discouraged because a lot of back and forth is involved in the local adoption process, not getting recognition are some of the challenges they are facing, the study conducted stated that the adoptive parents should get recognition and feel welcomed in the society so that they wouldn't be discouraged in practicing local adoption because, 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. But obviously, little was done on public awareness. Simply promoting domestic adoption on the media is worthless because people want to see the lived experience which can make a difference.

Study conducted by TenagneAlemu (2006) showed the practice of inter-country adoption in Ethiopia and the problems it caused on children who are adopted due to its practice effectiveness, such as: as: operating relationships among organizations facilitating inter-country adoption, time and price needed to finish the method, responsibility of documents conferred to the involved governmental agencies, and also the legal structure of the process. Which showed MOLSA's

failure to execute its major responsibilities particularly of the follow up of reports and supervisory activities and also The Ethiopian Adoption Law allows private adopting parents to adopt children. However, neither the Revised Family Code 2000 nor the adoption guideline prepared by MOLSA explains about reporting and supervisory mechanisms for privately adopted children.

Alternative child care guideline of 2009, it explain that local adoption is one way of a proper care and development provision for orphans and destitute children by placing them in a substitute and suitable familial environment, securing basic services to adopted child, psychologically stimulating familial environment, establish a substitute parental care and emotional bond between the child and adoptive parents.

From this it is clear that different conventions explain how important and life changing practice it is, local adoption. But different researches conducted on local adoption explain that the practice of local adoption, the policies and guidelines implemented on the ground is different so it's more focused on the practice of international adoption than local adoption and the existence of unwelcoming perspective towards local adoption and lower practice levels.

So the study conducted gives a deeper understanding on the trends of local adoption and its progress since the banning of inter country adoption, challenges it had encountered while being practiced, how is the responsible organs addressing this challenges, progress that the practice has shown, limitations it had and further recommended improvements.

### 1.3 General objective

To give a deeper understanding or insight towards local adoption since the banning of inter country adoption, how it was conceptualized, its implementation, challenge and limitations and what more should be done on local adoption.

#### 1.3.1 Specific objective.

- To describe the trends of local adoption in urban areas specifically in Addis Ababa.
- To establish a deeper understanding on the progress of local adoption practice and its gaps on the implementation of local adoption on the ground.
- To analyze the challenges and consequences of local adoption practice and develop the practice level of local adoption to a bigger and deeper state.

### 1.4 Research questions

#### Major research questions

- What are the trends of local adoption?
- What changes or progress did local adoption encounter since the banning of inter country adoption?
- What has been done so far through time since the recognition of local adoption as one of the alternative child care systems?
- What are the challenges and opportunities of local adoption?
- How are these challenges influencing the progress of local adoption?

### 1.5 Significance of the study

The study will contribute as one source of knowledge and information for stakeholders working in relation to local adoption, in order to upgrade the future implementation techniques which are improved and acceptable. It will show the phases it went through in relation to the challenges it faced with its changing dynamics.

And as it is known the MOWCYA is working on improving one of the alternative child cares which is local adoption to a higher standard, the study gives an understanding of local adoption and its present day implementation.

The study conducted will also give an insight on areas that that policy makers and institutions should give due attention and make improvements. It will also help as a tool for other researchers to conduct their research on the unaddressed topics of local adoption.

### 1.6 Challenges and limitations of the study

The study had faced challenges like, availability of different literatures which explain about local adoption on previous times before its full recognition so with this reason I was only able to study on local adoption practice since the banning of inter country adoption, but still the documents which I needed for the study were unavailable in the campus Library and online because of unorganized books and research management in university. I was also having difficulty in finding experts who had a good practice experience and knowledge towards local adoption even if they were put on the position and also unavailability of data which show how they implemented local adoption other than their personal experience they explained. Even though local adoption had a deeper concept and is implemented on different areas the study was only limited on studying institutions that are found in Addis Ababa. The study also was limited on the

number of participants which were ten in number who were from MOWCYA, AAWCA, and KIDMIYA Association. Though the participants were few in number the study aimed at showing a glimpse image of local adoption practice, however the study will contribute as a tool for other researchers.



## ChapterTwo

### 2 Review of related literature

Chapter two shows literature review and the first section of the literature explains about the definition of Adoption and Local Adoption practice, the second section is about the global experience of different countries trends and progress on local adoption, the third section shows the practice of local adoption in Ethiopia and lastly it shows some of the major challenges of local adoption practice in Ethiopia.

#### 2.1 Introduction

Adoption refers to the act with the aid of which an adult formally will become a guardian of an infant and incurs the right and duty of a parent. It's a legal procedure which transfers the parental accountability of a toddler to the adoptive parents; it's also a way of providing a child or youngster who can't be raised with the aid of their own parents with a new family.

Adoption can refer to a personal act, a legal process, or a social service. As a personal act, adoption involves three sets of participants at the same time regarded as the adoption triad the adoptee, the birth family, and the adoptive family and is now a concept that is lifelong process instead of a single act. As a legal process, adoption has been outlined as "the technique provided by rules to line up the legal relationship of parent and kid between persons who aren't connected by birth" (Child Well-fare League of America, 1978). Adoption as a social service addresses the needs of adoption triad individuals through such steps as figuring out and legally releasing children to be adopted, deciding on and preparing families for adoption, making ready and putting youngsters in adoptive families, and offering post placement and post adoptive services.

(Kathy P. Zamostny, Karen M. O'Brien, Amanda Baden, Mary O'Leary Wiley,2003)

One article stated that “Domestic adoption: An adoption that involves adoptive parents and a child in the same country of residence and usually, but not necessarily, of the same nationality”. (EveryChild, 2012 P.6). And another alternative guideline defines it as “Local or Domestic Adoption as an adoption that involves adoptive parents and a child of the same nationality and the same Country of residence”(MOWCYA, 2009, P10).

Domestic adoption accounts for almost 85% of all adoptions (UNDESA, 2009). Rates of domestic adoption vary greatly between countries and don't perpetually follow neat regional trends. “Many Asian and African countries have extremely low rates of domestic adoption as a percentage of the total child population.” (Every Child, 2012 P.9)

## 2.2 Global trend and progress of local adoption

Literary and legal sources indicate that adoption was widely practiced in many ancient societies. From the frequently cited examples of the adoption of Moses to that of Emperor Octavian Augustus, adoption played a major part in the traditional Eurasian societies. While adoption may be as old as human society by itself, the motivation for adoption has changed markedly over time. Today adoption is undertaken mainly to provide a home for children deprived of parental care and to satisfy the desire of individuals or couples to care for and rare child. In contrast societies of the past regarded adoption as a means of preserving family lineage, enabling the continuation of ancestor ship, creating political alliances and insuring of adoptive parents in their old age. The norms regulating adoption have also shifted over time. In many early laws for instance, person with children of their own, individuals of reproductive age and women were not allowed to adopt. Further, ancient laws often did not permit the adoption of minors, clear evidence that the welfare and best interest of children were not the paramount consideration in the decision related to adoption.(Child Adoption: Trends and Policies,UN,2009).

Adoption is a social and legal development that has been fashioned over time by using social developments and problems, cultural values and conflicts, historic occasions and forces as properly as public policy and legislation. The formal practice of adoption in U.S grew out of a need to care for developing numbers of homeless children and, at the same time, to legally make sure inheritance rights that were otherwise restrained by beginning relationships. Although the current exercise of adoption has the fundamental mission protecting the hobbies of children who are handy for adoption, the wishes of birth parents, adoptive families and childless adults additionally have come to be essential on adoption practice. Although the roots of the U.S adoption had been set up legally and socially through the late 1800s, the cultural and political modification of the letter phases of twentieth century had been most integral in defining the current exercise of adoption. (Tenagne, as cited in Carp, 2002)

One of the defining factors in current adoption has been the sharp decrease in the quantity of white, wholesome babies being relinquished through birthparents and placed for adoption and the simultaneous extended in often white couples and single person wanting to adopt. This change, in turn, prompted a second fundamental development: huge pastime in and full-size effort assessing alternatives such as global and one-of-a-kind-wishes of adoptions. A third key improvement resulted from adoptee and birthparent activism in the 1960s and 1970s that challenged the tradition of secrecy in adoption via birthparent searches and needs for open facts flow; this activism marked the commencing of openness in adoption practice. Last, there have been dramatic adjustment in the infant welfare gadget involving will increase the wide variety of teens entering foster care adoption that resulted from felony acts, most enormously the 1997 adoption and safe families Act (Administration for children and families, 2003).

The rules mandated strict timelines for permanency plans and termination of parental rights for children in foster care, additionally required immediate reporting of suspected child abuse in household and the elimination of children concluded to be at risk. While the records of adoption rooted in concerns for baby welfare, the wants and biases of other events additionally have had influence on adoption practice. Moreover, sociocultural forces related to race, class, religion, and economics have had a dramatic impact on adoptions records and underlie cutting-edge statistics. (Smith, D.W&Brodzinsky, D. M, 2002)

At the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, expressions on child welfare began to focus on family as the most appropriate setting for raising child deprived of care of their birth parents. As a result many governments have been actively encouraging the adoption of children living in foster care or institutional care who can't be united with their families. In the United States, for instance they encouraged adoption by introducing incentives to raise the number of adoption and also to increase financial supports to person who adopted children. On the other hand other countries like Republic of Korea provided tax incentives to adoptive families in order to promote domestic adoption. (Child Adoption: Trends and Policies, UN, 2009, P.17)

In India, adoption has been polished for a huge number of years. Hinduism being the significant religion polished in India, stories and history has records of holy people and royals who were embraced and who adopted. Ramayana and Mahabharata are the two such incredible sagas of Hinduism which bear references to reception. Generally, where an absence of male posterity happened, couples went in for embracing a male kid to assign him as legal beneficiary. As per Hindu convention, children are pivotal and a dead parent's spirit can possibly accomplish paradise if that individual has a child to light the memorial service fire, and salvation can be accomplished through children who offer familial love (Vlassof,C 1990).

The demeanor towards selection in India has changed fundamentally in two decades.

Forthcoming new parents are starting to comprehend the legitimate and social procedures of selection and perceive the need to experience sorted out youngster government assistance associations. It is intriguing to take note of that over the most recent couple of years, kids coming into organizations, either as relinquishment or giving up has diminished extensively. This is brought about by Family Planning and administering Medical Termination of Pregnancy.

Training, globalization and contemporary considerations have realized attitudinal changes in a more extensive point of view.

### 2.3 Local Adoption in Ethiopia

The customary forms of adoption in Ethiopia have similarity at different regions; generally speaking they didn't have as a primary purpose of the provision of home for the orphans. Usually the adoption process transpires between two families for the purpose of giving the adoptive family an heir and someone to provide comfort and care in old age. The natural or biological family of the child receives, in return for the child, immediate gifts and a long range socio political tie to the adoptive families. (Beckstrom, 1972, P.2&3) local adoption process was seen from two different periods of implementation the first one is the customary rural adoption which its reported that adoption originated with the Oromo society in the early 1800, the practice was called Gudifetcha or Mogassa by the Oromo society and late it was practiced by the Amhara's which they called it Yetutlij or in some areas they called it Yemarlij that was followed by a ceremony including the carrying and wearing of symbols and oath taking by the adoptive parents in front of priest and elders. In both the Gudifetcha (Mogassa) and Yemarlij(YetutLij) the consent of the natural parents or relatives to the adoption is solicited and received as part of the ceremony.

After the customary practice the civil code came to implementation which updated its system by which, an adoption contract should be approved by the court so that it can be valid. It provided adopted children to have legal ties with the natural relatives as well as the adoptive once so he/she is entitled to inherit from both his natural and adoptive parents. Another change it has brought was the customary practice of revocation or disowning by the adoptive parents when the child is old enough to be responsible. The last change it came up with is that adoption cannot take place unless it offers advantage for the adopted child, by which during the customary practice the adopted child's interest was not considered rather the interest of the adoptive parents was the focus.

Recently the Ministry of women affairs the current MOWCYA revised The Guideline for Alternative child care in 2009, which was mainly focused on Supporting of Children and Adolescents Living in Vulnerable Circumstances, in this document its stated that the alternative child care has five pillars that include:-

Community based child care which is an alternative that provides care and support to the children in a state of condition that is familiar to the children who used to experience it and its objective is to mobilize the community, its resources and indigenous knowledge with the ultimate goal of addressing the needs and rights of orphans and other vulnerable children (OVC) in a sustainable manner.

Reunification and Reintegration program which is about reunifying children separated from their parents/relatives due to natural or manmade catastrophe to their birth families or relatives and its objective include:- The objective of reunification is to restore child-family ties, Facilitate conditions for the assimilation of children with their parents and members of the extended family and promote their all rounded development, create opportunities for children in which they can

learn familiar and social values and norms living with their parents and/or members of the extended family, support parents and/or members of extended families to re-assume in their responsibility to cater for their children. The objectives of Reintegration are to facilitate conditions for children's adjustment in the community, to equip the children with necessary skills and financial resources to enable them to become independent and self-reliant citizens, to create opportunities in which children can interact in the community life, learn socio-cultural values and norms of the community for their proper development and reintegration.

Foster care is another alternative which refers to short or long term care within the private house of foster families, mainly addressing those children who are unable to live with their biological parents and families and its general objective is to secure a substitute and temporary familial environment for orphans and vulnerable children on a temporary basis, till a child is reunified with his/her extended family or placed in other permanent alternative childcare program.

Adoption is one form of the alternative which address the plight of orphans and abandoned children through inter-country adoption service and hence it probe that 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, showing that local adoption needs more attention for further implementation but recently with the banning of inter county adoption local or domestic adoption has been given due attention and its objective are mainly, to cater for the proper care and development of orphans and destitute children by placing them in a substitute and suitable familial environment.

And finally Institutional child care service which is used as a short-term alternative care strategy and only as a last resort when all other types of childcare options have been exhausted and its objective includes to contribute towards the improvement of the physical, social, psychological

well-being and ensuring self-reliance among children in the childcare institutions, by creating access to the fulfillment of their rights for basic and psychosocial services and seeking every other possible alternative placement for permanent upbringing of children.

The Guideline for Alternative child care of 2009 also explains the roles and responsibilities of different organs on the adoption process this includes the role of the MOWCYA is, to make a periodic visit to ASPOs and childcare institutions in adoption to ensure if they are working according to the Guidelines, Confirm that the child and the applicant of adoption meet the criteria of eligibility for inter-country adoption, Give opinion to the court on whether adoption is beneficial to the child or not, considering the best interests of the child, Make periodic follow-up on the status of the adopted children, Provide technical supports to the Adoption Service Facilitating Organizations, Design appropriate working procedures, manuals and guidelines on the standards of adoption services in the country, Respect the right of an adopted child to information about his/her parents. Advocate and strive for legal reforms to discourage private adoption, Monitor and evaluate inter-country adoption services in line with the policy, guidelines and procedures of the country. The role and responsibility of Adoption service provider organizations are To assist in building the capacity of childcare institutions/orphanages in an effort to organize and compile relevant and up-to-date data about the background and progress of children, Sensitize the public to encourage domestic adoption, Make sure that the employees they hire have the required qualifications and experiences in the areas of childcare, Support every effort being done to encourage domestic adoption, Provide support to destitute children living with their families, Avoid selecting a child for adoption on the basis of ethnicity and religion, Submit quarterly, biannual and annual reports to the relevant authority,



Ultimately from all the pillars on the alternative child care guideline designed and revised by the ministry office Adoption specifically local adoption is by far the healthiest alternative that the ministry office recommend for OVC. The institution also explains the resulting consequences each alternative has and issues that need response from different sectors with all this reasons the ministry itself has banned the practice of inter country adoption due to the different challenges adopted children face psychologically, physically, socially and spiritually. This lead to the recognition of local adoption as a major alternative child care system.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child signed by Ethiopia states that the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community, recognizing that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding. And on article 21 states that Parties that recognize and/or permit the system of adoption shall ensure that the best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration and they shall:

A. Ensure that the selection of a kid is approved uniquely by skilled specialists who decide, as per appropriate law and strategies and based on all relevant and solid data, that the reception is admissible considering the youngster's status concerning guardians, family members and legitimate watchmen and that, whenever required, the people concerned have given their educated agree to the appropriation based on such guiding as might be fundamental.

B. Recognize that between nation appropriation might be considered as an elective methods for kid's consideration, if the kid can't be set in an encouraging or a supportive family or can't in any reasonable way is thought about in the kid's nation of cause.

C. Ensure that the youngster worried by between nation receptions appreciates protections and principles proportionate to those current on account of national selection.

D. Take every proper measure to guarantee that, in between nation appropriation, the situation doesn't bring about inappropriate monetary benefit for those engaged with it.

E. Promote, where suitable, the targets of the current article by closing respective or multilateral courses of action or understandings, and attempt, inside this system, to guarantee that the situation of the kid in another nation is done by capable specialists or organs.

#### 2.4 Challenges of Local Adoption

Through time the practice of local adoption became hard to proceed with the increasing number of homeless children occurring in different urban regions of Ethiopia especially in Addis Ababa that was caused by increasing number of single females that maintain one-woman bars and through their business very likely becoming pregnant and being left with giving birth and abandoning their children. On the other hand in the urban environment there are homeless children with the loss of their mothers during birth and loss of their parents with HIV/AIDS. So, this brought the practice of Inter country adoption which was practiced in different regions of Ethiopia, it mainly was focused on bringing income for the agencies and leaving the adopted children in jeopardy with the loss of data from their biological families, loss of identity , cultural clash and mostly psychological problems. But with the banning of inter country adoption and practicing of domestic adoption had showed progress in acceptability and recognition in few percent's, hence with in this progress local adoption had challenges which include: reluctance of the society to adopt a child with the fear that its seen as a disgrace with in the society, and if a family adopts a child they are considered as being childless and it was only done as a gesture of

good will for a deprived child. Another challenge is the persistent prejudice against illegitimacy and the fear of unknown hereditary problems a child may have. And also lower level of understanding towards local adoption with in the service providing institutions and the service providers themselves.

## Chapter Three

### 3 Methodologies

#### 3.1 Research paradigm/ philosophical stance

Local adoption as being one of the main alternative child care system, it shows a deeper concept of child parent relationship and this relationship can be explained by different theories which are related to local adoption and its importance. Theories explain the significance of local adoption in the long lasting life's of infants for instance attachment theory is one of the theories that try to explain the progress of a child from pre-birth to adulthood, it shows us the early relationship and its effects on the later social, emotional, cognitive development of the child (Golding, K. 2007), so from this it shows that children who are adopted will have a positive effects on their latter lives if they have been raised properly with caring parents rather than in institutions. Another theory that is related to local adoption is social learning theory; it believes that the self-concept is built on the identification with role models, so children learn to interact through modeling and imitation of others, particularly role models which are parents, so this theory by focusing on the role modeling of the parents it provides the children to understand there self-worth (Cole& Cole, 2006), so based on this theory its shows that children's interaction is built based on the modeling of their adoptive parents whom they first interact with so if children are left out in institutions they will be having challenge in having a role model so it may cause a problem on their interaction level in their future lives.

### 3.2 Research design

Descriptive design has been employed to conduct the research, in which the goal of the design is to summarize or describe a specific event. This design mainly addressed the “what” question so I have studied the phenomenon which is local adoption, which assessed to answer the characteristics of local adoption practice and to describe it from what state it has reached to its current practice level since its full recognition nationally. So this design has described the trends of local adoption in urban areas especially in Addis Ababa so as to give a deeper understanding towards local adoption and the progress it has gone through, so as to understand and explain what is being practiced on current situation on urban areas and what more should be done to increase the number and practice level with in the community.

### 3.3 Study area

The study area that the research has been conducted on is Addis Ababa city which is an urban city with a total population of 3,384,569, from the total population of Ethiopia 52% are children under 18, 6% have lost their parents or vulnerable to different problems, and in Addis Ababa 100,000 children are vulnerable to different problems with a loss of their parents. With this being said the research data was collected from two major governmental institution and one non-governmental agencies which are located in three sub-cities that are the Ministry of women, youth and children affairs office located in Kirkos sub-city, Addis Ababa Women and children affairs located in Addis Ababa Yeka Sub city and Kidmiya Association located at Addis Ababa Nifas Selk Lafto Sub city, this institutions were selected based on the works that they perform on vulnerable children who need attention, specifically on one of the alternative child care giving system which is local Adoption.

### 3.4 Study participant

The study involved 10 participants who were professionals working in the Ministry of women, youth and children affairs office , the Addis Ababa women and children affairs office that are experts in relation to local adoption practices, that gave a brief insight about local adoption practices so far. On the other hand the other participants were professionals that work at Kidmiya association, an agency which works on local adoption programs which showed what has been done so far towards local adoption at agency level and what more should be done for the future. My respondents were composed of seven male and three female respondents in which, their roles in the institutions they represent include Child Protection and Safeguarding experts, Care and Support officers, Child Protection, Care and Support directors, Managing directors, Assistant Program directors, Policy and Procedure implementation experts..

### 3.5 Data collection tools

#### 3.5.1 In-depth interview

The study employed in-depth interview as a primary data collection process in order to get detailed information about local adoption. The interview gave a complete image towards local adoption based on the respondent's experience and expectation on local adoption, how it operates and its challenge and outcomes. The interview took part with the Addis Ababa women and children affairs office and it took about 45 up to 50 minutes.

### 3.5.2 Key informant interview

Another tool employed is key informant interview which gave supportive information or insight on local adoption and showed what the wider and professional response of the participants based on their expertise, knowledge, and understanding. This tool was conducted at the Ministry of women, children and youth affairs office and Kidmiyaassociation; the interview took 20 up to 30 minutes of time.

### 3.5.3 Observation

Observation was used as a tool to understand how the study participating institutions implemented local adoption, how they interact within their workplace environment and the challenges they face. This tool was employed alongside the other data collection tools like Key informant interview and In-depth interview.

### 3.5.4 Document review

The document review gave background information towards the institutions and local adoption and it determined if the documents gained from the institutions and other sources about local adoption were implemented as planned and it gave additional information about the study conducted.

### 3.6 Data collection procedure

The study used Purposive or judgmental sampling technique to select respondents, since I conducted a qualitative research my focus was on the relevance of the research and the responses gained from the respondents which were determined by the awareness, knowledge and exposure levels of my respondents and they were selected with the help of the responsible supervisors in the respective departments which the study took part and after a brief explanation about the study I was conducting, so each related departments had experts to domestic adoption and finding them was a bit challenging but with the help of the supervisors and the willingness of the respondents I was given a time which they would be available to collect the data that I needed for my study.

Key informant and In-depth interview had open ended questions, to get a wider and professional response about domestic adoption practice from their level of practice and exposure level and observations were the tools used to get deeper information about the research conducted. Since I am conducting a descriptive research the participants were informed or have a good knowledge or awareness about local adoption practices. Hence the purpose of the research is delicate and needs great in-depth information about local adoption. So the information or data that has been gathered from the participants or respondents had a detailed response based on the level and depth of exposure to local adoption practice

Before the data gathering process started I collected a support letter from the department explaining the purpose of my study and given to the institutions selected for the data collection process. All the key informants and In-depth interview respondents selected were willing to participate on the study which they showed their willingness with their informed consents they signed, but some respondents were not willing to be audio recorded. The time taken for conducting the key informant interview minutes took 20 to 30 minutes and the In-depth



interview took 45 up to 50 minutes. I conducted the interview in the participant's government office and local adoptive agencies. The interview was collected by note taking and audio recording.

### 3.7 Data analysis

In a qualitative research the data analysis process starts from the first day of the interviews conducted and it goes simultaneously with the data collection process, so that the researcher wouldn't be confused or mislead the respondent's response.

The data analysis process was conducted by first transcribing every response of the key informant interview and In-depth interview of the respondents in to a sentence that gives meaning by classifying the notes taken and audios recorded in to different streams based on the participant's institution they represent and they were given coding to make the response easy to understand. So as to assure the accuracy of the data gathered the notes taken were critically used with the exact explanation of respondents and the audio records were heard several times. After transcribing the data I classified the responses to specific streams based on the research question. The study also had another tool which is observation that took part while conducting the key informant interview and In-depth interview and the data gained from observation was related with the respondent's response and putted under terms that are understood. On the other had the reviewed literatures gained from the institutions was triangulated with the response of the respondent's?

### 3.8 Quality assurance

To measure the quality of a research and bring up a quilted research paper I made my research question be clear, representative and informative of the study conducted, terms used were clearly defined. In order to assure the trust worthiness of the study I triangulated the information gathered from the In-depth interview and key informant interview with the documents that I have reviewed. The data gathered was triangulated based on the institution the respondents represent.

While reviewing the secondary data's like document's, research, article and books, the reviewing process took part critically so as to get a valuable, valid and trustworthy data. On the other hand the responses gained from the respondents have be reviewed and after reviewing all the response's they were not be taken but rather those responses gave me a good insight towards local adoption trends and progress will be taken.

To assure the trustworthiness of the study conducted I triangulated the responses of the respondents with the available documents that they have provided and also I did a peer review on the findings of the study.

### 3.9 Ethical consideration

The data collected or information's and response's gained from all the participants were anonymous by which the privacy of a subject's identity was not disclosed after information is gathered and confidentiality of information's is mandatory so as not to risk the participants to any psychological harm, causing them great embarrassment, or frightening by the responses they give. So all participants in the study has signed an Informed Consent Form, indicating they understood the nature of the research and the safeguards to be employed to protect their rights.

So, this provided the participant the right in confidence or keeping it's secret from the public.

Every respondent's response was only used for research and research purpose only.

## Chapter four

### 4. Finding and Discussion

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter explains about the findings of the study conducted on local adoption the first section explains about the background of the participants and the second section talks about the demographics of the institutions that participated on the research, the third and fourth section of the paper explains about the progress of local adoption and the challenges and limitations local adoption had experienced through the progress, finally on the last section of this chapter it explains about recommended improvement's that local adoption needs.

#### 4.2 Background of participants

The participants who have involved on the data collection process are from the ministry of women, children and youth affairs, Addis Ababa women and children affair office and one Non-Governmental office (Kidmiya Association). The following table shows the information of the participants in the data collection process.

Table 4.1 Describes the Demographic information of Participants

Organization	No of participants	Sex	Role of the informants in the organizations
Ministry of women, children and youth affairs office	3	Male Male Male	-Child safeguarding expert -Child protection and safeguarding expert -policy and procedure implementation expert
A.A. Women & Children affair	5	Female Male	-care and support officer -care and support officer

Office		Female Female Male	-care and support officer -documentation and reporting expert -Child protection care and support director
Kidmiya association	2	Male Male	-Managing director of KIDMIA association -Assistant program director and facilitator

### 4.3 Demographics of the institutions

#### 4.3.1 Ministry of women and children office

In Ethiopia the ministry of women, children and youth affairs is mainly responsible to control the overall activities and practices which are taken towards women, children and youth and creation of awareness and movements towards women, children and youth and follow up and respond to the threats in relating to women, children and youth and submit report to the concerned bodies.

They also have the role to coordinate all stakeholders to protect the rights and wellbeing of children.

According to the respondent's explanation the MOWCYA is implementing an alternative strategy for vulnerable children. Adoption is the one and essential alternative mechanisms to provide better care and protection environment for OVC. Ministry Of MOWCYA is highly executing local adoption as a means of care and support for children in institutional care or without parental care. The local adoption is now promoted than other alternatives due to its widening importance for the social, emotional, and physical development of children. While children rise with protection and care of a family.

#### **4.3.2 Addis Ababa women and children affairs office**

The Addis Ababa women and children office is one of the streams of the Ministry of women children and youth office which is located in Yeka sub city, AA. This office mainly works on issues in relation to women, children and youth around Addis Ababa region. It was established as per the proclamation number 361/2003, the office was under the social and civil affairs bureau but, since 2011 the Addis Ababa city administration women, children and youth affairs office was named and established. The vision of the office is to recreate acuity by 2020 were by gender equality. A society that respects and protects the right and privileges of children and creation of vibrant and productive youth that actively participate in development endeavor is realized. Its mission is to create awareness among the Addis Ababa community, work in close collaboration with concerned parties, strengthen community based organizations, establish participatory and proactive programs, to develop and strengthen youth centers, provide community based child support and protect children's rights in addition ensuring that all sector office encompass women and youth agendas in their plans that would in turn all sector offices encompass women and youth equally participate, benefit and become decision makers.

#### **4.3.3 KIDMIA Association**

KIDMIA is a non-profit and child focused organization that fights against poverty by focusing on OVC and their families through integrated programs that provide sustainable and long-lasting changes in the lives of the most vulnerable groups of the population and their communities.

Founded in 2007, KIDMIA has become a leading force and a partner of choice within a national movement dedicated to ending orphan crisis and family disintegration. With the aim of ending the orphan crisis, Kidmia is working on six major areas of interventions, these include temporary and holistic OVC care and support in transition center, child sponsorship and family

preservation, local adoption of eligible OVC by loving and caring Ethiopian families, reunification of eligible OVCs into their extended families, economic empowerment of vulnerable OVC families, church and community mobilization and organization for OVC care and support as well as partnership building and networking for wider and greater impacts. The association envisioned to see targeted orphaned and vulnerable children released from physical, economic, and spiritual poverty, reach their highest and fullest potential, become constructive and productive citizens of their country and enjoy life in its fullness. Its mission is to develop the intellectual, spiritual, professional and social lives of the targeted orphaned and vulnerable children in a well-integrated, Holistic and sustainable Manner.

#### **4.4 Progress of Local Adoption practice**

As the respondent's mentioned the practice of local adoption has different historical backgrounds in our country. The time, place and the way adoption practices began in the societies cannot be known with precision. But A1 stated that local adoption is certainly one of the oldest institutions practiced by many societies across the world since antiquity but still there hasn't been any documented data that describes its beginning with its chronological order being considered, but history the practice of local adoption goes back to the old times that describes the practice of local adoption were the people who lived in the Oromo region have started practicing the now called adoption. These societies practiced the adoption in an understanding or a belief which had a connection with emergency of family and property the need for continuity of family line and heir to property evolved in these societies.

Another motive for the practice of adoption was demand for labor power need to get access to resources, some respondent's also said that the belief and value systems of our society also necessitate motive for adoption and adopting a child. Guddifachaa is the customary adoption

establishment practiced by the Oromo society since ancient time. Although there is no adequate information when and how it emerged among the Oromo society, adoption has been one of the known institutions in Oromo culture. Historiographers associate the historical origin of Guddifachaa with the so-called migration of Oromo after the sixteenth century but, until recent days the practice of local adoption has no data or information on other practice levels it preceded through time till recent years of recognition.

Respondents A1,A4,A5,M3,K1 stated that the practice of local adoption has been put as one part of the alternative child care system since 2007 which was a starting point for local adoption that gave OVC to be given an alternative or a choice to be raised with in a family but still it was fully recognized as a major alternative child care guideline after the banning of inter country adoption, before that there were also the practice of adoption that was international which was more money focused and business based causing children to loss of data of family members history, culture crisis, family separation, depression and other severe effects on the children who were sent for adoption internationally but M2 had different perspective towards international adoption which is that since our society doesn't accept the practice of local adoption more often it's better to give the children a better life by giving them the chance to be adopted by foreigners than having them stay in institutions.

But one idea that all the respondents agree on is that since 2007 the local adoption practice level has shown some progress on implementation and acceptability. During the previous times the practice of local adoption had different application or purpose, the main purpose it had was focused on the creation of a bigger family members and the collection of higher amount of property which is needed for continuity of family line and also for the heir property that they evolved in these societies it demanded for labor power to get access to resources so they took



children who had no care givers and children of relatives but, few of the society made an effort so as to raise children for the mare benefit of the child to be raised in a family and as their own child and also up bring them to success.

Recent practice of local adoption is on the implementation of local adoption which had good implication for children and the application of local adoption mainly focused on mainly finding a right parent for those children that are OVC who need guidance and love of a family stated by A2, M1 and K2. A3 on the other hand explained that the current practice of local adoption is not based on the need of the person who is adopting the child and there are policies and criteria's that have been designed and adopted in Ethiopia and the policies mainly state on the fulfillment of different criteria's of a parent who has a plan on adopting a child, the criteria's include being Ethiopian by nationality; At least, twenty five years of age and at most 60 years of age, are able to produce a document from a relevant authority certifying that he/she has an income that is sufficient to raise the child which is 3000 birr monthly income or above and if possible other means of income, can produce a document from a relevant authority certifying that he/she is free from any incurable and/or contagious disease and mental health problem, is able to produce a document from a relevant authority certifying that he/she is free from any criminal activities, can provide 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, the criteria also allowed the parents to choose a child age and sex. But all this criteria's has to be fulfilled and unless if not the family who planes on adopting a child are not allowed to adopt a child and this is mainly proceeded so as to give due attention and care for

the child being adopted and to assure that the child is guaranteed with safe place and family to be raised into.

A5 explained that, through time the criteria's have been given some changes the changes include the change in income provision from monthly income of 3000 birr to 5000 birr due to the fast changing and increasing economy of the country and the families ability of purchasing good and insuring the child with all the needs that the child may have. But A1 and A4 disagree with the criteria for the increasing of income level because as they said rather than promoting adoptive parents it has negative effects on pushing back families who plan to adopt a child and from my observation I have noticed that that parents want to adopt a child but when they are explained about the expected income level of the parent they are not willing to explain rather they hesitate to state their income and question why it's even important, but even after the professionals explain its purpose they become very negligent to proceed with the procedures.

Another progress A3 mentioned which has been seen recently is that during the previous times the local adoption process was merely based on finding a parent for a child without even fulfilling all the criteria's but this perspective has caused different effects on the lives of children so recently the main point of the local adoption process is about finding the a proper and suitable parent for every child so, it has become more child focused but it still needs more to be done.

Respondent A5, K1 and K2 stated that the other progress that has been seen is the increase in the number of children being adopted every year during the previous years the number of children only were in between 30 up to 35 children every year but currently the children who are being adopted has increased to a range of 150 up to 170 per a year.

#### **4.5 Challenges staining the practice of Local Adoption**

While practicing every program every practice encounters different challenges or drawbacks that limit its implementation and its progress. Some of the drawbacks mentioned by the respondent's that have caused an effect on local adoption were explained from different perspectives.

##### **4.5.1 Challenges from Institutional perspective**

At the institutional level A1,A3,M3 stated that local adoption has different way of implementation and the institutions have different roles to play but most of the participants agree that the practice of local adoption is facing a budget problem which is mainly seen in different organizations due to low understanding of the budget holders, as they mentioned most of the budget holders who are placed on the higher decision making position come with political acceptance than from level of knowledge and experience towards the program that they run so, they are all the decision makers on the budget within the agency. As mentioned by A3 and A2 What has been done so far until now is that the budgets that had been granted for the purpose of post adoption assessment that has to be done every three months so as to know whether a child is in good family care and good status but the budget has been shifted to another program that is implemented so this issues are leaving the children in danger because the agency didn't provide the guarantee of checking the status of the children after being placed to a certain family. On the other hand K2 mentioned that the budget problem is not only faced by the government institutions but also on the institutions like NGO's who work on Domestic adoption due to lack of understanding towards local adoption in which, most people side for the inter country adoption so it has caused different financial and budget drawbacks on local adoption practicing at private institutions. And K2 mentioned that it's hard to find support from outside with this challenging attitude the society has towards local adoption but recently the perspective that the

community has towards local adoption is changing and the supports are gained from local community.

The issue of stakeholders collaboration, local adoption practice was mentioned as one challenge in which the practice is not only implemented at one specific agency or organization level but rather it needs collaboration of different stakeholders this include health institutions, sub cities, kebeles, police stations, local Eder and also other institutions support and collaboration so, what has been seen as one challenge is that this institutions are not always collaborative;- for instance M4 mentioned is that in the health centers the adoptive parents are expected to bring full medical results and certificates stating that they are healthy from any Sevier and untreatable medical problems like HIV AIDS, Hepatitis B and other transmittable and chronic diseases that may endanger the child but most institutions are not collaborative while giving the service to adoptive parents that is leading the adoptive parents to unwanted waste of time that is making them loose there hope on the child adoption process.

As mentioned by A2 government institutions like the kebele and sub-cities also have major misunderstanding towards local adoption practice meaning that the institutions are supposed to give information towards the family or person who has a plan on adopting a child weather the person has a positive reputation towards children, social life and other activities that are facilitated within the society but this institutions are not cooperative in giving the documents that the adoptive parents need for the adoption process.

Another issue is that most of the institutions don't have expert working on child adoption and also the institutions always recruit new staffs frequently with low awareness level towards the procedure and documents that need to be provided , this issue are leading the adoptive parents to unnecessary back and forth for a simple document, there are also concerns in relation to the

assessment and provision of documents of children especially those who are older and the institution doesn't give that much focus on gathering the right information or data that is needed for a child to be adopted.

Respondent's K1 and K2 stated that there are problems at the agency level, which parents have gained a grant from the court on adopting a child they are not provided with a training on parenting skill for all adoptive parents but few of the parents that are lucky are given the trainings and the rest are left with no adequate understanding on how to raise their adoptive children the right way.

A2 mentioned that the institutions that take care of the children don't treat every adoptive parent in similar condition some of the workers try to choose a child for the adoptive parents that looks similar to them and they side for those with money so this has led to the violation of the law of the institution which states that the service provided should be child focused but rather it's clear that it's more focused on the interest of the parents.

#### **4.5.2 Challenge from Adoptive parent's perspective**

Respondent M3 and A4 stated that major challenge faced towards the adoptive parents include the families who come to the agencies have a wrong understanding towards child adoption they expect that adopting a child is about picking a child and taking it home so they don't have an understanding that the child adoption process goes through different stages so as to assure that every child gets the right and safe family and place that they can call home and this can only be assured if the parents go through all the procedures and raise a child.

Another challenge mentioned by A1 is the adoptive parents do not come to institutions for different consultation on parent child relationships and other supports they are having challenge

with. As mentioned by the respondent A5 the adoptive parents are given the chance on choosing a child that they prefer but the problem is that they only choose those children who are smaller with age so that the society that they live with don't suspect or confront them of adopting a child this preference of the adoptive parents is causing other children who are older with age to be left out without a family so they are left to stay at the institutions for longer time and also most adoptive parents choose female children than the male because of the fear that if a child is told that he or she is adopted and that they are not their biological parents they may resist so the girls may not reject them but the boys may leave them.

#### **4.5.3 Challenge from Environment perspective**

In every environment society and social life is one part of the environment and within every society there are different attitudes and perceptions towards different issue, in our community the attitude towards local adoption has shown progress through time even if still there is more to be done. Respondent M2 and K1 stated that the concept of local adoption that has been practiced during the previous times was perceived as an abnormal activity in which the adoptive parents should not see an adopted child as their own which lead different adoptive parents to move to a new household and a new community so as to start a new life with a different community who doesn't know them as to avoid the discrimination they face and also not to endanger their children, but the respondent's agree that currently the attitude of the society has changed with a few percent that they have started to give due attention to supporting the adoptive parents with raising a child.

Hence M3 probed that the attitude of the society needs to be worked more because we all know that our society has a culture of supporting those in need and caring for children but when it comes to adopting a child legally its seen as something very hard to accept and this is due to the

perception that the society doesn't recognize the child being adopted as their biological child and that she/he will be inheriting equal amount of resource with their biological children.

#### 4.6 Further Improvements on local adoption practice

The practice of local adoption has passed through different stages and experiences and with all this experience's it hasn't reached to a stablequalified practice level because of the challenges it is experiencing from different angels so it needs improvements with different approaches it implements. Some of the major improvements needed include;-

- **Changing the attitude and perception of our society towards local adoption** they also mentioned that this can be done by creating awareness by giving training and awareness creation programs for different social institutions that have close integration with the community like Eder, Maheber, Women league and other institutions that have close relationship, influential and inclusive system that can provide the right information and knowledge towards local adoption. The other type of awareness creation that should be done is giving advices to adoptive parents so that they would choose children who are older by showing the challenges they may face while not getting a family to raise them.
- **The recruitment of qualified professionals at every institution with the right skill and knowledge of the program area** they are haired for with the right training given. Another focus is on the other stakeholders that are involved in the adoption procedure the staff should be aware about the procedures that are taken for each parent to adopt a child and what is expected from them this can be done by giving the right training on local adoption and its procedure and other policies and laws that are applied for implementing local adoption on the ground.

- **Updating of the system that other collaborative stakeholders use** for instance the police station should give due attention to find documents of children that are older and if the documents are not available by some time they can release it on press and magazine if the children have families or relatives that can take care of them but if there are no relative or family member they can start the adoption procedure and can be given similar chances like the other kids.
- **The existing government should work on empowering the community itself before they reach in to crisis and leave their children on the streets** because as we all know the major cause of children who are left out is because of economic problems that they face so it can be worked on fixing the problem before it occurs from its root. Establishing a networked system for the local adoption procedure from its start to the end at every institution or stakeholder office by hiring qualified and trained employees specifically for the facilitation of local adoption procedure.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5.1 DISCUSSION

After reviewing different literatures on local Adoption I was able to understand the practice of local adoption had shown progress and also had unresolved challenges that always role every year and hasn't been resolved yet. Even though I was not able to find literatures written directly in relation to my study, comparing the existing studies and literatures with my finding was challenging and made it difficult to see consistency of the study. Adoption as a system is practiced around the globe but its trends and challenges differ from one area to another. From my finding it is clear that local adoption needs more focus so as to address the issues of the orphan and vulnerable children on the other hand it has also shown progress with limited streams.

From my findings, the first progress that is seen on local adoption practice is that the Ministry office banning inter-country adoption before many losses and damage occurs on innocent children like, loss of identity, psychological, social and emotional distress leading to depression and suicide at higher levels, and recognizing domestic or local adoption as the best or preferable alternative child care system at a federal level is one major step for the brighter future of the OVC being adopted. But still even after being recognized by federal government it hasn't been given due attention on what challenges the practice is facing and no one is questioning why the practice is going slowly below the expected level of implementation. On the other hand the other progress that local adoption encountered, which is seen as positive but, below the expected level is the increase in the number of children being adopted previously the children being adopted locally were in between 30 to 35 per year but now it has increased to 150 to 170 in number per year and many families are also coming to adopt children, but still we have almost more than 100,000 children who are orphan and vulnerable in Addis Ababa city only and also the number is

always adding up without a solution so adopting 150 to 170 children is not enough to address the rest of the OVC not only in Addis Ababa city but also other parts of the country.

Nevertheless local Adoption is seen as one alternative child care system at federal level responsible Government organs and Adoption institutions need to work more on changing the system, in addition ,after the banning of inter country adoption the designing of different policies and guidelines which promote the interest and rights of children being adopted have been designed but, though this policies and guidelines are designed and granted they are not implemented accordingly as stated in the documents, so the designed polices and strategies should be based on or should relate with the existing environment by studying what has been missing and not only designing them they should be implemented appropriately by experts of good experience. In addition a study conducted by Hiwot (2007) proved that the lower rate of domestic adoption in Ethiopia is because of the lack of accountability and coordination of agencies and institutions. So based on my finding the issue of accountability and coordination are a major hurdle on the local adoption practice because, the process of adopting a child needs the support of different responsible institutions so as to safeguard the child being adopted so, this shows that everyone is responsible in improving local adoption practice, so this shouldn't be the job of one or two institutions but needs the collaboration of every responsible organ, so my

According to the guideline for the alternative care of children(2009) mentions that Domestic Adoption should be seen as a critical component of any child protection system and as a core part of the range of all their native care option. But with the findings of my study it disproves this point in a way that local adoption having a long history of practice small changes only exist within the system and also with its implementation it is not given the attention it needsto be given. One major event or change that occurred on local adoption involved the banning of inter

country adoption which is a great opportunity for children to be adopted in a family of their nation, but still the practice needs more attention on awareness creation and provision of effective adoption process. I have also disproved that, on the guideline revised by the ministry office states that in any case, the provision of adoption service in general requires strict adherence to the law of the land and guidelines and even stricter enforcement of the law on the part of the authorities in charge and hence, the major roles that the ministry office stated on the guideline is to make a periodic visit to ASPOs and childcare institutions in adoption to ensure if they are working according to the Guidelines and make periodic follow-up on the status of the adopted children in but this responsibilities haven't been addressed at all , which may lead to the violation of the right of the adopted children who might be in risk of abuse or violence.

A study conducted by Tenagne(2006) showed the failure of MOLSA the now MOWYCA failure to execute its major responsibility which is following up of reports, doing supervisory on inter-country adoption and children being left out abroad without supervision leading the children in to different problems are the major points of the study. And with my finding this issue of supervisory and following of reports is still a major concern to the local adoption process too because the Government organs responsible for facilitating this process don't have the necessary knowledge to do their jobs rather they limit the other staffs not to perform any of their responsibilities effectively and lading the children at different risks like abuse, neglect, mistreat and other problems.

Another concern that is a major hurdle on the progress of local adoption is the community not accepting or participating in local adoption practice because of the fear about what others might say when adopting a child and not getting recognition. A study conducted by Simegn (2017) which she explained on her finding states that the major issue for the challenges that adoptive

parents experience is because of the unwelcoming society that we live in and little being done on awareness creation by the responsible organs about local adoption practice, this is leading the Adoptive parents to hide their adoption and leave in fear, in addition this concern not only affects the family but also the children who are being adopted. Hence the society will start accepting and practicing local adoption when we start showing the lived experience of the adoptive parents and how they are changing the lives of each child and also try to reverse the mindset and also work on reshaping the policies.

On the UN convention on the rights of a child which our country has signed on Article 21 sub article B that states that the a child who is OVC has the right to be recognized for inter-country adoption may be considered as an alternative means of child's care, if the child cannot be placed in a foster or an adoptive family or cannot in any suitable manner is cared for in the child's country of origin. Hence the convention gives a full recognition of domestic adoption as a best child care option for any OVC. And it also states that this OVC should be accessed, resourced and supported with the provision of domestic adoption process so the practice needs a greater attention to ensure a guaranteed life for the OVC.

## CHAPTER SIX

### 6 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

#### 6.1 Conclusion

The study tried to show the practices of local adoption since its full recognition. I wanted to see how the practice of local adoption brought an influence on the current practice level but the practice levels were not documented specifically so it gave me a hard time getting the actual concepts and data for my study but still the results had some point to show which showed the current practice of local adoption, its progress and gaps it had and the improvements we need to work more on local adoption practice.

From this I have concluded that the practice of local adoption has shown some progress even if it is not that much implemented out of the designed policies and guidelines that are currently used which shows that more work is needed so as to show a resulting progress from different angles. Major issues we need to address include:-

Improve our practice of local adoption by doing community sensitization which is a major drawback for the practice of local adoption from adoptive parents perspective and from children who are to be adopted because in our country we have almost 5 million OVC in Ethiopia and 100,000 of them in Addis Ababa only, so to reach out for this children we have to sensitize our community and up bring more adoptive parents with the right coping mechanisms and good level of understanding towards local adoption process which is a lifelong process of upbringing fruitful generation.

Another issue we have to address is that during the previous times adoption was not legal so children were more adopted for the adoptive persons interest but now it's noticeable that children

who are taken for adoption are given more priority, more rights and sustainable parental care and emotional bond, but so as to insure that that the children being adopted are in a good state of care by tier adoptive parents responsible institutions should work consecutively on doing post adoption assessments and on visiting the adopted children after the adoption process because the children who are adopted may be in good care or on the other hand be in the risk of being abused, neglected or their rights might be violated .

In addition institutions working on local adoption should work more on children with older ages to have a family like the other little kids with providing ways to fill their documents and find a respective family for them so that, they wouldn't end up in institutional cares. This can be done with the help of the police stations if the older children don't have parents or relatives who are available to take care of them they can put in magazines about their information's to confirm that they don't have anybody to take care of them if no one comes they should be given the same chance as the younger children to be adopted.

The other improvement that needs to be updated is the system that we are using to facilitate the adoption process which is very discouraging which has a lot of back and forth so this system should be more updated and networked so that it becomes more encouraging easily be facilitated by any further adoptive parent who wants to adopt. This can be done by designing information centers and pages that show the adoption procedure and the information that they should provide and also, placing skilled man power for the purpose of the adoption facilitation process in the collaborative institutions that adoptive parents need to visit.

Finally the major things we have to work on is changing the Societal Beliefs about domestic adoption by changing the definition of Family in which it is not merely children who are born from them are part of a family but also children who are adopted and need the caring of parents

or a family can also constitute a bigger and happier family, Increasing the media portrayals of positive Adoption Stories, showing how life changing it is to adopt a child and also how a single parent changes the lives of an orphan and vulnerable child, Promoting positive Adoption language, this can be done by doing awareness raising programs for every responsible organ and the society itself, Banish societies misperceptions about Adoption by showing that adopting a child is not about inheritance issues or giving equal share with their biological children but its more about empowering and saving each life of a child a vulnerable child.

### **6.2 Implication for social work practice**

The study conducted has different implications for social work practice. Local adoption is one of the alternative child care systems which has been given due attention with recent times which needs more promotion and encouragement. Social work as profession can work on different sectors to change the dynamics of local adoption and bring it to a higher level of application.

#### **Service provision**

In the local adoption practice post adoption placement visits are very much valuable to the child being adopted so this visit can change the lives of each child being adopted because this is the process where we can see the status of a child whether he is in a good care or not so this process has to be done by a social work professional who has the skill to observe and report the status of the child. On the other hand so as to give a qualified service with in other institutions which are related stakeholders each institution should have a social worker that can facilitate the back and forth going and discouraging system the institutions have and be supportive of the adoptive parents.

### **Advocacy**

One of the major issues addressed by a social work profession is advocacy and within the local adoption process in our country a social work professional can be a voice for the OVC who need a family and parental care by advocating to improving the system that is currently being applied, doing community sensitization and awareness creations, availing skilled man power with the right knowledge and capacity, advocating for the updating of policies and designing new policies that are applicable on the ground.

### **Training**

In the study conducted its visible that there is a gap in this stream of work. And we can understand that trainings are very important to provide new knowledge and an update on the skills that we already have so trainings should be provided to those stakeholders who work in relation to the adoption process and also for adoptive parents on parenting skill and other challenges they may face after adoption so that they can cope up.

### **6.3 Implication for further research**

The study conducted tried to show how the progress of local adoption reached with in the times of its recognition but more should be researched on the reasons why a society like ours that welcomes and likes helping others doesn't want to participate or support a legal adoption process and also the limited data on the practice of local adoption history in different institutions should be given due attention and more researches should be done on the historical progress of local adoption other than in Oromiya region and in urban areas only.



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Appendixes

Appendix A: informed consent

My name is LemlemEshetu I am an undergraduate student of social work at Addis Ababa University I am inviting you to participate on the study that I am doing. Involvement in the study is voluntary, so you can choose to participate or not. I will give an easy explanation about the study and if you have any questions about the study feel free to ask.

I am interested in learning about the trends and progress of local adoption in urban areas. Since you have been involved in the works of local adoption at Ministry of women and children affairs you will be responding about different trends that have been practiced towards local adoption. This will take approximately from 30 min to an hour of your time. All information gained from you will be kept confidential and anonymous, this means that your name will not appear anywhere and no one except me will know about the specific answers you give. The benefit of this research is that you will be helping me understand the previous trends that have been practiced by our society towards local adoption. This information should help other people to have a better understanding about the trends of local adoption from previous times to the current practice level and what makes the current practice level of local adoption different and what more should be done on it. If you do not wish to continue, you have the right to withdraw from the study, without any penalty, at any time.

Participant; - I choose voluntarily to participate in this research project. I certify that I am above 18 years of age so I approve by my underlines signature

## Appendix B: Interview guide

### Prepare for the Interview

- Review the participant's information, paying particular attention to the position that they are working on previously and currently in the organization and experience towards adoption related issues.
- Review competencies required for the participants and select relevant interview questions.

### Start the Interview

- Greet the participant, giving my name and where I am from.
- Explain my research that i am conducting on.
- Explain the purpose of the interview: to help the participants understand why I am conducting a research.
- Describe the interview process to the participants and the time it will take for the interview to end.
- Informing the participants that i will be taking notes throughout the interview.

### Establishing Rapport

- Explain that there is no right or wrong response rather every data that is gathered is crucial and valuable to the research conducted.

- Explain that the data that is gathered from the participants is confidential and the interview will only be conducted when the participant is willing and has signed an informed consent form.

Participant Name:

Interviewer Name:

Date of Interview:

Location of Interview:

During the interview process

- Prompt the participants to obtain missing or additional information using general questions.
- If participants are having difficulty thinking of an example, ask them to think about an example which can elaborate the situation easily for them.
- Do more probing on questions that need to be clarified challenging some answers which are not correct with an accurate data.
- Following the participants not to go out of topic.
- Nodding, smiling and encouraging the participants throughout the interview.
- Not being selective on note-taking and writing everything down, keeping my make notes continuously.

Appendix C: Key informant interview

1. How is local adoption practiced in Ethiopia and specifically in Addis Ababa?
2. What are the trends of local adoption? How was it practiced on previous times and how is it practiced currently after its full recognition by the federal government as the major alternative child care?
3. What are the major progresses local adoption encounters after its full recognition? What was it focused on in previous times while practicing local adoption and what is the current focus area or main issue of concern?
4. How are the previous practice levels of local adoption helpful in shaping the current local adoption practice state?
5. What are the challenges and prospects of local adoption practice? Do the challenges affect the progress of local adoption? If it does how are they affecting it?
6. What is lacking on the current practice level of local adoption?
7. What should be done more to improve and update the current local adoption practice level?

Appendix D: In-Depth interview

What does the practice of local adoption look like in Ethiopia?

1. What were the major issues addressed by the practice of local adoption since its recognition as major alternative child care by the federal Government and the Ministry office?
2. Was the recognition of local adoption as a major alternative child care productive? If it was how was it productive? If not what were the issues it didn't address?
3. Has there been any visible progress seen on the practice of local adoption since has been recognized? If yes what are some of the visible progresses?
4. Are there challenges which were seen as a drawback for the practice of local adoption and its progress?
5. What measures were taken to address any challenge faced by the practice of local adoption?
6. What ways are suggested by the Ministry office for the improvement of local adoption practice? How can they be implemented?