

## Socio-Cultural Challenges of Child Adoption in Eastern Nigeria in West Africa

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### *Abstract*

*The importance of child adoption to infertile couples seeking for children, and children in need of parents cannot be over emphasized. In Eastern Nigeria, child adoption has faced socio-cultural challenges due to cultural norms and beliefs, social expectations and values. This study investigated the socio-cultural challenges of child adoption in Eastern Nigeria. To achieve this, two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study was the entire couples in Eastern Nigeria. Disproportionate stratified random sampling was used to select 800 couples. Among these, 400 couples are childless, while the other 400 couples have biological children. A descriptive survey was used, while questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. The result was analyzed using mean scores, standard deviations and t-test. The findings revealed poverty, bastard syndrome, denial of inheritance among others as some of the challenges of child adoption. The data also showed that childlessness, and gender selection among others are some of the reasons for adoption. The data also revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of the males and females in what constitute the socio-cultural challenges of child adoption in Eastern Nigeria. There was a significant difference between the mean scores of childless couples and couples with biological children in the reasons for adoption. The summary of the findings was that child adoption has been very difficult to practice in Eastern Nigeria. The study also made some recommendations and implications.*

**Key Words:** *Poverty, Bastard Syndrome, Denial of Inheritance, Childlessness, Gender Selection, Male Child Preference.*

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### **Introduction**

Every child is a gift from nature, but not every family has the gift of child bearing, and not all those that can give birth are able or willing to nurture their children to adulthood. All over the world, the tears of millions of children who cry out for people they can call their parents, and the tears of childless families are wiped away by the hands of child adoption.

Here in Eastern Nigeria, child adoption also satisfies the yearnings of both motherless babies and childless couples. Unfortunately, the process of child adoption is crippled by socio-cultural challenges in this part of the country.

Child adoption is the legal act of permanently placing a child with a parent or parents other than biological ones. In this case, the adopted child is permanently separated from his biological parents and becomes the legitimate child of his or her adoptive parents with all the rights, privileges and responsibilities that are attached to the relationship. Manali (2004) defines child adoption as a legal procedure that makes the birth child of one man and woman the legal child of someone else.

Highlighting more on the concept of child adoption, the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) explains that it is a process whereby an individual assumes the parenting for another, and in so doing, permanently transfers all the rights and responsibilities along with filiation from the biological parent(s) to adoptive ones. The process of adoption therefore effects a permanent change in status and requires societal recognition either through legal or religious sanction.

Child adoption can be categorized into; open and closed adoption. In an open adoption, the birth and adoptive parents exchange identifying information such as names and addresses, while in a closed adoption the adoptive and birth parents remain anonymous and so do not exchange any identifying information. There is also domestic adoption where adoptive parents adopt a child within the city or country in which they reside. It can be interstate where both adoptive and birth parents live in different states, or intrastate adoption where both of them reside within one state. International adoption is where the birth mother and adoptive parents live in different countries. Private adoption is a type of adoption that is arranged through an individual who may be a physician, clergy or an attorney or even a referral service. There is also Agency child adoption where adoption is arranged through child adoption agency which can be private or public with or without religious affiliation.

The distinctions among these types of adoption according to Berger (2014) is important as each type must meet a different set of legal requirements and procedures. The legal requirements and procedures are very necessary because child adoption in many countries of the world is vulnerable to child trafficking, enslavement and other kinds of child abuse. It is due to these risks which are found in adoption system that in Nigeria, adoption process is regulated by the Nigerian Child Right Laws or the adoption Act of 1965. The procedure for child law/judiciary states that any body wishing to adopt a child must firstly lodge an application to the Director of Child Development Department in the Ministry of Women Affairs and Child Development.

In each of the Eastern states, there are also the bodies that are responsible for child adoption laws. For instance in Enugu State, the National Women Commission is the statutory body responsible for the documentation and follow-up of child adoption processes Aniebue, P.N. et al (2008).

There are many reasons why people adopt children. In Eastern Nigeria, the top most reason for child adoption is **childlessness** which may be due to infertility in the family or death where all the woman's children or child might have died when she cannot give birth any more. It is a tradition in Igbo, Effik and Ibibio tribes of Eastern Nigeria that a married woman without a child has no honour in her husband's family, since it is believed that it is her fault. This was the reason why Nnuego in "The Joy of Motherhood" attempted drowning herself because it is a general belief that a woman who did not have a child for her husband is a failed woman Emecheta (2004) when such woman has 'failed', an alternative step is to adopt a child so that the family will have continuity.

**Male Child Syndrome** is another thing that pushes many African traditional families to child adoption. In Eastern Nigeria, there is nothing that breaks a marriage as lack of a male child in the family. In most African traditional societies, the system of inheritance is patrilineal. A family that has no male child is believed to have been doomed. Igboland specifically, defiles gender boundaries as both husband and wife desire male children for their marriage and legitimacy of marriage on the other. So a woman who achieves cognition and status by the birth of at least one son is considered fulfilled and ultimately accorded great respect. This is because the custom demands that it is a son who can occupy the house, inherit the family property, and carry the family name all along Ezudu (1998). Worse still, women are believed to be responsible for a couple's inability to bear male children. Some men even beat up their wives for the same reason Adegboye (1998). Consequently, a married woman without a son is usually desperate or pressurized to adopt a male child in order to save her marriage Ezugwu, Obi, & Onah (2012).

**Family Expansion:** In Eastern Nigeria, especially in Igbo, Effik and Ibibio tribes, the number of children a man has is counted a bonus to lift him up in the society especially when the children are ‘gender mixed’, so a couple that has few children most of the time adopt more children to expand the family size. Downey (2010) asserts that parents adopt children to expand their existing families and provide safe, stable homes for homeless children.

**Gender Selection:** In a family where the children are of the same gender, and the couple is in need of the one they lack, the tendency is that such family may stop bearing children for fear of getting the already existing gender, and resort to adopting the gender they lack.

**Helping Children in Need:** In African societies, many families adopt children in need of help especially when such children are relatives. This is called kinship adoption. A child may lose his or her parents to death or they may be too poor or too sick to raise the child up. In this case, it is mostly the grandparents, uncles, aunts or even any close relation that adopts the child and raises him or her up.

The adoption laws in Nigeria is complex and vary from state to state due to numerous ethnic groups with complex socio-cultural beliefs and norms. Although the states that make up Eastern Nigeria have their individual laws regulating child adoption, this part of the country has witnessed an epileptic system of child adoption due to some socio-cultural factors that paralyze the whole child adoption process.

The present study was designed to investigate the socio—cultural challenges of child adoption in Eastern Nigeria. Eastern Nigeria is made up of (9) nine states that are predominantly Igbo speaking tribe. Other tribes are Efik, Ibibio and Ijaw. Studies in the area of child adoption in Nigeria culture are very few and scanty, and relatively fewer of these studies have been designed solely to investigate in the challenges of child adoption. The present author was motivated to contribute her own literature to child adoption in this seemingly unstudied area by researching on the socio-cultural challenges of child adoption in Eastern Nigerian.

These socio-cultural challenges of adoption were discussed in the following sub-headings.

**Cultural Norms:** In Eastern Nigeria, child adoption has never been acceptable culturally before pre-colonial era. Even now, according to Punch (2013) in Igbo communities, adoption is still a stigma. This assertion is true because in Eastern Nigeria people do not easily accept a child whose biological make up is foreign as a legitimate child in the family. Newspaper reports on child adoption in the Eastern Nigeria revealed that; (i) although child adoption is done, it is alien in Igbo culture (ii) no matter how rich an adopted child might be, he cannot be a traditional ruler in the community (iii) adoption of babies is bringing a lot of problems that are against people’s way of life and should discontinue Jude (2013). For these reasons, motherless babies who yearn for parents to love and train them may not be adopted.

**Poverty:** Poverty is a social problem, and a serious challenge to adoption process. Nigeria is Africa’s top oil producer, yet poverty is so endemic across the country that Ekere (2013) states that 67 million Nigerians live below one American Dollar per day. Consequently, many people in Eastern Nigeria sell themselves to material temptations to make ends meet. It is due to poverty that some people establish illegal adoption agencies and orphanage homes ‘baby factories’ where teenage girls are lured into giving birth and selling their babies for the same purpose.

In May, 2011 for instance, 32 pregnant teenage girls were freed by police in a ‘baby factory’ in Abia state. The girls according to source said they sold their babies for N25,000.00 – N30,000.00 depending on the gender of the baby Newsnine (2013). In 2012, 2,500 pregnant teenagers were rescued from baby factories in South Eastern Nigeria. According to source, most of the teenage mothers were lured into the infamous trade with monetary offers by the baby factory operators, while some others were forced into the trade by

poverty and illiteracy Defender (2014). These issues are a dangerous development and a criminalization of child adoption laws. People see all adopted children as being bought from baby factories, and there are confusions every where.

**Denial of Inheritance:** In Eastern Nigeria, child adoption is not common. It occurs only among educated people whose adopted children suffer discrimination and denial of inheritance Amobi & Igwegbe (2004). Many traditional communities in Eastern Nigeria, do not allow an adopted child to participate in sharing communal land. They are not also allowed to inherit the staff of office of the family (a position and honour given to the eldest man in a village or community). This type of attitude towards the adoptee discourages childless couples who may wish to adopt children that will inherit their property when they (adoptive parents) pass away.

**Bastard Syndrome:** Osu system which means ‘cult slave’ a sacrifice dedicated to deities or the gods and no longer part of the community is a problematic system which its practice gave rise to bastard syndrome in many Eastern Nigeria culture. Public opinion according to Alonih (2011) states that a slave or an osu is better than an adopted child because an osu knows his ancestors but an adopted child knows not his or her origin and so is not acceptable. Azuka (2013) speaking more on the fate of adopted child in Eastern Nigeria writes, that an adopted child is seen as not a “real son or daughter of the soil”, because everybody wants a child that is recognized as biological son or daughter by the society. According to him, adoption is still a stigma. A child born outside wedlock is stigmatized as a bastard.

This type of attitude towards the adoptee discourages child adoption. This is because nobody wants to adopt a child that will be discriminated against, and finds it difficult to interact freely because of fear of being intimidated.

**Age of the Adoptive Parents:** This is another social problem that destabilizes the process of child adoption. Adoption Act 1994 stipulates that the maximum age limit for those wishing to adopt a child is 45 years if one is adopting a first child, but if the adoptive parent already has other children and wants to adopt more, the maximum age is 50 years. However, for the adoption of new born babies, the age limit imposed is usually 35-40 years so that the adoptive mother will be able to take adequate care of the child Awake (1996).

Unfortunately, here in the Eastern Nigeria, because adoption of children is alien to our culture, many infertile couple delay a lot before they take decision to adopt. Because biological children are more preferred they usually exhaust all the avenues of giving birth before they opt for adoption. Sometimes you see couples retiring from their jobs and adopting children they may not have the physical and economic strength to take care of. Adoption at old age does not give the adoptive parents enough time to train their adopted child in school or nurture them enough to face the challenging world.

**Establishment of illegal adoption agencies and orphanage homes called baby factories:** Other social problems of child adoption are these illegal agencies and orphanage homes that do not have legal backings to run child adoption services. The perpetrators indulge in this crime partially due to poverty and partially as a result of materialism and quest for over-night richness.

The incidents of illegal orphanage homes ‘baby factories’ in almost all the Eastern states of Nigeria are so numerous in the daily news that they cannot be counted. The illegal agents in collaboration with some other individuals operate anyhow and indulge in harbouring teenage girls who are forced or lured into bearing children for sale. The business is so ‘fantastic’ that it attracts both genuine prospective adoptive parents and fake ones who want babies for ritual purposes and or for child trafficking. Elombah (2013) reported that police on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2013 found 6 pregnant teenage girls in Enugu City and arrested 3 suspects planning to sell the girls’ babies. According to source, the girls had been lured into the house with a promise of some

money after delivery. Arinze Orakwe of the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons and other related matters (NAPTIP) said that couples who patronize such factories are those Nigerians who want to avoid illegal adoption process.

In December 20, 2013, Nigeria Police freed 19 pregnant teenages in Abia State aged 15-23 years old Al-Jazeera (2013). The case of baby factories is so prevalent in South Eastern Nigeria that someone (name withheld) was asking if there was something wrong or peculiar in the Eastern Nigeria Punch (2013).

Through illegal orphanage homes, many children have been killed for rituals, while others have been trafficked for organ harvesting and child labour. This is because illegal adoption offers no monitoring of the adoptive parents to ensure the safety of the adoptee and their comforts.

These days according to Ossai;

“...babies are sold and bought in Eastern Nigeria as one buys candy from a confectioner’s store. What remains to be seen is a situation whereby a shop or building would have “babies for sale” written boldly on it.” Jude (2013).

The teenage girls who are harboured are not safe either as many of them are abused sexually in order to be pregnant of the babies to be sold. Sometimes they are starved. Of course, education is no longer for them. Their morals are killed while the perpetrators take the lion share of the baby sales and give the girls few coins.

**Poor Law Enforcement:** One of the major problems characterizing Nigerian society is that the laws are made for everybody, but are meant for the masses only. This for instance partly explains why in spite of the existence of different law enforcement agencies and organizations in the country such as the police, the States Security Service (S.S.S), the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corp (NSCDC) and the Independent Corruption Practices Commission, (ICPC), many corrupt practices in child adoption often go on unchecked. On daily basis, different news media are filled with stories of babies that are sold, illegal adoption agencies that operate and other illegal adoption practices such as children being sold for ulterior motives in Eastern Nigeria and in South-East precisely. Unfortunately, the perpetrators of these evils are not punished squarely. The Enugu State Government is equally aware of the foster homes and illegal maternity homes where babies are sold to both genuine prospective adoptive parents, and the fake ones, but the law is taking it as a child’s play because according to Jude (2013), powerful people in government and in the business world were allegedly involved in the business. It is because the perpetrators are not punished seriously that the business of baby sales still flourish up to date, with more people joining them. Someone can go on reciting the litany of the socio-cultural challenges of child adoption and how they paralyze the activities of the system, but for time and space.

## **Purpose of the Study**

In specific terms, this study sought to

1. Identify the socio-cultural challenges of child adoption in Eastern Nigeria.
2. Ascertain the reasons why people adopt children in Eastern Nigeria.

## **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What are the challenges of child adoption in Eastern Nigeria?
2. What are the reasons why people adopt children in Eastern Nigeria?

## Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested.

1. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of husbands and wives (male and female) on what constitute the socio-cultural challenges of child adoption in Eastern Nigeria.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of childless couples and couples with biological children on the reasons for child adoption in Eastern Nigeria.

## Methodology

The descriptive survey design was adopted in the study. The population of the study was the entire couples in Eastern Nigeria. Disproportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to select 800 couples. This technique was adopted because the population was very large comprising 9 states and to avoid any bias and cater for gender and childless and birth parents. Among the 800 couples, 400 couples are childless while the other 400 couples have biological children. Data collection was done using structured questionnaire, which comprised 20 research items in cluster A and B. the questionnaire had a 4 point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (AG), Strongly Disagree (SD) and Disagree (DG) . It was face validated by two experts in psychology and education, and one expert in Measurement and Evaluation, all from University of Nigeria Nsukka. To determine the reliability of the instrument , it was trial tested with (100) respondents in Enugu state. Cronbach Alpha reliability method was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument, and this yielded coefficient of 0.88 and 0.86.

The data collected was analyzed using mean scores and standard deviations. The criterion for mean score of 2.50 and above were acceptable. The t-test score was used to test the two hypotheses. These were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

## Results

Table 0: Research Question 1: What Are The Challenges of Child Adoption in Eastern Nigeria

Item NO	Item description	
1	Cultural norms/beliefs that an adopted child is not a biological child and should not be accepted.	3.67
2	The sale of babies by teenage mothers due to poverty, which confuses people about anything adoption.	3.13
3	The denial of an adopted child's inheritance from his adoptive parents.	3.22
4	The belief that an adopted child is born outside wedlock and so is not a real child of the family	2.52
5	The adoption of babies when the adoptive parent is too old to cater for the child	3.00
6	The belief that child adoption is an abomination and against the culture of the land.	2.84
7	The establishment of baby factories where babies are sold for adoption and for rituals.	2.54
8	High level of corruption in the country.	2.35
9	Political instability	2.00
10	Lack of adequate knowledge about process of child adoption	3.04
11	Poor law enforcement in the country which allows the illegal sales of babies	3.00
	<b>Cluster Mean X</b>	<b>2.85</b>

From the results presented in table 1, it could be seen that nine out of the 11 items in the cluster have mean scores above 2.50. This implied that they have been rated positive as the socio-cultural challenges of child adoption in the Eastern Nigeria.

Table 1: Research Question 2: What Are The Reasons for Child Adoption in the Eastern Nigeria

Item No	Item description	
12	To help childless couples get children of their own	3.22
13	If there is no male child in the family	3.20
14	For expansion of family size	3.08
15	To select a particular gender	3.16
16	To provide a home for a child in need	3.11
17	To provide a play mate or companion for the only child in the family	2.66
18	To help a child with a special need	2.76
19	If one is pressurized by a spouse or relatives	3.07
20	To rescue a child that is in danger	2.54
	<b>Cluster mean X</b>	<b>2.98</b>

The mean ratings of the respondent on all the items in this table were above 2.50, adopted as the benchmark for the acceptance of the response as positive. This meant that the respondents accepted all the items as the reasons for child adoption in Eastern Nigeria.

Table 2: Hypothesis 1: There is no significant in the mean scores of the husbands and wives on what constitute the socio cultural challenges of child adoption in Eastern Nigeria. SUMMARY of the t-test analysis for male and female respondents

Group	N	X	SD	t-crit	t-cal	Sig level	Decision
Male	395	2.89	0.61	1.96	1.64	05	HO <sup>1</sup> is accepted
Female	392	2.93	0.58				

Table 3 above presented the t-test analysis of the difference between the mean ratings of male and female respondents on the challenges of child adoption in Eastern Nigeria. From the data in the table, it could be observed that the calculated t-test value was 1.64 which was less than the critical value of 1.96. As a result, the null hypothesis of no difference was accepted. Therefore gender was not a significant factor in the perception of the respondent.

Table 3: Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the means scores of the childless couples and couples with the biological children on the reasons for child adoption in Eastern Nigeria the Summary of t-test analysis for childless couples an couples with biological children

Group	N	X	SD	t-crit	t-cal	Sig level	Decision
Childless couples	350	2.92	0.58	1.96	4.21	0.05	HO <sup>2</sup> is rejected
Couples with children	380	2.65	0.54				

The above table showed the summary of the t-test analysis of the difference between the mean scores of the childless couples and couples with children. From the data, it could be understood that the calculated t-value of 4.21 was higher than the critical t-value of 1.96. Consequently, the null hypothesis of no difference was rejected. Therefore, there was a significant difference in opinions of childless couples and couples with children on the reasons for child adoption in Eastern Nigeria.

## **Discussion**

The data in table 1 which identified the socio-cultural challenges of child adoption in Eastern Nigeria suggests that both males and females among the couples perceived some of the identified challenges as being destructive to the process of child adoption in Eastern Nigeria.

The findings generally agree with the opinion of Brodzinsky & Schechter (1990) that attitudes and laws regarding child adoption vary greatly and whereas all cultures recognize adoption, not all cultures accept that unrelated child should be treated as equivalent to biological children of the adoptive parents. Some of the findings are in line with the findings of Nwoga (2013) which revealed that cultural norms/beliefs, denial of inheritance of the adopted child are some of the factors that militate against adoption in Igbo land. The findings that poverty is a challenge to adoption is in agreement with the assertion of Jude (2013) that frustration and poverty lure teenage girls into selling their babies in baby factories. The findings also support Idea.time (2013) that many adoptive parents due to lack of knowledge about adoption suffer because they are unprepared for the challenges of raising an adopted child who has been in foster care. Ezugwu, Obi & Onah (2012) in their study found out that many Nigerian women heard about child adoption, but very few know actually what adoption entails. From these findings, it can be understood that child adoption does not find its feet in Eastern Nigeria.

The findings in table 2 highlights reasons for child adoption. The findings agree with the view of Ripa (2014) that people adopt children because of childlessness, to provide home to children in need, for expansion of family size, and for gender selection. These people are of the opinion that these reasons are genuine enough to give adoptive parents the desire to love and care for the children. The findings of this study also support the findings of Ezugwu et al that 69% of the adoptive mothers were pressurized by their husbands and external factors to adopt children. The findings are also with the advice of Indiaparenting (2013) that couples should adopt children if they have an only son so that the child will have a companion, and also adopt children if the existing ones are of the same gender.

These views reiterate the fact that the identification of these reasons for child adoption by the respondents are in conformity with scholarly opinions on the subject.

The perceptions of the respondents did not differ due to gender as revealed by the t-test analysis presented in table 3. This suggest that both male and female saw the challenges and reasons for child adoption the same way.

Finally, the perception of the childless couples differs significantly from the couples with children. The reason is obvious. The childless couples have different views and experiences from the couples who have biological children in matters of child bearing and adoption. The emotional stress, feeling of unfulfillment and emptiness on the side of the childless couples with the desire to have children are enough to make the difference.

In conclusion, adoption system is very difficult to practice in Eastern Nigeria. A lot of people in need of adoption prefer preserving the cultural norms and beliefs to adopting children they can call their own. Other people are discouraged by what happens to already adopted children. As a result, many motherless babies and abandoned children are wasting away in orphanage homes as many of them are not adopted. However,

there are still some well informed people who damn all consequences and adopt children, though they are not relatively many.

Whatever case may be, child adoption is one of the rewarding aspect of life for the adoptive parents who through it are able to get children. It therefore changes the life of the childless couples for the better as they are opportuned to play the noble role of parenting. To the adoptee, adoption gives them parents, a family, a home, and a reason to live. Even the biological parents of the adopted child are happy too as their child gets a home and a new life. When everybody is happy the society at large is happy. So adoption is a solution to many problems and should be welcomed by all and sundry.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made.

1. There is urgent need to reform any culture that is against a global change which is beneficial to humanity such as adoption.
2. Though most of the Eastern states have laws guiding adoption, in most cases, the laws are not enforce. The government should ensure that these laws are obeyed and that defaulters should be punished severely.
3. Non-governmental organizations and the church should organize seminars, workshops and talks both in rural and urban areas about the process of adoption and its benefits.
4. There should be employments for the youth to reduce the level of poverty in the state. By so doing many teenage girls and boys will be absorbed to minimize their waywardness or promiscuity.
5. More motherless babies' homes should be built, equipped and extended to rural areas to cater for motherless babies, the abandoned and the unwanted in the society.
6. In the area of baby factory, this should be discouraged by all means. It is evil. The church and the public should create awareness about the ills of baby factory.
7. The government should punish any unauthorized person running maternity homes, or orphanage homes. Individuals should be banned from running any orphanage home.
8. People should help the police by reporting any strange movement which indicates that baby factory is in the neighbourhood to law enforcement agents.
9. There is need for other adequate mechanism to check these baby factories and protect the lives and rights of children.

### **The Implications of the Study**

This study has many implications. In Eastern Nigeria, child adoption is challenged by many socio-cultural factors which invariably do not seek for the welfare of adopted children and the childless couples. People should understand that children no matter their birth conditions are a treasure in the family, the salt of the nation as rightly pointed out by Agbo (2012). If children are denied of their rights, are stigmatized against because of their birth circumstances, then the Nigerian child especially the adopted and or the homeless is an endangered specie. A specie that grows without affection, without family, and without love and comfort. There is no security for motherless babies in Eastern Nigeria. Many of them are exposed to all kinds of enslavement ranging from selling and buying them like chickens to rejecting them and branding them as bastards, slaves, outcasts and so on, and so denying them of their rights to inheritance, rights to live comfortably in a society they belong, right to good education and sound trainings.

It is due to cultural beliefs and norms that babies are aborted by their unmarried and inexperienced mothers for fear of the children being rejected by the society simply because their biological fathers are unknown. Another social implication is that the treatment meted for adopted children in eastern Nigeria causes

adopted children and the adoptive parents heart attack. The children due to rejection experience emotional trauma, low self esteem and identity crisis. Many other issues so intrinsic to the adoption experience arise when the adoptee reaches adolescence. At this time, there is acute awareness of the fact that the society in which they belong has negative attitude towards them. The children develop drive towards liberation which will never comes and which is accompanied by running away, committing suicide or developing behavioural disorders. Sometimes, they resort to fighting the society through armed robbery, kidnappings, assassinations etc.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, adoption system is not easy to practice in Eastern Nigeria. A lot of people in need of adoption prefer preserving the cultural norms and beliefs to adopting children they can call their own. Other people are discouraged by what happens to already adopted children. As a result, many motherless babies and abandoned children are wasting away in orphanage homes as many of them are not adopted. However, there are still some well informed people who damn all consequences and adopt children, though they are not relatively many.

Whatever case may be, child adoption is one of the rewarding aspect of life for the adoptive parents who through it are able to get children. It therefore changes the life of the childless couples for the better as they are opportuned to play the noble role of parenting. To the adoptee, adoption gives them parents, a family, a home, and a reason to live. Even the biological parents of the adopted child are happy too as their child gets a home and a new life. When everybody is happy the society at large is happy. So adoption is a solution to many problems and should be welcomed by all and sundry.

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