

**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK**

**DISCIPLINING OF ADOPTED CHILDREN IN NUCLEAR FAMILIES: A STUDY OF**  
**ADOPTIVE FAMILIES IN NAIROBI COUNTY**

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**OF DEGREE OF MASTER OF**  
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**OCTOBER, 2015**

**DECLARATION**

I declare that this is my original work and has not been presented in any other university.

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Signature .....Date.....

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This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university  
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Signature..... Date.....

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK**

**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this project to all good people who have walked with me during my study period.

To my parents who have been constantly on my side, I give you special dedication. Your love, support, encouragement and understanding has made me finalize this project paper.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

ACRWC	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Children
CCI	Charitable Children Organization
CWSK	Child Welfare Society of Kenya
DSC	Director Children Services
GoK	Government of Kenya
KCH	Kenya Christian Homes
KKPI	Kenyans to Kenyans Peace Initiative
LCN	Little Angels Network
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Fund
NAC	National Adoption Committee
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
FSD	Family Service Department
DCO	District Children Officer
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Scientists

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## ABSTRACT

This study sought to establish how adoptive parents discipline children under their care and the consequences of their actions. It was guided by specific objectives which were: - to find out the various methods that adoptive parents use to discipline their children within the nuclear family; to investigate the effectiveness of the disciplinary methods used by adoptive parents in modeling an adopted child's behavior; to establish the alternative discipline options that adoptive parents use when they are unable to tame their children. The study interviewed 42 adoptive parents, 9 adopted children, and 11 key informants comprising of adoption officers and children officers. There were also 6 observations of the adopted children interviewed. The study used semi-structured questionnaires to collect data.

Data collected was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were used to analyze quantitative data. Results of quantitative data analysis were presented in tables and charts. Results of qualitative data analysis were presented in narrative form. The study established that adoptive parents used various methods to discipline their children within the nuclear family. These methods included caning, spanking, pinching, warning, threats, talking to the child, suspension of some privileges and use of isolation corner.

The study found that the disciplinary methods used by adoptive parents in modeling an adopted child's behavior have been effective. The effectiveness of the methods used was validated by the people in the family who said that the way 92.9% of adoptive parents discipline their child is appropriate. It was also confirmed by the fact that 95.2% of the adoptive parents never took their child/ren for counseling due to unbecoming behavior. The study found that the alternative discipline options that adoptive parents have when they are unable to tame their children include canning and counseling. Many parents would cane the child or refer them to a counselor or the authorities like chief. The study established that adopted children are unique and require special attention on the way they are disciplined. According to the findings it is the role of the parents to bring up the child in the right way..

This study concluded that adoptive parents used different methods to discipline their children based on the situation and the age of the child in question. The study also concluded that adoptive

Parents need counseling to understand the various changes that take place as a child grows in order to be well prepared to model positive behavior and cope with challenges that come with parenting. Although the methods used by adoptive parents to discipline their children have been effective, they are not the best because some of them like caning might cause physical harm on the adopted child and some of these methods might border on battering or abusing the children which are unlawful. Adoptive parents therefore need to evaluate their disciplinary methods to ensure they are in the best interests of the adopted children.

This study recommends that the children department and adoption agencies should counsel adoptive parents thoroughly before adoption to ensure they are ready for parenting challenges. It recommends that adoption agencies, societies and nongovernmental organizations should organize seminars and workshops to equip adoptive parents with parenting skills as their children grow. The adoptive parents should not carry the burden of bringing up adopted children alone rather they should involve mentors as well as other social agents like church/mosque, school and family members to contribute positively in modeling positive behavior to adopted children.

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Background of the Study

Nuclear family is the most basic and core unit of every society (Nancy, 2011). In the animal kingdom, particularly among the advanced sapiens where man belongs, we do have the inherent capability to instinctively live together for the benefit of each other. And broadly for the absolute benefit of our off springs. Theodore *et al* (1978) notes that it is in basic nuclear set-up where-by the off springs get to learn the environment. Within the same set-up they also learn to interact with each other and as well know to mark their social and physical boundaries. Drawing from Lindsey (1994), he says that, it is at this formative age in one's lifetime that critical elements of social interaction and behavior alignment that occurs. The more a child is exposed to a repeated behavior the more he gets to understand it as standard norm acceptable by the surrounding community.

Through this direct and indirect interaction the care givers who mostly include the parents, guardians and siblings knowingly or unknowingly transmit cultural values, mores and traditions to the new generation through motivation, repetition of the wanted behavior, sanctioning and as well through continuous social practice (Bandura & Walters,1963). Bandura (1959) further notes that, this is an on-going process that can take duration of times and propagated through available dynamic agents of socialization which would include the media, institutions of learning, religious institutions, economic trades among others. Through this it becomes more evident that the children are able to adopt and conform to the laid down structures and systems in the society.

In understanding the behavior of children who grow up in foster homes and adopted families, Gambрил and Willis (1978) say that the methods used by the care givers is quite different and at times tend to differ from the common methods of disciplining minors, in the adopted families for

various reason they tend to pamper and hold the adopted children with kid soft gloves. On the other hand, Lindsey concurs, with both Gambрил and Willis, that children who grow up in foster homes and almshouses tend to lead a preserve lifestyle due to blanket discipline and lack of close parental touch. This is also confirmed by Harlow (1951) on his psychological experimentation of understanding children's behavior in charitable institutions.

For children to conform to what society expects of them, evidently they have to adhere to what society relatively qualifies as benchmark in conformity (Tembo, 1998) in the long run the purpose of achieving this discipline is to ensure social harmony that transcends the immediate space and persist over geographical, social and economic boundaries and as well create long term impact to the intended minor (Corsini& Painter, 1975). In a nutshell, they note that discipline in minors both at the family and institution levels is meant to model the intended subject to conform to what is deemed acceptable while on the other hand extinct what is unacceptable.

When a child enters a family either through birth by his biological parents, foster placement or through legal adoption, it becomes the sole parental responsibility to ensure that the child grows in accordance to the laid down family expectations and as well to the society's expectation (UNCRC, 1990; ACRWC, 1999; Phillip, 1994). In the cases where families opt to adopt children, it becomes a delicate responsibility especially when they adopt a child who had previously been under the care of a foster home or a charitable children institution. To discipline such children and re-socializing them to conformities of a standard household it becomes quite a challenge and would take a long time (Mbuga,2007).



To instill discipline among adopted children who are already placed in households is informed by quite a number of factors that would include: age of the child during placement, gender, initial environment set –up of the child where he was before placement. For example was he in a children’s home, bostal institution, under guardianship. Another factor of consideration would be the availability of other siblings in the family. This study therefore seeks to establish different approaches parents and guardians use to instill discipline to their legally adopted children who have been in their continuous care and protection for a period of not less than twelve months since the adoption orders were granted.

### **1.1 Problem Statement**

The number of children released for adoption by foster care homes and offering mothers has continued to rise in the last decade (CWSK, 2012). This is attributed to the high number of children who are abandoned by the streets or as result of taboo children born out of incestuous relationships which are common in cosmopolitan centers and some communities in western Kenya. With the advanced awareness creation, in the recent past, on the alternative options to abortion, most of the young girls who get unplanned or unwanted pregnancies are able to carry their pregnancies to term and offer the newborn for adoption to a deserving family through an adoption agency.

Initially adoption in Kenya was a topic that was only left to barren women. They were allowed to go ahead and establish a local arrangement from within the family relatives, for example, a sister to give birth and surrender the child to her barren sister to take care of the child as her own.(Munguti&Kamara, 1999). This confirmed the role of a woman in society as solely to raise

a family. Ogola (1994) likened a woman without a child to a river without a source; however, a woman's dignity in a society could be preserved by identification of a child, of whom she would raise as her own.

However, with increased modernity and access to practical education, adoption as an alternative way of having children has extremely grown. Nowadays, it is not therefore a preserve of barren spouses and Government of Kenya (GoK). There are over six licensed adoption agencies in the country, which are tasked by law to carry both local and international adoptions (Daily Nation, 24th December 2013). As a result, majority of parents are coming forward to adopt children not because they cannot have their own biological children per se, but because they want to afford a decent lifestyle to a deserving child out there (CWSK, 1997). Through such adoption exercises a child is able to have a family to live with. The director of Children Services in Kenya (CSK), Mr. Hussein, emphasized the importance of child adoption. He observed that, "the core reason for adoption is to give a child a family, but not the other way round."

In recent times, most of adopted children end up in families where the adoptive parents are in their working age; hence they end up juggling between work duties and bringing up their family (Adams, 1986). They are busy most of the time trying to make financial ends meet. However, this work obsession is carrying with it critical gaps and moral chinks, particularly at the family level. For example, people leaving home very early in the morning and coming back tired late in the evening, has affected disciplining and parenting roles expected from the adoptive parents towards their children. These critical tasks is passed over to other parties, including the maids, schools, religious centers, baby cares, where children are dropped in the morning and picked in

the evening. Some are left to watch unregulated or uncensored TV programs all day long. Disciplining of children in the present society has thus become an insignificant role in the adoptive families. In most cases, the role is taken over by tutors, instructors and care givers in various institutions of learning and places of worship (Swadener, et al, 2000).

With modernity creeping fast, thanks to technology, the social situation has been worsened by long working hours, dynamic agents of socialization and alternative choices of family entertainment. Parents and guardians have surrendered their disciplining roles to third parties. The scenario is deeply worsened by families who have deliberately opted to create a family through adoption. In most cases, this adoptive parents have waited for long to have children through biological means and with no success they engage their valuable time in economic ventures as coping mechanism in a society that stigmatize families that have no children. The worse situations involving disciplining of adopted children who had previously been exposed to institutional care and come to a loving family setup where they are treated with soft kid gloves hence the need for a critical study to understand how the adopted children are disciplined by their adoptive parents in the nuclear families.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

This study was designed to answer the following questions:

- 1) What are the disciplinary methods used by adoptive parents in instilling good behavior in the family?
- 2) How effective are the disciplinary methods in modeling a child's behavior?

- 3) What are the alternative disciplinary options that parents use when disciplining their adopted children in the family?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The overall objective of this study was to find out how adoptive parents discipline children under their care and protection. The specific objectives were: -

- 1) To establish the various methods used by adoptive parents to discipline their children within the family.
- 2) To identify how effective are the disciplinary methods used by adoptive parents in modeling their child's behavior
- 3) To establish the alternative options used by adoptive parents to discipline their adopted children.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

This detailed study sought to understand the different approaches that can be used to effectively promote positive virtues to adopted children in family. Conversely, it sought out to bring the relevant approaches that are often used as disciplinary actions to children but rarely leave any positive impact on their behavior change. The study was also conducted to inform not only mainstream parents but as well the society on the best practices in parenting that can help in bringing up an holistic child who fits well in the family as well as in the society. The research study will also be important in challenging the existing theoretical perspectives that give emphasize on some aspects of impacting discipline whereas de-emphasizing on other disciplinary approaches. Significant key partners like adoption agencies, children department and counseling bodies will also benefit from this study as it will open their understanding on how

children placed in adoptive homes are sanctioned and punished by their adoptive parents and guardians.

As a Masters Student with a bias in understanding human society, the study granted me the opportunity to primarily study the approaches of nurturing behavior at family level. Additionally, upon the successful completion of my study, I will be qualified to honorably graduate as a masters graduate student by the University.

### **1.5 Scope and limitations of the Study**

The study covered adoptive parents who have been taking care of their adopted children for not less than twelve months. In practice this duration is adequate for parent-child bonding. Consequently, my results referred to specific households and not the entire mainstream families that entirely comprise fully of biological children per se. The study investigated on how parents in adoptive families regulate behavior within the nuclear family, specifically it focused on the methods used and the impact it left to the children in modeling their personality. In terms of geographical scope, the study was localized within Nairobi County hence the research findings cannot be generalized. Nairobi County is unique in the sense that it is a cosmopolitan City which contrasts with rural counties in terms of social statuses, interactions and cultural leanings. Therefore the study was not a representative of other communities in the country.

The location of Nairobi County being a cocktail of different cultures that are brought together by forces of civilization and modernity may have its own adoption trends informed by either instinctive compassion to raise an orphan or biologically unable to bear children. Any trend thus might be as a result of either the two or both. Different families have different ways of

disciplining their children and these vary from one household to the other. The experience expressed from this might not be generalized. The researcher also bore with the fact that presently there are different types of families in the society. There are single parent families, separated, divorced, married and widowed. This study focused on families where there is an adopted child legally adopted by the parents.

Families have different functions at any given time that would include economic ventures, schooling of the minors among others. However, this study explored the socialization function of the children in the family with greater emphasize on the Parent-Child discipline. The family might have other functions which this study did not explore. Primarily, this study sought to establish the impact of behavior change among adopted children as instilled by their parents. To extend, and in the African context, the collective arm of the extended family and neighbors might influence behavioral outcome within the nuclear set-up.

## 1.6 Definition of key Concepts

<b>Child</b>	Any person who is under the age of eighteen years
<b>Care Giver</b>	Any person responsible for the provision of care and protection to a person below eighteen years of age
<b>Adoptive Parent</b>	A parent who acquires parental responsibility over child/children through adoption
<b>Taboo Child</b>	Child born of an incestuous relationship mostly from parents of the same kin
<b>Placement</b>	Taking custody of a minor under for a period of not less than three months with an intention of adopting him after the expiry of the three months
<b>Kinship Adoption</b>	The process of legally taking custody of a child who you are related either through blood or marriage
<b>Foster homes</b>	Places of safety, where children in need of care and protection are temporarily placed as efforts are sought for permanent care.
<b>Bostal Institution</b>	Corrective centers that admit minors who are in conflict with the law
<b>Nuclear Family</b>	This is the most basic and core social unit in society that consist of a couple (mother and father) and dependent children.
<b>Alternative Disc. Options</b>	These are the unconventional means that parents use in order to tame unbecoming behavior of the children in the family.
<b>Modeling Behavior</b>	This is an on-going endeavor by parents that seeks to impart socially acceptable manners to children under their care
<b>Disciplining Methods</b>	These are the various approaches that are used by parents within the family to instill and control behavior among their children

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.0 Introduction**

Knowledge has to be fitted into a framework of some kind in order to be usable. Social theories are important and worth attention, because they offer or attempt to offer coherent explanations of social happenings in the existing society (Heideson, 1985). It is in this background, therefore, that this chapter (section) provides a review of the empirical and theoretical literature relating to disciplining of adopted children in nuclear families. The overview was done in full cognizant of the fact that systematic studies on the disciplining of adopted children in families is limited.

The chapter will be divided into three key areas of focus. The first section will deeply delve in reviewing the existing literature. This will offer a critical understanding of how adopted children are disciplined and socialized in the family. It will go further to conceptualize the various approaches used to discipline minors below eighteen years at the global, regional, national and at the study area level. Legal instruments that safeguard the family and interest of adopted children are discussed as well. These instruments included the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children (UNCRC), The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) and The Children Act of 2001. The role of a parent as a critical agent of socialization will also be discussed in this section.

In the second section, a comprehensive theoretical review was done. Theories which were relevant to this phenomenon were discussed in tight relation to the area under study. The attachment theory which explains how discipline and socialization is acquired in the child hood years vis-à-vis the parental role, guided this study from straying. In addition, social learning theory as one of key theories that expound on the role of social agents in picking or dropping a



behavior, was also be discussed in length. The tail section was dedicated to conclusion. This drew a logical perspective to the study and a conceptual framework to guide the research study was formulated.

The review of literature was organized in the following broad themes:-

- Adopting of children to join mainstream Families
- Methods of Parenting
- The family as the basic element in society
- Socialization of under age children

## **2.1 Adoption of Children to Join Mainstream Families**

Child adoption is a practice that has been there for a long period of time. Adamec&Pierce (1991) notes that, the ancient Romans and Greeks practiced adoption over hundreds of years ago. The bible also in the Old Testament cites adoption in the book of Esther 2:7 and Exodus, where Hadassah and Baby Moses are adopted. Hadassah is adopted by Mordecai and Moses taken by Pharaoh's daughter.

The state of Massachusetts in America was one the states to develop adoption laws in early 20<sup>th</sup> century. By mid-20<sup>th</sup> century nearly all the European countries had formulated laws to guide adoption in their respective countries (Kadushin, 1967). The author (Kadushin) further notes that the Second World War which was fought between 1939- 1945, led to the rise in number of children who were in need alternative care and protection. This was occasioned by the death of their parents at war fields or became civil victims of the fight like the case of Hiroshima and

Nagasaki that left thousands of children with no families. The authorities felt such orphaned children would not grow well in orphanages and war camps hence a majority were placed in foster families for care and protection (Kadushin, 1967). From time immemorial, adoption has been practiced for a number of reasons. In the Roman days adoption was done only to save the barren surname from lineal extinction. They only adopted sons as heirs of their estate and family name.

During the industrial times in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, adoption was viewed as a source of labor by Americans. Only the strong minors with well-formed biceps, good set of teeth, were adopted by the masters (Cahn, 2002). Cahn states that, “*with the decline of slave labor, masters disguised sources of cheap labor as acts of compassion, whereby they adopted slave minors in their household but subjected them to forced labor*”. He further adds that “*the minors were not supposed to interact with the master’s children and were lashed, bartered and denied food as way of disciplining them just like any other slave in the Victorian times*”.

With the end of global colonization in sixties, and the attainment of republic sovereignties many positive reviews were done on adoption laws. The interest of the child was given the utmost priority over all other interests. In 1989, The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children (UNRC) as an international legal instrument on the care and protection of children was adopted. It gave emphasize on safe guarding the rights of children in alternative forms of care including adoption. Article 3.1 of the UNCRC categorically states that “*In all action concerning children , whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities, care givers, legislative bodies- the best interest of the child shall be a*

*primary consideration*". Owing to our continental uniqueness and challenges, the African states developed their own regional child protection instrument- The African Charter for Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC)-it was adopted by the Organization of African Unity (now African Union) in 1990. The charter recognizes the central role played by parents as the primary socialization agent in the society. It also lay much emphasize on the recognition of the family and states that efforts should be made to ensure that all children grow up in a family set-up.

At the national level, we have the Children Act of 2001. It is one of the local policies that safeguard the interest of minors in the country. It provides guidelines on adoption, its process both in social and legal aspects, the legal role of the adoptive parents among other guidelines. The Act affirms that children should grow in families where there are parents and that at all times efforts should be made to place children in families. This makes them develop emotional bond with adoptive parents and newly found siblings. Through adoption, prospective adoptive parents assume all the parental responsibility that biological parent bears. Once the adoption orders are granted by the High Court, then an adoptive parent is legally recognized by law as the legal parent and the orders can never be reversed or revoked. Through this the child joins the family and enjoys same rights just as any other biological child.

## **2.2 Socialization of Under-age Children**

According to Odetola&Adel (1987) socialization is regarded as a way by which culture is transmitted and individuals are fitted into the society's organized way of life. It can be argued that human personality is developed through socialization. It has been argued that a drive impels activity but does not determine it a great deal and too, in all circumstances. This drive makes

children to be trainable with an expected social target in adopting a certain character or behavior. Man has longer childhood dependence on their parents than any other primate. A child will take between one to two years to learn how to walk, thus the need for close dependence on the parents for virtually everything. It is this close interaction with parents and siblings that create first socialization of the child in the world. Through mundane activities of everyday life like eating, walking and response to nature calls, minors are able to mimic these processes and knowingly or unknowingly end up mastering them. Therefore, it can be argued that infants will end up picking some mannerisms knowingly (through observation) or as a way of responding to inward drives.

Socialization inculcates basic discipline in children by restraining a child from immediate gratification. A child who is toilet trained, will delay relieving itself until the proper time and environment is created. Socialization instills aspirations, it teaches social roles, it teaches skills and conformity to norms. The way of embracing said roles, norms and aspirations is not a sprint event, rather it is a gradual process that begins in early life and through interaction with caregivers and immediate environment. This immediate surrounding plays a vital role in socialization process. It is within this proximate surrounding that basic personality, attitudes, values and moral ideas are laid down. It is upon this foundation that adult socialization is built.

Konyango-Male and Anyango (1984) demonstrates that socialization in the African set-up, would involve a large number of agents. Traditionally a child was socialized by the whole community, in the sense that he could be corrected by any adult if it misbehaved. Adults also had full authority to tell any child to perform simple duties, although parents knew to what extent to discipline the children, this authority was not abused.

In modern times role of parents as agents of socialization has been altered tremendously because of their absence from home during the day. Grandparent role in socialization has been severed too, due to the physical distance between town and village. Peer role models in modern times have been altered as well. Peer in modern times are less supportive of the values of the parents and the larger cultural group. The socialization process therefore squarely lies on shoulders of parents as first and primary source of socialization. It is however not lost on us that there are other agents of socialization which play a role in socializing the young ones into ways of a society. With modernity and advancement in technology, mass media is slowly taking lead as one of the effective way of socializing young generation. Television sets have become common in every household, and so are radio transmitters. From early age we are exposing children to these forms of media. Not to mention that internet that has bombarded our towns and estates at high speeds. The browse net has made the entire globe become a village with the use of Instagram, Palmchat, Whatsup and Vibernot to mention Facebook, Twitter among other social net platforms. Places of worship like churches and mosques contribute in instilling values and mores to the young generation. Young Christian children attend Sunday schools on Sundays where they are taught on virtues of love, joy, honesty, helping the needy among others. Muslim children attend Madras classes where discipline of chastity, compassion, and respect to the most high among others are instilled upon them.

Bandura (1959) observes that early life experience that children are exposed to as they master the world around them, plays a pivotal role in molding personality. Cobb (2011) couldn't agree more with Bandura (1959) when she said "*the childhood repeated actions that children see from the people around them, are part of the building blocks that define their future personality*"

### **2.3 Role of the Parent in Child Socialization**

Leslie and Korman.(1985) term a parent as a person who assumes care-giving responsibilities towards an offspring. This can be achieved biologically through giving birth to offsprings or through assuming parenting roles to children through adoption. Therefore, parenting is a standard rearing strategy that involves nurturing and caring for young ones by providing, protecting and being there for them physically and emotionally up to majority age or when one attains self-independency. Darling andAteinberg (1993) define parenting as the commitment by parents to socialize their children to adulthood. Parenting can be done jointly where either both parents are available or it can be single parenting because of death, divorce, separation or personal choice.

Overtime children have been brought up by parents who opt to use a parenting style that was mostly used to them by their parents. They tend to exercise what they saw parents do to them when they were young.(Baumrind, 1966). Different scholars emphasize on the role of the parent in bringing up children. Locke (1693) sees children to be born as blank slates, hence the parents role in early years is to empower child in learning the most physical and basics of life; like coordination of the psycho-motor skills to push a hand away from fire. Locke says that it is the role of a parent and the environment to fill those blanks in the child's life, hence what it learns is what it will be. Rousseau (1762) see parental role in the early years as more of creating physical controls-for example from injury- and thus should let the child freely interact with the immediate environment. He says that parents should go slow in nurturing their children in what he calls as "slow parenting". In his theory of cognitive development, Piaget, J likens the role of a parent to a child to that of a rower and a boat. He says it is the action or omission of the act that defines the type of personality the child is going to adopt in later life. Piaget's theory postulates that this

parenting role shapes infants life at early age mostly at the pre-operational and concrete operational stages of development.

By parents opting to adopt children in their families, evidently, it becomes the role of the parent to model the child according to the expectations of the family. Baumrind (1966) advances that parents in efforts to discipline children they either become authoritarian, authoritative or permissive. On the other hand, Maccoby and Martin (1983) see parenting to be in four ways- Indulgent, Permissive, authoritarian and authoritative. In authoritative parenting, the parent tends to place control and limits to the children actions but at the same time promoting independency. In most cases these parents nurture their children to high self-esteem and self-reliance. Authoritarian parents are more strict to children and expect conformity and compliance at all times. They are always cold to children and do not expect them to question any command. Battering and rough treatment is used by these parents as a way disciplining children. Minors who are brought up in such families tend to develop anti-social behaviors later in life.

According to Maccoby and Martins (1983) indulgent parents are very lenient to their children, they do not give direction to be followed but they provide to them anything that they demand. Parents who raise their children in such a way, might lead the minors to early heavy drinking and abuse of drugs. The extreme style of parenting is the neglectful style. In this case, parents detach themselves from children completely; they never bother about them neither do they provide for them. In societies with functioning child welfare services, these parents end up being taken to court for child neglect.

## **2.4 The Family**

The family is associated with the ideal institution consisting of a husband, wife and their children. Merton (1997) sees family as relatively permanent group of people related by ancestry, marriage or adoption. This group lives together and forms an economic unit in which the adult members assume responsibility for the young. The nuclear family which is the focus of this study is sometimes referred to as conjugal family and consists of the husband, wife and their immediate children (Leslie, 1973). Harlambos (1985) asserts that a nuclear family is the universal human social grouping. It exists as a distinct and strongly functional group and is the basic unit from which more complex forms are compounded.

Murdoch, who analyzed the family institution of 250 human societies, defines the family as a social group characterized by common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction. It includes adults of both sexes, at least two who maintain a socially approved sexual relationship, and one or more children owned or adopted by sexually cohabiting adults. The family unit serves several functions in society. One of which is to ensure continuity of life. Besides, man being a social being, the family fulfills mans social needs necessary for maintaining the entire social order and ensuring survival of the individual. The functions of the family in this perspective are seen as regulation of sexual behavior, replacement of members, reproduction and to provide for socialization, care and protection. (Blackwell, 1956).

According to Ghail and Chris (2007) contemporary commentators on gender relations have suggested that the family is undergoing significant changes with a wide range of family formations now a common place. These include non-married, cohabiting partners, the increase of non-blood related children and the visibility of gay/lesbian partnerships, all emerging alongside the traditional extended family and the modern nuclear family. The family being the most



nucleic and more cohesive unit of the larger society, it is therefore expected to be the best natural nest for children to grow under. It's the role of the adults in a family to provide both emotional and material provision to children. It is their duty to ensure that children grow in conformation to societal expectations. On the other hand children, being heirs of culture and transient carriers of the same, they are expected to heed to the set standards and achieve even more for as long as it is within the societal limitation. It is this interaction within the family that creates an opportunity for virtue formation. The parents discipline the children when they go against the rules. The parents reward good behavior. Through this punishment and reward system then the family becomes the key and most basic unit of personality development.

Mbiti (1969) gives emphasis on the role that parents and the larger community play in modeling the Kenyan child. He says that, much as we embrace modernity in all its form, we should not neglect the fact that we belong to a culture and it's the duty of us Kenyans to grow our future Kenyan generation by promoting these divergent positive cultures.

## **2.5 Theoretical Framework**

Theories help to explain a social phenomenon by showing distinct relationship between two or more concepts. In one of the theories critically discussed in this study is Bowlby's Attachment Theory that explains relationship between minors and their immediate minders. It explains role of each party and influence it creates on future social relationships and interaction. The second theory is Social learning Theory. This theory gives a conceptual understanding of how external reinforcements from parents and peers give children the opportunity to develop new skills and acquire new social information. The theories used in this study are discussed below.

### **2.5.1 Attachment Theory**

This is one of the theories that seeks to explain interpersonal relationships with greater emphasis on infant's social development vis-à-vis the role of the immediate parents/caregivers (Waters et al, 2005). The theory seeks to explain how infants develop close attachment with caregivers, siblings and parents who play a critical role in ensuring their survival through feeding, language learning and protection from predators and hazardous climate.

Bowlby (1969) being one of the key proponents of the theory, advances that at the early stages of an infant, they tend to identify with a primary care giver who provides both a physical and psychological haven for the child. At this point the infant is young and in dire need of emotional security. He further argues that at infancy the role of attachment does not go to any specific person but it is guided by those who are available. The child will develop trust to those who feed, cuddle and respond to its reflex demands. These responses could come from the house help, the father, grandmother, matron, home manager and not necessarily the biological mother. It is these close relationships that will prepare the shooting base to nurture relationships in later life.

A developmental psychologist, Mary Ainsworth concurs with Bowlby that the early care giving environment shapes on how the individual interacts and maintains future relationships. Proponents of Attachment Theory (though they profoundly question the practicability of Psychoanalysis in understanding relations in early life) do note that at some point organisms possess instinctive characteristics that range from primitive reflex to fixed complex responses. It is these instinctive responses that allows for survival, evolutionary and genetic replication of the organisms (Miller, Galanter&Pribram, 1960) from early life.

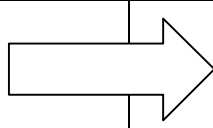
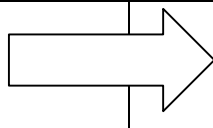
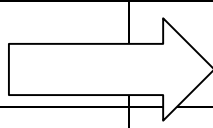
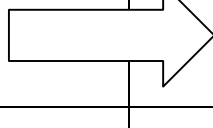
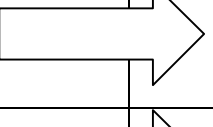
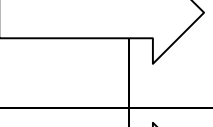
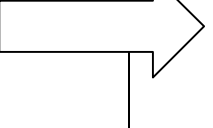
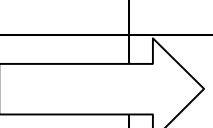
The theory lays much emphasis on the life's infancy years, teenage period and early adult life. It checks on how personality is acquired vis-à-vis parental participation at each phase. It is during the early experiences with parents that continually give rise to a developed system of thoughts beliefs, memories and behaviors about the individual and others in the society. Bowlby refers to this as "the internal working model of social relationship". He says that it continues to expand with time and through experience. He further states that- it is during this time that parents should capitalize in order to replace the innate reflex actions with socially and self-dependent behaviors. For example- training children to pick learned behavior like going to toilet, waiting for your turn to serve at the dining table, among others. He emphasized this by saying "*the infant and the young should experience a warm, intimate and continuous relationship with his parent ( or permanent mother substitute) in which both find satisfaction and enjoyment*"

Harry Harlow and Pinker (2002) both argue that it is this infant training that builds the capacity in children to handle new types of social relationships in future lives. Additionally, the scholars concur that such experiences will permit them to cope with friends, choose spouses and raise families in their adult life with different emotional indulgence and feelings. In explaining how children develop parental bond in early years, Ainsworth (1978) developed three categories that explain the parental relationships and their outcome in each of the categories. The first category she identified it as Secured Attachment. In this, the relationship between the parent and the child is free. The child has great opportunity to explore under close watch of the parent. In the second category (Ambivalent Attachment) the child is very wary of strangers and does very little to explore. Anxious-Avoidant Insecure Attachment is the third one. Here the child displays no emotion whether the parent or care giver is present or not. Later Main and Hesse (1987) added the fourth open- ended category and called it the Disorganized Attachment. This category

describes the child as disturbed, jerky and unsettled. Ainsworth (1978) advises that parents and caregivers should be able to promote close parental care through the power of touch and close attention. This makes children to develop trust, build esteem and self-confidence in preparation of other life stages.

As the children grows into early teenage, they tend to shed off some attachment related behaviors that they held for survival during infancy. At this point their cognitive growth, age and continued social experiences are advanced. Their inner guide which Bowlby called “internal working model” is now able to act in an independent and pragmatic manner. At this point they request for longer separation hours with their parents, they reason with them and each party is willing to compromise to reach to an amicable decision. However, Schelk (1987) warns that this new found freedom should not be exaggerated since peers replace the parents as key agents of socialization.

**A Table Showing Close Correspondence between Ainsworth Infant Attachment and Main & Hesse Early Adulthood Attachment Categories**

<b>Infancy</b>	Secured Attachment		Freedom & Exploration
<b>Adulthood</b>	Secure		Positive & Independent
<b>Infancy</b>	Ambivalent		Shy & Timid
<b>Adulthood</b>	Anxious-Preoccupied		Positive & Dependent
<b>Infancy</b>	Anxious-Avoidant		No Emotional Display
<b>Adulthood</b>	Dismissive Avoidant		Feel rejected
<b>Infancy</b>	Disorganized		Jerky & Disturbed
<b>Adulthood</b>	Fearful Avoidant		Feel Unworthy

Source: Ainsworth MDS, Hesse M, Waters E, Wall S. *Patterns of Attachment*. NJ: Hillsdale

Figure 2.1

This infant- adult analysis in the theory confirms that early childhood social relationships play a significant role in modeling of human behavior.

The theory helps to understand more on the developmental impact created by care givers to children as they grow in early years. It also makes efforts in explaining developmental milestones that are gained or unconsciously ignored particularly in children who grow under special circumstances like in foster homes, war camps, refugee camps or almshouses. However, proponents of Attachment Theory to some extent tend to relatively disregard the role of biological and inborn characteristics which Bowlby loosely terms as internal fantasies to what Freudian scholars claim to form critical part in behavior modeling.

### **2.5.2 Social Learning Theory**

This theory holds a firm belief that learning being a cognitive process it can occur through observation, direct reinforcement and through witnessing of rewards and punishment in what is referred to as vicarious reinforcement. Previous theories that explain acquisition of behavior like the psychoanalytic explanation and operant conditioning laid great emphasize on intrinsic drives that tend to respond to internal drives and give little emphasis to interpersonal and social interactions. Chomsky (1959), in review of B.F. Skinner's book ,Verbal Behavior, states that "pure stimuli response theories of behavior cannot account for the process of character and language acquisition" additionally, Bandura concurs with Chomsky by saying "the weakness of learning approaches that discount the influence of social variables are nowhere those clearly revealed than in their treatment of the acquisition of novel responses". In his Bobo Doll experiment Bandura (1961) argued that children tend to imitate action and behavior that they are

exposed to. Children who grow up in families where parents use abusive and vulgar language, consequently the children will also imitate and adopt such mannerisms. In families where the parents are loving, caring and show emotional bond, the children will as well imitate that bond and show it even to the dolls that they play with.

In understanding of how behavior is acquired, Bandura and Walters (1963) says that the process is guided by certain principles: - (i) The behavior can occur by observing similar behavior and the outcome of such behavior. This is termed as the vicarious reinforcement. It happens in family where younger children observe the elder siblings being reprimanded for their wrong doing. (ii) Observing and getting information from what you have observed. From this, then you cognitively make a decision basing on what you deem best. By observing parents attend main service every Sunday, the child will end up to pick that as an acceptable behavior even with no one commanding him to do so. (iii) That learners are not passive and can as well influence the environment (Reciprocal determinism). The trio (learner, behavior and the environment) do influence each other in strengthening character.

Social Learning Theory in what it refers to as modeling postulates that there are three stimuli that influence on how discipline can be acquired particularly in young children. Bandura talks of the live model- where the parents do the actual demonstration of what it is supposed to be done. In the second stimuli in which he refers to as verbal instruction, he says this is the most common used as a way of modeling behavior. In this case the parents describe and explain the desired behavior by giving instructions on how to behave or engage in the said behavior. He notes that the parent might not act as he wants the child to follow but would insist on conformity of the instructions. In symbolic modeling, Bandura says the parents involve third parties especially the use of media in instilling discipline. These would involve the use of good mannered children

movies, television programs and children books as a way of mentoring and maintaining good behavior. The content might be real stories like documentaries of prize award fetes in school or good mannered fictional characters. However, Donald (1973) warns that symbolic modeling is very delicate and owing to its fluid nature, it might expose the learner to other unrestricted stimuli.

The theory is practical in explaining roles parent play in modeling behavior of their children who are placed under their care. The earlier the parents begin training and modeling their children's behavior, the higher the chances the child will conform to the expectations. The child is more likely to imitate the people it perceives as similar to itself (Donald, 1973). Subsequently, with cognitive growth it will try to ape those it perceives to be of the same gender and with shared similarities. Since the child does not grow in a vacuum, the people around will definitely respond to the behavior the child exhibits through either reinforcement or punishment. When the consequences of the behavior are rewarding, it will continue to repeat. When the consequences are punished, it is highly likely the child will stop the behavior. When a parent notices his younger child pull the garbage bin to the truck and tells him he has done great, this will be a verbal reward to the boy and it is highly likely that he will repeat it again and again. Through this, the boy's behavior has been strengthened (reinforced). Such reinforcement can be external or internal. If it comes from other parties say siblings, peers or parents it is an external reinforcement. If the boy's feels appreciated and smiles after doing something good, then this generates internal reinforcement to him.

Social learning theory helps in understanding the contemporary society. It helps to explain how children who grow in passive families end up picking care-free attitudes. On the other hand it gives an understanding on the importance of care givers/parents being the right models to their



children. Children possess cognitive powers to interpret situations; hence, parents should not just take them as mere young ones. On how parents respond to their (children) action through punishment or reinforcement, it will determine if the behavior will be dropped or it will continue to persist into adulthood.

## **2.6 Conceptual Framework of the Study**

A conceptual framework is a set of broad ideas and principles taken from relevant fields of enquiry and used literature in a subsequent presentation (Reichel and Rame, 1987). The figure below explains the major variables that form the basis of this study. The Framework outlines the relationships in methods and categories that adoptive parents use to inculcate discipline to their adopted children in the family. They include the modeling approach whereby the parents live as models they want the children to be like, lets say being honest, caring and God fearing. Another method is the use of counseling to correct children and the use of corporal means like caning and spanking to instill discipline. The frame work goes further to show some of the expected outcomes on the use of those methods. The outcomes have been put into two categories, showing possible negative and positive outcomes. Figure 2.1 shows the conceptual model of the study.

## Conceptual Model

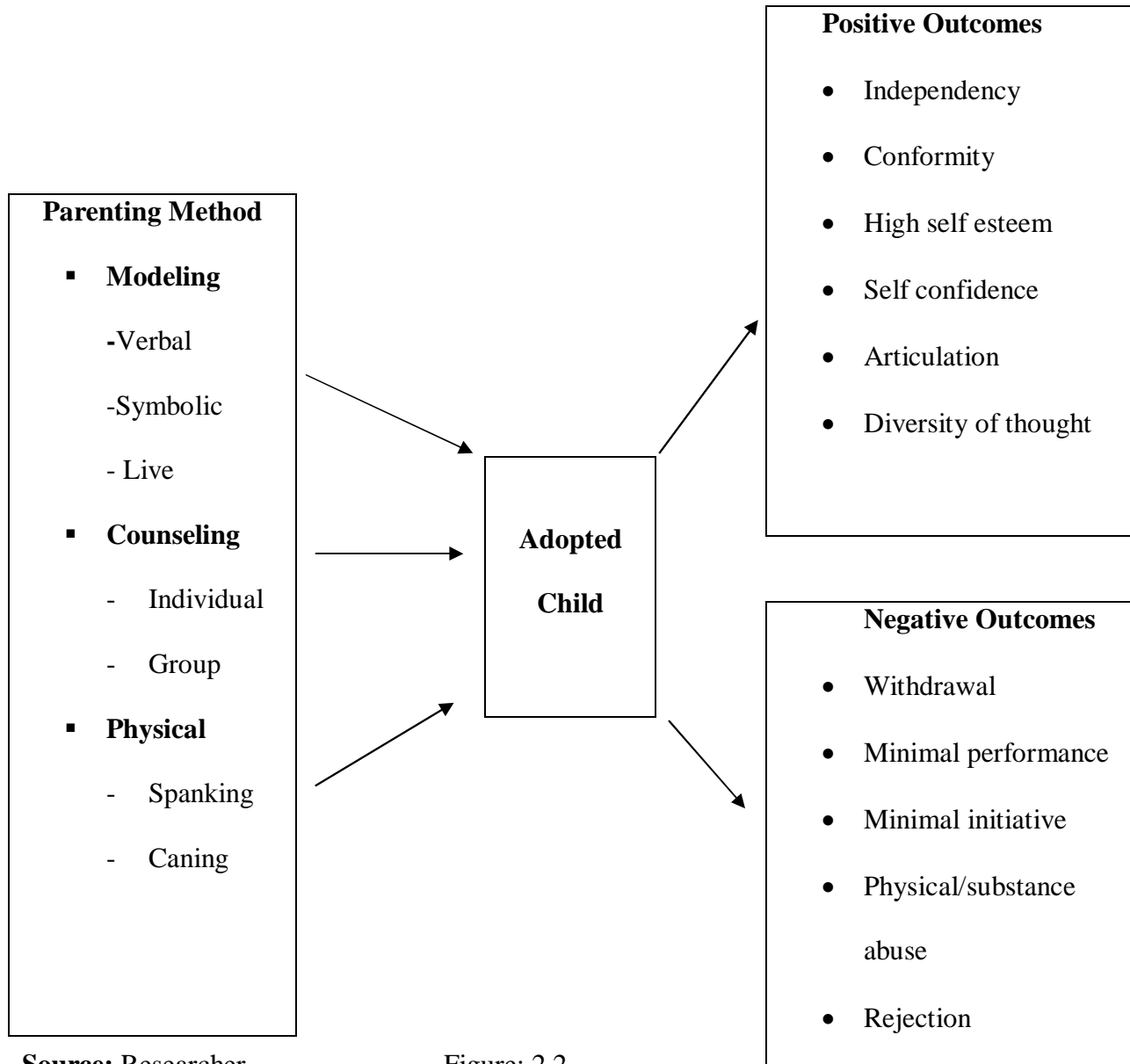


Figure: 2.2

## CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.0 Introduction

Owing to limited research on the area under study, this study aimed at generating comprehensive information on parental disciplining of adopted children within the nuclear family. The study used both quantitative and qualitative approaches in order to capture the magnitude and extent of some key themes under study.

As advanced by Kilbride&Kilbride(1990) in Swadener, Kabiru and Njenga (2000) qualitative research is based on the understanding that persons are shaped by the meaning that they ascribe to their experiences, by their positions in social structures, culture and their inter personal relationships. The use of qualitative approach gave insight on the various approaches that parents use to socialize their adopted children to meet societal and family expectations in terms of discipline. Information in this research was gathered through in-depth interviewing, narratives and observation in parents/child/ren relationship. The key areas covered in this chapter include the following:-

- Site description and Description
- Unit of analysis
- Unit of observation
- Target population
- Sampling design
- Data sources, methods and tool of data collection
- Ethical considerations
- Data analysis
- Anticipated challenges/ problems

### **3.1 Site Selection and Description**

This study was conducted in Nairobi County. Nairobi City is one of the biggest and culturally diverse cities in the country. It became a fully-fledged county after the promulgation of the revised constitution in 2010. According to the 2009 national census, the city has a population of 3.138 million people and its administrative area covers 269 square miles.

The reason why the researcher opted to conduct the study in the capital city was because; it is the leading county in the processing of adoption matters at the high courts. Records at the National Adoption office at the Children's department (January 2014) revealed that Nairobi had the highest number of adopted children in the country, subsequently; it indicated that it has the highest number of adoptive families. Data at the country's national Adoption Agency (Child Welfare Society of Kenya) indicated that a total of 172 prospective adoptive parents had applied to be placed with child/children in the year 2013. In addition, all the other licensed private adoption agencies in Kenya are based in Nairobi. These include Little Children Network, Thomas Barnados Home, Kenya Christian Homes (KCH), Kenyans to Kenyans Peace Initiative (KKPI). Of significance to note is that all adoption matters are handled at the High Court and Nairobi has a fully-fledged family division at Milimani High Court that solely handles adoption and family matters alone.

As the site for this research study, the county has been selected because of its diverse social, cultural and economic position. A majority of the people opting to adopt children mostly fall in the middle and upper class. Nairobi is one of the leading counties that have the highest number of people falling in the upper and middle class compared to other counties. It is still one of the cosmopolitan cities that have brought together people with diverse cultural social and religious background. This gave this study an opportunity to engage respondents with diverse experience

and backgrounds. During the research period, some of the areas visited included adoptive families in the living estates, National Adoption Agency (Child Welfare society of Kenya) and the National Adoption Committee offices within the children's department.

### **3.2 Unit of Analysis**

Unit of analysis is the major focus that is being analyzed in a study. It involves the what and who that is being studied. Singleton et al (1988) defines a unit of analysis as the entire entity under study. It would include people, social roles, positions, groups, relationships and social organizations. The unit of analysis in this study was the methods adoptive parents use to discipline adopted children in the nuclear family context. By analyzing the relevance and appropriateness of the diverse approaches used as disciplining measures, the study attempted to reveal the effectiveness of such methods in behavior and personality development.

### **3.3 Target Population**

According to Mugenda & Mugenda (1999) a target population is that population which the researcher wants to generalize the results. In this case, the study targeted adoptive families. In particular this study targeted adoptive parents. It studied on how they discipline their children. Adopted children and adoption officers were also interviewed.

### **3.4 Unit of Observation**

The key unit of observation in this study was adopted children and their legal parents. Focus was on observable mannerisms on how they interact, mutual easiness amongst them and any other observable information that could be generated optically.

### **3.5 Sampling Design**

It would have been difficult to study an entire population as this would have been exhausting, costly and time consuming; hence, a sampling design had to be prepared to obtain a representative of the target population. According to Singleton et al (1988) a sampling design refers “to that part of the research plan that indicates how cases are to be selected for observation”. This study employed use of non-probability sampling to identify its respondents. Non-probability relies on the available subjects and does not give all individuals in the population equal chances. It include all other case selection rather than random selection. Singleton (1988), notes that this method of sampling is more practical and appropriate more so, when handling case selection of specific samples in qualitative study.

This study used purposive sampling to identify respondents. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (1990), this technique allows a researcher to use cases that have requisite information in respect to the objectives of his study. In this research the key themes gave the researcher an option to be able to select the respondents whom he deemed to have the necessary information in line with the study parameters. The researcher in this study purposively identified the adoptive parents, adoption offices and the Children officers within the study site. The researcher visited Child Welfare Society of Kenya, Nairobi’s adoption register, from where he purposively selected respondents. Subsequently, the children placed with the adoptive parents formed part of the samples. Purposively the parents were picked from the registry because they had finalized the legal adoption process, had been granted adoption orders by the high court and they reside in Nairobi. Another key reason of this close identification was the fact that they had disclosed to their children that they adopted them and had consented to the adoption.

### Summary of the Samples

<b>RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>TARGET</b>
(i) Key Respondents (Adoptive Parents)	42
(ii) Adopted children	9
(iii) Adoption Officers (Adoption Agency )	8
(iv) Children Officers ( Children's Dpt)	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>62</u></b>

The study targeted a total of sixty two respondents. It is imperative to note that the study population was small due to the fact that child adoption is still done in a private manner and many adoptive parents do not reveal the facts. Secondly, adoption is highly regulated and follows a strict legal procedure and not all applicants finalize the process at the high court. Thirdly, most of the parents have not disclosed to their children that they got them through adoption. And lastly this research involves children hence not all children are psychologically prepared to share some discipline issues.

### 3.6 Data Sources, Collection, Methods and Tools of Collection

To ensure validity and reliability of data collected the research used multiple sources of information. That is primary and secondary sources of data. The use of both in this qualitative study helped in corroboration and triangulation of key themes in better understanding of the qualitative data (Swadener, Kabiru&Njenga, 2000).

### **3.6.1 Methods of Data collection**

The study engaged a variety of distinctive methods of collecting data at the field level. These were: - In-depth interviews, Key Informant Interviews, observation & review of existing data

#### **3.6.1.1 Key informant Interview**

Any person who has special knowledge/ information on the research under study qualifies to be called a key informant. They are mostly identified by the relation they have, the knowledge or responsibility that is put on their shoulders. Like the responsibility placed on children officers by authority to ensure that children placed in adoptive families are taken care of adequately. Through interaction with key informants one is able to get in depth information. Chadwick, Bahr and Albrecht (1984) explain that such interaction encourages the respondent to think more deeply about an issue and even explain further. Apart from the set prepared questions (interview schedule) the researcher probed more through spontaneous questions hence generating rich data. With no clear cut time lines, the key informants were given ample time to discuss the issues satisfactorily.

#### **3.6.1.2 Personal Interviews**

This method was used to source data from the respondents- in addition, the researcher used a set of well-prepared questions (interview schedule) at a close face to face conduct, making it easier for the respondents to understand the kind of information required. At the same time the researcher was able to observe the emotion and tone to which the questions were answered. This allowed room for clarification where emotions contradicted with words.

#### **3.6.1.3 Observation**

Observation was done informally. At the family level the researcher observed how the adopted child interacted with parents, siblings and other people in the family like the house help. Any



physical altercations on the body perhaps because of battering, spanking or scolding was also observed. Child's behavior like withdrawal, restlessness, hyperness was observed. This helped the researcher to generate more information on the child-parent relationship.

#### **3.6.1.4 Review of Secondary Data**

Secondary data was used to supplement primary data. Data maintained at the adoption chambers at the high court, adoption agencies and children department was used. In addition, secondary data for review was sourced from web materials, published/unpublished reports and other relevant journals.

#### **3.6.2 Research Tools**

Different respondents were subjected to different research tools depending on information needed, responsibility bestowed upon them and as well as their age. The tools used were:-

##### **3.6.2.1 Key Informant Guide**

This guide pinpointed issues related to the objectives of the study. The issues were discussed with adoption officers and children officers because they possess critical information to this study. It included the use of open ended questions as this gave respondents an opportunity to share as much information as possible.

##### **3.6.2.2 Observation Checklist**

The checklist was used to check on the relationship, physical marks, attitudes, feelings and relationship particularly between the child and adoptive parent. The duly- prepared observation checklist helped to tick the presence or absence of what was under observation. In case of any additional information a space for comments and clarification was provided.

### **3.6.2.3 1 Structured Interview Guide**

This tool was used to generate information from Key Respondents. It gave them a standard opportunity to respond to both close and open ended questions. The researcher collected the data through reading of questions in a structured manner. Through this the researcher was able to generate data in a more reliable manner

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

This research study is very sensitive in nature and might attract emotional reaction at the family level. The researcher was very careful to respect the rights and privacy of all adoptive families, including both the parents and the children. Any information was treated as confidential and will remain as such. Tools used to collect data from the children and other sensitive respondents were adapted to match their age and emotional indulgence. They were also designed in a way that would not initiate /invoke emotional reactions from both the parents and the children.

### **3.8 Data Analysis**

In this study, much of the data generated was descriptive in nature. Therefore the massive raw data from the primary sources was organized and interpreted. This involved coding of data through conceptualizing, compressing and putting it into thematic categories depending on the responses from the various respondents in the field. After this the data was then subjected to comprehensive descriptive and interpretive analysis. The key reason of doing descriptive analysis was to raise the major issues captured in the research data.

## CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the data analysis and interpretation. It covers the findings on adoptive parents, adopted children, key informants (Children officers and Adoption officers) and observations.

### 4.1 Response Rate

This study targeted 80 respondents in total comprising of adoptive Parents (55), adopted children (10), adoption Officers (10), and Children Officers (5). The study managed to achieve a response rate of 77.5% which was considered appropriate for making conclusions. Table 4.1 shows the response rate.

**Table 4. 1: Response Rate**

N= 62

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Key Respondents (Adoptive Parents)	42	68%
Adopted children	9	15%
Adoption Officers (Adoption Agency )	8	13%
Children Officers ( Children's Department)	3	4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 4.2 Demographic Information

#### 4.2.1 Adoptive Parents

The adoptive parents were asked to indicate their age. Majority of the parents were in the age bracket of 51-60 years (40.5%) and 41-50 years (38.1%). Parents in the age bracket of 31-40 years and 61 years and above were 9.5% each. Only 2.4% of parents were in the age bracket of

21-30 years. This shows that most of the adoptive parents opted to adopt in their advanced years.

Table 4.2 shows these results.

**Table 4.2: Distribution of Adoptive Parents by Age**

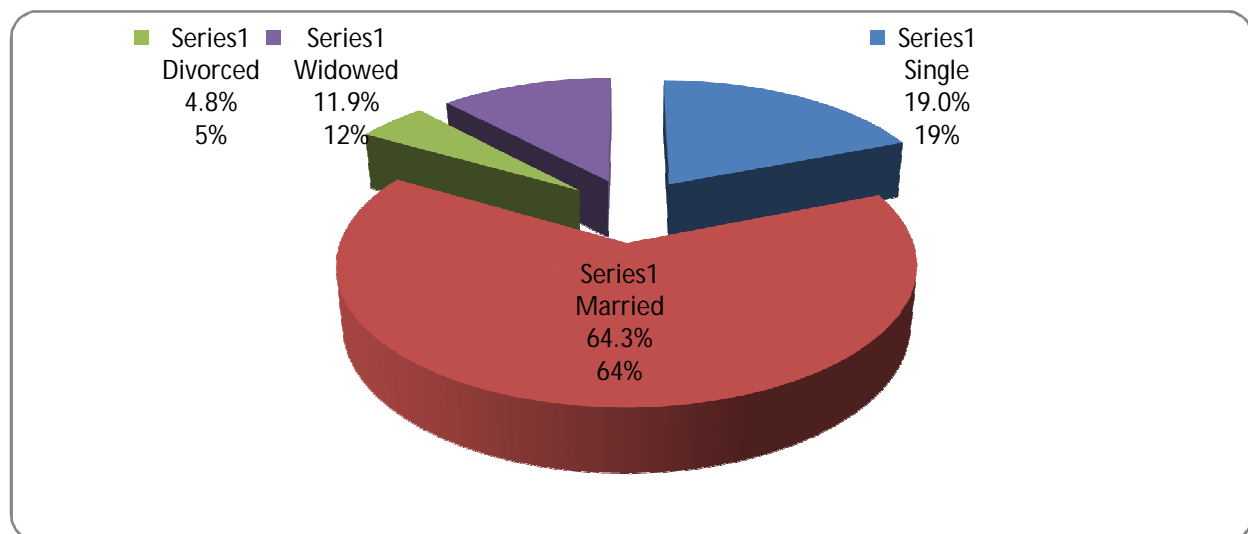
**N=42**

Age	Frequency	Percent
21-30	1	2.4
31-40	4	9.5
41-50	16	38.1
51-60	17	40.5
61 years and above	4	9.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### 4.2.1.1 Marital Status of the Adoptive Parents

The respondents were asked to indicate their marital status. Majority of the respondents were married (64.3%) while 19% were single and 11.9% were widowed. Only 4.8% of parents were divorced. From this, it's evident that most of the adoptive parents live in families where there is father, mother and children. Figure 4.1 shows these findings.

**Figure 4.1: Distribution of Adoptive Parents by Marital Status**



#### 4.2.1.2 Level of Education of the Adoptive Parents

The researcher wanted to know the respondents' level of education. Respondents were distributed across four levels of education with most having secondary education (40.5%). Respondents with primary education were 16.7% while those with university and college level of education were 28.6% and 14.3% respectively. Table 4.3 presents these findings.

**Table 4.3: Distribution of Adoptive Parents by Level of Education**

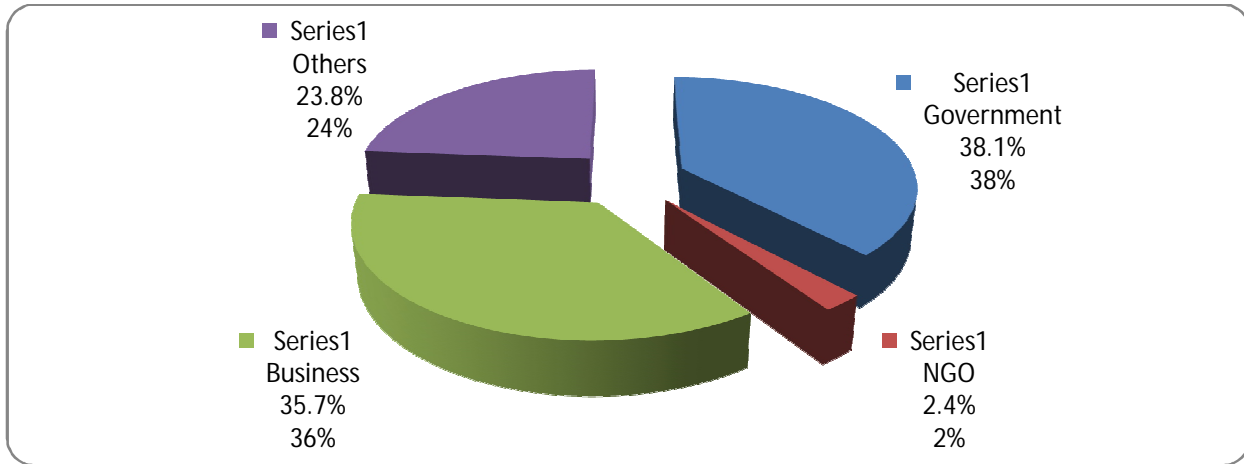
N=42

<b>Level of Education</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Primary education	7	16.7
Secondary education	17	40.5
University education	12	28.6
College education	6	14.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### 4.2.1.3 Employer of the Adoptive Parent

The respondents were asked to indicate their employer. Majority of the respondents were employed by the government (38.1%) and business persons (35.7%). Only 2.4% of the respondents indicated their employer as NGO while 23.8% of the respondents indicated their employer as others. Those who indicated others were house wives, retirees, estate managers and pastors. Figure 4.2 shows these results.

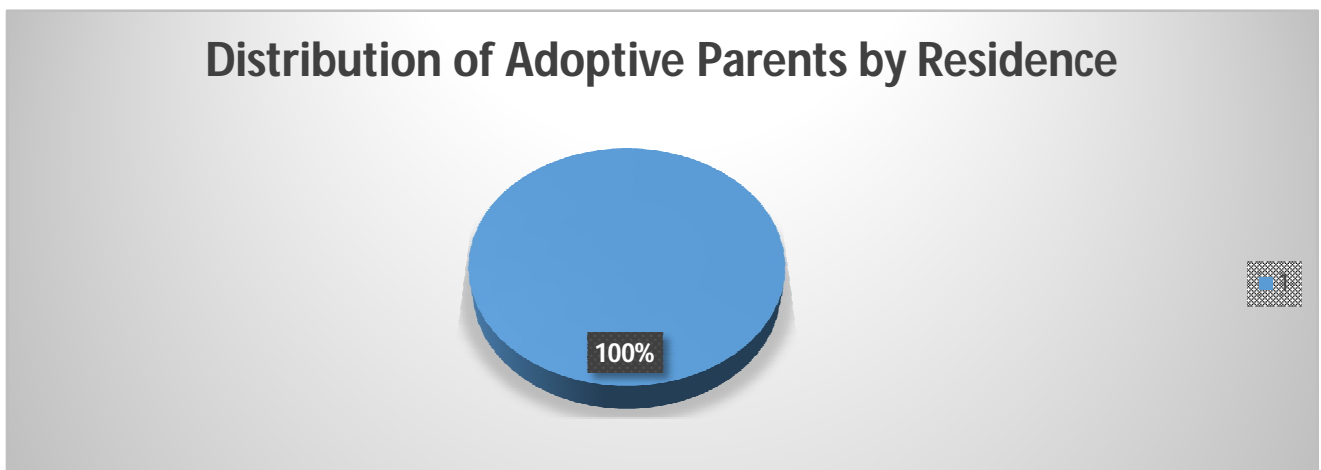
**Figure 4.2: Distribution of Adoptive Parents by Employer**



#### 4.2.1.4. Residence of the Adoptive Parents

The researcher wanted to know the residence of the respondents. All the respondents indicated that they reside in Nairobi (100%).

**Figure 4.3: Distribution of Adoptive Parents by Residence**



#### 4.2.1.5. Adoptive Parents Source of Income

The respondents were asked to indicate their source of income. Majority of the respondents indicated employment (66.7%) while 19% indicated they get their income from business (19%) and 9.5% from the husband. Only 4.8% of the respondents indicated that they got their income from pension. An indication that majority of the respondents are employed.

**Table 4.4: Distribution of Adoptive Parents by Source of Income**

N=42

Source of Income	Frequency	Percent
Employment	28	66.7
Business	8	19.0
Spouse	4	9.5
Pension	2	4.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### 4.2.1.6 Total Number of Adopted Children by the Adoptive Parents

The researcher wanted to know the number of adopted children by the parents. Majority of the respondents had adopted 1 child (76.2%) while 23.8% had adopted 2 children. This is a clear indication that most adoptive parents prefer to adopt a single child.

**Table 4.5: Distribution of Adoptive Parents by Number of Adopted Children**

N=42

Number of Adopted Children	Frequency	Percent
1	32	76.2
2	10	23.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### 4.2.1.7 Age of the Adoptive Parents First Child

A look at the age of adopted first child revealed that majority were in the age bracket of below 10 years (33.3%) and 10-14 years (47.6%). Adopted first child aged 15-19 years were 19%.

**Table 4.6: Age of Adopted First Child**

**N=42**

<b>Age of Adopted First Child</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Below 10 years	14	33.3
'10-14 years'	20	47.6
'15-19 years'	8	19.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Majority of the adopted second child were aged 10-14 years (60%) while those aged 15-19 years and below 10 years were 20% each. None of the respondents had adopted a third child.

#### 4.2.1.8 Age of Adoptive Parents Second Child

The researcher wanted to know the age of second adopted child. Majority (60%) were in the age bracket of 10 to 14 years.

**Table 4.7: Age of Adopted Second Child**

**N=10**

<b>Age of Adopted Second Child</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Below 10 years	2	20.0
'10-14 years'	6	60.0
'15-19 years'	2	20.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100.0</b>



#### 4.2.1.9. Sex of the First Adopted Child

The researcher wanted to know the gender of adopted first child. Majority of adopted first children were female (52.4%) as compared to male (47.6%).

**Table 4.8: Sex of Adopted First Child**

**N=42**

<b>Sex of Adopted First Child</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Male	20	47.6
Female	22	52.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### 4.2.1.10 Sex of the Second Adopted Child

On the gender of adopted second child, children were distributed equally where male were 50% and female were 50%.

**Table 4.9: Sex of Adopted Second Child**

**N=10**

<b>Sex of Adopted Second Child</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Male	5	50.0
Female	5	50.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### 4.2.1.11 Parental Role of the Adoptive Parent

The respondents were asked to indicate their parental role. Majority of the respondents indicated their parental role as mother (69%) as compared to 31% who indicated their parental role as father. This shows most of the respondents were mothers.

**Table 4.10: Parental Role**

N=42

<b>Parental Role</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Father	13	31.0
Mother	29	69.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### 4.2.1.12: Have the Adoptive Parents Legally Adopted the Child

The researcher sought to know whether the respondents had adopted children legally. Majority of the respondents indicated YES as compared to 7.1% of the respondents who indicated NO.

**Table 4.11: Legally Adopted Child**

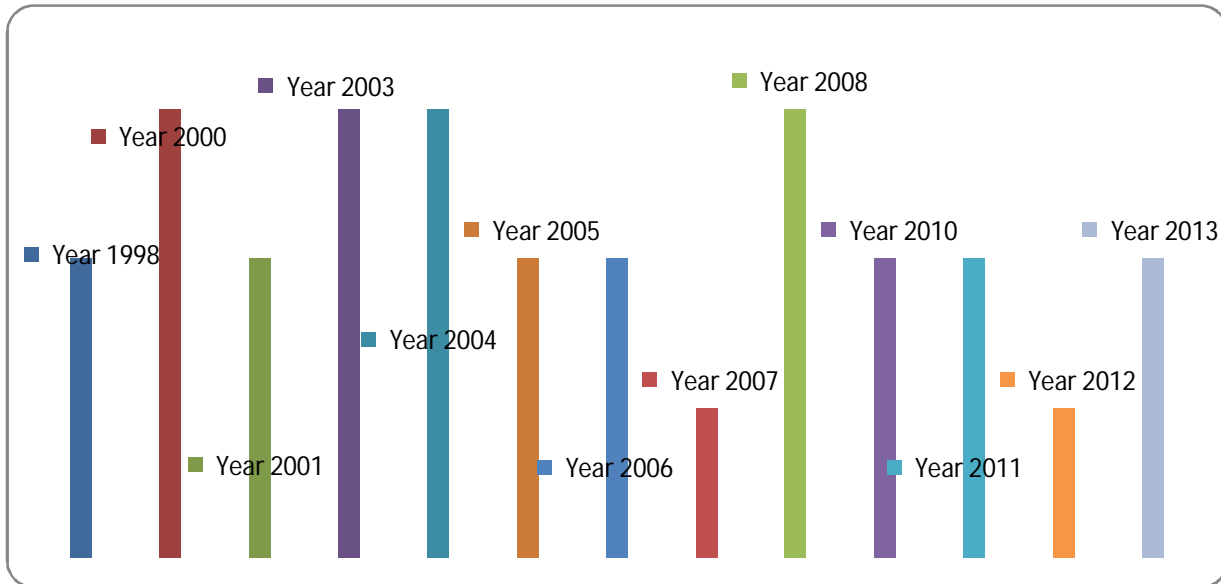
N=42

<b>Legally Adopted Child</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	39	92.9
No	3	7.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### 4.2.1.13: Year When the Orders were Granted

On the years when adoption orders were granted, the results shows that the respondents who participated in this study got their adoption orders in 1998-2013.

**Figure 4.4: Years when Adoption Orders were Granted**



**4.2.1.14: Other Biological Children in the Family**

The researcher wanted to know whether the respondents had other biological children. Majority of the respondents indicated no (71.4%) while 28.6% indicated yes.

**Table 4.12: Have other Biological Children**

N=42

Have other Biological Children	Frequency	Percent
Yes	12	28.6
No	30	71.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Respondents were asked whether their adopted children knew that they are adopted and not biological children of the respondents. Majority of the respondents indicated no (52.4%) as compared to 47.6% of the respondents who indicated yes.

### **4.2.3 Key Informants.**

The key informants interviewed during this study were eight Adoption Officers drawn from the National Adoption Agency (CWSK) and Three Children Officers from the Children's Department. They work directly with Adoptive parents during placement and as well on follow up meetings and seminars

Majority of the Key Informants interviewed were of the male gender (54.5%) whereas the rest 45.5 % were of the female gender

### **4.3 Disciplinary Methods Used to Control Behavior**

This section sought to know the various methods that are used by the adoptive parents to discipline their adopted children.

#### **4.3.1 Methods used to Discipline the Child by Adoptive Parents**

Asked to mention the methods used to discipline the child, the respondents cited a number of methods including caning, spanking, pinching, warning, threats, talking to the child, suspension of some privileges and use isolation corner. The respondents indicated that as the children grow, advising them and showing them the right way to do things becomes critical. In addition, respondents indicated they reprimand or refer children to people they respect like father, mother, aunt, uncle, teacher or their mentors for guidance.

The researcher wanted to know whether the parents have one consistent method they used to discipline their children or it depended with circumstances. Half of the respondents indicated NO (50%) they did not have one consistent method for disciplining their children while 50% indicated YES.

**Table 4.13: Parent has one Consistent Method or Different**

N=42

<b>Parent has one Consistent Method or Different</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	21	50.0
No	21	50.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**4.3.2: Do Adoptive Parents Use One Consistent Method of Disciplining Their Children**

The respondents further explained that the method used depended on the gravity of the discipline issue. In addition, the methods used differ with age of the child and the situation. Some of the respondents indicated that for the children to pick the right values, consistency is important.

Asked to name the different methods that they used, parents cited different methods for different situations. One of the parents said “*at home I pinch the child and at church I plead with the child*”. Another parent indicated that “*at school we talk on performance and at home for being unruly I pinch the child*”.

**4.3.3 Approval of Preferred Discipline Method by Family Members**

The parents were unanimous that people in their family allow them to discipline the children. According to majority of the respondents, people in the family say that the way they discipline their child is appropriate (92.9%). However, 4.8% and 2.4% of the respondents indicated that the people in the family say the way they discipline their child is mild and lenient respectively.

**Table 4.14: Approval of the Discipline Method Used**

**N=42**

<b>Approval of Discipline Method Used</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Mild	2	4.8
Appropriate	39	92.9
Lenient	1	2.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### **4.3.4 Child’s Reaction to the Disciplinary Method used**

The respondents were asked to describe child reaction to discipline option that they opted. The respondents cited a number of reactions with most citing that the children heed to their advice and change positively. Some parents indicated that their children cries after pinching or spanking but conforms and change for the better. As one of the parents said children are “*are ready to heed to what I tell them*”. Another parent indicated that the child is “*ever ready to apologize for any mistakes done*”. One of the parents indicated that the child is “*cautious not to ruin the weekend out or be denied the television*”. Another parent described child reaction as “*respectful and ready to change*”.

#### **4.3.5: Age of the Child Matter on Which Disciplinary Method to Use**

The parents were unanimous that the age of the child matter when disciplining him or her. The respondents were asked to indicate where their children first run to get aid when in difficulties. According to the respondents, the children first run to the adoptive father or mother. Where the adoptive parent was single, divorced or widowed, they indicated that the children first run to them when in difficulties.

#### **4.4: Effectiveness of the Methods Used**

This Section sought to understand how effective the methods used in behavior control managed to deliver the desired behavior change.

##### **4.4.1 Adoptive Parents Reaction after Repeated Warning**

The respondents were asked to indicate which things that their children do which are weird and how they deal with them. Although most parents indicated that their children do nothing weird unlike the usual things that children do, others think their children do weird things. One parent indicated that their child “*avoids bath*” and to deal with that the parent “*makes sure the child bath every day*”. Another parent cited that the child “*comes from the school dirty*” and therefore the parent “always encourages the child to be tidy like a girl”. A parent indicated that their child “keeps on asking why he lived in a place with so many children when he was young (children's home)” and the parent “tells him it was God's plan”. According to another parent, their child refuses to eat and they call the house help to feed him. A parent said their child sag clothes and to deal with that they encourage the child to dress decently. Another parent indicated that the child always want attention and is not independent since the child always want to be with the parent. The parent said they are now training the child on independence. Other parents cited sibling rivalry, poor performance in school, crying when they need something and the child being hyper active. These parents indicated that they give the children equal attention and tell the children not to fight since they are brothers and sisters, buy books and liaise with teachers to improve performance at school and give children some household chores.

The researcher wanted to know the knee-jerk reaction if they found their child in a compromising situation with a neighbor's child. Some parents said they would not know what to

do while others said they would scream and wonder where their child learnt such things from. A parent said they would “*reprimand the child and let the neighbor know what happened*”. Another parent said they would try to find out the genesis of the problem and then advise the child appropriately.

**4.4.2: Referred the Child to a Counselor or Area Chief for Gross Indiscipline**

The respondents were asked whether they ever referred their child to let say chief or counselor due to unbecoming behavior. Majority of the respondents indicated NO (95.2%) as compared to 4.8% who indicated YES that they referred their child to a chief or a counselor due to unbecoming behavior. Some of those who referred their children to a counselor indicated it was for general teenage preparation.

**Table 4.15: Ever Referred a Child to Chief/Counselor**

N=42

<b>Referred a Child to Chief/Counselor</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	2	4.8
No	40	95.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**4.4.3: Best Disciplinary Method Used by Adoptive Parents as a Result of Their Parenting Experience**

The researcher asked respondents to indicate best methods to discipline a child out of their parenting experience. Parents indicated that advice and close monitoring are critical. Some parents indicated that reward of positive behavior while others indicated caning and counseling.



Based on the parents' responses the age of a child determines the method of discipline used. At a very young age parents cited spanking, caning and pinching while at teenage years counseling and guidance becomes important. Other parents mentioned talking to the child and modeling good behavior through guidance and giving direction to the child. The parents were unanimous that if they had biological children they would discipline them the same way.

#### **4.4.5: Similar Challenges Faced When Disciplining Biological Children**

The researcher asked the respondents whether they faced the same challenges disciplining other biological children. Majority of the respondents indicated they had no biological children (73.4%). Respondents who indicated YES were 16.7% as compared to 9.5% who said NO. Parents indicated that at the same age, children exhibit similar discipline issues regardless of whether biological or adopted.

**Table 4.16: Face Same Challenges Disciplining other Biological Children**

**N=42**

<b>Face Same Challenges Disciplining other Biological Children</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	7	16.7
No	4	9.5
Have no biological children	31	73.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### **4.5: Alternative Disciplinary Options.**

This Section sought to understand the various options that adoptive Parents have as alternatives when molding their children's behavior

#### 4.5.1: What Are Other Alternative Social Agents That Have Positively Contributed in Molding Adopted Child’s Behavior

Parents were presented with a number of social agents and asked to indicate which have contributed positively in molding their child’s behavior. Majority of the respondents indicated family, school and church/mosque (57.1%) while 21.4% indicated family contributed positively. Only 4.8% of the respondents cited church or mosque alone while those who cited family and church/mosque (16.7%).

**Table 4.17: Has Contributed Positively in Molding Child's Behavior**

N=42

Social Agent	Frequency	Percent
Family	9	21.4
Church/mosque	2	4.8
All of the above	24	57.1
Family and church/mosque	7	16.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### 4.5.2: Do Adoptive Parents Allow House help to Discipline Their Children

The researcher asked whether respondents allowed house help and siblings to discipline the child when away. Majority of the respondents indicated NO (85.7%) as compared to 14.3% who said YES.

**Table 4.18: Allow House Help and Siblings to Discipline Child When Away**

N=42

<b>Allow House Help to Discipline Child</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	6	14.3
No	36	85.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### **4.5.3: Cultural Values That Influence the Disciplinary Method to Use**

The respondents were asked whether there are cultural values that persuade them to opt to one discipline method over the others. Majority of the respondents indicated no (52.4%) while 47.6% indicated yes.

**Table 4.19: Cultural Values Persuade Option of One Discipline Method over the Other**

N=42

<b>Cultural Values Persuasion</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	20	47.6
No	22	52.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Asked to explain their answer, one respondent indicated that “as an African man, I have a responsibility as a father to be a role model to my boys”. Many parents cited the Bible that “sparing the rod will spoil the child”. Other parents cited traditions dictate that parents should model their children in the right way. One of the parents in explaining the traditions indicated that “*mtotoumleavyondivyoakuavyo*” meaning that children grow based on how they are brought up.

**4.5.4: Should Teachers Use Corporal Punishment in Schools as an Alternative to Behavior Control**

The respondents were asked whether they thought it is a good thing for teachers to use corporal punishment in school. Majority of the respondents indicated YES (71.4%) as compared to 28.6% of the respondents who indicated NO.

**Table 4.20: Think it is a Good Thing for Teachers to Use Corporal Punishment**

**N=42**

<b>Should Teachers Use Corporal Punishment</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	30	71.4
No	12	28.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Those respondents who indicated NO were asked to explain. A number of parents cited that corporal punishment may lead to violent behavior in teenagers while others indicated that it kills self-initiative and self-esteem in students and pupils. Some parents indicated that corporal punishment does not work and it can cause bodily harm on the child but cannot make them change.

**4.5.5: What Do Adoptive Parents Deem as the Best Ways to Discipline a Child within the Nuclear Family**

The respondents were asked to indicate their opinion on the best way to discipline a child within the family. Many of the parents cited advice and reward of positive behavior while others cited talking to the children and praying for God’s intervention. One parent indicated that “as a parent

to talk to them when mature, when young spank a bit”. Spanking, pinching and caning were mentioned by many parents for young children while counseling, talking, giving advice, guidance and direction through role models were cited for teenagers.

#### **4.5.6: Should the Best Way Not Work, What is the Alternative Option**

The researcher asked the respondents what would be the other option if the previous mentioned method did not work. Many parents indicated they would cane the child or refer them to a counselor or the authorities like chief. Some parents indicated that they would send their child to an approved school and others said they would commit their child to prayers.

Asked to share additional comments in regard to the study, some parents indicated that “a child will always grow according to the environment hence parents should give the first instructions on discipline”. Another parent commented that adopted children are unique and require special attention on the way they are disciplined. According to the respondents it is the role of the parents to bring up the child in the right way. The parents indicated that when children grow older, they become independent and then the parental role becomes more of monitoring.

### **4.6 Discipline Methods from Adopted Children’s Perspective**

#### **4.6.1: Methods used by Parents to Discipline the Child**

The respondents were asked to describe how parents reprimand them when they do mistakes. Many of the adopted children indicated that their parents sat them down and talked to them about the issues they were not happy with. They however indicated that when they were young their parents used to pinch them. Some adopted children indicated that their parents warn or advice

them while others indicated that their parents reduce or withdraws their privileges such as pocket money, mobile phone and television.

#### 4.6.2: Gross Mistake That Really Disappointed their Adoptive Parents

The respondents were asked whether they have ever done a gross mistake that really disappointed their parents. Majority of the respondents indicated no (77.8%) while 22.2% of the respondents indicated yes.

**Table 4.21: Did Gross Mistake that really Disappointed Parents**

**N=9**

<b>Did Gross Mistake that really Disappointed Parents</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	2	22.2
No	7	77.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Those respondents who indicated that they have ever done a gross mistake that really disappointed their parents were asked to describe the scenario and parents reaction. One of the respondents described the scenario as follows, *“I drove my mum’s car outside the gate. She reported the matter to dad but I apologized”*. Another respondent indicated that *“I performed poorly in school, my parents got me a tutor for holiday tuition”*.

#### 4.6.3: Methods used by Adoptive Parents To Correct the Children

The respondents were asked to indicate the methods their parents used to correct them. The respondents cited a number of methods including counseling, talks, isolation, referral to mentors, reprimanding and suspension of some privileges. One of the respondents said that “initially in primary school they used to beat me but now they guide me by engaging me in talks”.

#### 4.6.4: Ever Taken To a Counselor

The respondents were asked whether they have ever been taken to a counselor by their parents. Majority of the respondents indicated no (66.7%) as compared to 33.3% who indicated yes.

**Table 4.22: Taken to a Counselor by Parents**

**N=9**

<b>Taken to a Counselor by Parents</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	3	33.3
No	6	66.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100.0</b>

In their explanation, the respondents indicated that the counseling they attended was general counseling especially during school holidays. Some of the respondents cited that “at some point after primary school I was taken to a full week general counseling camp” and another said that “during last school holidays we went for a church organized teenagers camp at Lukenya” while another summarized that “*we attend general teenage camps during school holidays*”.

#### 4.6.5 Do Parents Use Them as Role Models to Other Siblings

The researcher asked respondents whether their parents used them as role model to their younger siblings. The responses were mixed as 33.3% indicated yes as compared to an equal percentage that indicated no. Respondents who indicated that they had no siblings were also 33.3%.

**Table 4.23: Role Model to Younger Siblings**

**N=9**

<b>Role Model to Younger Siblings</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	3	33.3
No	3	33.3
Has no siblings	3	33.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100.0</b>

In their explanation, some of the respondents indicated that not only their parents but other social agents such as schools have used them as role model to other children. One of the respondents asked whether the parents use him as a role model said; “a lot, even at school am the dorms captain”. Other respondents indicated with passion that they love taking care of their siblings as confirmed by a respondent who said “when am home from school am his keeper” in regard to his sibling.

#### 4.6.6: Do They Have Parent-Child Discipline Talks

Asked whether they have child parent discipline talks, majority of the respondents indicated YES (88.9%) while 11.1% said NO.



**Table 4.24: Have Child Parent Discipline Talks**

**N=9**

<b>Have Child Parent Discipline Talks</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	8	88.9
No	1	11.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100.0</b>

In their explanation, the respondents indicated they talk often. One of the respondents said that “as family we sit down with the parents and discuss all issues from school performance to early saving” and another one said they have talks “*when I do something that they do not like*”.

**4.6.7: Are the Adoptive Parents Hard on Them**

The respondents were asked whether they have ever felt their parents were hard on them. Majority of the respondents indicated NO (88.9%) as compared to 11.1% who indicated YES.

**Table 4.25: Felt Parents are Hard on Them**

**N=9**

<b>Felt Parents are Hard on Them</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	1	11.1
No	8	88.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The respondent who indicated that she felt her parents were hard on them explained that it is because they “do not allow me to go for sleep/camp over”. Explaining whether he felt parents

were hard on him, another respondent said “not really, they engage me before making any major decisions”.

Asked which discipline methods they would recommend for parents, many of the respondents cited counseling, talks and consultations on issues. This was confirmed by one of the respondents who said “consultation. It makes one to own the agreed action points” while another respondents indicated “counseling and involving children in any issues concerning them”.

The respondents were asked to indicate whether they felt that their parents treated them well and provided things that their peers at home and at school are not afforded. Majority of the respondents indicated yes (77.8%) as compared to 11.1% who said no and 11.1% who did not respond.

**4.6.8: Do They Receive Good Treatment From Their Parents**

In their explanation, the respondents indicated that their parents treated them well. One of the respondents said that he “is lucky to have such parents” while another one said “they are there for us (me and my sister) and we never lack essentials of life”.

**Table 4.26: Good Treatment from Parents**

**N=9**

<b>Good Treatment from Parents</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	9	100
No	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## **4.7. Key Informants (Adoption and Children Officers on Adoption and Discipline)**

### **4.7.1: Counseling Before Child Placement**

The social workers, child officers and adoption officers were asked to indicate their responsibilities. They cited placement of children, children placement follow up, hook up arrangements, social report compilation, and counseling of adoptive parents. The officers were unanimous that they counsel adoptive parents before adoption.

In their explanation, the officers indicated that they do counseling of adoptive parents “*at least to ensure that they are conversant with good parenting skills*”. One of the officers emphasizing importance of counseling indicated that “it prepares the parents on how to deal with the children especially to the first timers”. Another officer said counseling is important as it “prepares the parents on how to handle the children better” while another one indicated that it “takes them through possible behavior changes as the children grow and the various ways to approach the discipline issues”.

### **4.7.2: Law Permit Adopted Children to Be Withdrawn**

The key informants were asked whether the law permits adopted children to be withdrawn. Majority of the respondents indicated no (90.9%) while 9.1% indicated yes. In the explanation, the respondents indicated that adoption orders once given by the high court cannot be reversed. One of the respondents explained that “*adoption orders are like birth rights, you cannot reverse or revoke them*”.

### **4.7.3: Match Personality Before Placement**

The key informants were asked whether they match personality traits when placing children. Majority of the respondents indicated YES (90.9%) as compared to 9.1% of the respondents who

said NO. Explaining matching personality traits when placing children, the key informants indicated that it is good for ease of bonding. One of the key informants indicated that matching personality traits when placing children “enables the parents to get children that share more or less the same character” and it “ensure ease of bonding and a good fit to the family”.

#### **4.7.4: Organize Group Counseling Seminars for Adopted Children**

On whether the key informants organize individual or group counseling for strictly adopted children, majority of the key informants indicated YES (90.9%) as compared to 9.1% who indicated NO. In their explanation of organizing for individual or group counseling for strictly adopted children, the key informants said that “these forums give them an opportunity to air any issues that they might be facing at home”. A key informant indicated that this provide a forum “to know how they are doing in the adoptive families and incase of any high handedness or abuse to be discussed”. Another key informant said that “when adoptive parents approach us on indiscipline issues of the child, we invite them for counseling”.

Asked to indicate some of the methods used to instill good behavior under care before adoption, key informants cited counseling, behavior modeling, reprimanding, use of silent corners, individual therapies, inviting mentors and exposing the children to positive values.

The key informants were asked to outline the challenges of adoptive parents when disciplining adopted children they have shared with them. Many key informants indicated that some parents “are afraid to go against the law e.g. on caning. They also fear the discipline option they opt to use might affect the child”. The key informants also cited that some adoptive parents have shared with them a challenge involving “children who are hard headed, who forget easily and who fear to be caned physically”. One of the key informant said that some adoptive parents “fear of

disciplining the children and end up running away from the family and there is also fear that other people might say you are too tough on the child”.

#### **4.7.5: What they feel Are the Appropriate Methods of Disciplining Adopted Children**

The key informants were asked to give some of the appropriate methods of disciplining adopted children. Most of the key informants cited counseling and being the role model to the children. Others recommended talking to the children, reprimanding them, use of other social agents like church/mosque and consistency in modeling their behavior.

#### **4.8 Observations on the Relationship between Adoptive Parents and Adopted Children**

The observation checklist revealed that parents engaged the children in discussion, children hugged and happily greeted the parents, they appeared comfortable in the presence of the parents, parents talked politely with the children and children talked freely. In addition, there were no signs of fear on the part of the children when talking with parents and the children did not appear withdrawn. From observations, both the adoptive parents and the children seemed to interact freely with no tension amongst themselves. The adopted children appeared very much at ease with the adoptive parents as they interacted freely. The interaction was free and both the parents and children appeared to be in good relationship.

The children talked while maintaining straight eye contact. They showed respect to people and were being given free opportunity to explain or express themselves. There were no any hunching or pouting when children were expressing themselves. In addition, there was interaction among and between siblings. These observations led to the conclusion that the children appeared to be well behaved as they had respect for the parent, house help as well as visitors. The children were in control of their behavior and knew what is expected of them.

There were no bruises on the children's bodies, scars or wounds. In addition, there was no any form of limping or unusual pain walking style and no any swollen body parts were observed. The children had no visible physical marks and therefore were healthy and not abused.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the study summary, conclusions and recommendations based on the findings.

### **5.1 Summary of the Study**

This study sought to find out how adoptive parents discipline children under their care and the consequences of their actions. It was guided by specific objectives which were: - to find out the various methods that adoptive parents use to discipline their children within the nuclear family; to investigate the effectiveness of the disciplinary methods used by adoptive parents in modeling an adopted child's behavior; to find out the alternative discipline options that adoptive parents have when they are unable to tame their children.

The study interviewed 42 adoptive parents, 9 adopted children, and 11 key informants comprising of adoption officers and children officers. There were also 6 observations of the adopted children interviewed. Through use of interview schedules, the researcher was able to collect data from key informants and respondents. The data collected was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were used to analyze quantitative data. Results of quantitative data analysis were presented in tables and charts. Content analysis was used to analyze qualitative data. Results of qualitative data analysis were presented in descriptive narrative form.

The study established that adoptive parents used various methods to discipline their children within the nuclear family. These methods included caning, spanking, pinching, warning, threats,

talking to the child, suspension of some privileges and use of isolation corner. The methods used differ with age of the child and the situation.

The study revealed that the disciplinary methods used by adoptive parents in modeling an adopted child's behavior were effective. The effectiveness of the methods used was validated by the people in the family who said that the way 92.9% of adoptive parents discipline their child is appropriate. It was also confirmed by the fact that 95.2% of the adoptive parents never referred their child to let say chief or counselor due to unbecoming behavior.

The study found that the alternative discipline options that adoptive parents have when they are unable to tame their children include canning and counseling. Many parents would cane the child or refer them to a counselor or the authorities like chief while others would send their child to an approved school and commit their child to prayers. The study established that adopted children are unique and require special attention on the way they are disciplined. According to the findings it is the role of the parents to bring up the child in the right way and when children grow older, they become independent and the parental role becomes more of monitoring.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

This study concluded that adoptive parents used different methods to discipline their children based on the situation and the age of the child in question. The study also concluded that adoptive parents need counseling to understand the various changes that take place as a child grow in order to be well prepared to model positive behavior and cope with challenges that come with parenting.

Although the methods used by adoptive parents to discipline their children have been effective, they are not the best because some of them like caning might cause physical harm on the adopted



child. In addition, some of these methods might border on battering or abusing the children. In general, some of the methods might be unlawful which could land adoptive parents into problems with the law. Adoptive parents therefore need to evaluate their disciplinary methods used to ensure they are in the best interests of the adopted children.

Alternative methods once the existing ones are exhausted seem to be limited in options. However, there is need for adoptive parents to try different alternative methods to establish which works best for the situation they are in.

### **5.3 Recommendations of the Study**

#### **5.3.1 Recommendations to the Children Department**

- i. This study recommends that the children department should counsel adoptive parents thoroughly before adoption to ensure they are ready for parenting challenges.
- ii. Children department in collaboration with other stakeholders such as NGOs, Adoption Agencies and societies should make a follow up of the adopted children and their adoptive parents to ensure good relationship and offer help where they may need it.

#### **5.3.2 Recommendations to the Adoption Agencies**

- i. This study recommends that adoption agencies, societies and Non-Governmental Organizations should organize seminars and workshops to equip adoptive parents with parenting skills as their children grow from one stage to the next.
- ii. These organizations should also collaborate with the children department to counsel adoptive parents in order to ensure they respond to any misbehavior when under their care.

### **5.3.3 Recommendations to the Adoptive Parents**

- i. The adoptive parents should not carry the burden of bringing up adopted children alone rather they should involve mentors as well as other social agents like church/mosque, school and family members to contribute positively in modeling positive behavior and imparting positive values to adopted children.

### **5.3.4 Recommendations for Further Research**

- i. Further research should be carried out by future scholars to establish the role of different social agents in modeling children behavior within the family set up.
- ii. The research also recommends that future research should also develop a framework for evaluating child behavior for adoptive parents to know when to seek assistance or apply alternative methods of discipline.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Interview Schedule for Adoptive Parents

#### **DISCIPLINING OF ADOPTED CHILDREN IN NUCLEAR FAMILIES: A CASE STUDY OF SOME SELECTED ADOPTIVE FAMILIES WITHIN NAIROBI COUNTY.**

I am Tom Muindi Peter, an MA student at the University of Nairobi, Department of Sociology. I am carrying out the above research study as part of the requirement for the degree. I will be interviewing key informants concerning the various ways used to discipline adopted children within the family. The information I get from you will be confidential and together with that from other key respondents will be used to obtain knowledge on the different approaches used to instill discipline among the adopted children in the families. In addition, the information generated will be used to inform policymakers, care givers, parents and other stakeholders on the best practices to embrace in behavior modeling of adopted children.

#### **Section One**

##### **(Bio data)**

- 1) Name (Optional) -----
- 2) Age .....
- 3) Marital Status      1.Single      2. Married      3. Divorced  
                                 4. Widowed    5.Other
- 4) Level of Education    1. Primary      2. Secondary    3. University
- 5) Occupation.....
- 6) Employer              1. Government      2. NGO          3. Business  
                                 4. Other (Specify)
- 7) Residence.....

8) Source of income .....

9) Number of Adopted Children 1.  2.  3.

10) Age of the adopted children

Child	Age
1)	
2)	
3)	

11) Sex of the child/ren

Child	Male	Female
1)		
2)		
3)		

12) Parental Role (1) Father  (3) Mother

13) Have you legally adopted the child? 1.  2.

14) When were the adoption orders granted to you?.....(YY).....(MM)

15) How old were you when you adopted the child?.....

16) Do you have any other biological children 1. Yes  2. No

17) Is the child aware that he is not biologically yours? 1. Yes  2. No



**Section Two**

18) What are some of the methods that you use to discipline your adopted child at home

.....  
.....

19) Do you have one consistent method all the time or you use different- in different circumstances.....

.....

20) What are some of these different circumstances.....?

21) Do people in the family allow you to discipline the child the way you do? Do they say it

is 1. Severe       2. Mild       3. Appropriate

22) How does the child react to the discipline option that you opt to use.....

.....  
.....

23) Does the age of the child matter when disciplining him/her 1. Yes  2. No

24) When the child is in difficult position and in need of help, where does s/he run first to get help.....

.....?

25) What are some of the things that your adopted child does that you feel are weird? And how do you deal with the situation?.....

.....  
.....

26) Suppose you found your child in a compromising position with your neighbor's child, what will be your knee-jerk reaction? And how will you deal with the situation.....  
.....

27) Have you ever referred the child to, let say, chief or counselor due to unbecoming behavior? 1. Yes  2. No.

If yes, explain

28) In your parenting experience what are best methods that you use to discipline your child.....  
.....

29) Suppose you have other biological children would you still discipline them the same way? 1. Yes  2. No

If no, explain

30) Do you face the same challenge when disciplining your other biological children.....(Explain).....  
.....

31) Which of the following do you thing has positively contributed in molding your child's behavior 1. Family 2. School 3. Church/Mosque

32) When you are away do you allow house help, elder siblings to discipline your child.....  
.....

33) Are there some cultural beliefs/values that persuade you to opt to one discipline method over the other?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

If yes, what are some of these beliefs.....

34) Do you think it's a good practice for teachers to use corporal punishment in school?

- 1. Yes
- 2.No

If no, why.....

35) In your opinion which way do you think is the best to discipline a child within the family.....

.....

.....

36) Perhaps that method above does not work, which will be your other option.....

.....

37) Any additional comment that you would like to share in regard to this study.....

.....

.....

**Thank you for cooperation.**

**Appendix II: Key Informant Guide  
(Children Officers and Adoption Officers)**

**DISCIPLINING OF ADOPTED CHILDREN IN NUCLEAR FAMILIES: A CASE STUDY  
OF SOME SELECTED ADOPTIVE FAMILIES WITHIN NAIROBI COUNTY.**

I am Tom Muindi Peter, an MA student at the University of Nairobi, Department of Sociology. I am carrying out the above research study as part of the requirement for the degree. I will be interviewing key informants concerning the various ways used to discipline adopted children within the family context. The information I get from you will be confidential and together with that from other key informants will be used to obtain knowledge on the different approaches used to instill discipline among the adopted children in the families. In addition the information generated will be used to inform policymakers, care givers, parents and other stakeholders on the best practices to embrace in behavior modeling of adopted children.

**Section One**

1) Name (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

2) Sex (1) Male  (2) Female

3) Employer \_\_\_\_\_

4) Department \_\_\_\_\_

5) Designation \_\_\_\_\_

6) What are your responsibilities?

- .....
- .....
- .....

**Section Two (A)**

7) Before placement do you counsel adoptive parents on behavior issues.....  
.....  
.....

8) Does the Law permit adopted children to be withdrawn in case of any maltreatment in the family?

1. Yes       2. No

If no, why.....

9) Does the law permit adoptive parents to return the child back for lack of compatibility.....

10) What are legal implications to any adoptive parent who omits or commits an harmful act towards an adopted child?.....  
.....  
.....

**Section Two (B)**

11) Do you match personality/ character trait when placing children with parents for adoption

12) Have you ever had cases of children who were returned back to you by adoptive parents due to indiscipline issues?

13) Do you organize seminars on parenting for adoptive parents after you place them with children?

- 14) Do you organize individual/ group counseling therapies for strictly adopted children?
- 15) What are some of the methods that you use to discipline children under your care before adoption?
- 16) What are some of the challenges adoptive parents share with you that they face when disciplining their adopted children?
- 17) Any case of extreme strictness or abuse by parents ever reported to you by adopted children?
- 18) Have you ever received any report of favourism in these families, where biological children are favored more than the adopted child, or vice versa?
- 19) What are some of the appropriate methods of disciplining adoptive children that you advise adoptive parents to use?
- 20) What are some of the behavior control methods that parents claim to be effective in the family?
- 21) Any other comment relevant to this study?

**Thanks for your cooperation**

### Appendix III: Interview Schedule for Adopted Children

**(Administered ONLY to those who have consented to the adoption in writing and are over fourteen years of age, as required by Law)**

I am Tom Muindi Peter, an MA student at the University of Nairobi, Department of Sociology. I am carrying out the above research study as part of the requirement for the degree. I will be interviewing key informants concerning the various ways used to discipline adopted children within the family context. The information I get from you will be confidential and together with that from other key informants will be used to obtain knowledge on the different approaches used to instill discipline among the adopted children in the families. In addition the information generated will be used to inform policymakers, care givers, parents and other stakeholders on the best practices to embrace in behavior modeling of adopted children.

#### Section one

1) Name (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

2) Age

14-16 years

Above 16 Years

3) Sex (1) Male  (2) Female

4) Do you go to school (1) Yes  (2) No

If yes, what level

Primary level

Secondary

Post-Secondary

- 5) How many are you in the family?
- 6) Are you the only child in the family 1.Yes 2.No (Specify)

## **Section Two**

- 7) If you can remember, for how long have you been living with your parents?
- 8) When you have done mistakes how do your parents reprimand you?
- 9) Have you ever done a gross mistake that really disappointed them?
- 10) What are some of the methods that your parents use to correct you when you have done things that disappoint them?
- 11) Have you ever been taken to a counselor for counseling by your parents?
- 12) Does your parent use you as a role model to your younger siblings?
- 13) Do you have child/parent discipline talks with your parent?
- 14) At some point have you ever felt that your parents are hard on you?
- 15) Which discipline method would you recommend parents to use and why
- 16) Do you feel that your parents treat you well?

**Thank you for your cooperation**



**Appendix IV: Observation Checklist**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Household Number \_\_\_\_\_

Initials of the Parent \_\_\_\_\_

Ward \_\_\_\_\_

Observation	Description	Yes	No	Comment
<p><b>Interaction with Adoptive Parents</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talks freely</li> <li>• Appears withdrawn</li> <li>• Signs of fear while talking with parents</li> <li>• Hugs and happily greets the parents</li> <li>• Appears comfortable in the presence of the parents</li> <li>• Parent talks politely with the child</li> <li>• Parent engages the child in discussion</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Behavior</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Talking while maintaining straight eye contact</li> <li>○ Any respect to</li> </ul>			

	<p>people and being given free opportunity to explain/express one self</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Any hunching or pouting when expressing oneself</li> <li>○ Interaction among and between siblings</li> </ul>			
<b>Physical Marks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Are there bruises on the child's body</li> <li>▪ Are there scars or wounds</li> <li>▪ Any form of limping or unusual pain-walking style</li> <li>▪ Any swollen body parts</li> </ul>			