

Knowledge and Opinion Regarding Adoption among Rural Adults: A Cross - Sectional Study

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Abstract: Children are appraised as the precious gift. Worldwide about 8% of couples suffer with primary infertility and 12% of couples suffer with secondary infertility with the rate of 10% in India and about 20 million children are deprived, even then the rates of adoption are declining in India. Present cross sectional study was undertaken with objectives: to assess and compare the knowledge and opinion regarding adoption among adults of different age groups, to determine relationship between knowledge and opinion regarding adoption among adults and to seek association of knowledge and opinion regarding adoption with selected variables. Sample size consisted of 200 adults selected by quota sampling residing in rural area. Data collection was done with structured knowledge questionnaire and likert scale using interview technique. Results depicted that most (86%) of adults were having below average knowledge and majority (92.5%) of adults were having favourable opinion towards adoption. A weak positive significant relationship ($r=0.309$) was found between knowledge and opinion scores of adults residing in rural area. Knowledge scores among adults in rural area were dependent on age, occupation, marital status, duration of marriage (year) if married, education level, number of living children, source of information whereas opinion score were dependent on age, education level, family income (per month), source of information. It can be inferred that rural adults were having below average knowledge and favourable opinion regarding adoption. Rate of adoption was found to be 24% in selected rural area.

Keywords: Knowledge, Opinion, Adoption, Adults, Cross – Sectional

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I. INTRODUCTION

Children are appraised as the precious gift on this earth and childhood is an important phase of one's life¹. Many couples over worldwide and in India are without children. Infertility is the leading reason for childlessness, so couples adopt children from those to whom they are not concerned. Further inspiration for adoption are wish to give a home to a child without home, desire to have a child of alternative sex, increased age and chances of having any genetic problem in their biological child². Adoption is the process that creates a parent- child relationship between persons not related by blood through a legal and social process. It is a process of becoming non biological parents³. Worldwide adoption has become more common, in between 1999-2011 there were 233,934 children who were placed for adoption, internationally 2004 was a top year and since then rates have decreased⁴.

According to CARA, the in-country figure of adoption has come down from 5693 in 2010 to 3011 in 2015-16. The inter-country figure of adoption has not been changed more between 2010 and 2015-16. The distressing aspect is that the figure of in-country adoptions has decreasing continuously⁵. In Haryana total number of 75 in-country and 36 inter-country adoptions have been takes place in the last four year. These were from Shishu Greh located in Sector 15. This is the one of the three adoptive agencies operated by the Haryana State Council for Child Welfare where neglected and deprived children are kept. Delightfully, it is the girl child which is desired most. In the last four years total number of 45 girls has been adopted opposed to 30 boys in in-country adoptions⁶. About 20 million children are orphan in India. Out of them parents of only 0.3% children have died and others were neglected by biological parents. In India, there are large number of orphan children and infertile couples but still adoption rate is very low. Behind this low rate there are some reasons which act as barrier for adoption⁷. Couples in India faced so many social and family problems than their western culture. They wish to adopt children who can match to their ethnic, religious, social and cultural environment. Other factors like sex of the child, colour of the child and physical quality and health of the child affect the adoption⁸.

The common reasons given for hesitation to adopt a child were culture, unknown background of the child and the child may not be kin and so cannot have inheritance of genealogical rights. Other things were fear of abnormal behaviour in the child or diseases inherited from biological parents which may not be socially acceptable. There was also the fear of leaving of adopted child once he/she got to know about his/her adoption status from any outsider. Many respondents have fear that adoption was not psychologically acceptable because they felt they could not love the child as their own biological child⁹. Other causes were wanted a biological child, fear of illegitimacy, social stigma and uncertainty about adopted child's genetic traits¹⁰. Factors which effect the plan to adopt a child were awareness about adoption, and authorization for adoption. Individuals who recognized the significance of blood relations in family relationships and had bother about the outcomes of adopted children like problems in adjustment, problems in behaviour were less like to have thought about adoption¹¹. In India, people have very little awareness about the issues, laws and procedures for adopting a child. Even it has been also observed that in Indian parents have more desire for adoption but there is very less information about adoption among such couples. There is paucity of literature in the field of adoption in India¹².

II. MATERIAL AND METHODS

This was a descriptive cross - sectional survey study which took place in the selected rural area of Ambala district of Haryana between August 2016 to June 2017. The ethical clearance was obtained from Institutional Ethical Committee. This was followed by obtaining consent from sarpanch (Local Community Leader) of selected rural area. The consent from participants was then obtained.

Participants

The sample size comprised of 200 adults of selected rural area and was categorized in the age groups of 20-30 years, 31-50 years, 51-65 years and more than 65 years by using quota sampling (50 adults in each category). Adults who can understand Hindi or English language and willing to participate were included in the study. Adults who had any psychological impairment and not available at the time of data collection were excluded. The purpose for carrying out research project was explained to the study subjects and assurance for confidentiality was given. Written informed consent was taken from each subject after explaining the purpose of research project.

Survey Instrument

For data collection structured knowledge questionnaire and likert scale were used. Structured knowledge questionnaire comprised questions regarding criteria for adoption, rights of adopted child & adoption of special need child, adoption agency, cost of adoption and likert scale had statements regarding adoption and adoptive family, adopted child, adoptive parents. Content validity of the tools was established by submitting it to seven experts in relevant area. Tools were found to be reliable (KR 20; 0.77, Cronbach α 0.76).

Procedure

Formal approval was obtained from the Sarpanch of rural area and investigator got oriented to the area by the help of Sarpanch. Home to home approach was used by systematic sampling technique. Two hundred adults were selected from rural area by using quota sampling technique. Knowledge and Opinion regarding adoption was assessed. The data collection was done with the interview technique. Data was collected from 7-8 participants in a day. The average time taken to collect data from one participant was about 50-60 minutes. Only one adult from one family was selected for interview. After finishing the structured knowledge questionnaire and likert scale further experiences of those who had an adoption in family, friends, and relatives were explored. (Findings not included in this paper)

Data Analysis

Statistical analysis of collected data was done by using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS, version 22). Descriptive statistics was expressed in term of mean and standard deviation. Inferential statistics was expressed in term of one way ANOVA, to find out mean difference of knowledge and opinion score with age groups of adults. Further, independent t test and one way ANOVA were used to find out association of knowledge and opinion score with selected variables. Post Hoc test used to find out difference between Mean knowledge and opinion score of adults of rural area regarding adoption among selected variables.

III. RESULTS

The data from 200 adults were used in the analysis. Majority of the participants were female (82%) and were married (69%). Majority was Hindu by religion (96%) and had been married more than 15 yrs (77%). Nearly one third (31%) were graduate in education level whereas 12% had no formal education. Only 17% were employed and 73% were either retired or homemaker by occupation. Nearly half of the participants (45%) had three or more living children. Seventy eight percentages (78%) had previous information regarding adoption through social media. (figure1) nearly one fourth (24%) had a case of adoption in either their families, relatives or friends.

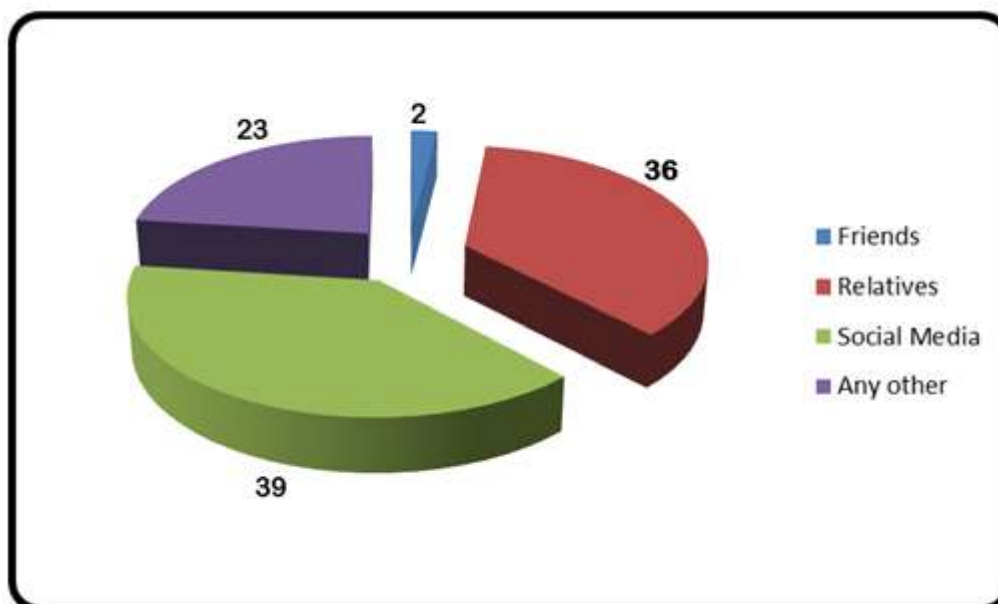


Figure 1. Percentage of Participants as Per Source of Previous Knowledge Regarding Adoption

Findings of the study (table 1 & table 2) revealed that in current setting, majority of adults i.e.86% in rural India had below average knowledge regarding adoption, followed by 13% of adults who had average knowledge and only 1% of adults had good knowledge regarding adoption. Findings further revealed that majority of adults i.e. 92.5% had favourable opinion regarding adoption, followed by 7.5% of adults had moderately favourable opinion and no one had unfavourable opinion regarding adoption.

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Rural Adults in Terms of Level of Knowledge Regarding Adoption.

N= 200		
Level of Knowledge	f	(%)
Very Good	00	(00)
Good	02	(1)
Average	26	(13)
Below Average	172	(86)

Maximum Score = 30 Minimum Score = 00

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Rural Adults in Terms of Level of Opinion Regarding Adoption.

N = 200		
Level of Opinion	f	(%)
Favourable	185	(92.5)
Moderately Favourable	15	(7.5)
Unfavourable	00	(00)

Maximum Score = 90 Minimum Score = 30

The result of one way ANOVA (table 3) showed a significant difference in knowledge score among adults of different age groups regarding adoption and post hoc test indicated showed significant difference, indicating age had an impact on knowledge regarding adoption and adults in younger age group in rural area had more knowledge regarding adoption.

Table 3: ANOVA and Post hoc Showing Mean Difference of Knowledge Score with Age Groups of Adults of Rural Area

N = 200

Age Groups (in years) ††	Mean	F test	Df	p value
20-30	11.40			
31-50	10.32			
51-56	09.84	10.51	3/196	0.001*
>65	07.44			
Age Groups ϕ (in years)	Age Groups (in years)	Mean Difference	Standard Error	p value
20-30	>65	3.96	0.729	0.001*
31-50	>65	2.88	0.729	0.001*
51-65	>65	2.40	0.729	0.007*

Significant(p \leq 0.05) ^{NS} Not Significant (p>0.05)

†† ANOVA, ϕ Post Hoc

The result of one way ANOVA (table 4) showed a significant difference in opinion score among adults of different age groups regarding adoption. It indicates younger age group had higher opinion score than older age group.

Table 4: ANOVA Showing Mean Difference of Opinion Score with Age Groups of Adults of Rural Area

N = 200

Age Groups (in years) ††	Mean	F test	Df	p value
20-30	77.48	3.024	3/196	0.031*
31-50	77.90			
51-56	75.44			
>65	75.22			

*Significant (p \leq 0.05)

^{NS} Not Significant (p>0.05)

†† ANOVA

Scatter Diagram (Figure 2) showed computed 'r' value (0.309) which was found to be significant at 0.05 level of significance. It indicates a significant weak positive correlation between knowledge and opinion score of adults in rural area.

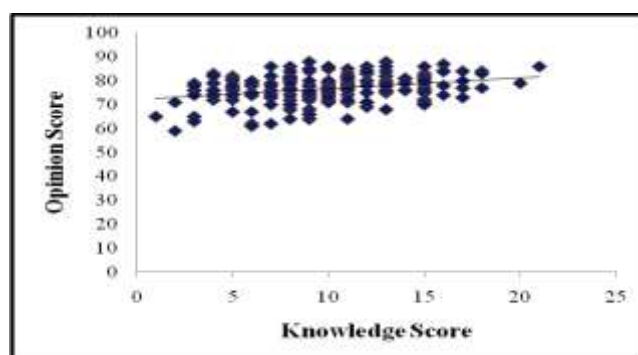


Figure 2: Scatter Diagram Showing Correlation between Knowledge Score and Opinion Score of Adults of Rural Area

According to the result of one way ANOVA and Independent 't' test (table 5), there was significant association between knowledge and marital status, duration of marriage (year) if married, education level, occupational status, number of living children, any information regarding adoption and any child has ever been adopted. There was significant association of opinion with education level, family income (per month) and any information regarding adoption.

Table 5: ANOVA and t – Value Showing Association of Knowledge and Opinion Score with Selected Variables of Adults of Rural Area.

N = 200

S. No.	Selected Variables	Knowledge			Opinion		
		F/t test	df	p value	F/t test	df	p value
1.	Gender	0.707	198	0.480 ^{NS}	0.206	198	0.837 ^{NS}
2.	Marital Status	21.178	2/197	0.001*	2.931	2/197	0.056 ^{NS}
3.	Duration of marriage (year) if married	4.117	3/167	0.008*	0.388	3/167	0.762 ^{NS}
4.	Religion	2.344	2/197	0.099 ^{NS}	1.510	2/197	0.224 ^{NS}
5.	Education level	13.792	4/195	0.001*	4.530	4/195	0.002*
6.	Occupational status	4.887	3/196	0.003*	2.204	3/196	0.089 ^{NS}
7.	Family income (per month)	0.874	3/196	0.456 ^{NS}	5.587	3/196	0.001*
8.	Number of living children	3.408	3/167	0.019*	0.34	3/167	0.808 ^{NS}
9.	Any information regarding adoption	4.586	3/196	0.004*	4.750	3/196	0.003*
10.	Has any child been ever adopted in relation to your family, relatives, friends	2.098	198	0.037*	0.538	198	0.591 ^{NS}

*Significant(p<0.05) ^{NS} Not Significant (p>0.05)

Further, Post hoc test showed a significant difference in knowledge score among adults who were single as compared to widow/widower and married, who had duration of marriage 6-10 year as compared to >15 years, who were graduate or above as compared to senior secondary, matric, primary and illiterate, who were private/self employee as compared to labour/retired/homemakers, who had 2 living children as compared to those who had 3 or more children and who got information from social media regarding adoption as compared to those who got information from relatives and any other.

In analysis of opinion score, Post hoc test showed a significant difference in opinion score among adults who was graduate or above as compared to illiterate, who had family income ≥ Rs. 15,000 as compare to ≤Rs.5,000, Rs. 5001-10,000 and Rs. 10,001 -15,000, who got information from friends as compared to any other, social media and relatives.

IV. DISCUSSION

Present study showed that all adults (100%) in rural area had heard about adoption and out of them more than one- third of adults (39%) got information by social media. Similar findings were reported by study on knowledge, attitude and practices of infertile women on child adoption which showed that majority (89.7%) of subjects had heard about adoption and among them 62.1% were informed via the media¹³.

Findings further showed that half (50%) of adopted children were females and 98% had age less than a year at the time of adoption. Wish to have a female child was given as a reason for adoption. Similar findings were reported in Indian adoption statistics by CARA (2016) showed that total numbers of 2160 children were adopted and out of them 1561 were in the age group of 0-2 years which is 72%. Female children have been adopted more as compare to the male children. Only 4475 male children and 6448 female children have been adopted in India⁵. This shows a change in patriarchal mind set of ancient India.

Interestingly, further exploration of findings revealed that majority (96.5%) of participants were from Hindu religion and only (33%) said that they knew someone who has adopted after having their own biological child and desire to have a male child was the reason for adoption. Similar findings were reported by a research study adoption in India – the past, present and the future trends which showed according to Hindu tradition, sons

are necessary in the family as the dead parent's soul can only reach heaven if that person has a son to light the funeral pyre and restoration can be achieved through sons who offer ancestral worship³.

Present study showed that majority of adults (86%) in rural area had below average knowledge about adoption. Similar findings were reported in another study, which showed that only a minority (27.3%) of subjects knew the real meaning of adoption, its legality and process of adoption¹⁴.

Present study showed that majority (92.5%) of adults in rural area had favourable opinion for adoption. Similar findings reported by a research study on knowledge and attitude towards child adoption and fostering among infertile women who showed that most 70.4% believed adoption was good and more than 80% of the respondents thought fostering was good¹⁵. Another research study on knowledge and attitude towards adoption amongst infertile couple also showed that most 76% couples had a positive attitude towards adoption and majority 91% recommended adoption as a good option to complete the family¹⁰.

Findings of the study revealed that age ($p=0.001$), educational level ($p=0.001$), occupational status ($p=0.003$) were dependent on knowledge score of adults residing in rural area. Similar findings reported by a research study on knowledge, attitude and practice to adoption in a rural community in Esan central Local government area of Edo state, Nigeria which showed that respondent age ($p=0.00$) and educational level ($p=0.00$) and occupation ($p=0.00$) were significantly associated with knowledge of child adoption².

Further the findings of the study revealed that educational level ($p=0.002$) of adults residing in rural area dependent on opinion score. Similar finding reported by a research study on knowledge, attitude and practice to adoption in a rural community in Esan central Local government area of Edo state, Nigeria which showed that educated respondent have positive attitude towards child adoption².

The findings of present study showed that maximum (83.3%) of children in rural area were adopted from relatives. Similar findings reported by a research study on knowledge, attitude and practice to adoption in a rural community in Esan central Local government area of Edo state, Nigeria which showed that eighteen (7%) of respondents had adopted child in rural area².

V. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that majority 86% of rural adults had below average knowledge regarding adoption. Majority 92.5% of rural adults had favourable opinion regarding adoption. There was a statistically significant difference in knowledge and opinion score of rural adults among different age groups. A weak positive significant relationship ($r=0.309$) was found between knowledge and opinion scores of adults residing in rural area. Adoption rate was found to be 24% in selected rural area. There is imperative need to sensitize community regarding adoption process and current efforts of CARA (Central Adoption Resource Authority) to make adoption process more transparent and hassle free needs to be applauded.

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Conflict Of Interest

Author declares no conflict of interest.

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