



Comparative Analysis Of Child Adoption Practices In India

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Abstract:

Child adoption, a complex and multifaceted process, is deeply rooted in culture, law, and social norms. In India, a country known for its rich diversity, the practice of adoption is subject to regional variations, cultural influences, and legal frameworks. This research paper presents a comparative analysis of child adoption practices in India, aiming to unravel the diverse factors that shape the adoption landscape across different regions. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data analysis with qualitative insights from interviews and surveys. Through an extensive examination of adoption records and policy documents, we explore how child adoption is practiced in India. This analysis encompasses a wide range of aspects, from adoption rates and preferences to the legal frameworks and cultural beliefs that influence adoption decisions. The research findings highlight significant variations in adoption practices across India. These differences can be attributed to cultural traditions, social norms, and regional disparities. Through the analysis of quantitative data and qualitative narratives, we gain a nuanced understanding of how adoption practices differ between urban and rural areas, and diverse communities. The research paper also delves into the implications of these regional disparities, not only for the children being adopted but also for adopting parents and the broader society. It emphasizes the importance of recognizing and respecting cultural diversity while ensuring the best interests of children.

Additionally, this study highlights the need for legal and policy reforms to address regional differences in adoption practices. It evaluates the role of adoption agencies, social workers, and advocacy groups in addressing these disparities and promoting more equitable adoption practices. In summary, this paper provides a comprehensive comparative analysis of adoption practices in India.

Key Words: Child Adoption, India, Adoption Practices, Regional Variations, Cultural Influences, Adoption Rates, Legal Framework, Adoption Preferences, Social Norms

Introduction:

Child Adoption is a complex and multifaceted process, reflecting society's values, cultural diversity, legal system and social norms. In a country as diverse and culturally rich as India, adoption practices show a lot of variation, influenced by regional disparities, cultural traditions and changing legal frameworks. This research article begins a comparative analysis of adoption practices in India, seeking to untangle the complex web of factors that shape the adoption landscape in different regions. India, often considered a subcontinent of nations, is a land of many traditions, languages and cultures. Within this vast tapestry, adoption takes on many colours and nuances that vary by region and community. Although the overarching goal of providing children with a loving and caring home remains the same, the means to achieve this goal can vary widely. Adoption, influenced by culture, law and social norms, can take different forms in different parts of India. Whether adopting within the same state, interstate, or internationally, the considerations and processes are different. While some areas may prioritize adoptions of a particular gender, others may be more flexible in their preferences. Urban areas may exhibit different adoption patterns than rural areas. This study aims to explore regional differences and the factors that underlie them. Using a mixed methods approach combining quantitative data analysis and qualitative insights, we examine adoption records, policy documents and narratives from different regions. In doing so, we aim to explore the complex aspects that shape adoption practices in various parts of India. The findings of this paper provide a comparative perspective on adoption in India. We study how adoption rates vary across regions, whether adoption preferences vary, and how regulatory frameworks influence these practices.

Furthermore, the study examines the social implications of these regional differences, emphasizing the importance of respecting cultural diversity while protecting the best interests of children. Additionally, we examine the role of adoption agencies, social workers, and advocacy groups in addressing these regional disparities and promoting an inclusive adoption system and more child-centred. By recognizing and understanding regional differences in adoption, it contributes to a broader discussion about the complexities of adoption in a diverse and culturally rich country. These findings provide a valuable resource for policymakers, practitioners, and advocates working towards a more inclusive and child-centred adoption system in India. The aim is to provide information that can inform policy, advocacy and practice to ensure that the rights and welfare of children in the adoption process are respected, regardless of whether the child seeks regular place of residence. In our efforts to shed light on the regional dynamics of adoption in India, we aim to contribute to a broader understanding of the complexities and nuances of adoption within a state.

Literature Review:

Sheetal Dattaram Shedge (2023) examines the legal processes and roles of government organizations and authorities involved in the adoption process. Challenges related to adoption law are also discussed, including financial, legal, international adoption, and health issues. This study enriches our knowledge of the legal and

ethical challenges of adoption, with implications for improving adoption procedures and protecting the welfare of adopted child.

Hodges and Tizard (2021) explains that, children placed in foster care and institutional care as well as children returned to their biological mothers exhibited more problem behaviour than adopted children. Additionally, a recent study on the outcomes of adoption versus long-term foster care reaffirms the benefits of adoption, especially the higher levels of safety about emotions, feelings of belonging and happiness.

Triseliotis (2015) reveals that a study of 881 adolescents adopted before age 18 months also found positive outcomes related to identity, attachment, child mental health, and family functioning. However, 25% of respondents had mental health problems and 16% reported not feeling attached to either parent (Benson, Sharma, & Roehlkepartai).

Methodology:

The study used a mixed methods approach, combining quantitative data analysis with qualitative information from interviews and surveys. This study employs a descriptive research design to analyse and describe the current state of trends in legalized adoption. The statistical analyses employed in this study include Panel Regression, correlation, and chi-square testing. These methods were chosen for their suitability in exploring the relationships and patterns within the collected data. Correlation analysis is employed to examine the relationships between various variables related to child adoption. The correlation matrix provides insights into the strength and direction of associations between different aspects of the adoption process.

Comparative Analysis of Child Adoption in India: “Comparative Analysis of Child Adoption in India” is expected to delve deeper into the various aspects explored in the study. Here, we break down the key elements of the paper and provide a deeper analysis:

1. Adoption in India - Overview: By introducing the concept of adoption and its diverse nature. It emphasizes the importance of understanding regional differences in adoption practices and their relationship to cultural diversity.
2. Regional differences in adoption practices: The core of the paper revolves around examining regional differences in adoption practices. It is important to note that India is a very diverse country, with cultural and regional differences. Understanding these differences is important to appreciate the complexity of adoption in this country.
3. Cultural influence: Research article explores the impact of cultural traditions and beliefs on adoption. India's cultural diversity is an important factor influencing preferences and practices. Specific rituals, beliefs, and taboos related to adoption vary significantly across regions.
4. Legal framework and adoption practices: There is a need to analyse the legal framework governing adoption in India. The paper should assess the extent to which state-specific applicable policies and laws influence regional variations. Some regions may be more progressive in adopting national and international adoption standards.

5. Adoption rates and preferences: Article looks at adoption rates in different regions, highlighting differences in adoptions across genders, different ages and origins. These variations can be driven by cultural preferences, economic factors, and even historical practices.

6. Dynamics of adoption in urban and rural areas: Need in-depth analysis of adoption patterns in urban and rural areas. Urban areas may have better access to adoption agencies and information, which may influence adoption options. Rural areas may have different preferences, potentially influenced by traditional beliefs and social networks.

7. Impact on children: Research articles consider the impact of regional differences in adoption practices on adopted children. It assesses how these differences affect adoptees' well-being, identity formation, and psychosocial development.

8. Best interests of the child: Analysis should determine whether regional differences correspond to the best interests of the child, as required by the conventions international and Indian law. It is necessary to assess whether child protection is a major concern in the region.

9. The role of adoption agencies and social workers: The article explores the role of adoption agencies and social workers in shaping adoption activities in the area. Their awareness of cultural differences and their efforts to promote more inclusive and equitable practices should be assessed.

10. Advocacy initiatives: Review the work of advocacy groups and organizations working to promote equitable adoption practices in all regions. These initiatives may highlight the importance of respecting cultural diversity while safeguarding the rights and well-being of the child. It is expected to provide recommendations to policymakers, practitioners and advocates working towards creating a more equitable and child-centred adoption system in India.

Prospective Adoptive Parent:

A Prospective Adoptive Parent, often abbreviated as PAP, is an individual or couple who expresses the intent and desire to adopt a child and undergoes the initial registration and assessment process required for adoption. These individuals or couples are often at the beginning of the adoption journey, demonstrating a commitment to provide a loving and stable home for a child in need. Prospective Adoptive Parents play a vital role in the adoption process, as they represent the first step in offering a better life to children who may have faced challenging circumstances. Their dedication and commitment to providing a loving home are instrumental in ensuring that every child has the opportunity to grow up in a supportive and caring family environment.

The data presented in the Fig 1 indicates that there may be a bias in adoption preferences with a higher number of Prospective Adoptive Parents (PAPs) expressing interests in adopting infants while compared to older children. This trend could be attributed to various cultural, social, or personal reasons that lead PAPs to express a preference for adopting infants. It is essential to delve deeper into the underlying factors behind this trend to ensure that adoption processes remain equitable and that every child's best interests are considered,

regardless of their gender. Further research and analysis are needed to understand the dynamics at play in adoption preferences and to promote a more inclusive and balanced approach to adoption.

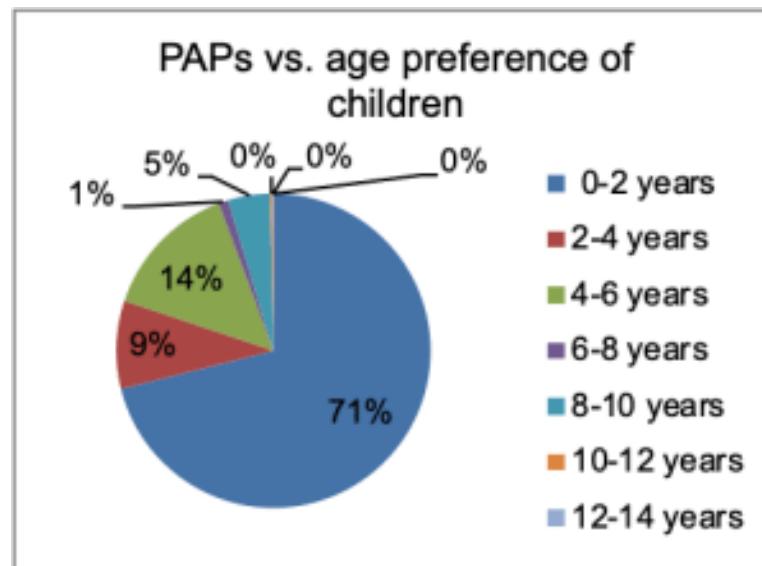


Fig 1: PAPs vs Age preference of children for adoption.

Source: Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA).

According to the latest statistics from the Central Adoption Resources Authority (CARA), 20,142 out of 28,334 potential adoptive parents (PAPs) are interested in adopting a child between the ages of 0 and 2. However, in reality, only a few hundred are eligible for adoption at this age.

The data reveals a notable bias in adoption preferences, with a significant surge in adoptions of children between the ages of 0 to 4. There is a clear pattern showing a much higher number of Prospective Adoptive Parents (PAPs) registering their interest in adopting infants within this age group compared to other age categories. This exponential increase in adoptions of infants may be indicative of a preference for adopting children during their early years, as these PAPs may believe it allows for greater influence and bonding during a child's formative stages. However, it's crucial to approach this trend with caution, ensuring that it doesn't result in the neglect of older children in need of loving homes. A more comprehensive understanding of the reasons behind this bias is necessary to maintain a balanced and inclusive adoption system that prioritizes the best interests of every child, regardless of their age or gender.

Comparison of In-country and Inter-country adoption in India:

There is a wide gap between adoptable children and prospective parents, which may increase the length of the adoption process. Studies reveal that while more than 29,000 prospective parents are willing to adopt, just 2,317 children are available for adoption.

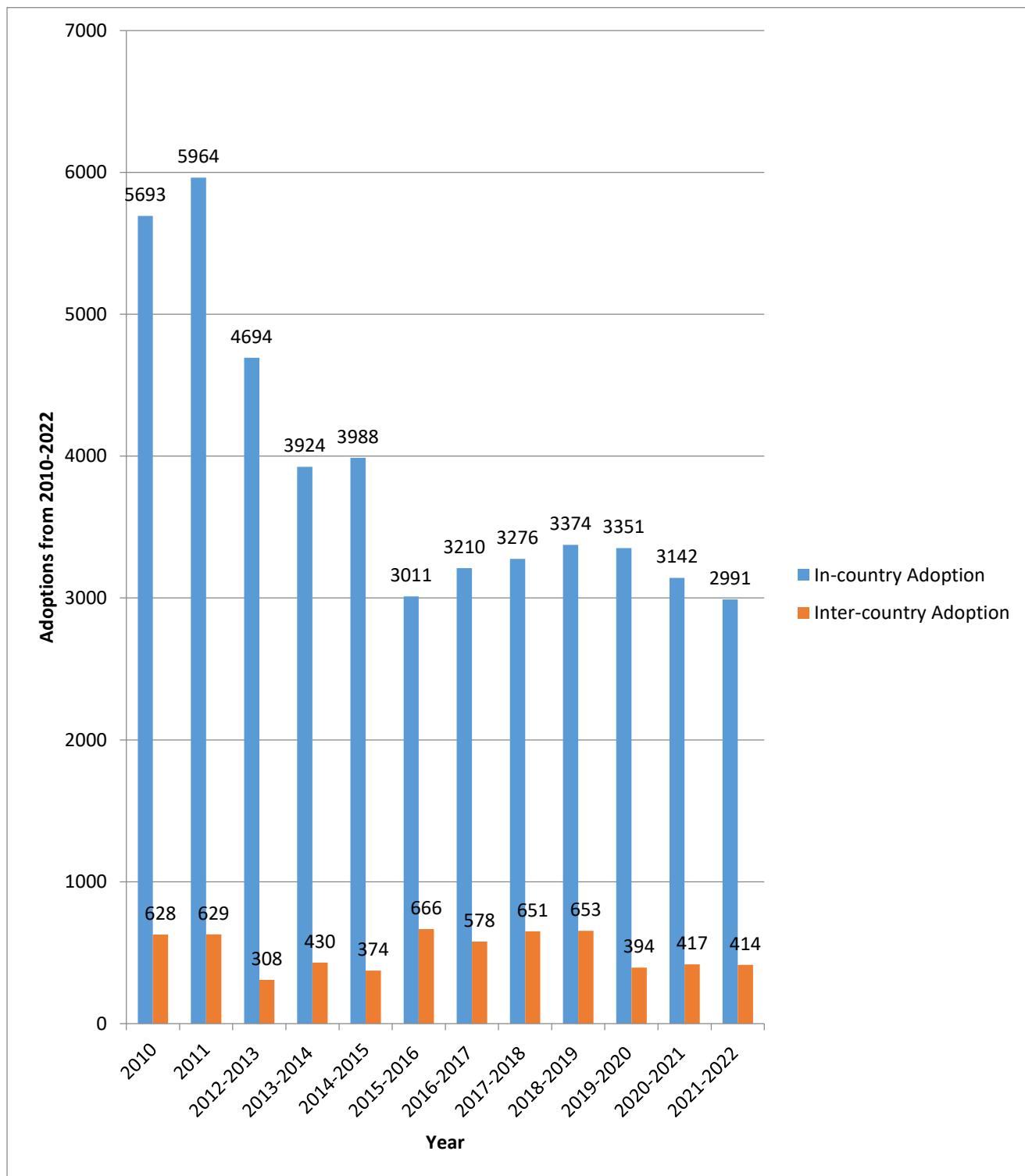


Fig 2: Comparative analysis of In-country and Inter-country adoption 2010-2022

Source: Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA).

The data provided offers a decade-long snapshot of adoption trends, capturing the dynamics of in-country and inter-country adoptions from 2010 to 2022. The data delves into the nuanced patterns revealed by the numbers, exploring the fluctuations, possible influences, and broader implications for adoption practices. Over the years, the landscape of adoption has witnessed both stability and change. In 2010, a total of 5693

in-country adoptions and 628 inter-country adoptions were reported, setting the stage for a decade marked by varying degrees of adoption activity. The subsequent years saw a notable increase in in-country adoptions, reaching 5964 in 2011 and remaining relatively steady in the subsequent years. This trend suggests a growing preference for domestic adoption during this period.

However, the inter-country adoption landscape displayed a more erratic trajectory. From 2010 to 2012, inter-country adoptions remained relatively stable, hovering around the 600 mark. A significant dip occurred in 2012-2013, with only 308 reported cases, raising questions about potential shifts in international adoption policies or geopolitical factors influencing the process.

The years 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 brought a resurgence in inter-country adoptions, reaching 430 and 374, respectively. This fluctuation might be attributed to evolving international adoption regulations, diplomatic relations, or changing socio-economic conditions in the source countries. The subsequent years, however, witnessed a decline in inter-country adoptions, indicating a possible trend towards greater emphasis on domestic adoption or heightened scrutiny in international adoption processes.

The interplay between in-country and inter-country adoptions reflects a complex interweaving of legal, cultural, and socio-economic factors. While in-country adoptions generally remained steady, inter-country adoptions displayed a more unpredictable pattern, suggesting a delicate balance between global and domestic considerations.

Notably, the data indicates a decline in both in-country and inter-country adoptions in recent years. In 2021-2022, in-country adoptions numbered 2991, and inter-country adoptions stood at 414. The reasons for this decline may be multifaceted, ranging from changes in societal attitudes towards adoption to the impact of global events on adoption procedures.

Conclusion: This comparative analysis of adoption practices in India offers a multifaceted perspective on the complexities and regional differences that characterize this multifaceted social phenomenon. This conclusion summarizes the main findings and their broader implications for policy, practice and advocacy in the field of adoption in India. Examining regional differences in adoption practices reveals the profound influence of cultural factors. India's diversity of traditions, beliefs and rituals is interwoven into the fabric of adoption decisions. It is clear that cultural norms and taboos can significantly influence preferences regarding the gender, age, and origin of adopted children. The legal frameworks governing adoption in different states and regions have been found to help shape regional disparities. Adoption laws and policies may maintain or minimize differences in adoption practices. The analysis highlights the importance of ensuring regional legal frameworks are consistent with national and international standards to protect the best interests of children. Exploring adoption rates and preferences across different regions reveals significant disparities. Urban and rural areas have different adoption dynamics, with urban areas likely to benefit from greater access to

adoption agencies and information. This analysis focuses primarily on the impact of regional disparities in adoption on the well-being and identity formation of adopted children. The study highlights the paramount importance of protecting the best interests of children, regardless of regional differences, by promoting fair and child-centred adoption practices. The role of adoption agencies and social workers in developing adoption activities in the region is fundamental.

This analysis highlights the importance of their role in raising awareness, facilitating equitable adoption, and adapting to regional nuances. It is essential that these stakeholders take a proactive role in promoting adoption activities that prioritize the well-being of children. Advocacy initiatives and awareness campaigns are essential elements to address regional differences in adoption practices. The paper emphasizes the importance of advocacy groups and organizations in promoting equitable adoption practices that respect cultural diversity. A comparative perspective on adoption in India can provide insight not only into the unique characteristics of the Indian context but also into the broader phenomenon of global adoption. By comparing adoption practices in India with practices in other countries, we gain a better understanding of the universal and culture-specific factors that shape adoption choices.

In summary, the results presented in this paper highlight the importance of recognizing and respecting regional differences in adoption practices while maintaining the best interests of the child. This research serves as a call to action, urging policymakers, practitioners, and advocates to consider regional nuances in adoption and work to create more equitable, person-centred adoption system in India. This is a reminder that, at its core, adoption is about providing a loving and caring home for children, regardless of their cultural or regional origin. By promoting such an inclusive and fair adoption system, we can respect the rights and dignity of every child, ensuring they find a forever home with love and care.

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