Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

THE PROCESS OF AN INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

The Role Of The Women Within The Couples Involved

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Social Work

at

Massey University

Palmerston North

New Zealand

Catherine Marie Wilson

2001

ABSTRACT

This thesis studies the experiences of ten married couples in New Zealand, in particular the women, who have completed the process of adopting a child or children from overseas. It has two main objectives: first to highlight the role of the woman within a married couple applying to adopt intercountry; and second, to note any gender differences in the experience and perception of this process and the issues involved.

The research design for this study followed the approach of eidetic phenomenology which focuses on the perceptions and meanings that people use to interpret their own experiences. Data were collected using in-depth, audiotaped personal interviews with the participants, and detailed case notes made during the interview. Personal observations after each interview were also used. The data were analysed using content analysis with cross-case groupings of responses into themes.

The findings indicate that women are the main instigators and organisers in the process of achieving an intercountry adoption. Within this role the women often felt unsupported by both professionals and organisations involved. The findings also indicate areas for further research and review for professional practice and policy, in order to provide more effective and supportive assistance throughout the process of adopting a child or children from overseas.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the participants who gave of their time and energy so willingly in order to share their experiences with others. Being able to share in a small part of their lives made me aware of just how busy they were. I became aware that this project was important to them in a personal and practical way and that it was not just seen as an academic exercise.

I would also like to express my heartfelt thanks to the supervisors of this work, Associate Professor Andrew Trlin and Wheturangi Walsh-Tapiata. Their endless support, guidance and above all patience through some very trying times, are deeply appreciated.

To friends and colleagues who have encouraged and supported me over the years of my part-time study I also offer thanks. In particular Julie Burne, who was quietly challenging and persistent, Sale Fiaola my stress relief, Jan White who put up with me on a daily basis, and Mike Kunac for seeing me into my future.

Most importantly I would like to thank my family, Mum, Bill, Josi and wee Billy Wilson. This thesis was stopped and started many times due to a variety of personal sadnesses which occurred within our family during the last few years. No matter what happened, their support for me and for the completion of this work never faltered. The love they have shown has been more than I could ever have imagined. Thank you all so much.

Finally, and above all, my thoughts go to my Dad - William Grey Wilson who died during my work on this thesis. My inspiration and main supporter, who had complete faith in me no matter what. He never doubted his daughter's ability.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract i
Acknowledgements ii
Table of Contents iv
List of Figures vii

Introduction 1
Thesis Objectives 2
Definitions 2
The Controversy of Intercountry Adoption 3
Arguments in Support of Intercountry Adoption 3
Arguments Against Intercountry Adoption 4
An Overview of Thesis Chapters 7

Chapter 1: Intercountry Adoption: Origins, Protective Measures and Processes 10
The Origins of Intercountry Adoption 11
Organisations Formed in Response to Intercountry Adoption 12
The International Social Services (ISS) 12
The Leysin Seminar (1960) 13
Intercountry Adoption to the Present Day 15
The United Nations Declaration 1986 16
The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC) 1989 17
The Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption 1993 17

The History of Local Adoption in New Zealand 18
Maori and Adoption 19
The Statutory Acts of Adoption 20
1881 Adoption of Children Act 21
1895 Adoption of Children Act 21
Adoption Act 1955 22
Adult Adoption Information Act 1985 22
The Law Commission Review on Adoption 1999 24

History of Intercountry Adoption in New Zealand 24
Intercountry Adoption in New Zealand and the Law 27
Adoption (Intercountry) Act 1997 28
Intercountry Adoption Policy of CYFS 29
The Process 29
ICANZ (Intercountry Adoption New Zealand) 31

Conclusion 33

Chapter 2: Literature Review 35
New Zealand Research 36
Personal Experiences of Adoptive parents 36

Overseas Research 46
Adoptive Parents: Motivation 46
Adoptive Parents: Preparation 47
Adoptive parents: Types of Child(ren) Chosen 48

Development and Adjustment Issues 49
Psychological Development 49
Intellectual Development 50
Behavioural and Social Development 51
Health Issues 54
Cultural Issues 55
Attachment Theory 56

Conclusion 58

Chapter 3 – Research Methodology 61
Thesis Objectives 61

Method 62
Qualitative Research 62
Phenomenology 63
Theoretical Underpinning of the Thesis 64
Feminist Theory 64
Research Design 65
Participant Selection 66
Contacting Participants 68
Data Collection 68
The Interview Guide 69
Analysis 71
Ethical Concerns 73
Voluntary Participation 74
Anonymity and Confidentiality 74
Potential Harm to Participants 75
Potential Harm to Researcher 75

Conclusion 75

Chapter 4 – The Participants and Their Socio-Demographic Characteristics 77
Introduction to Participating Couples 77

Participant Characteristics 80
Age 80
Ethic Self-Identification 81
Employment Prior to Placement 81
Employment After Placement 81
Marital Status and Children 82
Religion 82
Previous Experience of Overseas Travel 83
Languages Spoken 83
Conclusion 83

Chapter 5 – Motivation Behind Choosing Adoption 85
Deciding to Adopt Intercountry 85
Infertility Issues 86
Christian and Humanitarian Motives 86
Availability of Children in New Zealand 88
Previous Knowledge of Intercountry Adoption 90

Differences of Opinion Between Wives and Husbands 90
Issues Associated with the Decision to Adopt Intercountry 92
Choosing Which Country to Adopt From 92
Concerns Expressed Regarding an Intercountry Adoption 94
Number and Gender of Children 96

Conclusion 98

Chapter 6 – The Process of Achieving Intercountry Adoption 101
The Process Within New Zealand 101
The Main Organisers Throughout the Process 102
Length of Time 103
Doing the 'Right Thing' 104
Repetition of Material 106
Support 107
Ageism and Sexist Attitudes 109

The Process in the Sending Country 111
Stress 111
The Legal Process 113
Meeting the Child(ren) 113
Making the Wrong Decision 115
Support 116

Womens Advice to Future Mums on Intercountry Adopted Children 118

Conclusion 119

Chapter 7 – The Homecoming 122
Issues and Difficulties Encountered 122
Health Issues 122
Support Needed on Their Return 124
Family and Friends 125
Reaction from Strangers 125
Support from other Mothers of Intercountry Adopted Children 127
Professional Support 128

Effect of the Adoption on Lifestyle 131
Effect of a Career Change 131
Friendships 132
Relationship with Spouse 133
Perception of Others 134

Conclusion 134

Chapter 8 – Where to From Here? Discussion and Recommendations 137
Review of Findings 138
Socio-demographic Characteristics 138
Motivation Behind Choosing Adoption 139
The Process of Achieving Intercountry Adoption 141
The Homecoming 144

Implications For Policy and Practice 144
Practice Issues 145
Education and Preparation Programmes 145
The Assessment Process 146

General Reviews Needed on Current Policy 148

Future Research 149

Conclusion 150

Appendices

Appendix 1 The 12 Principles for International Social Services 151
Appendix 2 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 153
Appendix 3 Family Profile Document 156
Appendix 4 Consent Form 164
Appendix 5 Interview Guide 165

Bibliography **169**

LIST OF FIGURES

Table 1	Major Receiving Countries of Intercountry Adoptees 1993-1997	15
Figure 1	Child, Youth and Family Intercountry Adoption Placement Process	32
Chart 1	Age Distribution of Participating Couples	80

INTRODUCTION

This study came about due to my work as a social worker for the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services (CYFS), working in the area of adoption. Through this work I came into contact with many women who were either in the process of adopting a child from overseas or who had recently done so. On working with them it became apparent that they felt the process was not user friendly and that there was room for improvement. I also noticed that for the couples I dealt with the woman was the main source of all information and the main contact throughout the intercountry adoption process was gained through the woman, with little mention of the role her husband played in the process.

It also became apparent that there was very little local or international literature on the issues for women adopting from another country. The bulk of the literature is on the problems (i.e. development and adjustment issues) that children adopted from overseas and from an institutional setting have, with little mention of the process issues for the adoptive parents or the experiences of the women in particular. As a social worker, therefore, I was interested in finding out more about this part of an intercountry adoption in order to be in a position to provide more appropriate support for the women I work with. In producing this thesis, my hope is that I can help to make their role in intercountry adoption more visible and give them the recognition they deserve in an often long and difficult process.

In my experience, many of the women have found the process of intercountry adoption stressful and time consuming. Many commented that the information gained in the education programme of CYFS was often repeated by an organisation called Intercountry Adoption New Zealand (ICANZ) which many couples contacted in order to gain its assistance. I also noted that many of the women actually appeared to have made the decision to adopt intercountry

prior to any major discussion with their husbands. Once the women gained all the information they required on the process they then presented their husbands with the proposal to adopt a child(ren) from overseas. The husband's role in this process seemed to be one of agreeing, or disagreeing, with the proposal made. Agreement secured, the wife set about taking the steps needed to make the adoption happen with very little further input from her spouse.

THESIS OBJECTIVES

On the basis of the above observations, the two main objectives for this thesis are to: first, highlight the role of the women (in married couples) who apply to adopt a child or children from overseas; and second, to investigate if there is a difference between females and males in their perception and experience of the process and issues involved in an intercountry adoption. This thesis was accordingly developed to investigate the experiences by interviewing both the wife and husband of each couple studied.

DEFINITIONS

Before continuing it is important to clarify the terminology relating to adoption which will be used in this thesis. The New Zealand Adoption Act 1955 does not provide a definition of adoption, but Section 16 (2)(a) details the effects of an adoption order. It states that:

> the child shall be deemed to become the child of the adoptive parent, and the adoptive parent shall be deemed to become the parent of the child, as if the child had been born to the parent in lawful wedlock.

A local (or domestic) adoption is defined as (1993 Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption):

> an adoption that involves adoptive parents and a child of the same nationality and the same country of residence.

Intercountry adoption, on the other hand, is defined as (1993 Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption):

> one that involves a change in the child's habitual country of residence, whatever the nationality of the adopting parents.

THE CONTROVERSY OF INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

Controversy surrounds the issue of intercountry adoption with members of society having strong feelings either for or against it. The following is a brief summary of the major arguments that have been raised with regard to this subject. It is important to gain an understanding of these issues as the arguments can be seen to underlie some of the perceptions and experiences presented and discussed in the following chapters, including the literature review and the history of intercountry adoption both within New Zealand and internationally.

It is important to understand that couples embarking on an intercountry adoption come into contact with these issues and the views expressed via the media and/or people who offer their opinion to applicants during the process of adopting. They are then reflected in the beliefs formed by many of the couples who come forward to adopt as well as in the beliefs of the professionals who are employed to assist these couples throughout the process. Obviously the beliefs and opinions of professionals who have dealings with couples throughout the process of an intercountry adoption may play a significant part in the overall service that they give to couples.

Arguments in Support of Intercountry Adoption

The argument frequently used in supporting intercountry adoption is that of saving the life of a child and giving that child a better life. This view is often supported by the media with items and programmes on television which portray the plight of poor, homeless and sick children

in third world countries. The following are examples of this argument.

McDonald (1994) writes that the "language of rights" is used to reinforce a moral argument in which it is the child's right to have a secure and stable family. To do otherwise would be "...a case of abandoning children of their rights" (McDonald, 1994:50). Christian duty and self-interest are also noted as reasons for intercountry adoption (McDonald, 1994:51):

> Saving children is not only the highest expression of lived Christianity, but it also connotes selflessness, and the preservation of family values. To rise above politics and to do battle for moral principles against apathy and impenetrable bureaucracy can be most fulfilling.

Plant (1990:10) furthers this argument by stating that with the growing accessibility of the world we have become a global village and as a result it would be anachronistic "in matters of duty and charity, to attach great significance to local or national boundaries". He continues that "to limit my moral responsibility I should not read or watch television reports of drought and disaster. I should not look at charity advertisements".

Arguments Against Intercountry Adoption

Arguments against intercountry adoption focus on four main areas. First, it is argued that the cultural needs of a child will not be met in a foreign culture with parents of a different colour and/or race. Second, it is argued that encouraging intercountry adoption ignores the economic and social problems that lead the children to be orphaned or abandoned. In doing so it can support the status quo and delay the much needed long-term changes required in the countries from which the adoptions are made. Third, it is argued that intercountry adoption exploits people on the basis of race, class and gender. This argument includes concern that children from third world countries are being sold into more affluent countries. Finally, the question of who the adoption is for, is raised. It is argued that intercountry

adoption is seen as an answer to infertility and an adult's need for a child. In putting adult needs before the child, the wellbeing of the child is not protected. The following are specific examples of the above arguments.

Opponents hold that intercountry adoption undermines a child's sense of racial identity. This can lead to the child not being able to cope with the majority culture and not being able to integrate with their minority subculture. It has been argued in the United States, for example, that no matter how well intending a white couple may be, they cannot teach a child of a different race how to survive in an essentially racist society (National Association of Black Social Workers, 1994). Ngabonziza (1988) notes that adopted youngsters from Korea, India, Lebanon and Zaire all reported that they were suffering from negative racial discrimination. Ngabonziza (1988:39) further raises the question of "whether the child could not be better off in a poorer but more accepting environment in its own country".

Another argument supported by Ngabonziza (1988), and further advanced by Triseliotis (1993), is that money should be spent on providing services in developing countries to prevent children from being abandoned. Ngabonziza believes that intercountry adoption disguises the needs of millions of children who are left to grow up in poverty or disease. Furthermore, by allowing large numbers of children to be adopted overseas, adoption will be viewed as a solution to unwanted children, rather than making available programmes of family support, health and welfare.

Triseliotis (1993) also notes that generally it is not the children most in need who are adopted but healthy children who are either new-born or less than three years of age and European. In other words, intercountry adoption takes from the country potentially productive adults who could assist in that country's development. An alternative could be to adopt the child from a distance (i.e. act as a sponsor or

benefactor), therefore giving the child material support and care which enables the child to grow and develop in their own culture by improving the country's welfare programmes.

The adoption of children from a third world country can also be seen and interpreted as exploitation on the basis of race, class and gender, as in most cases the adoptions involve foreign, middle class white couples who are adopting the children of poor women from another race. McDonald (1994:49) notes that this argument has also focussed on the exploitation of women and the right of all women to be able to nurture their own child (Else, 1991; Dietrich, 1992). This view is taken further in stating that intercountry adoption is a systematic and self-perpetuating exploitation of women under the patriarchal society that legitimises those practices (Herrman & Kasper, 1992; Else, 1991).

The exchange of money in some intercountry adoptions has also caused concern. Under international law it is illegal to buy, sell or trade children. In some third world countries, however, there have been documented instances of women being encouraged by brokers to sell their fertility and children (Chun, 1989; Lewin, 1990; UNICEF, 1986). Cases have been cited in Honduras where teenage girls are paid by baby brokers to get pregnant and are then cared for in order to gain healthy babies to offer for adoption through a 'known' orphanage (Else, 1990). Cases of kidnapping babies from peasant and transient women have also been cited in Indonesia (UPI, 1990) and Bolivia (ICWR, 1984). Other countries where children have been reported as being stolen and bought include Thailand, Guatemala, the Philippines, El Salvador, Sri Lanka, Romania, Taiwan, Turkey, and Peru (Chaponniere, 1983; Serrill, 1991).

Finally, Triseliotis (1993) states that in some northern European countries, adoption has become synonymous with intercountry

adoption. In so doing, it is primarily meeting the needs of adults who wish to gain a family as:

> ...Beyond the altruism of rescue lies the primary reason [which is] that so few infants are available for adoption by involuntarily childless couples and single women in most developed countries (Triseliotis, 1993:47).

Due to a lack of safeguards in intercountry adoption using Section 17 of the New Zealand Adoption Act 1955, concern has been raised as to the wellbeing of the children and the motives of the intercountry adopters in New Zealand. An example occurred in 1996 where a Protestant Minister, who had adopted 19 children from overseas over a five-year period under section 17 of the Adoption Act, was found guilty of sexual offences relating to 3 of his adopted children (Couchman, 1997).

Although there is more written on the arguments against intercountry adoption, this is not a reflection on whether this is the majority or the minority view. Regardless of the number of arguments about intercountry adoption, advocates on both sides can be very passionate and emotional about their views and believe that their view is the right view.

AN OVERVIEW OF THESIS CHAPTERS

The first two chapters of this thesis form a background to the study by introducing a history of adoption, both intercountry and local, as well as the literature currently available on this topic. Chapter 1 begins this process by giving a background to the origins, protective measures and processes of intercountry adoption both within a New Zealand and overseas setting. In Chapter 2 both the national and international research pertaining to this area is reviewed. The first section of this chapter concentrates on literature within New Zealand, including articles from the media, on the experiences of New Zealand couples, while the second section focuses on overseas literature and brings into focus background research on the issues that children

adopted from overseas may bring with them and discusses attachment theory.

In Chapter 3 the research method used in this study is outlined. The process of selection of participants and the use of in-depth interviews for both wife and husband are reviewed as well as the use of the interview guide. The process of collecting the data and then analysing it is depicted, together with a description of the relevant legal and ethical issues and the establishment of the study's trustworthiness.

Chapter 4 provides a brief introduction to the participants and then presents the socio-demograpic characteristics of the couples in this study and, where possible, compares the results found here to research completed both internationally and within New Zealand.

The motivation behind the choice of intercountry adoption is discussed in Chapter 5. Here the aim is to present the factors identified by the couples that underlay or influenced their decision to adopt intercountry. Related questions concerning the number and gender of the children adopted are examined and the chapter also investigates whether or not there were differences of opinion between spouses on these matters.

Once the decision to adopt intercountry was made, what were the issues that participants had to deal with in achieving this adoption? This is the subject matter of Chapter 6. In order to discover the issues this chapter is divided into two main sections. First, attention is focused on the experience of couples throughout the process in New Zealand. Second, the focus then shifts to their experience in the country they have decided to adopt from.

The process is completed once the couple have gained their child(ren) and returned home to New Zealand. Chapter 7 focuses on

the initial period of the homecoming and brings forth the issues and concerns that faced the participants during the first six months on returning home with their child(ren).

A discussion relating to the findings from the previous chapters occurs in Chapter 8. The implications of the results for policy and practice as well as future research are also outlined.

CHAPTER 1 INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION: ORIGINS, PROTECTIVE MEASURES AND PROCESSES

In order to gain an understanding of intercountry adoption, it is important to look at how intercountry adoption has developed and the issues connected to it. As shown in the introduction, there appear to be strong beliefs either for or against this form of adoption; it is not a neutral topic but one that fuels emotion for those involved. The aim of this chapter is to background the origins, protective measures and processes of intercountry adoption both within New Zealand and overseas so that an understanding is gained of the issues contained within the premise of an intercountry adoption. Protective measures in this setting encompass safeguards that have been put in place to ensure that both the children and the birth parents involved in an intercountry adoption are not exploited.

The above aim is achieved through five sections, the details of which are as follows. The first section takes a global perspective to the origins of intercountry adoption that incorporates the organisations that were formed in response to this phenomenon in order to help protect the children involved. This global focus on intercountry adoption is maintained in section two where contemporary issues surrounding this topic are also explored. The discussion includes the principles and standards relevant to modern day intercountry adoption as well as the aims of current intercountry adoptions practice. Section three turns the focus to the New Zealand setting where a brief history of adoption within this country is outlined, including the statutory acts relevant to adoption. It is important to look at the history and legislation of adoption in New Zealand as these have provided the foundation for New Zealand's current position on intercountry adoption. Section four continues to focus on New Zealand by tracing the history of intercountry adoption in this

country, including a description of the legal process for obtaining such an adoption. Finally, section five identifies the current policy of the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services (CYFS) regarding intercountry adoptions, and outlines the process applicants must complete in order to gain their child. Currently CYFS are required by Law to give approval to all adoption orders, whether local or intercountry, made in New Zealand. It also provides an overview of Intercountry Adoption New Zealand (ICANZ), a non-statutory organisation formed to assist people in gaining children through intercountry adoption and used by many of the participants in this study.

THE ORIGINS OF INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

Historically, intercountry adoption has appeared with natural or man-made disasters and the poverty that follows. Since the First World War refugees and homeless children have, therefore, been placed in various countries. With each war came children who were deemed to be without a family and care. It was not until after the Second World War, however, that intercountry adoption became widely practiced and reported on.

Bagley (1993) states that from the end of the Second World War in 1945 at least half a million children have been adopted across countries and cultures. The Second World War not only left many children orphaned or separated from parents but also resulted in many illegitimate children conceived by the members of invading or liberating armed forces. From 1945 onwards, separated, orphaned or abandoned children from the Middle East, Korea, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Germany and Thailand were adopted in North America. Since 1960 an increasing number of children from poorer countries of the third world have been adopted by parents in North America and Western Europe (Bagley, 1993). The break-up of the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries has also increased the number of children adopted abroad (Bogert, 1994).

Organisations Formed in Response to Intercountry Adoption

As the number of children adopted across countries increased so did concern as to whether the rights and needs of these children were being protected. Initially, concerns arose over the differing legal systems between the country of origin and the receiving country. Ethical issues also arose as to whether removing a child from his or her country was the right action to take. Arguments were raised that aid and assistance should be given instead in order for that country to support and retain their own children and, in so doing, contribute to that country's future. Questions also came forward focusing on the well-being of the adopted children in their new land and the ability of the adoptive parents to meet the special needs of such children (Bagley, 1993; Altstein & Simon, 1991). It is evident that the questions and concerns discussed in the early years of intercountry adoption are still being raised today, as indicated in the introduction to this thesis. Because of these concerns, organisations were formed in order to address the issues that were becoming apparent.

The International Social Services (ISS)

ISS was formed in Geneva in direct response to the increased number of refugees and homeless children created by the First World War. It is a non-denominational, non-political, voluntary group, which has its headquarters in Geneva. The basis of International Social Service is to offer skilled social work service to families and individuals whose problems cross international boundaries. From its origin, ISS was particularly concerned with the problems of refugees and migrants. The refugee situation after the Second World War enhanced the need for ISS due to the conflict of law between countries which affected migrants. These conflicts concerned marriage, divorce, and maintenance of dependants. It was during this period that ISS began to advise on and monitor intercountry adoption.

ISS saw its function, with regard to intercountry adoption, as one of finding suitable parents for a particular child, not finding children for prospective adoptive applicants. Placing the emphasis on the child's needs for a parent and not the adult's need to become parents was a vital changing point of view for that time and one that is fundamental to current practice, as discussed later in this Chapter. Detailed information was gained on both child and applicants in order to make a match. After the Second World War many matches were made with American couples with ISS being subsidised by the World Adoption International Fund (WAIF), a voluntary organisation based in Los Angeles, and by U.S. State Department branches. Children were placed from Germany, Austria, Greece and Italy. The Korean War and the 1949 revolution in China also created abandoned and/or orphaned children that were placed in foreign countries (Lewin, 1990; Bagley, 1993).

ISS also became increasingly aware after the Second World War that many adoptions had taken place across national boundaries and were not therefore subject to the same protocols and safeguards as local adoptions. Accordingly, ISS actively lobbied for urgent international consultation on intercountry adoptions. In 1956, representatives from the various member countries of ISS met and formed twelve principles as a guide to practice in intercountry adoption. The principles developed and implemented formed the basis of intercountry adoption and were the forerunners to the Leysin Seminar.

The Leysin Seminar (1960)

With the escalation of American agencies and solicitors specialising in adoption work it seemed that many adoptions did not meet adequate professional standards and concern was increasing as to the means by which children were being acquired for intercountry adoption. Many of the case histories showing the difficulties and

dangers of intercountry adoption are drawn from American experience. According to Bagley (1993:145):

> The rich, determined and childless American couples, with powerful lawyers at their disposal in both their home country and the country in which they wish to adopt a child are often a match for under-financed and under-staffed regional offices of international bodies concerned with child welfare.

Professionals involved in child welfare therefore came together to discuss issues surrounding intercountry adoption at Leysin in Switzerland in 1960. Approximately 80 participants from 16 European countries, the United Nations (UN), ISS and the International Union for Child Welfare were involved. The meeting was convened and financed by the United Nations in order to consider the problems caused by the growing number of intercountry adoptions and the possible legal, social and economic solutions. It was at the Leysin Seminar that the previous twelve ISS principles were further defined and they now underpin all international instruments dealing with this subject (see Appendix 1).

Considering that third world countries were the main providers of children in intercountry adoption it is interesting, as Bagley (1993) notes, that no third world countries were invited to attend this Seminar. Bagley (1993) does not discuss the reasons why this occurred. This apparent oversight raises questions to the standing that receiving countries gave, both to the views and concerns of the sending countries, as well as the perceived ability of the sending countries to present their own concerns.

The two main principles, as affirmed by the Leysin Seminar, are that: (1) adoption is the best substitute in the absence of care from the natural or extended family; and (2) the welfare of the child must be the principal objective at all times. The Leysin Seminar is an important landmark in the history of intercountry adoption because it resulted in a lengthy report, often referred to as an authoritative statement, which guides the current practice of intercountry adoption.

It was also an early structured attempt by receiving countries to place the needs of a child over the needs of adults.

Intercountry Adoption to the Present Day

The major receiving country for intercountry adoption today is the United States, which accounts for approximately half of all intercountry adoptions. Other major receiving countries are Canada, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland. As the following table shows, there has been a clear upward trend in the annual numbers of intercountry adoptions over the period 1993-1997 with the USA showing the greatest increase.

Table 1: Major Receiving Countries of Intercountry Adoptees 1993-1997

	1993	**1994**	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**
Canada	1740	2054	2022	2064	1799
France	2783	3075	3028	3666	3528
Italy	1696	1712	2161	2649	2019
Netherlands	574	594	661	704	666
Sweden	934	959	895	908	834
Switzerland	923	741	665	742	733
USA	7377	8333	9679	11340	13620
Total	**16027**	**17459**	**19111**	**22073**	**23199**

Source: UNICEF – innocenti digest (1999:3)

In the 1970s, concerns were again expressed at the mass exportation of children from economically developing nations into the West. Along with Western demand came a variety of agencies and intermediaries to meet it, similar to the occurrence after the two world wars. This development caused further concern that intercountry adoption, instead of being purely in the child's best interest, had become a lucrative profit-making activity involving major financial

interests. Children appeared to be mere commodities. This situation continued to occur into the 1990s, but by this time research had also begun to appear which substantiated the concerns.

In Albania, for example, in 1992 one international mission found evidence of children being handed over by birthparents for consumer goods (UNICEF 1992). Also in 1992 reports of baby abduction were reported in Honduras. Infants were abducted from poor families, hidden in 'fattening centres' and then sold to foreign couples for $5,000 each. This led to the Honduras Government halting all intercountry adoptions (UNICEF 1992). Similar situations occurred in Romania, the government of which also responded by stopping intercountry adoptions. New Zealand was one of the countries that Romania ceased to work with.

During the 1980s and 1990s the guiding principles, which emerged from the Leysin conference in 1960, were further refined and discussed in the hope that they would govern the practice of intercountry adoption so that situations similar to those noted above would cease to occur. The following are the main principles and standards that emerged and which are in practice today.

The United Nations Declaration 1986

The 1986 United Nations Declaration on Social and Legal Principles Relating to the Protection and Welfare of Children (Article 17), states:

> If a child cannot be placed in a foster or an adoptive family or cannot in any suitable manner be cared for in the country of origin, intercountry adoption may be considered as an alternative means of providing the child with a family.

This declaration aims to ensure adequate counselling and professional observation of those involved in the adoption. It also aims to protect the rights of the child and to prevent abduction and improper financial gain.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC) 1989

The provision of the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child specifically dealing with adoption is Article 21 (see Appendix 2). The Convention again reiterates that intercountry adoption is only an option when it has been established that no substitute family or other caring environment is available in the child's country of origin. Article 21 also states that "the best interests of the child" are "the paramount consideration" in any adoption and that safeguards and procedures are to be fully respected. Intercountry adoption is viewed as a last resort.

Article 20.1 of UNCROC corresponds to the right of the child "deprived of his or her family environment...to special protection and assistance provided by the state". New Zealand signed and ratified this Convention on 13 March 1993, the 131st country to do so.

The Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption 1993

The Hague Convention was adopted on 29 May 1993 and implemented on 1 May 1995. More than 60 countries took part in its drafting. The principal objectives are:

(a) to establish safeguards to ensure that intercountry adoptions take place in the best interests of the child and with respect for his or her fundamental rights as recognised in international law;
(b) to establish a system of co-operation amongst Contracting States to ensure that those safeguards are respected and thereby prevent the abduction, the sale of, or traffic in, children;
(c) to secure the recognition in Contracting States of adoptions made in accordance with the Convention.

The Hague Convention was designed to further promote and instil international co-operation relating to intercountry adoption and to give practical effect to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Responsibilities and tasks are shared among the states

of origin and the receiving states. One of the basic premises is that adoption is not an individual affair that can be left to the child's birthparents or legal guardians or to the prospective adoptive parents or other intermediaries. Adoption is a social and legal measure for the protection of children, therefore it should be the responsibility of the states involved to ensure that the adoption is in the child's best interest and his or her fundamental rights are respected. Article 30 of the Hague Convention requires contracting states to preserve ..."information concerning the child's origin" and to permit access to this information "...in so far as is permitted by the law of the State". New Zealand has not ratified this Convention but has agreed to act on the principles contained within it.

THE HISTORY OF LOCAL ADOPTION IN NEW ZEALAND

Having an understanding of the history of local adoption and adoption law in New Zealand gives a good background to seeing how intercountry adoption has evolved in this country and the beliefs this society holds regarding the concept of adoption.

In Western societies, adoption has focussed on legal ownership over a child (Campbell, 1957; Griffith, 1997; Iwanek, 1997). This derived from England during the 1850s when the industrial revolution resulted in religious or charitable institutions overflowing with abandoned or orphaned children. The processes of industrialisation and urbanisation left many people poor, homeless and unable to provide for their children. As the need for unskilled labour declined, the number of children in religious or charitable institutions rose. In order to relieve these organisations of this care, an indenture system was introduced where children were sent to the colonies (Griffith, 1997; Iwanek, 1997).

Iwanek (1997) writes that under the indenturing system, Canada, the United States of America, Australia and New Zealand received thousands of children who were able to provide needed labour.

These children were not always well cared for, however, and some groups in society, mainly with religious affiliations, became concerned over their exploitation and attempts were made to pass legislation to protect them.

Prior to the Adoption of Children Act 1881, there were no legal adoptions in New Zealand. Adoption was informal or contractual. Campbell (1957) comments that a system of voluntary guardianship evolved where children were cared for by foster parents in long-term family situations. Due to the lack of legal backing for these situations, there was concern that birth parents could re-appear in the child's life and demand custody in situations which were not in the child's best interest, especially where the child had bonded to a family for a period of years. Campbell (1957) further commented that a situation of extortion could occur between a worthless parent and the foster parents. When adoption situations were in dispute there was no specific law for the issues to be resolved through.

Such concerns over the lack of a legal safeguard led to a move towards an ..."inexpensive adoption law which would give security to the relationship between adopting parent and child and a more effective scope for the philanthropic activities of kindly disposed people" (Smith, 1921:165). In England, adoption laws were stalled till 1926 because of issues surrounding inheritance and class. In New Zealand these issues were of less importance therefore legislation occurred earlier. Reform groups in New Zealand believed that by placing a child in an upright, spiritual environment, any unsavoury parts of a child, which came from being born from illicit origins, would be lessened (Griffith 1997; Iwanek 1997).

Maori and Adoption

Adoption, as practiced today, was not a notion known in traditional Maori society. Prior to the arrival of Europeans, Maori children were seen as part of a tribal community and cared for by other members of

the extended family/whanau/hapu if the need arose. With the arrival of the European came British law that ensured such placements were given legal recognition by the Maori Land Court and the Native Land Act in 1909. This ended with the passing of the Adoption Act 1955, which then regulated all adoptions. Prior to 1963 The Maori Land Court had the power to make an adoption order where the child and at least one of the applicants were Maori. This power came under Section 21 of the Adoption Act 1955, but was later removed by Section 7 of the Adoption Amendment Act 1962 making all local adoptions, including Maori, heard in the Family Court. Under the Adoption Act 1955, Maori adoptive applicants, or any other applicants who wish to adopt a Maori child, must follow the same legal procedures as any other applicant for adoption. As with intercountry adoption, trans-racial adoption between Maori and European within New Zealand has also raised similar concerns.

Section 2 of the Adoption Act 1955 defines a "Maori" as a person who is a Maori within the meaning of the Maori Affairs Act 1953. Section 2 (1) of this Act was amended in 1974 and defines Maori as a person of the Maori race of New Zealand and includes any descendant of such person who considers her/himself to be Maori (The Department of Child, Youth and Family Services Adoption Placement Manual 1999).

The Statutory Acts of Adoption

> If adoption is to exist at all in a society where possession, ownership, and materialism hold sway it must be absolutely total and water tight. This has been the nature of the laws in England and the United States, and their colonies.
>
> (Griffith, 1996:3)

The above quote provides an insight into the thinking behind adoption in the late 1800s when adoption first became legalised.

1881 Adoption of Children Act

In 1881, New Zealand became the first country in the British Empire to introduce an Adoption Act. George Waterhouse M.P. introduced the Adoption of Children Act in an attempt to encourage people to take children into their own homes from an institution. The Act was strongly influenced by his Methodist faith. It provided full and secure legal rights to adoptive parents without removing the ability to find out the child's birth origin. The adopting parents' surname was conferred on the adoptee in addition to their birth name, and the file remained open to view. With the file open to view, the birth parents, adoptee and adoptive parents were able to find information on each other. There was no secrecy in adoption at this stage. The adoptee had to be under the age of 12 with the adoptor being at least 18 years their senior. Under the 1881 Act institutions could also adopt a child. When children were difficult to place only charitable institutions, usually church based, would provide the care required. Griffin (1997) writes that it was a genuine attempt to meet the needs of deserted children by giving them legal, social and economic security through adoption. Institutional adoption ended with the Child Welfare Act 1925 as the Child Welfare division took an increased responsibility for deserted children making the provision of adoption by institutions redundant.

1895 Adoption of Children Act

This Act increased the adoption age to less than 15 years of age and stated that a child over the age of 12 must consent to the adoption. The name of the adopting parents was conferred onto the child in addition to the birth name of the child, and there continued to be no legal secrecy in adoption.

The following are the two major pieces of legislation currently affecting adoption in New Zealand.

Adoption Act 1955

The Second World War resulted in an increase of ex-nuptial births and a subsequent demand for adoption placements for these children. Iwanek (1997) writes that politicians used highly emotive speeches to bring the increasing number of children in institutions, and their cost to the state, to the attention of the public. During this period influential theories, based on environmentalism, bonding and genetic studies, supported the belief that children could be reared by other families without any negative consequences. It appears that the prevailing attitude was that a child would take on the personality traits and intellectual ability of the adoptive parents, leaving the immoral traits of the birth parents behind. It is evident that during this period adoption was seen as the best option for children and a cure for the ill effects of immoral behaviour in society. It was also believed that birth mothers should be grateful to have the option of adoption and, therefore, should forget the child and begin a fresh new life based on good moral character. A belief prevailed that a successful adoption was one were the child was seen as if born to the adoptive parents and had no contact with the birth family. It is this attitude which led to the 'clean break' and secrecy approach which influenced adoption for the next 30 years. (Griffin, 1997; Iwanek, 1997). With the introduction of the Adoption Act 1955, the adoption file was closed to public view, the adoption age was increased to under 20 years of age, and the adopted child had their birth name permanently changed to the name of the adoptive parents.

Adult Adoption Information Act 1985

From the 1960s the clean break theory began to come under pressure and be challenged by professionals and people affected by adoption. Existentialism began to emerge which promoted the importance of knowing yourself, taking responsibility for your actions and having the freedom of choice. In 1984 Sorosky, Baran and Pannor reported on the feelings and attitudes birth parents had who adopted a child out. Research continued to emerge arguing that

birth parents had suffered severe emotional trauma through adoption and that this trauma continued to effect them throughout their lives (Sawyer, 1979; Langridge, 1982; Van Keppel, 1984). The studies confirmed a growing belief that secrecy in adoption did not work and that birth parents were not able to have a 'clean break' and continue as if they had never given birth to their child. Children who had been adopted, and were now adults, were voicing their need to find out their birth origin and stating that being brought up as if born to their adoptive parents had not been enough. With continued pressure from professionals and adoption support groups the Adult Adoption Information Act 1985 was passed which gave adopted adults (20 years of age) and birth parents the right to gain information about each other. It also gave parties the choice to maintain their privacy if they wished.

New Zealand society today has changed significantly since the 1950s, however, the 1955 Adoption Act remains relatively unchanged. The traditional ideals of the nuclear family and legitimate children have been challenged by de facto relationships, same-sex relationships, reconstituted families after relationship breakdowns and single parent families. Since the 1980s, secrecy in adoption is no longer practised, however it must be noted that, under the Adoption Act 1955, secrecy is still the law. It is only the policy of the Adoption, Information and Services Unit of CYFS, which allows parties in an adoption to have contact with each other. The Adoption Act 1955 is currently under review and has been for many years.

The current law regulating adoption in New Zealand is set in a number of pieces of legislation. These are the:

- Adoption Act 1955
- Adoption Amendment Act 1957
- Adoption Amendment Act 1962
- Adoption Amendment Act 1965

- Adoption Amendment Act 1987
- Adoption Amendment Act 1995
- Adoption Regulations 1959
- Adult Adoption Information Act 1985

The Law Commission Review on Adoption 1999

The Law Commission is an independent and public funded advisory body that was established by statute to review, reform and develop the law of New Zealand. The Minister for Justice requested the Law Commission to review the legal framework for adoption in New Zealand, as set out in the Adoption Act 1955 and the Adult Adoption Information Act 1985, and to recommend how the framework could be changed in order to address contemporary social needs. In October 1999 this Commission released a discussion paper called "Adoption Options for Reform" which looked at the issues surrounding adoption in New Zealand. This paper was formed to raise debate and questions and to give the Government recommendations towards the future direction of adoption in New Zealand for the purpose of changing the current Act. The discussion paper looks at retaining a modified version of adoption as well as abolishing adoption in favour of a modified form of guardianship. The Law Commission also called for submissions and comments on their paper from interested groups or individuals in order to present these to the Government. Although the Law Commission has completed the review, to date the Government has not acted on it.

HISTORY OF INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION IN NEW ZEALAND

The history of intercountry adoption in New Zealand is similar to that of other receiving countries. The Second World War brought orphaned or abandoned Polish children into New Zealand (Griffith, 1997). In 1962 the churches urged the government to allow 100 orphans from Hong Kong to be adopted into New Zealand. It appears, however, that there were far fewer children available than

was originally thought as wealthy Hong Kong couples were coming to New Zealand in order to adopt children (Else, 1990). Renewed calls to admit children for adoption also arose after the Vietnam War.

The late 1960s and early 1970s saw a steady decrease in the number of babies available for adoption within New Zealand. Financial assistance had become available for some women via the Domestic Proceedings Act 1968, which provided an avenue for women to seek maintenance from the father of their child(ren). If the woman was unmarried she needed either the father or the Court to make a declaration of paternity in order to gain maintenance. This situation changed in 1973 when the Domestic Purposes Benefit was introduced. The Act provided state financial support for single mothers, irrespective of whether or not the father was contributing to maintenance payments.

The introduction of the Domestic Purposes Benefit has been seen as a main factor behind the decline in adoption. This benefit may have contributed to the decline but as the number of children being adopted had started to fall in 1962, it is clear that other factors have also played a part. Since the late 1960s, birth mothers in New Zealand have had more options in a society that has become more accepting of solo parenting and children born out of wedlock, a society that has increased the availability of contraception and also removed the stigma of illegitimacy with the Status of Children Act 1969.

The need for potential adoptive parents therefore decreased but the needs of couples who were unable to conceive or bring a pregnancy to term to have a family of their own continued. This combination of trends created a situation where the number of prospective parents was far greater than the number of children available for adoption. Consequently, many prospective parents have sought children from overseas.

In the early 1990s when the media presented images of institutions in Romania and the children within them, intercountry adoption truly came to the attention of the New Zealand public. These images created a wave of humanitarianism as couples inquired on how to adopt them. However, Else (1991) wrote that images of Black children from Africa and Ethiopia did not appear to have the same result which suggests that 'race' and perhaps ethnicity are important considerations in the expression of people's humanitarianism. Efforts were made by various groups to put pressure on the New Zealand government to allow couples to adopt from Romania. The departments of Internal Affairs and Social Welfare came under increasing pressure from various politicians, personalities, the media and pro-intercountry adoption groups to fast-track the procedure for intercountry adoption and to privatise it. An attempt to pass legislation as part of a Law Reform Miscellaneous Provisions Bill was made in 1994 with ..."minimum publicity, minimal consultation and maximum speed (Griffith, 1997:246)." This attempt was not carried through as the parliamentary select committee felt that the Bill did not meet the standards of the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation (1993) in respect to Intercountry Adoption. Therefore the Bill was deferred until New Zealand was able to gain ratification of the Convention and produce a new Bill that would conform to the Hague Convention (Griffith, 1997).

The majority of intercountry adoptions in New Zealand are processed through the New Zealand Department of Internal Affairs, not CYFS. This is due to the adoption occurring in the country of origin and being processed through Internal Affairs in order to gain New Zealand citizenship by descent. This may change now that The Adoption (Intercountry) Act 1997 has come into force.

In 1998 there were 645 adoptions processed by the Adoption Information and Services Unit (AISU) of CYFS. Of these, 125 were placements of babies born in New Zealand and placed into families

unknown to the birth mother (stranger adoptions). In contrast there were 102 intercountry adoptions made under New Zealand legislation, up from 70 in 1997. The remaining number were mainly through parties known to each other, for example family placements, step-parent adoptions and adoptions where the birth parents choose the adoptive parents privately. In these cases the adoptions still need CYFS to report to the court on, but CYFS do not set the placements up. With a projected increase in intercountry adoptions and a continuing decrease in local adoptions forecasted, it appears that intercountry adoptions will soon out number local adoptions. This trend reinforces the need to examine the process of intercountry adoption in order to provide a safe and professional service in New Zealand. The majority of the remaining adoptions were placements made within families.

Intercountry Adoption in New Zealand and the Law

Under the Adoption Act 1955, adoption did not affect the nationality or citizenship of the adopted person. The adoptee's nationality remained their own. This changed in 1977 when Section 3(2) of the Adoption Act took precedence and stated that an adoptee could gain New Zealand citizenship either by the Adoption Act 1955 or by an adoption to which Section 17 of the Adoption Act 1955 permits. Under Section 17 adoptions made in a country other than New Zealand, but according to the law of that country, could be validated in New Zealand. Section 17 of the Adoption Act 1955 was introduced in response to concern that immigrants to New Zealand, who had adopted children in their country of origin, risked having those adoptions not recognised in New Zealand (Couchman, 1997). Today Section 17 is used to enable couples resident in one country to adopt a child resident in another country, and can apply to countries that are not signatories to the Hague Convention.

Adoption (Intercountry) Act 1997

The Adoption (Intercountry) Act 1997, which implements the 1993 Hague Convention and therefore applies to adoptions between countries that are signatories to this Convention, came into force on 1 January 1999. The Act also enables private agencies to become accredited in order to carry out functions under the Convention. This gives prospective parents an option of working with a government or non-government agency in applying to adopt from outside New Zealand. At the time of writing, CYFS is the only agency authorised to report on adoptions and completes this work internally not contracting out to other agencies.

The Adoption (Intercountry) Act gives a judge the discretion to refuse an overseas adoption subject to terms and conditions the judge thinks fit. The New Zealand court has no such discretion if an adoption complies with the provisions of section 17 of the Adoption Act 1955. In cases where intercountry adoptions are made overseas, CYFS may not be involved and therefore checks on the suitability of the applicants or the availability of the child being adopted may not be done. This situation can open the door to abuses occurring in this area and could lead couples into choosing countries to adopt from that are not signatories to the 1993 Hague Convention in order to have fewer barriers to overcome. In 1990 and 1991, prior to ratification of the Hague Convention by Romania, New Zealanders adopted 159 Romanian children. Since Romania ratified this Convention only 6 adoptions by New Zealanders have taken place from this country. As adoptions from Romania decreased, there was a dramatic increase of adoptions from Russia, which has not yet signed the Hague Convention. During the period of 1980-1994 there were 76 adoptions between New Zealand adults and Russian children. From 1994-1999 this had increased to 298 such adoptions. Couchman (1997:431) notes that Section 17 may fail to prevent:

- abduction of children for adoption

- adoption without consent of birth parents
- payment for adoption
- adoption by persons with serious criminal records
- adoption by the very elderly or the very young
- adoption by those with serious mental incapacity
- adoption by those with no means of financial support
- adoption of a large number of children by the same person/couple
- adoption by a parent with a terminal illness.

Through law and policy within New Zealand, which directs local adoption practices, the above factors are hopefully prevented.

Intercountry Adoption Policy of CYFS.

Current intercountry adoption policy for CYFS states that it is a service for children and should follow Article 21 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and The Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption:

> In countries where adoption is recognised and/or allowed, it shall only be carried out with assurance that the best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration, with the authorisation of the competent authorities and with appropriate safeguards for the child. (CYFS, June 1999)

The central authorities of both the sending country and the receiving country must be in agreement for the adoption to proceed.

The Process

In New Zealand there are three government departments involved in Intercountry adoption.

- CYFS, which reports on the proposed adoption by means of a Home Study on the adoptive applicants.
- The New Zealand Immigration Service (NZIS) which gives permission for the adoptee to enter New Zealand.
- The Department of Internal Affairs which can grant New Zealand citizenship to the adoptee.

CYFS works on a one to one basis with the government agency of the country of origin and with ISS in an attempt to protect children. The Department does not deal with adoption brokers or private agencies not authorised by government.

In order for a couple in New Zealand to adopt a child from overseas they must complete a series of three seminars, run by CYFS, that look at the issues of adoption both locally and intercountry. All applicants must undergo a police check and medical report, and three referees are sought. Once the seminars and checks have been completed couples must complete a Family Profile document (see Appendix 3). This is an in-depth profile on the applicants' life and is written by the applicants. The profile is given to their social worker who then, after a series of interviews, writes the Home Study which is the social worker's report on the applicant's circumstances and their suitability with regard to the proposed placement.

The paperwork and documents needed for an intercountry adoption differ from country to country. Each sending country states its own requirements. Once the documents the country has specified, and the documents required by CYFS, have been completed they are forwarded by CYFS to the sending country. With the paperwork and documents completed and despatched, a fairly uniform procedure is then followed within countries that are signatories to the 1993 Hague Convention. The sending country matches a particular child with the applicants and sends a report and photographs of the child to CYFS. After reading the report the applicants decide on whether they wish to adopt this child, and if they decide to proceed will travel to the sending country to meet the child and complete legal proceedings in that country. An adoption order is made in the sending country and/or applied for on return to New Zealand in the New Zealand courts. The New Zealand Immigration Service enables the child to enter New Zealand by issuing a visa on evidence from CYFS, or the sending country, that an adoption has either taken place or will take

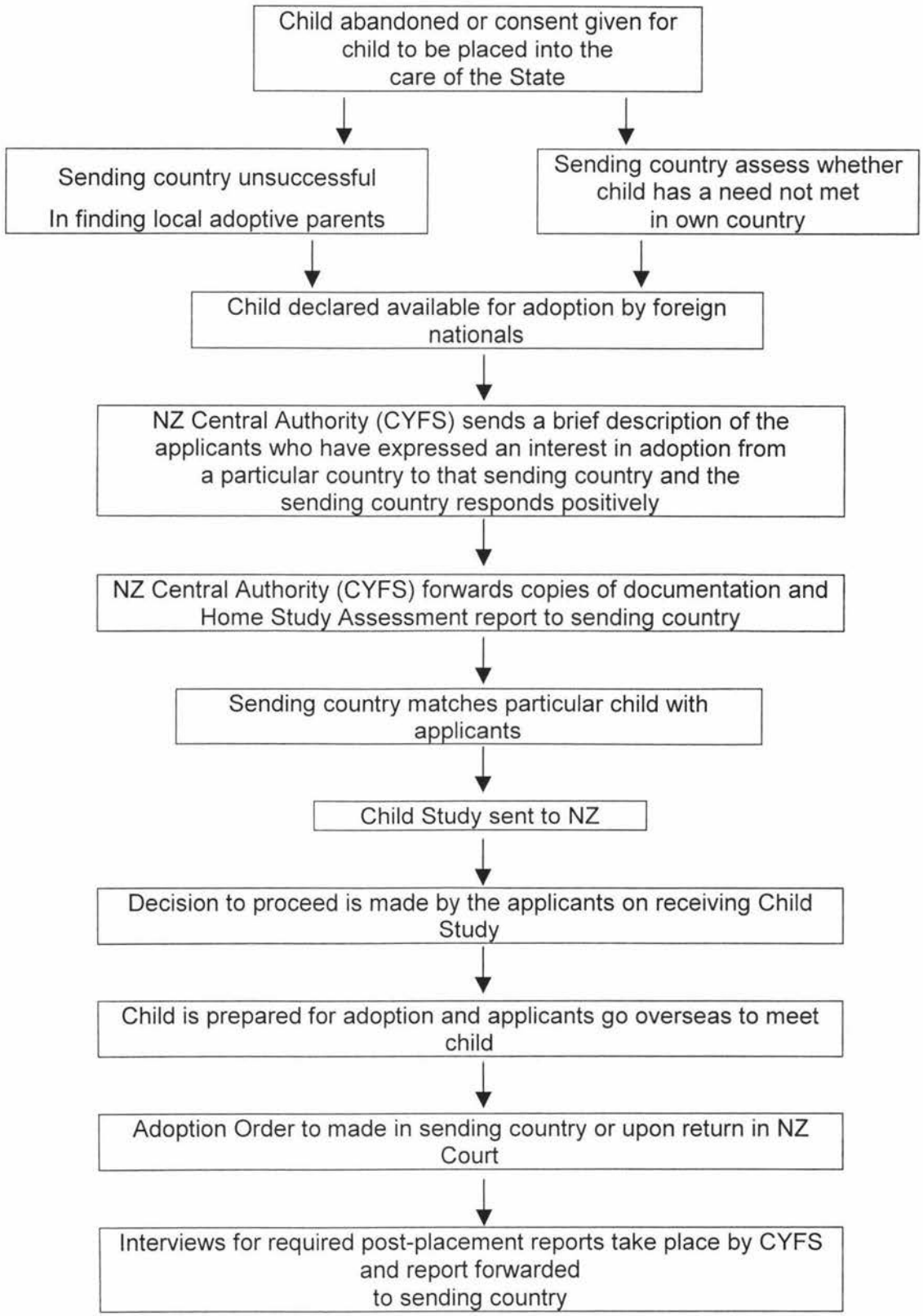
place. Once the adoption has been completed in New Zealand, citizenship can be applied for if not already granted. This process may appear simple and straight forward but in reality (depending on the country the applicants choose) it may take from 6 months to over 2 years to complete. An example of the current process for intercountry adoption, through CYFS, is on page 32.

If couples choose to adopt from Russia, which is not a signatory to the 1993 Hague Convention, the process follows a different route. Applicants still need to attend the seminar programme with CYFS but once they gain the CYFS Home Study the majority approach ICANZ. (Intercountry Adoption New Zealand) to facilitate the adoption.

ICANZ (Intercountry Adoption New Zealand)

ICANZ is a voluntary organisation with no statutory powers that was formed in 1989 by Mr and Mrs Gardyne who had adopted children from overseas and wanted to assist other prospective adoptive couples. ICANZ has an office in Auckland dealing with couples from throughout New Zealand. Once applicants have their Home Study and approval from CYFS, ICANZ acts in a type of brokerage role with the sending country. ICANZ tends to work mainly with couples wanting to adopt from Russia and for a fee assists in organising the paperwork needed, flights, accommodation in the sending country and interpreters. The applicants adopt the child(ren) in Russia under Section 17 of the Adoption Act 1955 and, therefore, as Russia is not a signatory to the 1993 Hague Convention, the applicants do not have to adopt the child(ren) in the New Zealand court on their return to New Zealand.

Figure 1 CYFS Intercountry Adoption Placement Process



(August 2001)

CONCLUSION

In the last few decades intercountry adoption has become increasingly apparent worldwide. In this chapter I have outlined the historical origins of intercountry adoption as well as the present situation of this phenomenon and discussed some of the issues surrounding the adoption of children from one culture into another.

Intercountry adoption tends to occur between wealthy countries (receiving states) and poor third world countries (sending states). Concerns have arisen over the means by which children are obtained in intercountry adoptions and whether the rights and needs of these children, as well as their birth families, are being protected. It appears that these concerns and issues, which were also raised in the early years of intercountry adoption after the First and Second World Wars, are the same concerns and issues being raised and addressed today. An organisation that was formed in those early years, and which is still operative today, is The International Social Services (ISS). Other main forums and conventions that have occurred over the years include The Leysin Seminar in 1960, The United Nations Declaration of 1986, The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC) 1989 and The Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption 1993. The above were attempts to install some safeguards for children involved in intercountry adoption and to gain a uniform process for intercountry adoption. UNCROC and The Hague Convention are the main documents that advise or guide practice in the area of intercountry adoption within New Zealand today.

The history of local adoption in New Zealand was also discussed in this chapter in order to give an overview of how adoption has become an institution within our society. New Zealand led the way in instigating adoption law in the western world where the focus tended to be on legal ownership of a child. Adoption has been a legal situation within New Zealand since 1881. The statutory acts of

adoption, which inform current local adoption practice have been outlined.

As with other countries, intercountry adoptions in New Zealand have often occurred following a war in a third world country. Another factor, which caused an increase of intercountry adoptions in this country, was a decrease in the number of children available for adoption locally. This section also identifies and outlines the Acts of Law in New Zealand which have allowed adoptions to occur from overseas and some of the pitfalls which have occurred with this. The process and policy of the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services (CYFS) is also discussed in the final section, as is the origin and function of an organisation known as ICANZ. It is the processes within both of these organisations that the couples in this study had to complete in order to gain an intercountry adoption.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW ON COUPLES EXPERENCES OF INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

This chapter reviews the literature available on the experiences of couples throughout the process of intercountry adoption. There appears to be a lack of research material in this area, both within New Zealand and overseas, so I have also included research on the intellectual, cultural and health development of children adopted from one culture into another and briefly discussed attachment theory. I have included these issues as part of the process of intercountry adoption entails adoptive parents discussing and coming to terms with these matters in order to assist them in their decision making. The underlying aim of the review was to gain a better understanding of the process of intercountry adoption and the issues involved. This understanding informed the design of the study reported in later chapter and assisted in the analysis and interpretation of the results obtained.

Much of the literature available in New Zealand tends to be in the form of newspaper and magazine articles. These articles are often based on ad hoc interviews between reporters and couples who have completed an intercountry adoption. In the absence of other research I have included this material because it illustrates aspects of the actual experiences of couples who have adopted from overseas, and because it shows the view presented to society by the media.

The chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section concentrates on literature from New Zealand on intercountry adoption, including the media articles on the experiences of New Zealand couples. The second section focuses on literature from overseas.

New Zealand Research

Smith (1997), using a demographic analysis, studies the profiles of parents in an attempt to show the general characteristics of people who adopt from overseas. Her study was based on 85 couples who had their Home Studies completed by the Adoption Information and Services Unit of what was formerly The Children, Young Persons and Their Families Service (CYPFS), now known as The Department of Child, Youth and Family Services (CYFS). Smith found that her results followed international trends.

1. The majority of parents were between 30 and 40 years of age. The average age for women was 39 years with a range from 25 to 57 years. The average age for men was 42 years with a range from 26 to 63 years.
2. A high percentage of the couples were tertiary educated and in highly skilled jobs. There was a higher skill level for non-relative (adopting a child that is not related to the couple) intercountry adoption compared to relative (adopting a child who is a relation) intercountry adoption.
3. Combined annual incomes were well above the average at $62,800 pa for non-relative and $42,200 for relative intercountry adoption.
4. They were predominantly couples who had been married for an average of 10 years with a range from 1 – 24 years.
5. Two-thirds of the couples had prior parenting experience.

Personal Experiences of Adoptive Parents

The personal experiences of adoptive couples involved in intercountry adoption highlight a number of different themes. For example: what motivates couples to adopt from overseas; the difficulties experienced in New Zealand through the adoption process; and the difficulties experienced in the sending country during this process. These themes formed the foundation for my research.

The assessment process for intercountry adoption can be very intimidating for prospective adopters. Howe (1996) writes that having to be subject to an assessment in order to become a parent can be seen as unfair compared to the majority of the population who can become parents more or less at will. According to Howe, prospective applicants have a variety of feelings in regard to the assessment process. Some see it as a positive learning experience albeit a demanding one. Others view it an intrusive game that has to be played with the correct answer in order to gain a child. The assessment process can also cause distress as the applicants have often already dealt with the emotional stress of infertility and now they find that their alternative to childbirth has obstacles.

Knoll and Murphy (1994) bring a variety of experiences of intercountry adoptive parents together in their book. Two common themes are evident throughout this book, the first of which concerns the reasons why couples chose to adopt intercountry. Consider, for example, the two following quotes.

> Another reason why we went international is that we were uncomfortable about the birthparent issue. We had concerns with domestic adoption in that respect, not knowing what a relationship with a birthparent might be. With intercountry adoption, we knew that issue would probably not be there for us (Knoll and Murphy, 1994:5-6)

> We decided two and a half years ago to have a second child. We wanted a larger family. But I was forty-four, my wife was thirty-nine, we'd had some problems having a biological child, and my wife hadn't particularly enjoyed childbirth. Also, philosophically I'm a believer in "one per couple." So for several reasons we decided that adoption would be best. As for the decision to go intercountry, domestic adoptions seemed fraught with pitfalls, healthwise and legally. And I guess you could say that this kind of adoption makes a statement about our lives, our kind of "unitarian" belief in "one world, one people" (Knoll and Murphy 1994:10).

As illustrated in the first quote, not having to deal with the birth family of a child was a common factor behind choosing intercountry adoption. The second quote also shows motivational factors of age and humanitarian beliefs. Due to their older age, however, they had

experienced infertility problems. Whether the infertility came before their 'unitarian' belief or vice versa is not shown. Motivational factors, as portrayed in these quotes, raise the question as to whether the focus is on the best interest of the child or on the adoptive applicants. It will be of interest to establish if these factors are evident within this study.

The second theme concerned the trauma, stress and length of the adoption process; as illustrated in the following quote (Knoll and Murphy, 1994:71):

> I had envisioned this adoption to be a spiritual journey. But in reality it was a very stressful experience. The idea of it was spiritual, not the trip itself. The day I got to Moscow, a Russian editorial appeared in the newspaper questioning the practice of "selling" Russian children to foreigners. In response, 'the oblast', or county commissioner, put a moratorium on children under his directorate ....because of all the difficulties, I felt I was robbed of anticipation. There was just the most incredible feeling of desperation.

The above quote also shows that couples may feel disappointed and/or disillusioned with the adoption process by not being well prepared for the reality of what it entails. This could have a negative impact on the future success of the placement.

Articles in magazines and newspapers also tend to support the two themes concerning the motivation and trauma couples experience with intercountry adoption, as described in the book by Knoll and Murphy (1994). They also bring three further themes into focus. First, that it is the woman in each couple who is the main force and participant in the adoption. Second, they indicate an apparent conflict between Social Welfare and ICANZ. Finally, they reveal that the issue of intercountry adoption is a very emotive one for those involved. These themes are illustrated below.

In an *Evening Post* article, Angela Ots (1992) reported on "Deborah and Brian" who adopted two girls from Romania at 11 weeks and nine months of age. This couple stated that they did not go through

Social Welfare as they believed it was not supportive of intercountry adoption; "Social Welfare believe the placement will collapse and the Government will have to pick up the pieces". Deborah added that this was an "...insulting attitude to take. We've all gone there and done something difficult and courageous. We've all promised to bring them up". Deborah further commented that the birthmothers of her children were "ecstatic" to have their children adopted and that she and Brian had "adults begging us to take their children out of the country, out of poverty" (Ots, 1992:27)

The article also made mention of the conflict between Social Welfare and ICANZ in intercountry adoption. A representative from The Department of Social Welfare was quoted as stating that instead of taking children out of their culture, money could be put into the country to support families.

> Adoption is a service first and foremost for children who don't have a family. It is not a service for childless couples. (Intercountry adoption) might be the answer for some children but it's not going to change the situation.
>
> (Ots, 1992:27)

On the other hand, a representative from ICANZ was quoted as saying that:

> We believe every child should have the right to a family life. How does money give kids love? They want parents who will adore them, which we have.
>
> (Ots, 1992:27)

Jan Keir (1990), from the *Otago Daily Times* reported on Mr and Mrs Gardyne adopting a child of African descent from Colombia. This couple had been working in Bogota with the Youth with a Mission programme. They had three children, born from a previous relationship, and stated that they "wanted to give a home to an abandoned child." The reporter wrote of the frustration the Gardyne's experienced trying to find out the process to adopt

> Next came weeks of finding the right channels to pursue and, combined with language difficulties, it was a frustrating process.

> The Gardynes had come to realise that being told "no" was really only the cue to try again.
>
> (Keir, 1990:6)

The experiences of the Gardyne's prompted them to set up ICANZ to assist other New Zealand couples adopting orphaned or abandoned children from overseas.

The article stated that this couple wanted to keep the child "in touch" with his culture. They did not clarify how this would be achieved other than by stating: "He has both Colombian and New Zealand birth certificates and passports and he is soon to get a Colombian identity card" (Keir, 1990:6) Mr Gardyne was reported as saying:

> It upsets me to hear people sitting in an office coming up with the culture argument for them as individuals. Culture is important, but to an abandoned child culture has no meaning because wherever you go the institutions are all the same. The Romanian orphanages are no different to those in Colombia.
>
> (Keir, 1990:6):

After watching "heart-wrenching television pictures of the children in Romanian orphanages" the Gardyne's decided to adopt from Romania. Finances were a major concern but they hoped to secure "sponsorship" to pay for their trip.

Amanda Cropp (1990) of *The Dominion*, reported on two couples adopting from Romania. The wife of the first couple was in Romania for 10 weeks arranging the adoption of two children, aged four and seven years, while her husband was in New Zealand looking after their four-year-old son. The husband was reported as saying (Cropp, 1990:12) "We have always wanted to adopt more children but there were none available in New Zealand." The article stated that his wife had visited the orphanage regularly in Romania for several weeks. Intercountry adoption in this case seemed to be a second choice as they had been unsuccessful in seeking to adopt in New Zealand.

The second couple in the article by Cropp, Mr and Mrs Clarke had adopted a five month old girl from Romania. Mrs Clarke had remained in Romania for about six weeks trying to have the adoption recognised by New Zealand and to sort out the paperwork while her husband returned to his employment. Mr Clarke stated that they were unable to have children of their own and had mortgaged their home to finance the adoption. "They believed they would not be able to adopt a child in New Zealand" (Cropp, 1990:13). Again this article indicates that intercountry adoption was not a first choice for the couple concerned. In this case, adopting a child intercountry was the third choice behind having a biological child or adopting a New Zealand child. It also shows that the wife was the main organiser of the adoption as the husband left her in the sending country to complete the adoption process on her own.

Barbara Webb (1991) of *The Evening Post*, wrote about a Mr and Mrs Smith adopting a 22 month old girl and a two and a half year old boy from Romania. Webb wrote:

> It is a long way from Upper Hutt to Bucharest and for the 48 tedious hours of their journey they thought of little other than the choice they had to make: how do you select one child over another? They had no preconceptions other than wanting a boy and a girl.
>
> (Webb, 1991:27)

Mrs Smith commented:

> We saw other, healthier babies but for some reason we said no; we wanted that little girl. There was a shouting match between our translator and the pediatrician, who was running a racket, selling babies to France. Rosa (the child) had a young sister, 10 months old, who had just been adopted by an American couple before we got there.
>
> (Webb, 1991:27)

Mr and Mrs Smith met the mother of Rosa, who liked the couple "and told them the child was theirs." They choose their son Harry from another orphanage that they had heard about from an American couple.

> The doctor didn't want to show us any of the children because she thought we were American, but when our translator told her that we had come all the way from New Zealand she softened up.
>
> (Webb, 1991:28)

Due to paperwork and disputes in Romania which held up proceedings, Mr Smith returned home after two weeks leaving his wife to complete the process by taking four further trips north with a translator, car and driver in order to obtain the documents to adopt Harry.

Again this article shows that the wife was left alone in the sending country to complete the adoption process. More importantly, it also indicates that there were some intercountry adoptions occurring that were based on corrupt practices which exploit the children and their birth parents. Concerns over these situations were discussed in Chapter 1 as were the steps put in place to stop this activity. Unfortunately, even with the safeguards in place, it has not been clear from the literature that such activities have stopped.

Cheryl Lilly (1994) in an article in *North and South,* reported on Mr and Mrs Washington, a couple who had been childless for 14 years because of an infertility problem. Mrs Washington said they first thought of adopting from Romania in 1989 when the media first "...shone on the squalid Bucharest orphanages overflowing with grossly deprived children" (Lilly, 1991:81). They adopted a boy aged two weeks from Romania, and later a girl aged 11½ months from Russia. Mrs Washington travelled overseas to adopt their daughter while her husband remained in New Zealand looking after their son. At the time of the article they were currently preparing to adopt another girl, six and a half years of age, from Russia. Mrs Washington was planning their trip back to Russia in order to bring their new daughter home. Mr and Mrs Washington had gained sponsorship from private individuals to adopt further children. They felt that "their lives..[had] a sense of direction" (Lilly, 1994:83), and

that they knew now what the next 30 years of their lives would be for. Infertility and humanitarian factors seemed to be the main motivations behind this adoption, although it is unclear whether these factors were independent of each other. Here again the woman was the main organiser of the adoption and was alone in the sending country to complete the adoption process.

Donna Fleming (1992), writing for *The New Zealand Womens Weekly,* reported on Mr and Mrs Shapira who adopted two girls, aged 14 and 12, from Sierra Leone. This couple were unable to have children naturally so they had previously adopted one child from New Zealand and two from Romania. Mr and Mrs Shapira had heard about adopting children from Sierra Leona through an American agency. Just prior to the finalisation of the adoption a coup took place in Sierra Leone and all the paperwork was destroyed. The children were evacuated to America as citizens of Sierra Leone and were unable to get New Zealand visas. CYPFS opposed the adoption: "We got a negative report from CYPFS, which was just soul-destroying" (Fleming, 1997:20). However, after going through the New Zealand court an interim custody order was granted to the Shapira's and they were able to bring the children into New Zealand. This article indicates that the process was very stressful and that CYPFS were not supportive of the adoption, though no reasons were given in the article as to why CYPFS opposed this adoption.

An item in The *Press (*Anna Dunbar, 1998) reported on Mr and Mrs Julian who adopted two boys, 20 months and 3½ years, from Brazil. Mrs Julian had found out about ICANZ and on contacting this organisation she was advised that by adopting from Brazil they would not need to involve The Department of Social Welfare. After their initial application for two Brazilian children in April 1995, the Julian's experienced innumerable delays and disappointments before the boys arrived in December 1996. Although this article suggests that, due to delays and disappointments, the process was difficult for the

applicants it does not state what caused the delays and disappointments.

Dunbar's (1998) article also reported on Ms Axford, an unmarried woman in a relationship with her partner Peter for about 12 years. Ms Axford adopted a four-year-old Paraguayan boy, but stated:

> I would not have contemplated adopting a child if I had known how difficult, painful, and long the process would be – largely due to the obstructive tactics of the Christchurch CYPFS.
>
> (Dunbar, 1998:15):

However, despite the difficulties encountered, including the obstructiveness of CYPFS, she was nevertheless in the process of completing the paperwork to adopt a girl from Mexico, and commented:

> It will be hard to wait – knowing there is a child out there in desperate need of a parent, but I will manage – one thing I have learnt to have in abundance is patience.
>
> (Dunbar, 1998:15)

It could be suggested from the above comments that to some women intercountry adoption is like giving birth. You forget the pain and go on to have another child, as the desire for a child outweighs the difficulties of acquiring one.

Susan Campion (1998) writing for *The Dominion,* reported on Mr and Mrs Nathu adopting a two year old girl from India. Mr and Mrs Nathu, both of whom had a previous marriage, had five children. Mrs Nathu was reported as saying that she "...wanted to share her family's good fortune with a child needing a home" (Campion, 1998:13). She wanted to adopt an Indian child as her husband was "...half-Indian and she felt a strong affinity with the culture" (Campion, 1998:13). After gaining the support of her husband and children she initiated and became the main organiser of the process to adopt intercountry. However, according to Mrs Nathu, CYPFS "...appeared to put obstacles in their way, and the staff assigned to the job seemed young and slow, they [CYPFS] tried her patience to the end"

(Campion, 1998:13). On a more positive note, however, Mrs Nathu concluded that "CYPFS's treatment of prospective parents [was] now more co-operative and respectful than it [had been] four years ago" as at the time of the article she had reapplied to adopt further children (Campion, 1998:15).

Peter Saunders (1990) in an article in *The Evening Post,* reported on a couple adopting from Romania. This couple found that not all the babies were available for adoption: "Some mothers did want their babies but could not afford to keep them" (Saunders, 1990:29). Their babies went to orphanages for survival but the mothers (some visiting weekly) planned to take back their son or daughter as better times evolved. This couple spoke about their experiences and what they were reported as saying, I believe, sums up many of the experiences and views of couples who have adopted from overseas. These experiences and views include that women are the main organisers in an intercountry adoption, that the process is stressful and can be fraught with many problems, and that the idea of adopting a child intercountry can be a very emotive one based on Christian and humanitarian beliefs:

> My wife remains in Bucharest with a dozen other New Zealanders. They wait with children, paperwork being worked through.
>
> Getting a family in Romania is costly. There are travel and accommodation expenses, living costs and lost income. Internal costs in Romania help a little, but there are the expenses of paperwork at home, getting it interpreted and then authorised and notarised.
>
> It is a moving experience for prospective adoptive parents, yet I feel only those motivated correctly would make such an effort. To those who think about going to Romania on such a mission, I say go and do it if you feel the enthusiasm will carry the cost, the drag of the bureaucracy and the emotion of so many children in need. And to those who oppose such excursions on the grounds of cultural crashing, I can only point out that some see it differently, and maybe we cannot all agree.

> But Romania has hundreds of thousands too many children. Offering a few homeless ones a new life has more to do with Christian values and even human rights than a change of "culture" from a dirty cot in an over-crowded orphanage to a loving home and nutrition.
>
> (Saunders, 1990:30)

OVERSEAS RESEARCH

As in New Zealand, there appears to be little overseas research on the experiences of adoptive parents, or the adoptive mother in particular, throughout the adoption process. This section of the chapter leads with research findings on the adoptive parents. The findings can be grouped under the following three themes: motivation, preparation, and the type of child chosen by adoptive parents.

Adoptive Parents: Motivation

Hoksbergen (1997) notes that for 85-95 per cent of adoptive parents the main reason behind pursuing an intercountry adoption is the couple's inability to have biological children. Another main reason is based on a humanitarian belief that they will help a child in need. This view is supported by Bachrach et al. (1991) who found, through a national study on adoption seeking behaviour, that 94 per cent of Caucasian women sought to adopt due to fertility impairment or unmet fertility desires. Infertility, as a major motivational factor, is also suggested in research by Justice (1996) who studied couples who had applied to adopt and had been approved in the Netherlands during the years 1988-1995. The results showed that 30 per cent of couples did not proceed with the adoption process if they had been able to conceive naturally or via in-vitro fertilisation (IVF). Evidence also suggests that a large majority of Caucasian adoptive parents prefer Caucasian infants without disabilities (Feigelman & Silverman, 1983; Harper, 1994).

Research from overseas supports the New Zealand findings of Smith (1997) by showing that adoptive parents are about eight to ten years

older than biological parents, that they are from a higher socio-economic situation and have gone to great lengths to adopt a child (Hoksbergen et al., 1988, 1997; Jaffe, 1991; Marcovitch, 1995). Due to the lengths that adoptive parents will go to and the hurdles they will overcome in order to adopt, Hoksbergen (1997) believes they have high expectations with regard to both their ability to parent the child and the child's ability to adapt and bring subsequent family happiness. However, as Hoksbergen (1997:149) points out:

> Research as well as clinical practice show that the stronger and more clearly defined the expectations of the parent, the greater the chance that they will eventually need to turn to professional assistance for guidance.

This gives rise to a concern as to whether couples are adequately prepared for adoption and are made aware of the issues pertaining to parenting a child from another culture and from an institutional setting.

Adoptive Parents: Preparation

This concern is voiced by Rosenwald and Hoksbergen (1997). They assert that often adoptive parents of the 1970s and 1980s believed that children, adopted from overseas, could overcome any earlier traumatic experiences by having their new parents show love and care. However, Rosenwald and Hoksbergen (1997:159) found that this did not prove true and that in fact a number of adoptive parents became very disillusioned about the ability of their children to overcome earlier trauma and were, therefore, unable to cope with those children. "Psychic homelessness" was a term coined to describe children who, despite the love and care of their adoptive parents, were unable to form close attachment to their new families.

Rosenwald and Hoksbergen (1997:161) further argued that the attachment patterns in adoptive parents should be assessed. Their usage of attachment patterns considered how secure or insecure the applicants were within themselves and as a couple. They questioned whether the success of an intercountry adoption could be influenced

by how secure the adoptive parents were. They concluded that more attention should be focused by the relevant agencies or authorities on assisting the applicants in exploring and understanding their personal sense of well-being as well as attachment to their partner, other people and to places, instead of the current focus on age, finances and health alone.

Adoptive Parents: Types of Child(ren) Chosen

In the New Zealand literature Else (1991) wrote that the images of Black children, orphaned or abandoned in Ethiopia and elsewhere in Africa, did not appear to have the same effect on prospective New Zealand Caucasian adoptive parents as such images of Caucasian children did. Overseas research supports this, as evidence shows that a large majority of Caucasian adoptive applicants prefer Caucasian infants without disabilities (Feigelman & Silverman, 1983; Harper, 1994), which suggests that adoptive applicants want children who look similar to themselves and will be without any major issues.

If adoptive applicants do want children like themselves and without any major issues, how realistic is this and what are some of the issues that adoptive parents may face with their child(ren)? Some of the development and adjustment issues that can occur with children from an orphanage, or similar type of institution, are identified and discussed in the following pages. Particular attention is given to five areas of development: psychological, intellectual, behavioural and social, health and cultural. It appears to be vital that adoptive applicants are aware of these issues because it will help them to make an informed decision on whether they will be able to parent a child from another cultural and institutional background. Adopting a child from one country and culture to another is life changing for both the child and the adoptive applicants. Making this decision is left to the adoptive applicants as the child does not appear to have a choice in this matter, yet it is the child's life that can be most affected.

DEVELOPMENT AND ADJUSTMENT ISSUES

The following is a brief summary of some of the major findings in the areas of development and adjustment of children who have been adopted intercountry. It is not intended to be a comprehensive guide to the issues experienced but a brief overview of the issues and difficulties raised in the Literature that prospective adoptive parents should or do need to consider and be aware of as part of the process of intercountry adoption. In particular, attention will be given to issues and difficulties associated with a child's pre-adoption institutionalism (i.e. in an orphanage, hospital or similar place). It should be noted, for example, that all Russian and most Romanian children adopted by New Zealand couples in the early 1990s, came from institutions.

Psychological Development

Early research overseas tended to focus on the psychological effects of intercountry adoption. Clinical studies examining short- and long-term effects in institutionally reared children focused on maternal deprivation as the major element leading to a variety of harmful effects (Bowlby, 1951; Goldfarb, 1944, 1945). However, the experiences included under the term "maternal deprivation" varied considerably as the children in these studies also lacked fathers, siblings, and a family environment. The issue, therefore, can be seen as one of "attachment" or lack of it.

Goldfarb (1943; 1945) also described persistent cognitive and affective defects in children whose early years were spent in institutions, even when they were later reared in foster homes. The extensive deprivation of children in an institution was attributed to the lack of an attachment figure in the institutional setting. Goldfarb (1945) argued that this was extremely detrimental to the psychological growth of these children as well as irreversible (see also, Bowlby, 1951).

In an experiment by Skeels (1966) it was found that orphanage children who were transferred to an institution for mentally retarded adults were more likely to develop normally, to eventually leave the institution, and to become fully contributing members of society than their peers who remained in the orphanage. Skeels attributed this development and outcome to the fact that in the institution for mentally retarded adults, the children received affection and attention. It is not clear from this study whether it was a lack of affection and attention per se or affection and attention from a primary caregiver/attachment figure that was the crucial deprivation in early institutional care.

Later clinical studies began to challenge the findings of earlier studies on the long-term damaging effects of early institutional care. Dennis (1973) studied 89 children adopted from a Lebanese institution by both Lebanese and American families and found that although children who were placed in adoptive homes after the first two years of life showed impairments of intellectual and social abilities, earlier adoptions were more successful and showed little impairment. From this research it appears that the age of a child at placement and the period of time spent in an institution are fundamental to their later development and adjustment.

Intellectual Development

Tizard and her colleagues conducted a series of studies with a group of children in the Netherlands who, during their early years, lived in institutions and were subsequently adopted or restored to their biological parents. Within these institutions, children experienced repeated separations from caregivers and had limited opportunities for gratifying social experiences. Although these children were described as being significantly less friendly than children brought up in their own homes, only slight retardation was apparent at two years and no significant language or intellectual retardation was apparent at three years of age (Tizard & Joseph, 1970). Parents reported that

by four and a half years of age, earlier indications of language retardation were no longer evident and most of the children were believed to have formed close attachments to adults (Tizard & Rees, 1975).

Hodges & Tizard (1989) found that the largest gain in IQ occurred in children placed in adoptive homes between the ages of two and four and a half years. This finding is consistent with earlier studies (e.g. Dennis, 1973) showing that the IQ scores of children adopted after infancy tended to be slightly lower than those of children adopted in infancy.

Further evidence suggests that educational attainment is higher in children placed earlier in adoptive homes than in children placed later (Verhulst et al., 1990a). Scandinavian studies reflect this finding, specifically that children adopted from foreign countries after the age of two tend to have deficiencies in their vocabulary and difficulties with writing compared with children adopted from age 0-2 (Andresen, 1992). As Kim (1977) suggests, interruption of first language development in children placed when older may explain the deficiencies in subsequent reading and writing tasks.

Behavioural and Social Development

Rathburn et al. (1958; 1965) published data on 35 refugee children brought to the United States of America from Europe and Asia. The age range in this study was five months to 10 years. In their follow-up, four levels of adjustment were designated: adequate (49 per cent); problematic (30 per cent); superior (15 per cent); and disturbed (6 per cent). They found that the older the child was at placement, the more problems the child incurred adapting to their new situation.

Verhulst et al. (1990b) conducted an epidemiological study of 2,148 international adoptees aged from 10 to 15 years in the Netherlands. They investigated the effects of age at placement on adoptee

adjustment. In general, their results confirmed that the older the child at placement, the greater the probability that the child would be reported as having behavioural and emotional problems or to perform less well in school. Within the infant adoptee group, however, children adopted in the first six months of life showed lower levels of successful adjustment than those adopted in the second six months of the first year. Verhulst et al. (1990b) also examined the interactions between gender of child and age at placement. They found that boys placed at older ages tended to show higher levels of delinquency and uncommunicativeness, while girls placed at older ages showed higher rates on depression, schizoid and cruel syndromes.

The general view is that the older the child at placement the greater the likelihood that problem behaviour will be reported. Most studies confirm that age of adoption is a salient factor in predicting behavioural adjustment. Both length of time that the initial behaviour problems persist and the incidence of the problem behaviours depend partly on the child's age at arrival (Kim et al., 1979; Verhulst et al., 1990a and 1990b). Children adopted at older ages are more vulnerable to behaviour problems with an increase in problem behaviour in children placed after the age of two.

Tizard and Hodges (1978) showed in a follow-up study of children adopted from an institution that when the children were eight years old, their teachers found them more problematic than did their parents. Teachers reported problem behaviour such as attention seeking, restlessness, and poor peer behaviour. These problems were described as "...an almost insatiable desire for adult attention" and a difficulty in forming good relationships with their peer group (Tizard & Hodges, 1978:45). The parents of these children did not see problem behaviour as an issue. It was further reported that at 16 years of age adjustment difficulties similar to those reported at four

and eight years, primarily in social and peer relations, were still evident.

Hodges and Tizard (1989) interviewed 16 year olds about problems in their relationships with their peers, parents and teachers, as well as emotional problems such as depression, worries, fears, and self-depreciation and ideas of reference. The adopted adolescents had a significantly higher total problem score than their non- adopted matched comparisons.

Harper (1994) stated that through her practice as a child psychotherapist she found children who had been adopted from overseas presented with a variety of behavioural problems. These ranged from "lying, sexual acting out and temper tantrums to developmental delays, difficulties in relating, fears and anxieties, issues of identity" and in some cases placement breakdown (Harper, 1994:20).

However, in a study which compared 36 older intercountry adoptees in the United States with matched American adoptees aged 4 to 12 years, Welter (1965) found no significant differences in the number of problems. That said, it was also found that the intercountry adoptees had fewer "intra - psychic - interpersonal" and more culturally related problems (Welter, 1965:354).

Westhues and Cohen (1994) reported on the subsequent adjustment of 155 international adoptees in Canada with results in contradiction to previous studies. They found that adolescent adoptees showed higher self-esteem than those in the general Canadian population and that their peer relations were similar to those in the general population. Concerns raised were with respect to adjustment in the areas of ethnic and racial identity (as in Welter's 1965 study).

In a study in Norway, Andresen (1992) used parent and teacher reports to assess 151 international adoptees between the ages of 12 to 13 years and 135 controls. Although the adoptees scored higher than the controls on total problems and on the hyperactive subscale, these were not significant differences. The most pronounced difference within Andresen's group of international adoptees was between boys and girls, with more problems being reported for boys than for girls.

Health Issues

The limitation and accuracy of medical information obtained from the child's country can be a concern to both the adoptive parents and health professionals.

Research conducted in the Netherlands since 1975 shows that intercountry adopted children are at a high risk of experiencing medical and/or psycho-social problems (Hoksbergen et al., 1988).

Similarly, a study by Verhulst et al., 1990) on 2,148 intercountry adopted children stated that according to adoptive parents, 45 per cent of the children had been exposed to a form of neglect with 13 per cent being abused to some extent.

Sorgedrager (1988) saw over 1,000 intercountry adopted children in his paediatrics clinic and conducted extensive medical examinations of each child over a one-year period. He concluded that about a quarter of the children had been seriously physically neglected and that almost all arrived with physical abnormalities or medical conditions. Sorgedrager also noted that the medical information that came with the children was very limited.

Two frequently reported health problems associated with institutionalised Romanian children are the prevalence of the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and the Hepatitis B virus (HBV).

According to the World Health Organisation, the incidence of paediatric AIDS in Romania reached 1,094 documented cases, with 683 infected children (62 per cent) living in institutions. Although adoptive parents were often reassured by negative screening results in Romania or by records of immunisation for Hepatitis B before adoption, a review of available Romanian records revealed findings that conflicted with post-neonatal diagnosis in the United States (World Health Organisation; 1996).

Cultural Issues

Wilkinson (1981) found from his research on Korean adopted children in Caucasian American homes that the children sometimes ignored or refused to acknowledge their culture of origin. Wilkinson stated that this was part of the child's process to obtain acceptance of their ethnicity. On the basis of his research he pointed to five stages of adaptation: denial, inner awakening, acknowledgement, identification and acceptance. He noted that these stages were typical but not compulsory.

A contrast to Wilkinson's (1981) findings, however, is provided by Feigelman and Silverman (1983) did a national survey of 372 adoptive families in the United States comparing and contrasting the long-term adjustments of Colombian, Korean and Afro-American intercountry adoptees with local Caucasian children adopted by local Caucasian parents. The results indicated that children's adjustments were generally similar in both groups and that Korean adolescents were better adjusted than their Caucasian adopted peers.

Concern has also been raised regarding the ability of adoptive parents to help their child adjust. Trolley et al., (1995) note that even when parents viewed the importance of their children knowing where they came from as instrumental in gaining their identity, only half saw it as relevant to their adjustment. A dilemma occurred for parents in trying to acknowledge the background of the child without making the

child seem too different to their peers. In other words, it was a matter of finding the balance between "denying", "acknowledging" and "stressing" the difference (Trolley et al., 1995:467-9).

With many of the children adopted from overseas exhibiting the issues described above, theorists are trying to understand why these issues occur. One of the main theories utilised in this area in that of attachment theory.

Attachment Theory

Attachment theory, as formulated by Bowlby (1951, 1969, 1988), suggests that a child's attachment to the primary caregiver, at an early age, influences their subsequent interactions and relationships with others. Bowlby (1988) states that a child is continually monitoring how accessible older 'attachment figures' (usually biological relatives such as the mother) are and then gains security and protection from these individuals. It is further argued by Bowlby (1988) and Ainsworth (1982), that all children become attached to a familiar figure and that the figure becomes a secure base to explore the external world from, and a safe place to which to return in stressful or dangerous situations. In other words, close attachment relationships experienced by children help them make not only sense of themselves but of other people and social interactions.

Ainsworth et al (1978) studied how infants coped with the stress of being left alone by their mother in strange situations and reached the conclusion that there are three types of attachment-responses in infancy. The infants have been categorised as either secure, avoidant, or anxious/ambivalent (Ainsworth, 1982). A fourth category of disorganised/disoriented has also been identified by Main and Solomon (1990).

It is not known how many children who have been adopted from overseas are suffering from an attachment disorder. The research

discussed in the preceding section, however, suggests that these children show considerable developmental and psychosocial impairment post placement, which could be attributed to this disorder.

The difficulty which may occur for adoptive parents of children from an institutional setting, or one where attachment was not achieved, is that the children may experience severe developmental delays affecting major behaviour patterns. Howe (1999:22) lists the following symptoms of an attachment-disorder:

Social

- Superficial and charming behaviour with strangers, grandiosity;
- Little eye contact;
- Poor peer relations;
- Fights for control over everything.

Emotional

- Indiscriminately affectionate with strangers;
- Inappropriately demanding or clingy;
- Lack of affection with carers;
- Resentment.

Behavioural

- High levels of anger and violence towards carers, especially mothers; oppositional behaviours;
- Restlessness
- Demanding
- Obvious lying; manipulative
- Sexual acting out;
- Stealing
- Preoccupation with fire, blood, gore and weapons;
- Cruelty to animals;
- High breakage rate of toys and objects.

Developmental

- No cause and effect thinking;
- Abnormal eating patterns and hoarding of food;
- Lack of conscience and moral sensibilities;
- Self-neglect, poor hygiene.

Attachment theory explains the above behaviours in terms of children trying to exert some early control over a world that is frightening and unpredictable. Research suggests that children, who have not formed a secure attachment, can learn to love and trust adults in a family setting (Federici, 1998). As growth and development continue throughout the life span, Federici (1998) believes that it is rarely too late for a child to change but it can take much energy, skills and time from the parent to get to this point. With regard to therapy, Howe (1999) suggests that an intense therapeutic relationship is required which has to be close, intrusive, nurturing and highly alert. Federici (1998) believes that the greater the understanding of what motivates these children, and the disorders of attachment and attachment therapy, the better equipped parents and professionals will be to help them.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter has been to gain a better understanding of the process and issues involved in intercountry adoption in order to design the investigation reported in later chapters and to assist with the analysis and interpretation of the data collected. To this end, the available literature on the experiences of couples throughout the process of intercountry adoption, as well as the issues that may occur with these children, was reviewed in this chapter. The key findings were as follows.

First, studies suggest that a typical group of people who apply to be intercountry adoptive parents are between the ages of 30-40, in professional employment (which is reflected in their high income range) and married.

Second, the New Zealand literature, which included articles in newspapers and magazines based on ad hoc interviews with people who have adopted children intercountry, revealed a number of common themes. These included that women had the major role in the organisation of the process to adopt intercountry, that there was often a conflict in attitudes and values between Social Welfare and ICANZ, and that the couples who adopt intercountry had deep emotional feelings. The articles also suggested that intercountry adoption was a third choice for many couples behind having biological children or adopting children from within New Zealand.

Overseas research on the experiences of adoptive parents was grouped under three main themes: motivation, preparation, and the type of child chosen by adoptive parents. The findings indicate that infertility and humanitarian beliefs are the main motivational factors behind an intercountry adoption. Whether infertility brings about humanitarian motives was not investigated. Concern was raised in some studies that couples may not be adequately prepared for the process of adoption or the subsequent parenting of children adopted from overseas. As part of this preparation it has also been suggested that the adoptive applicants should be assessed as to their own security as a couple and within themselves. With regard to choosing adoptive children, studies show that Caucasian applicants tend to prefer Caucasian children without disabilities.

Finally, the chapter concluded with a brief review of some of the development and adjustment issues that can occur with intercountry adopted children. The literature in this section suggests that an applicant's preference for children without disabilities maybe

unrealistic. Issues that can occur for these children fall into five main areas: psychological development, intellectual development, behavioural and social development, health issues and cultural issues. Attachment theory is also discussed as a means of understanding why the above issues may occur.

The literature review indicates that the intercountry adoption process is fraught with problems and issues that need to be thoroughly assessed and evaluated before proceeding with an adoption. This not only protects the child(ren) but also protects the prospective parents from a situation they are unable to cope with. As it appears that it is the women who are the main organisers of this process there is a need for further research into their experiences, what their role is and the support they need. In achieving this, both professional people working in this area and the women themselves, can be assisted in gaining a clearer understanding of both the intercountry adoption process and the issues involved.

CHAPTER 3 - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As indicated in previous chapters, there is little available research overseas or in New Zealand on the experiences of couples throughout the process of adopting a child(ren) from overseas. What there is does suggest, however, that the assessment process can be intimidating and may not address areas necessary to prepare the prospective parents adequately for an intercountry adoption. These findings and others in the literature raised questions for me as to how prospective parents in New Zealand, especially women, found the process of intercountry adoption and what issues may have emerged for them while they were involved in this process. The focus of this thesis concerns the experiences of such couples, in particular the women.

This chapter states the objectives of the thesis and describes how the research was conducted, including the analysis of the results. Particular attention is given to the nature of qualitative research design, the form and scope of the interview guide employed, and the process of data analysis and the issues involved in it. Ethical concerns are also discussed, as is a brief description of feminist theory and its utilisation in this study.

THESIS OBJECTIVES

This thesis has two main objectives. First, to highlight the role of the women (in married couples) applying to adopt intercountry. Second, to see if there is a difference between females and males in their perception and/or experience of the process and issues involved. Overall, this research seeks to increase women's visibility, to enhance our understanding of their perspective as adoptive parents of children from overseas and to highlight issues that the women have experienced in this process. If there is a gender differentiation, the intention is to also highlight this and bring it to the attention of future couples as an area to recognise and discuss. In attaining this

objective, the thesis not only has the potential to improve the current practice of social workers, who provide the education and preparation services to couples, but also to highlight areas for their future professional development.

METHOD

Qualitative Research

> Qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994:4).

For this study a qualitative research design has been followed. Qualitative researchers try to understand or attempt to interpret the actions of people by finding out how the subjects themselves interpret those actions. In order to achieve this, emphasis is placed on an in-depth and personal study of subjects in their own environment using a collection of empirical methods. These methods include the life history, the case study, personal experiences, in-depth interviews and observation (Patton, 1990). In this study I have collected qualitative data using in-depth, audiotaped personal interviews with the subjects (in their own homes and at times chosen by them) as well as making detailed case notes written during the interview and by recording my personal observations after each interview. Denzin and Lincoln (1994:2) describe the multiple methodologies of qualitative research as a bricolage and the researcher as bricoleur. The researcher uses a variety of strategies and methods to collect and analyse empirical materials to produce a "bricolage, that is, a pieced-together, close-knit set of practices that provide solutions to a problem in a concrete situation" (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994:4).

According to Lofland and Lofland (1984) there are four essential skills in gaining and presenting qualitative data. First, you must be close to your participants and their situation in order to understand in

depth what their experiences are. Second, you need to capture the perceived fact of what the participants have actually said or done. Third, you need to gain descriptions of participants' activities, interactions and settings, all of which form a major component of qualitative research. Fourth, direct quotations from participants are to be included which will incorporate the participants into the study and bring the research to life. Based on the experience and knowledge I have gained in my position as a social worker in the area of intercountry adoption, I felt I had the essential skills outlined by Lofland and Lofland to proceed with a degree of confidence in relation to the project's design and execution. Through this position I have been able to acquire a good knowledge base towards understanding what the experiences of adopting couples, and especially the women in such couples, may be. This enabled me to gain a level of interaction with the participants which is necessary for rich information to come forward from them and to be incorporated into the research.

Phenomenology

For my study I have chosen to follow the approach of eidetic phenomenology as its "task is to elucidate the general sense of the phenomena being investigated to yield a concrete descriptive analysis (Cohen & Omery, 1994:38)". Eidetic phenomenology follows the teaching of German philosopher Edmund Husserl who taught that people could only know what they experience by focusing on the perceptions and meanings that are awakened from their conscious awareness. In other words, people interpret events based on their own experiences and views. This comment also gives caution to the researcher to ensure that their own experiences and insights do not become an integral part of this research. As a social worker in the area of intercountry adoption I was very mindful of this issue. Although my position gave me a good understanding of the intercountry adoption process, it also created perceptions and ideas on this process that had to be acknowledged as my views and not

those of the participants. Any views I formed were not shared with the participants as I was very mindful not to contaminate the results or the participants' confidence in being able to share their own perspectives.

The aim of gaining the experiences of women who have adopted children from overseas was not to present the findings to future adoptive applicants as well as to the professionals who work with them in order to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the process involved. Using eidetic phenomenology assisted in the achievement of this goal by enabling me to gain personal descriptive results in a natural setting where the participates felt safe to share their experiences knowing what the outcome would be, and agreeing with this objective. It must be recognised, however, that in discussing the results and proposing possible explanations, Feminist theory has been utilised.

Theoretical Underpinning Of The Thesis

Although my aim in this thesis is to present the results in an atheoretical manner, I am aware that my own perspective and views will effect how the results are interpreted and discussed. The following section will briefly describe feminist theory as it informs my own perspective and, to an extent, the design of this research.

Feminist Theory

Gross (1992) states that in the early 1960's feminists began to query the images traditional theories portrayed about women and the feminine. At this stage feminists fought to include women in the contemporary theories as men's equals and to investigate issues of direct relevance to the lives of women. These included: the family, sexuality, domestic issues of the home and interpersonal relations (Gross, 1992). In studying issues relating to women, feminists tended to use the frameworks and concepts of traditional patriarchal theories. Some of the predominant theorists in feminist discourses at

that time included Marx, Sartre, Masters and Johnson (Gross, 1992). What was discovered, however, was that the inclusion of women as equals into patriarchal theory was not possible due to the rigidity of such theory. Gross (1992:336) explains that "the project of women's equal inclusion meant that only women's sameness to men, only women's humanity and not their womanliness could be discussed". Gross (1992:336) further argues that by adopting the male role for research women were becoming "surrogate men".

In order to overcome this situation, women began to question the methods and assumptions used in research from a feminist perspective. A basic shift occurred from a politics of equality to a politics of autonomy (Fonow, 1991). In so doing, women began to focus on making personal issues for women political ones in order to change specific oppression within society. Smith (1974) argues that in order to provide appropriate research on women it is necessary to adopt research strategies which document women's experiences in a way which reflects what is important to them. This study applies this view. In so doing, the opportunity can occur to make the personal problems and experiences of the women link to the division of responsibilities within the family, the economic system, and dominant belief systems within society. A vital component of contemporary feminist activity is in consciousness-raising where the personal experiences of women are shared in such a way that a pattern of common experience emerges. The design and analysis of this research allows this to occur for the women, and also provides a base for future research.

Research Design

This study focuses on 10 couples selected from Auckland, the Waikato, the Bay of Plenty and Wellington. Although I had initial concerns as to whether or not the number of couples chosen would yield sufficient information for the study, I felt that 10 couples would be an adequate number to gain a variety of backgrounds and

experiences without becoming too large a number for me to handle. I gained solace from Patton (1990:184) who wrote "There are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry". Patton (1990: 185) further suggests that:

> The validity, meaningfulness, and insights generated from qualitative inquiry have more to do with the information-richness of the cases selected and the observational/analytical capabilities of the researcher than with sample size.

I felt that the design of my research would gain sufficient information-rich cases with the number of participants I had chosen in consultation with my thesis supervisors.

Participant Selection

The selection criteria for the participants were:

- that they had adopted at least one child from overseas in the past three years;
- that the child was not known to them prior to the adoption;
- and that the couple had completed the information seminar on adoption through the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services.

I chose the above criteria to try and gain a more homogenous group which other women, thinking of adopting intercountry, could identify with. With the introduction of the Adoption (Intercountry) Act 1997, that came into force in 1999, more couples will need to involve CYFS in their decision making and preparation for intercountry adoption. It is, therefore, important that CYFS is aware of the experiences of the women/couples who have completed the process of intercountry adoption.

To gain my initial participants I relied on a purposeful sampling procedure. Katzer et al. (1982: 212) define purposeful sampling as a "nonrandom sampling technique in which researchers use their knowledge of a population to select a sample for a given purpose". The strength of purposeful sampling is that the researcher can gain

information rich cases to study in depth. Information rich cases are those that can best bring the issues of central importance to the research together in order for the researcher to study and gain insight into the topic or problem under investigation (Patton, 1990).

Access to the participants was initially gained through a local support group formed by parents who had adopted one or more children from overseas. Women in this group then suggested other couples they knew who met the criteria and who might wish to participate. This method has been described by Patton (1990:182) as "snowball or chain sampling". It enables information rich participants to be found as others, who know their ability, characteristics and likely value, recommend them. Due to this selection procedure participants came from more than one locale within New Zealand as the support group had links with similar groups throughout the North Island. Although this technique yielded information rich cases who proved to be excellent sources for data, a drawback was that it created a sample of couples who had only adopted from Russia and not from other countries. This feature reflected the composition of the support group at that time and the current trend (see Chapter 1) towards adopting from this country.

Once I had collected the names of 15 sets of couples who met my criteria, and who had indicated an interest in participating, 10 names were randomly drawn from a container. I choose to gain my sample this way in order to minimise selection bias and thereby to increase the credibility of my study. I acknowledge, of course, that the results cannot be generalised to the entire population of women who have adopted overseas. I choose 15 couples initially in order to have others available if the 10 I contacted were unable to participate. Once the final 10 couples had signed the consent form I contacted the remaining couples by telephone and informed them that they had not been selected and how the selection process had occurred. All of the 15 couples were aware of being in this selection process as

the support group, or the person who nominated them, had informed them and sought their permission.

Contacting Participants

Each participating couple was contacted by telephone and the purpose of the study was explained. The amount of time they would need for the interviews (1-2 hours for each of two interviews) was also explained. If the subjects were happy to take part they were then sent the Information Sheet and a Consent Form to complete (Appendix 4). Participants were also advised that they both needed to take part in the research (i.e. one spouse could not take part on their own). In the case of two of the couples contacted, the husband choose not to participate so I randomly drew 2 more sets of couples from the remaining 5 in the container. In both cases where the couple was 'disqualified', the women felt disappointed at not being able to take part in the research but understood my reasons for needing both partners. The two replacement couples contacted both agreed to participate in the study. Participants' were able to phone me in order to obtain answers to any queries they may have had. On receiving the completed Consent Form a time was arranged for the first interview.

Data Collection

Data was collected via in-depth interviews with the participants using an interview guide (Appendix 5). Most of the information was gained in this fashion during the course of two interviews held separately with each participant, each interview being of 1-2 hours duration. By not interviewing the couples together I aimed to gain individual views and not views agreed to as a couple. The data was recorded using a combination of audiotapes and detailed field notes for each interview. After each interview, observations made by myself during this process were also recorded. The interviews were successful in gaining relevant information, although some unexpected issues did occur.

The interviews did not go quite as smoothly as anticipated. While trying to conduct the interviews with some flexibility, questions and issues arose that took an unanticipated move away from the interview guide. On reviewing the interview transcripts and field notes after the first few interviews, topics which would have been useful to include in the interview guide were highlighted. Due to time restraints, however, they were not included in later interviews as I was unable to re-interview earlier couples. Doing a number of pilot interviews may have overcome this problem as I could have fine tuned the interview guide for the actual research participants, but this strategy would have posed the problem of finding an additional number of eligible cases.

The audiotapes were transcribed verbatim as soon as possible after each interview and coded using an initial previously given to each couple (e.g. Mr and Mrs A, Mr and Mrs B etc.). In order to maintain confidentiality, the transcribing of the interviews was undertaken by myself and only I knew the identity of each couple and what initial each couple were allocated.

The Interview Guide

The interview guide was divided into nine sections. The aim was to gain flexibility in the interviews by using a semi-structured approach so that any issues that arose could be further explored. Questions were kept open-ended in order to allow the participants to express themselves in their own words (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Patton, 1990). However, in trying to reach the objectives of this research the participants were asked to expand on some of their answers. Such probing, may be argued, could turn open-ended questions into closed questions (Patton, 1990) or it could assist the participant by encouraging more specific answers (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996).

Bearing the above in mind, the nine sections of the interview guide and its structure are summarised as follows:

- The first section was used to gain socio-demographic material on the subjects. This included age, ethnic identification, education, employment, marital status, number of children, previous experience of overseas travel, knowledge of languages other than English, and religion. With regard to the latter item, one of the main arguments for intercountry adoption is commonly based on Christian principles so I was interested to see how many couples considered that they were Christian. I was also interested in finding out what experience couples had in relationship to being parents and of travelling overseas.

- Section two focused on why the couple chose to adopt. The literature (see Chapter 2), for example, suggests that infertility is a main reason. I also wanted to know if there were any differences of opinion between a couple and if so how they resolved the issue. In essence, my intention was to identify the motive(s) for adoption and to determine if either one or the other member of a couple had more say in choosing to adopt.

- Section three was concerned with the process and issues a couple faced in coming to their decision to adopt intercountry. Why did they choose intercountry adoption instead of local adoption? Did differences of opinion occur regarding adopting intercountry? This section included the issue of which country to adopt from and matters of race and/or ethnicity.

- Section four focused on how the couple came to decide on the number of children they wanted to adopt and the gender of these children. What were the factors that influenced this choice?

- Section five considered experiences with the actual process of becoming adoptive parents of children from overseas, in both the receiving and sending country. Particular attention was given to whether or not there was a separation of tasks, who did what, their opinion of the process and the support they gained or needed.

- Section six tackled developmental and/or health related issues the couple have faced since returning home.
- Section seven focused on the support or assistance the couple felt they needed on return and if they considered that they had received the support or assistance needed.
- Section eight turned attention to the effect of the adoption had on their lifestyle.
- Finally, section nine was for women only and was included in order to gain their insights into what they thought other women should know about intercountry adoption before they embarked on this course of action.

It should be clear from the above that the design and scope of the interview guide was significantly influenced by themes, topics or issues encountered in the literature review as well as my own experiences as a social worker in this field of practice.

Analysis

For the analysis of data collected, content analysis with cross-case groupings of responses on particular questions or topics was applied. Content analysis is a method of analysing the content of texts and can occur concurrently with data collection (Sarantakos, 1993). It is achieved by identifying, coding and categorising the patterns and themes that emerge from the data (Patton, 1990), or in other words analysing what the subjects say by finding common patterns and themes.

For this study the analysis was achieved by classifying the qualitative data according to patterns and themes within a particular section of the interview and then across cases. In order to gain the patterns and themes I began by reading through the data and writing points of reference or comments on each section case by case. As suggested by Sarantakos (1993), this was conducted concurrently with data collection. Glaser (1992:45) made the point that codes, categories,

and names would "just occur in the analyst's head as he immerses himself in the data." He further commented on the patience and trust required in this process, and this proved to be an accurate statement.

Once this was done I began to identify the patterns and themes which had emerged under the headings used in the interview guide. Within each couple, spouses were separated by gender so that a comparison could occur not only between the spouses but by gender as well. The results were then analysed across cases to gain further insight into the patterns and themes which had emerged on both a general basis and a gender specific one. The use of field notes and observations made after each interview were of particular value in the data analysis.

One useful lesson was learned the hard way during the data analysis process. Rountree & Laing (1996) recommended that one manilla folder be kept for each chapter of the study, whereby information related to a chapter could be filed and used in the writing up stage. Unfortunately this system was not used until the final stages of writing up the results. Had I begun to correlate information in this way from the start of the research I would have minimised the time lost in the final stages.

Three main issues appear in the literature regarding the credibility of qualitative data analysis. They are (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 1990):

(1) the methods used to gain validity and accuracy of findings;
(2) the qualifications and experience of the researcher; and
(3) the ideas and assumptions behind the study.

For data validity and accuracy I have triangulated data sources and methods. This was achieved by collecting data from both the male and female in each couple interviewed and by using audio tapes, detailed notes of each interview and my own recorded observations

after each interview. Consistency in overall patterns from the different sources, and reasonable explanations for differences identified, contribute to the overall credibility of the findings (Patton, 1990).

As this was my first research project my experience as a researcher was limited. This was made known to the participants. However, my credibility in the eyes of the participants was increased by their knowledge that this study was for a Masters thesis, that it was supervised by Massey University staff and that I had considerable experience in this area as an adoption social worker for the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services (CYFS). Any concerns over my objectivity, as a social worker for CYFS have been monitored and discussed with my supervisor's at Massey University. Moreover, being a social worker in this area, I have focused more on trying to be balanced, fair and conscientious in recording data – attributes proposed by Guba & Lincoln (1981) as an alternative to objectivity. I have also focused on being factual in my observations without being distant, as being close to the participants is an essential part of qualitative research (Lofland & Lofland, 1984; Patton, 1990; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Patton (1990:480) suggests that "...distance does not guarantee objectivity; it merely guarantees distance".

Ethical Concerns

Before commencing with this study ethical approval was gained from the Massey University Human Research Ethics Committee following consideration of my project application. There were four particular ethical issues that warrant attention in this study. They were:

- voluntary participation;
- anonymity and confidentiality;
- potential harm to participants;
- potential harm to researcher;

Voluntary Participation

It was made clear to the participants that involvement with this study was voluntary and that if they were unsure about participating we needed to discuss this prior to their acceptance. Voluntary participation was important because I did not want participants to feel they had to take part, or should take part, because of my role as a CYFS social worker in this area. I emphasised that whether or not they chose to take part it would have no bearing on any future dealings they may have with CYFS as this was a private study and not funded by CYFS.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

The participants are not named in the research, nor are the towns or cities in which they live. Pseudonyms are used and certain distinguishing features have been changed in order to protect their privacy as far as possible. As intercountry adoption is relatively new in New Zealand, some aspects of each couple's experience may be recognisable, therefore, anonymity could not be entirely guaranteed. This was discussed with each participant prior to the signing of the Consent Form.

Data collected were kept in a secure, private filing cabinet and the audiotapes and transcripts will be either returned or destroyed as directed by the participants once the examination of the thesis has been completed.

Potential Harm to Participants

The issue of potential harm was discussed fully with each participant and the following precautions were taken to avoid harm:

- opportunities for the discussion of any concerns arising from the interviews were provided to the participants at all times during the research process;
- participants were able to withdraw from the research at any time during the collection of information. This was explained to the participants prior to the Consent Form being signed and after each interview;
- the privacy and identity of participants were protected as indicated above with respect to anonymity and confidentiality.

Potential Harm to Researcher

One possible area where potential harm to the researcher (and a conflict of interest could occur) concerned the dual role of being both a researcher and a social worker working in the area of intercountry adoption. The thesis supervisors monitored this area, and the risk was minimised by providing an opportunity to air any concerns that may have arisen in this area.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, the research method used in this study was a qualitative one, taking a phenomenological approach in order to present the findings without linking them to a particular theory or adding a personal view. Purposeful sampling was used in order to gain 10 information-rich couples to form a relatively homogenous group on the basis of the selection criteria and procedure employed. To collect information, a combination of methods was employed. In-depth, audiotaped interviews were conducted individually with both the wife and the husband of each participating couple, detailed case notes were made during the interviews and the researcher's personal observations were also recorded after each interview. Each

interview was analysed utilising a process of content analysis with cross-case comparisons to identify patterns, of themes and categories. The main ethical issues in this study were those of: voluntary participation, anonymity and confidentiality, potential harm to the participants and potential harm to the researcher. Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the Massey University Human Research Ethics Committee.

CHAPTER 4 –THE PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Current international research shows that there is a characteristic group of intercountry adoptive applicants. This group typically comprises older European couples, from highly skilled occupations with above average incomes and who have been married for some time with prior parenting experience from children born to them.

With the above in mind, this chapter has two objectives. First, it seeks to determine the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants in this study and to compare the results with international findings to see if the characteristics are similar. Second, and as a precursor to the first objective, it aims to provide a brief introduction to the participating couples – to assist the reader and to provide the couples with a more personal, "human" face.

INTRODUCTION TO PARTICIPATING COUPLES

As noted above in the previous chapter, pseudonyms have been used and in some cases certain distinguishing features have been changed for reasons of privacy and confidentiality.

Beth and Mike adopted two children from overseas. Both children were adopted in one application and one trip overseas. Both of these adoptive parents engaged in professional employment prior to the adoption. Beth chose to leave her employment on adopting their children so that she could become the main caregiver. Beth and Mike had been unsuccessful in attempts to have biological children. This was the first marriage for both. Beth was in the 36-40 age group and Mike in the 41-45 age group.

Jean and Steve also adopted two children. Both children were adopted in one application and one trip overseas. They had a

biological child but were unable to conceive another. Steve was in professional employment prior to this adoption with Jean being the caregiver of their child at home. This arrangement did not change on the adoption. This was the first marriage for them both and they were in the 36-40 age group.

Leah and Bill adopted one child from overseas, and they had two biological children prior to this adoption. Both Leah and Bill were in professional employment prior to this adoption and continued in their professions after the adoption, although Leah had to reduce her work hours. Leah considered herself the primary caregiver of the children. Leah and Bill chose to adopt from overseas as they wanted to help a child in need. Infertility was not an issue for them. This was the first marriage for both of them. Leah was in the 31-35 age group and Bill in the 36-40 age group.

Dianne and Brian had previously adopted one child locally who was 12 years old at the time of the interview. They had adopted two children from abroad but they were not biological siblings. Both children were adopted from one application and one trip overseas. Brian is in professional employment, while Dianne remained the full-time caregiver of her children. Dianne and Brian where unable to have biological children. This was the first marriage for both and they were in the 31-35 age group.

Mary and Alf adopted one child. Alf has two children from a previous relationship but there was little contact between Alf and these first two children. Both Mary and Alf were in professional full-time employment prior to the adoption. Mary became the full-time caregiver of the child after the adoption. This couple also could not have children biologically. This was the first marriage for Mary and the second for Alf, and they were in the 41-45 age group.

Ann and Peter adopted two siblings. Both Ann and Peter were in professional employment prior to this adoption. On return with the children, Ann became the full-time caregiver while Peter continued in his employment. Ann and Peter have no other children due to infertility. This was the first marriage for both and they were in the 36-40 age group.

Sue and Kevin adopted one child. Both Sue and Kevin were in professional employment prior to this adoption. Sue left her employment on their return in order to become the full-time caregiver. Kevin continued in his employment. This was the first marriage for Sue and the second for Kevin, who had a son from a previous relationship but there was little contact between them. They were unable to have biological children. Sue was in the 31-35 age group and Kevin in the 41-45 age group.

Jan and John adopted one child. Both were in professional employment prior to this adoption, Jan leaving her employment to become the full-time caregiver on their return to New Zealand. John remained in his employment. This was the second marriage for both. John has three adult children from his previous relationship and they were supportive of the adoption application. Jan and John were unable to have biological children and were in the 41-45 age group.

Carol and Mark adopted two children who were siblings. Both children were adopted from one application and one trip overseas. Carol and Mark were both in professional employment prior to this adoption, with Carol choosing to become a full-time caregiver for the children. This was the second marriage for Carol and the first marriage for Mark. Carol had three children from her first marriage that lived independent of her. Carol was in the 51-55 age group and Mark in the 46-50 age group.

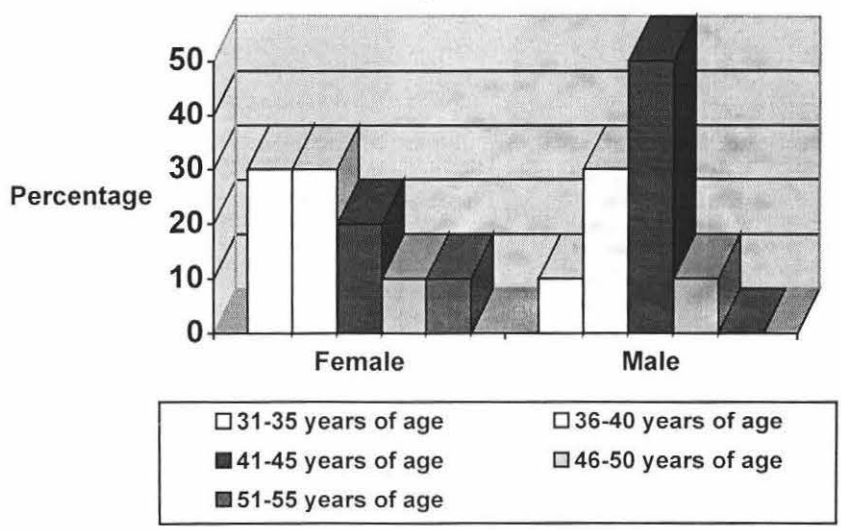
Monica and Dave adopted one child. Both were in full-time professional employment prior to this adoption. Monica became the full-time caregiver of the child and Dave continued in his employment. This was the first marriage for both. They had no other children and were unable to have biological children. Monica was in the 46-50 age group and Dave in the 41-45 age group.

PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

In the following pages, particular attention is give to eight socio-demographic characteristics of the participants. They are: their age; ethnic self-identification; employment; both before and after the placement (adoption); marital status and children; religion; previous experience of overseas travel; and language(s) other than English spoken. Where possible, these characteristics are compared with those reported in overseas research on couples involved in intercountry adoption.

Age

Chart 1: Age Distribution of Participating Couples



The age of the respondents held closely to the results from both national and international studies showing an older age for parent-

hood (Harper, 1986; Marcovitch, 1995; Smith, 1997; Textor, 1991). The majority of these studies indicate that couples seeking intercountry adoption overseas are between the ages of 30 and 40 years with a growing number of applicants older than 40. The participants in this study were in line with those results, as the average age for women was 39 years (range 31-52) and for men 42 years (range 43-51).

Ethic Self-Identification

Ninety per cent of the participating parents cited European/New Zealand as their ethnic identification. One parent identified as Swiss. In all cases studied, the child or children adopted were also Caucasian. These features are consistent with overseas results which show that the majority of Caucasian couples prefer to adopt a Caucasian child or children from overseas (Meezan et al., 1978; Kissoudji, 1989; Feigelman & Silverman, 1983; George et al., 1995; Else, 1991).

Employment Prior to Placement

Prior to the intercountry adoption, 8 out of 10 of the participating women were in professional employment with only two being in unpaid work. All 10 of the men were in professional employment. International and national studies also show similar results with a high proportion of applicants coming from highly skilled occupations (Hoksbergen et al., 1987; Textor, 1991; Smith, 1997). The income range from previous studies also reflected professional occupations with most levels being above the average in many of the countries concerned (Marcovitch, 1995; Jaffe, 1991; Smith, 1997).

Employment After Placement

On placement of their child(ren), all but one of the women who were in professional occupations prior to the adoption left their employment in order to become full-time caregivers of their child(ren). The exception was Leah who remained in professional

employment but reduced her hours of work. The professional status of the husbands remained the same as that prior to the placement.

I have been unable to find any other studies with compatible data. The articles from New Zealand magazines and newspapers (Chapter 2), however, do indicate that women are the primary caregivers of their adopted child(ren) regardless of their previous occupation. The lack of research on the employment status of women before and after a placement could be a reflection of the low importance placed on the role of women in intercountry adoption.

Marital Status and Children

All of the applicants had been married for at least five years when starting the process of intercountry adoption. This was the first marriage for six couples and the second marriage in four cases. In seven of the couples, at least one partner had prior parenting experience. All second marriages had children born prior to that relationship, although in only one of the four cases did the child(ren) reside with the couple. The majority of couples were reported in overseas research to be married (Harvey, 1983; Jaffe, 1991; Marcovitch, 1995) with national research showing that 41 per cent of current unions had a combination of previous marriages, ranging from one to three (Smith, 1997). All couples in this study were legally married, which aligns with the requirements for adoption in this country.

Religion

Eight of the ten couples stated they were Christian and followed Christian beliefs in their lives. Although Christian beliefs were cited as motivational factors for couples choosing intercountry adoption in overseas studies, it was not noted whether the couples were actually practising Christian beliefs or saw themselves as nominally Christian.

Previous Experience of Overseas Travel

All of the couples had experience of overseas travel but in many cases this was for a period of less than 8 days in Australia or a Pacific Island for a holiday. Four couples had been to Europe for an extended period or more than 8 days. None of the couples had been overseas to see an orphanage or had any prior experience of such a setting.

I was unable to find any overseas studies with data that could be compared to the above results. The results here indicate that the adoptive applicants may not be fully prepared for the realities of life in the settings they had chosen to adopt from.

Languages Spoken

Five participants were able to speak another language other than English. No participants were able to speak the language of the adopted child's birth country. Again this could prove to be a stress-causing factor during the adoption process in the sending country as the applicants may not be able to communicate directly with either the child(ren) or the officials who have the power to finalise the adoption. It does mean, of course, that interpreting and translation services will usually be required. Research from overseas was not available for comparison.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has introduced the couples who participated in this research by giving a brief description of their situation (which includes their age, marriage status and children) and has examined also their socio-demographic characteristics.

Overall, the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants in this study reflected those found in research both nationally and internationally, though there were noticeable research gaps in some

areas. Couples were Caucasian, from an older age group for having children as well as coming predominantly from professional occupations. Where the women were in professional employment prior to the adoption, in all but one case they left this employment to become the full-time caregiver of the child or children adopted.

It was also found that the participating adoptive parents did not have previous experience of seeing life in an orphanage or other institution prior to adopting their child/ren, nor were they able to speak the language of the country they choose to adopt from. Whether these features were a cause of stress to the participants while completing the adoption process within the sending country will be investigated during this study.

CHAPTER 5 – MOTIVATION BEHIND CHOOSING ADOPTION

What motivated the couples to adopt, and why did they choose the option of overseas adoption? The primary objective of this chapter is to provide answers to each part of this question, bearing in mind the factors or reasons identified in other studies or reports. Infertility, for example, appears as a major motivating factor throughout the literature on couples choosing to adopt from overseas, but I wanted to know if this factor was also a key motivation for New Zealand couples and/or what other factors contributed to the decision to adopt. Related questions concerned the number and gender of children to be adopted, and whether or not there were differences of opinion between spouses on these matters.

DECIDING TO ADOPT INTERCOUNTRY

Within the questionnaire 'Choosing Adoption' and 'Deciding to Adopt Intercountry' were two separate sections. During the process of interviewing, however, the participants combined these sections in their answers as they did not see them as being separate issues. For many of the participants the decision to adopt was made simultaneously with their decision to adopt intercountry. For this reason the results from the questionnaire have been combined under the heading 'Deciding to Adopt Intercountry'. In order to obtain information on the above decision, questions were developed in the following areas: infertility issues; humanitarian reasons; knowledge of other people who had adopted; previous family experience of adoption; particular events that pushed respondents towards intercountry adoption; the availability of children in New Zealand; how the respondents heard of intercountry adoption; what they thought of intercountry adoption at this stage; and their source of information.

Infertility Issues

Infertility was the main reason cited by women for deciding to adopt intercountry. Nine of the ten women interviewed had this factor as their primary reason while one woman cited a humanitarian reason. Of the nine women citing infertility, five had tried In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF) with unsuccessful results, two had been given warnings by their doctor against becoming pregnant and two stated that for medical reasons they were unable to conceive and that they did not qualify for IVF treatment. The two following quotes from the interviews illustrate the reasons given:

> We always planned to have children and when this didn't happen we had to look at other ways. IVF didn't work and was becoming really expensive so I thought adoption was the only way we could have children.
>
> (Mary)

> The doctor had advised me against having more children, so we thought the only way to have a bigger family was through adoption.
>
> (Jean)

This finding supports previous research. As shown in Chapter 2, writers such as Hoksbergen (1997), Bachrach et al. (1991), and Justice (1996), have also identified infertility as the main motivating factor. This motive was also prevalent among the New Zealand women featured in the magazine and newspaper articles reviewed as part of that chapter. However, as will be shown in the following section, this was not how the men perceived their motivation.

Christian and Humanitarian Motives

A secondary factor identified by six of the women for choosing intercountry adoption was that of Christian values, which basically involved doing the will of God by caring for disadvantaged children who did not have a home and a family. These values came through strongly in the responses of Jan and Monica, respectively:

> I believe it was the will of God that we adopt. I feel our infertility was for a reason and that was to open our hearts and our home to children who suffer from want and being unloved. I truly believe it was God's will and that we needed to follow this path. (Jan)

> Our house has always been big enough for lots of children, and I suppose when we found out we couldn't have children we had to re-evaluate our lives and our purpose. We realised our purpose was to bring up children and that as Christians we should share all we had with those who have not, so [we] thought about adopting a child in need.
>
> (Monica)

Leah held a similar view but saw it as more of a humanitarian reason, not a Christian one:

> We also wanted to adopt for humanitarian reasons as well. We wanted to open our home to children who would otherwise be without. There are so many needy children in the world and we have so much to offer a child that we felt it was our duty to do so.

Christian and humanitarian motives for intercountry adoption were also evident in the literature of Chapter 2, particularly in the newspaper and magazine articles. It is not clear, however, whether Christian and humanitarian reasons occur independent of infertility or whether infertility brings about Christian and humanitarian motives with regard to an intercountry adoption. In this study only one couple who cited Christian and humanitarian motives were not infertile.

When it came to the men, Christian and humanitarian motives were the primary reasons given for deciding to adopt intercountry. Of the ten men, five stated that humanitarian reasons were the major motivation underlying their choice of adoption, one cited Christian values as the major reason while four identified infertility as the major motivation. With regard to secondary factors in their decision to adopt, five stated infertility reasons, three cited Christian values and two claimed humanitarian reasons. Although many of the men stated Christian and humanitarian motives as the primary factor in their decision to adopt intercountry this was not apparent in their comments, which often showed that infertility may have been the primary motive. This is evident in the following examples of the responses given:

> We were unable to have children and advised that if we tried it would put Beth's health in danger, which was not an option as far as I was concerned. Through the church we learned of the starving

> children overseas in need of a home. We had a good home and felt it was what Jesus Christ wanted us to do; his mission for us to pick up, so that's what we did.
>
> (Mike)

> Basically we were unable to have children so thought about intercountry adoption, as there was such a need for these children to have a home. So humanitarian reasons were our main motive.
>
> (Alf)

> Humanitarian reasons really. There are so many children in need and without any chance of an education or a life, so we thought it was something we could contribute towards [since] we couldn't have kids of our own.
>
> (Bill)

The comments from the men suggest that it was due to not having children naturally that they (and/or their spouse) first thought about intercountry adoption. From this it can be assumed that if they were able to have children naturally they would not have adopted intercountry. Whereas the women were more inclined to acknowledge this, the men were not. This difference would be an interesting area for further research. Whether or not men felt uncomfortable and/or ashamed about discussing infertility or whether they saw Christian and humanitarian reasons as being more socially acceptable are possible factors that could be examined in relation to this discrepancy.

Availability of Children in New Zealand

Nine of the ten women in the couples interviewed, stated that another secondary deciding factor in choosing to adopt from overseas was a belief or understanding that they would not be able to adopt in New Zealand. This belief was based on their perception or knowledge that there were few children available in New Zealand, and that the older you were the less chance you had of being successful in securing a local adoption. These points came through clearly in the responses of Mary, Sue and Ann, respectively:

> Well we would have liked to have adopted a baby in New Zealand but there just weren't any available and we had been through the

> waiting and apprehension of IVF, so the thought of waiting again and not knowing if this would be the day or not was just too hard.
>
> (Mary)

> Basically our ages decided for us. We had heard that if you are in your late thirties, early forties, you would not be chosen. If we could have been guaranteed a baby in New Zealand then we would have adopted here, but you can't have that. With intercountry adoption you can. I know that sounds a bit harsh but that was the reality for us. When you know you will make good parents and want a baby as much as I did you just want to get on with it. We're not getting any younger and we wanted to be able to play and keep up with our children.
>
> (Sue)

> Never considered anything else as I knew what the prospect of local adoption was like. There just aren't many children [available] and the older your are the less likely you are of getting a child.
>
> (Ann)

Nine of the ten men also stated that the lack of children available for adoption in New Zealand was the main reason for seeking intercountry adoption. It should be noted, however, that this reason was often associated with or exacerbated by other factors. For example, Steve said:

> We wanted a child now before we got any older and the gap in age between a new child and our own child got any larger. We knew that our ages and the fact we had an older child would go against us in New Zealand for our chances of being picked. If we went to Russia, ICANZ guaranteed us a child or (in our case) two.

One man stated he had not considered local adoption as he wanted more than one child.

> I wanted a family. Had looked at fostering but its only a short time, so we choose adoption so we could have an effect on the children.
>
> (Peter)

The above results also support the findings of previous research reviewed in Chapter 2: namely, that a lack of children available for adoption in New Zealand was often cited as a motivating reason to turn towards adopting children from overseas. These findings also indicate that in many cases intercountry adoption can be perceived as a third choice after (a) having children biologically and (b) adopting from within New Zealand. With intercountry adoption being

a third choice for many couples the expectations on the child(ren), and the parents' ability to parent, may be higher due to the lengths that couples had to go to in gaining their family, as stated by Rosenwald and Hoksbergen (1997) in Chapter 2.

Previous Knowledge of Intercountry Adoption

All the women had known or read about couples going overseas to adopt prior to their own decision in favour of intercountry adoption. This tended to be their first point of contact and through this they were able to find out more information in order to make their decision. The main sources of this information were the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services (CYFS) and ICANZ.

Personal knowledge of adoption was not cited by any of the men as a reason behind their choice. However, Mark stated that his wife had gained the idea through reading a magazine article.

> My wife had read an article on a couple who had adopted from Romania. She rang ICANZ and I suppose it started from there.

Although some of the couples in this study mentioned seeing images of children overseas through the media, it was not as prevalent as it was with the couples reported on through the newspaper and magazine articles reviewed in Chapter 2. This could be due to the fact that at the time of these reported articles the media had most notably brought intercountry adoption to the attention of the New Zealand public through the situation in Romanian orphanages. Media images since then have not been as vivid or as widely reported on.

Differences of Opinion between Wives and Husbands

There were no reported differences of opinion between wives and husbands, although nine of the ten women added that they were the main instigators of the idea and subsequent action. Consider, for example, the following quotes:

> I don't know if there were differences of opinion, but I suppose I was the main architect in the overall plan, so to speak. Brian wasn't keen in the beginning and went along with it to keep me happy. Well not quite. I mean he started the process of learning more about it maybe because it was so important to me and to stop me from going on about it all the time, but as we went along he wanted to adopt as well.
>
> (Dianne)

> It wasn't so much that Kevin and I had differences [of opinion] it was more that I was more committed to making this decision than he was. I tended to get the information and be more pro-active in getting him to make the same decision as me. But there were no differences, especially once he learned about adoption after the CYPFS seminars.
>
> (Sue)

> No there were no differences between us although, to be honest, I had to push him a bit to get him thinking about adoption and why it was a good option for us. Once he started to think [about adoption] we were away, and he has never regretted it. Well maybe when he can't watch the news on T.V. due to the noise, but no there were no differences.
>
> (Carol)

> No differences as we had always thought that if we're unable to conceive we would adopt. It was a decision that we made together.
>
> (Ann)

All of the ten men also stated that they had not experienced any differences of opinion between themselves and their wives with regard to choosing adoption as an option, but stated that their wives were the more committed in the beginning and the main instigators of the idea. These responses, very much in accord with what their wives had said, are illustrated in the following quotes:

> No differences between us – it was the wife's idea.
>
> (Kevin)

> This was a joint decision which we both discussed and agreed to. There were no differences between us, but Mary found out about this area and brought the information to me.
>
> (Alf)

> No differences [between us] about adoption but there was a difference in the level of commitment. I went with an open mind that if it was not right then we would not do it. Ann seemed to be more convinced that this was the right decision.
>
> (Peter)

> No I wouldn't say there were differences [between us], Carol was more certain, shall we say, from the beginning that this was the right road to take, but the decision was made by both of us and there were no differences as such; more deliberation maybe on my part.
>
> (Mark)

> No, no differences. We both had always wanted to open our home to a less fortunate child so when Jan suggested this I was supportive of her.
>
> (John)

The New Zealand newspaper and magazine articles reviewed in Chapter 2 also showed women to be the main organisers of an intercountry adoption both within New Zealand and, in many cases, the sending country. There did not appear to be any specific international research in this area to enable comparisons to be made. The results in this section also demonstrate the influence that the wives had within each couple with regard to the decision to adopt intercountry. As the above quotes show, the husband was often not as committed to the idea of adopting a child(ren) from overseas as his wife was and tended to be guided by the information given to him by his wife, in making his decision to adopt intercountry.

ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE DECISION TO ADOPT INTERCOUNTRY

It should not be imagined that the decision to adopt intercountry was unproblematic. There were problems and issues which needed to be overcome. These included: issues concerning which country to adopt from; the matter of the race or ethnicity of the child(ren); sacrifices which needed to be made in their lives (notably in terms of financial costs); and differences of opinion between the couple with respect to such issues.

Choosing Which Country to Adopt From

When it came to the issue of which country to adopt from, all the couples were in agreement that they would adopt from Russia. The women choose this country for three main reasons: first they had

heard of other adoptions from Russia; second ICANZ only operated in this country and would organise the adoption for them; and third, there was the desire to have a child with the same colour skin and race as their own. This can be seen in the following statements from Dianne, Sue and Mary:

> Well I had read in a woman's magazine about a couple that adopted from Russia and they seemed so happy and the children looked beautiful. I showed the article to Brian and he was fine with Russia. We never really thought of anywhere else because all the services and agencies seemed to only work with Russia.
>
> (Dianne)

> I wanted children who looked like Kevin and me so that they wouldn't stand out as being different. Russia was the only place that offered European children and the only country ICANZ seemed to work with if you wanted white children and didn't want to wait years.
>
> (Sue)

> I had read an article about children adopted from Romania and firstly thought of there, but when I approached CYFS they stated that you were unable to adopt from there now and they suggested Russia. When I contacted ICANZ they only dealt with Russia on the European setting so that was that really. We wanted a child that would fit into our family and not look different as we felt this would be harder on the child and to be honest I couldn't see myself being the mother of a black child, and I wouldn't look as if I was.
>
> (Mary)

The men tended to choose Russia on the basis of two main factors; first that their wives had chosen this country; and second, because the children would have a similar skin colour and race to themselves. Other factors included the ease of the adoption process with ICANZ and the will of God. The above factors are clearly illustrated by Brian, Kevin, Alf and John:

> Well basically Dianne suggested Russia as it was the easiest country to adopt from and I wanted the children to look like our other daughter so it just seemed to fit all together.
>
> (Brian)

> Sue had looked into the countries available and decided that for our purposes Russia was the best country. I suppose our purposes were that we could adopt quickly and children that were of European heritage.
>
> (Kevin)

> Russia offered the best adoption system through ICANZ. We didn't have to organise as much and the videos of the children were a great asset as we could see before we bought, so to speak.
>
> (Alf)

> I am not sure why we choose Russia, I think it was where God led us at the time through prayer.
>
> (John)

Again women are seen as the main instigators of the decision making. The women typically found out the information and then presented it to their husbands who agreed with the proposed country. Having a child of the same skin colour or race played an important part for both wife and husband in choosing which country to adopt from. Else (1991) comments that humanitarianism is related to the colour of the child as Caucasian couples tend to seek similar coloured children to adopt under the humanitarian cause. Black children, adds Else (1991:67) do not evoke the same humanitarian emotion for Caucasian people. Couple's in this study adopted similar coloured children but it was unclear whether colour alone was the main factor in adopting from Russia or whether it was the apparent ease and certainty that an adoption from this country guaranteed through using ICANZ. It is interesting to note that ICANZ was reported to deal only with Russia. Whether this was based on racial grounds or merely supplying what the market dictated was not investigated in this study.

Concerns Expressed Regarding an Intercountry Adoption

For women, the main concern regarding intercountry adoption was that of the financial costs involved. Other concerns, illustrated in the following quotes, included the health of the child and the effect of the adoptee(s) on other children in the home.

> We were concerned about the cost. We don't have much money, [and] we definitely don't now, so we had to take out a mortgage which was [a] big step but one that we were prepared to take in order to gain our family.
>
> (Dianne)

> I suppose money was [an issue] really. It was a lot and we knew it would be ongoing if the children had special needs or something. We weighted it all up before committing ourselves and going into debt.
>
> (Beth)

> I thought about the effect another child or two would have on our son. He has been an only child for all his life, and I suppose spoiled, so we had to take that into account.
>
> (Jean)

Despite the above issues and concerns, all of the 10 women stated that they believed they would be able to cope with the child(ren) they adopted. Dianne's response was typical of the thoughts and attitudes amongst the women:

> I didn't think about not being able to cope because I knew I would be able to. You just do, don't you, no matter what life has in store.

In comparison, financial cost was a secondary concern for the men. The main concern for the men focused on the problems that a child(ren) adopted from overseas may present with. The men seemed less certain about their coping ability and indicated a fear of not being able to manage, particularly if the child(ren) had major health problems. The views of Brian and Mark, respectively, were not uncommon:

> Well we weren't sure what we were going to get, I mean health wise. We had heard that these kids had major issues so I was worried we would be getting ourselves out of [our] depth.
>
> (Brian)

> Money was an issue, well lack of it, but I think my main concern was how we were going to provide for a child with severe emotional or physical trauma that we were not aware of beforehand. It was a risk we decided to take.
>
> (Mark)

The concern with regard to financing the adoption was one shared by many of the couples featured in the newspaper and magazine reviewed in Chapter 2. Many couples had to borrow money in order to complete the adoption process. Again this investment could increase their expectations, not only with regard to the happiness

they hoped to gain from the child(ren) but also in terms of their own ability to parent.

NUMBER AND GENDER OF CHILDREN

The research question here is how each participant made decisions on how many children to adopt and the gender of the children. Where appropriate, attention was given to: financial influences; the number of previous children; the age of participants and their stage of life/career; and differences of opinion between wives and husbands.

Financial reasons were prevalent with regard to the decision making process for the women. This outlook or attitude ranged from only wanting to adopt one child, not thinking they could afford to bring up more (illustrated by Mary below), to wanting to adopt two or more from one application due to the higher cost of going back again if they decided to adopt more (as Jean indicated).

> We were struggling to come up with the money for the adoption and put ourselves into debt for years to come, so realistically we could only afford to bring up one child as we had other children already in the home.
>
> (Mary)

> I always wanted more than one child as financially we would not be able to go back for a second child at a later date. So we decided on two children.
>
> (Jean)

If the woman was only going to adopt one child, and she did not have any other children, there seemed to be no gender preference. However, if there were other children this tended to dictate which gender she chose, as Sue indicated:

> We already have a little boy so [we] thought it would be nice for him to have a little sister.

If the couple were choosing to adopt more than one, then they choose one of each sex. A good example is the case of Jean, who said:

> We would have taken any children available but aimed for a boy and a girl to make it more even. It didn't really matter but as ICANZ offered us a boy and a girl the issue never arose.

According to each of the women there were no differences between them and their husband regarding the choice of gender.

Among the men, finances were also the main reason behind how many children to adopt. Steve summed up the issue of costs quite well:

> Well the cost was still pretty much the same whether you got one child or two, and as we didn't think we'd ever be able to afford going back again we decided to get two now.

That said, most of the men stated that their decision on the number of children was directed or determined by their wife's view. Dave, for example, noted that:

> Monica wanted two children to begin with and I thought we could only afford one, but then as she was the one who was going to care for them I guess I agreed with her that two were just as expensive as one. Anyway it was up to the Lord how many we would be offered and what happened.

Men also tended to be led by their wives with regard to gender, as both Alf and Kevin, respectively, indicated.

> I would be happy with either a boy or a girl but Mary had her heart set on a little girl.
>
> (Alf)

> I thought a boy would have been nice. You know – the family name and everything. But Sue wanted a girl. This may have been because I had a boy with my first wife. I don't know why she wanted a girl, but a child is a child so it didn't really matter.
>
> (Kevin)

Overall, women tended to have firmer ideas on which gender and how many children to adopt. Although many women stated that they did not mind if the child was a girl or a boy, most of them had a preference. Men tended to follow the direction of their wives with respect to both the gender and number of children. For both spouses finance was a major factor in how many children to adopt.

Would the couples, and in particular the women, be disappointed if they did not gain the gender of child they preferred? This disappointment, if it existed, was not evident in the results of this study. The point to be made, however, is that it could play an important part in the unfulfilled expectations discussed by Rosenwald and Hoksbergen (1997), especially if the women were more at risk of unmet placement expectations.

CONCLUSION

This chapter set out to determine why couples chose to adopt and why they then chose to adopt intercountry. Related issues faced by the couples in making these decisions were also examined and discussed.

Previous studies and articles have identified infertility, increasing age of adoptive parents, and a lack of children available for adoption within New Zealand as the major motivating factors in an intercountry adoption. These factors were found in this study but their importance appeared to differ according to the gender of the respondent. Whereas women tended to identify infertility as their major motivating factor, their husbands tended to see infertility as a secondary factor with humanitarian reasons or a Christian ethos as their main motivation. However, whether or not infertility was in fact a secondary rather than a primary factor for men is open to debate due to the nature of their comments.

The results indicated that for both wife and husband, intercountry adoption was a third choice behind biological children and adopting from within New Zealand. For the majority of cases intercountry adoption was investigated as the first two options were ruled out by infertility, other health problems, the age of the couple and the availability of children for adoption in New Zealand. This finding was also evident in overseas research (Chapter 2) where it has been

reported that couples sought children from abroad due to their infertility and/or the lack of locally available children.

The woman, within each couple, took the lead role in deciding whether to adopt intercountry. Although men did have a voice, their decision was based on the information that was presented to them by their wives. It was apparent from the results that men did not play an active role in gathering the information towards making this choice and tended to be guided to a large extent by the point of view of their wives.

The country chosen by the respondents in this study was Russia. Previous research has suggested that couples of European or Caucasian racial origin seek to adopt European children, a finding which the results of this study seem to reflect. But it is unclear whether colour and race were the major factors in choosing a country of origin or whether it was the ease and speed of achieving an adoption through ICANZ that was the major factor.

Both the wife and husband of each couple were in agreement as to why they choose Russia to adopt from, however differences did occur between them in the concerns that they had with adopting a child from overseas. Women did not doubt their coping ability and believed that no matter what issues the child or children had they would be able to deal with them. This was not the case for many of their husbands, who felt cautious about their ability to cope, especially if the child(ren) had health or behavioural problems. Women may have felt over confident in their ability to cope due to having put so much effort (emotional and physical) and time into obtaining the adoption. Rosenwald and Hoksbergen (1997) caution that having high expectations can set the placement up for failure, as often the reality of the situation may not live up to those expectations.

With regard to the concerns couples contended with in making their decision it was found that financial cost was common to both wife and husband. This was a concern evident in the magazine and newspaper articles reviewed in Chapter 2. A main concern for the men was whether they would be able to cope with the child(ren) they adopted due to any health or behavioural problem they might have. Women, on the other hand, did not doubt their ability to cope and therefore did not see this as an issue for them. Finally, when it came to choosing the number and gender of the children to be adopted, women tended to lead the way by having firmer ideas on what they wanted with their husbands following their direction.

CHAPTER 6 - THE PROCESS OF ACHIEVING INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

A search of the literature on intercountry adoption did not find any substantive studies that concentrated on the actual process that couples went through in order to complete an adoption from outside their own country, or the issues that they may have been faced with during this process. What literature there was consisted mainly of anecdotal newspaper and magazine articles based on interviews with couples who had adopted a child, or children, from overseas. Although these articles indicated that couples found the process stressful and time-consuming, actual areas of concern within the process were not clearly identified.

This chapter focuses on the issues involved within the process of intercountry adoption, in order to determine the nature of the experiences of couples who have participated in this process and to identify specific areas of concern they may have had. To achieve this aim, the first part of the chapter focuses on the experience of couples within New Zealand, while the second part directs attention to their experience within the sending country abroad. Gender comparison will continue to occur, as in the previous chapter, in order to better understand not only the role or labour division in the couples but also their particular perceptions of the intercountry adoption process.

THE PROCESS WITHIN NEW ZEALAND

Six dominant themes emerged during the interviews on the process in New Zealand. First, that the women were the main organisers of the process. Second, that there was dissatisfaction with the length of time it took to achieve final approval to adopt as well as with the content of the education/preparation programmes. And third, that there appeared to be a lack of support by service professionals throughout this process, with some services seen as ageist and

sexist. These themes and the effect they have had on the participants are discussed below.

The Main Organisers Throughout the Process

It has previously been established (Chapter 5) that the women were the main instigators and fact finders for intercountry adoption. The findings from this study also show that women were the main organisers of the process involved in achieving an intercountry adoption. This is illustrated in the respective comments of both Dianne and Brian, Jean and Steve:

> I had to find out about intercountry adoption and then present it to Brian. He tended not to have as much time as me, so I did all the paperwork and organised the trip etc. Sometimes I did find this hard and tiring but if I didn't do it we wouldn't have our beautiful children now.
>
> (Dianne)

> The process was fine. Dianne did most of the organising but I had to attend the seminars with her.
>
> (Brian)

> Steve didn't have the time with his work and everything so as I was at home with our son I did all the paperwork and organising. Steve just had to sign on the dotted line and get on the plane.
>
> (Jean)

> I was busy with work so as Jean really wanted to adopt she organised it. No real involvement other than attending meetings [seminars].
>
> (Steve)

The above quotes could be interpreted to indicate that the women were more interested or driven in the quest for a child and/or that they had more time to devote to organising the process if they were at home with children or not in paid employment. However, it was established (Chapter 4) that eight of the ten women were in paid employment so they did not necessarily have more time to manage the adoption process. Of course, it could be that the men were simply less motivated or felt that it was a task in the woman's domain and therefore that their spouse would be the best at organising it.

Another interpretation of the results is that the women felt (consciously or unconsciously) that it was their duty to supply their husbands with a family. Authors such as Oakley (1974) and Rowbotham (1973) have stated that childrearing is seen as a women's domain so it is plausible that gaining a family through adoption is an extension of this domain. This possibility was not investigated in this study nor has it been suggested in any study I have read with regard to adoption, yet it is an area that I believe could benefit from further research.

Length of Time

The length of the application process was cited as a major concern with each of the respondents stating that it had taken too long to complete. Although both partners felt that the process had been too lengthy, there appeared to be a gender difference in the effect that this delay had. Women tended to find this time emotionally tiring whereas their partners saw the delay as more of a nuisance without being affected emotionally. The following quote illustrates Mary's frustration and a feeling of desperation stemming from the time delay, as she was worried that her husband Alf would change his mind and give up on the process:

> At times I felt I was hitting my head against a brick wall....I just wanted to get my children and start being a mother, I had gone through the process of making my mind up prior to approaching ICANZ so just wanted it done. I also worried that Alf would change his mind as there seemed to be endless paperwork and money spent on getting all the paperwork down. I think this was the most stressful time for me because I just wanted to go [to Russia].
>
> (Mary)

The desperation experienced by Mary could add weight to the proposition, mentioned earlier; namely that women feel it is their role to provide a family. It also suggests, of course, that Mary perceived Alf to be less certain about the option of adoption.

The anxiety felt by Mary could also be interpreted to indicate that she and Alf were not as secure a couple as they might wish other to

believe. If a couple are not secure they may feel that a child will bring them closer together, blaming infertility as the reason for their problems. Adoption is not an answer to relationship problems. In the literature review it was noted that Rosenwald and Hoksbergen (1997) caution that couples should be assessed as to how secure they are both within themselves and as a couple, for if they are not secure, the success of the intercountry adoption could be adversely affected.

Alf, on the other hand, seemed very laid back and unaffected by the delay, apparently oblivious to his wife's anxiety. Alf never mentioned whether he thought about changing his mind, however he did comment that his wife found the process "hard going at times, but [the process] seemed fine [to me]". The laid back approach of Alf was also evident in other men, as illustrated by John:

> The time it took to complete everything before we could go did seem to be very lengthy, mind you I am used to red tape and knew it had to be done. It was done with no problems and we flew out a year later.
>
> (John)

Yet his wife, Jan, found that the time the process took was frustrating:

> The process was straight forward, but it was more involved than I thought. You need to be sure that people are adopting for the right reasons so I feel it is needed but it was frustrating for me as I knew this was the right thing to do and wanted to get on and do it. It's hard to explain how I felt at this time. Part of me wanted to just stop everything and go but the other side was quite complacent to the situation and I tried to take a day at a time.
>
> (Jan)

Doing the 'Right Thing'

Other women also indicated frustration in completing the process. This frustration, shown by Jean and Carol, seemed to be lessened by their belief that they were doing the "right thing" and "something worthwhile" as seen in the following comments:

> For me it seemed to take forever. God created the world in seven days yet to help one of his children seemed to take forever. It was a hard time as there seemed to be endless tests of our commitment, but God needed to know we were the right ones and that we were

> ready for this. Prayer got me through this time and the belief that John and I were doing the right thing.
>
> (Jean)

> It was a very stressful time for me and one with a lot of tears. It just seemed to go on and on but at least I was doing something important, something worthwhile. I knew it was the right thing to do.
>
> (Carol)

The belief that they were doing the "right thing" seemed to be very important to many of the women, almost as if they needed to justify their choice to proceed with an intercountry adoption. This links to their Christian and humanitarian motives (Chapter 4) which were often used as a justification. This need to justify their decision could reflect their own uncertainty, which could have many causes. The frustration felt by the women was also evident in the review of newspaper and magazine articles (Chapter 2), where many of the women also seemed to justify intercountry adoption with Christian or humanitarian motives.

The frustration and feelings of doing the right thing could also be symptomatic of the emotional stress of infertility, which Howe (1996) has spoken of. Howe also stated that couples saw the adoption application process as an intrusive game that had to be played in order to gain a child. This 'game playing' could cause a great deal of stress and create a feeling of frustration as they sought to finish the game and get their prize – a child. Causing the women feelings of frustration is detrimental to the assessment process. If a sense of needing to 'play the game' is created then couples are not going to come with an open mind to the education and preparation part of the process, instead they may focus only on saying or learning what they believe is needed in order to 'win'.

The men did not appear to have this sense of frustration and were, on the whole, far more laid back in their approach to the process. The differences between the spouses could perhaps be linked to who

had direct responsibility for completing the process. The fact that it was the women who were directly involved in the process, and who were experiencing the frustrations of the delays, may account for their higher level of frustration. Their husbands, on the other hand, were more removed from this direct contact and were thus not experiencing the same frustrations.

Repetition of Material

A particular problem mentioned by Mary was the repetition of material in the 'educational' preparation part of the process, as well as the negativity of CYFS.

> We had to attend three seminars with CYFS and one with ICANZ before we could proceed with the actual adoption. I felt the ICANZ one just repeated what we had already learnt and was not as well run as CYFS. But I didn't think we needed to go to three seminars as two were mainly for couples wanting to adopt locally. CYFS also seemed to just present the negative side of adoption

This theme was apparent between both genders. For example, Steve and Mark stated:

> The process went smoothly and we slowly got all the paperwork together and attended the seminars. I felt that we were doubling up having to attend an intercountry day seminar with CYFS and again with ICANZ. I found the seminars good but would have preferred to have only attended the day three seminar on intercountry adoption and not the first two on adoption generally.
>
> (Steve)

> The process seemed to take a long time and was very bureaucratic. I found the seminars good to start you thinking but most were unsuccessful stories. It would have been nice if they [CYFS] had success stories on a local level.
>
> (Mark)

The reported repetition of content in the presentations/ seminars of CYFS and ICANZ indicates a need to better integrate the education seminars of these two organisations, though it may also indicate that couples are not giving the seminars the weight they deserve. This is evident from John, who commented that:

> I didn't really see the point of the seminars. We knew what we wanted, and to be honest, the seminars seemed a bit touchy feely. Well that's not the right word but it just was a bit over the top talking

> about issues and problems. It might have helped some of them but we knew it would be fine.

This feeling that it would be fine (the stereotypical Kiwi "she'll be right") does cause concern over whether the couples were pursuing an intercountry adoption with unrealistic expectations as to both the success of the placement and the child's ability to adapt as well as their own parenting ability. Given the issues identified in the literature review on the problems which can occur for children adopted from other cultures and countries, it could appear that in their eagerness to adopt some couples might overlook these issues or actively disassociate themselves from them. This is an important area for professionals in this area to address as the available literature indicates that it can be fundamental to whether a placement is successful or not.

Support

All the women stated they would have liked more support but in some cases, like Monica and Leah, were unable to say where this support was to come from:

> I don't know. It was hard on my own but I don't know if there is any support really. I mean you have to go through it, no one can do it for you. Maybe it would have been good to speak to other women who had gone through this process, I really don't know.
>
> (Monica)

> Support would have been good but I don't know where from as no one seemed to know much about it as it was still quite new to New Zealand.
>
> (Leah)

For Jan and Monica their main support came through prayer and their church. For example, Jan said:

> The church was my rock throughout this process. Their constant support and encouragement kept me going, and as I said before I gained the help I needed through prayer with the Lord Jesus, our Saviour and King.

Although their husbands (John and Dave) mentioned the church in a supportive role, it was to a different degree, as indicated by John:

> Support wasn't really needed as we knew this was what we had to do and we had the church community behind us so we knew that we wouldn't fail.

In one geographical area, Sue and Jan commented a lack of support from CYFS:

> I remember ringing CYPFS [now CYFS] about adoption and spoke to the 'boss' of that section in our area. Well I found her cold, clinical and really unhelpful. She was very condescending and I almost gave up then. Luckily the social worker we had wasn't like that and we carried on.
>
> (Sue)

> Well to be honest I felt rather let down by CYPFS. When I first approached them about adoption you [would] think I was asking something terrible. They weren't at all supportive and left me to do it myself. I would have liked some guidance; I don't think that was asking too much. Although, to be fair, it was just one woman who treated us like that, the actual social worker was much better but didn't seem to know herself what to do.
>
> (Jan)

Both Kevin and John realised that their wives had felt unsupported by CYFS but had not experienced it themselves. This was due to both men not being actively involved with this agency. For example, Kevin said:

> I didn't have much to do with CYPFS [CYFS] but I don't think much of their manner as Sue had a real upward battle with one lady who just let her own bias cloud the situation. It was really appalling and put undue stress on Sue which she didn't need.
>
> (Kevin)

John also commented on the manner of the particular staff member which Sue and Jan had felt unsupported by. John added that he felt she had mocked his wife's Christian beliefs. John had not had any dealings with her himself stating that:

> ...if support was needed it would have been better from a Christian agency as the supervisor in CYPFS [CYFS] really mocked our beliefs and was totally unprofessional. Jan was crushed. I'm just glad I never had to deal with her.
>
> (John)

The lack of support experienced by Sue and Jan is consistent with the view that has been portrayed in the magazine and newspaper

articles on the past experience of couples who have adopted overseas. It may be noted, however, that in this study the experience in each case was confined to one staff member in particular and was not the women's overall impression of CYFS as an organisation.

On the whole, women saw a need for support in finding out about the realities and practicalities of intercountry adoption in terms of what to expect with a child from another country and culture. A need to discuss issues with other women who had adopted intercountry was also prevalent among the women. Husbands, on the other hand, did not mention the same need for support and in many cases saw no need for it, as illustrated in the cases of Ann and Peter, and Dianne and Brian:

> I felt the seminars were focused more on whether we wanted to adopt. By the time we had got that far of course we were ready. We had contended with IVF failure and being childless. We didn't need to go through it all again. I wish there had been more on the reality of intercountry adoption and what to expect. Even support by being able to talk with other people who had already been through it [adopting ICA] would have been really good.
>
> (Ann)

> I'm not too sure you needed support, other than the practical side.
>
> (Peter)

> It would have been really helpful to have met other couples who had adopted from overseas and spoken to them about how they found it. What I have learnt since the adoption, would have been so helpful to have known prior.
>
> (Dianne)

> No we didn't need any support, we had already adopted a child locally so Dianne knew all about it and being a mother so she was fine.
>
> (Brian)

Ageism and Sexist Attitudes

Some women felt that because they were over forty years of age they did not get the support from ICANZ that they had expected. Sue and Mary, for example, commented:

> I felt really shocked and angry when I spoke to a woman at ICANZ. She said that as I was in my forties not to expect any babies to be given to me as "Russia doesn't want grandmothers picking up their children from school." This was really hurtful after all I had gone through with not being able to have children. I didn't need another slap in the face. She could have been less nasty about it.
>
> (Sue)

> I felt ICANZ were not that interested as we were over forty. The woman was quite rude and cold each time I rang and I felt she just didn't like me. I heard men get on with her better so in the end if there was any phone contact to be made, I made Alf do it.
>
> (Mary)

Monica also mentioned that she had heard that ICANZ:

> ...seems to have a better relationship with men. Other women had mentioned this to me and suggested that I get Dave to be the main person to ring them. Dave did seem to have a better relationship with her [a contact person at ICANZ] than me, but it didn't really worry me.

Although Kevin, Alf and Dave had contact with ICANZ they did not mention any concerns. Indeed, Alf said he:

> ...found ICANZ very good. They told me what I wanted to hear and got on with the job of getting us children. No fuss, very business like.

Whether ICANZ has a policy regarding the age of couples was unclear from this study. None of the women mentioned having seen anything that indicated that such a policy existed. Policy or not, however, the experience of the participants raises a concern over whether ICANZ was (and may still be) operating from a view that older women are not as capable as younger women in parenting a child. As the age of the first time mother is increasing in first world countries, without any documented disadvantage to the child that I am aware of, this view should be challenged if it is still evident. Moreover, as it has been shown in this study that women are the main organisers of the intercountry adoption process, it is of concern also that an organisation working in this area was seen as being more helpful towards men. This is also an area that ICANZ needs to address. Ageism and sexism were not issues that arose in the literature review (Chapter 2), although it was noted that couples who

adopt from overseas are generally of an older age group than biological parents.

THE PROCESS IN THE SENDING COUNTRY

My intention here was to elicit the experience of the respondents while they completed the process of intercountry adoption in the sending country. I aimed to find out if this experience differed from their experience of the process within New Zealand, and if so, what the differences were. Areas considered in the interview included the following: support the respondents needed while overseas; how the respondents were treated in the sending country; and how well prepared they had felt they were.

The themes that emerged from the questionnaire were general to all of the women and brought much emotion from them as they recalled the events in Russia. The main themes included the stress of being in a different culture under their circumstances; the ease of the legal process; meeting the children for the first time; questioning their decision to adopt; and the support they wanted while completing this part of the process.

Stress

Going into a different culture to gain a child or children whom they had never met before caused a great deal of stress for all of the women. Many were surprised by their levels of stress as they had not anticipated these emotions occurring to such a degree. Culture shock and the shock of seeing life in an orphanage were cited as the main reasons for their experience of stress. Other reasons included the lack of space and privacy they had, being unable to speak the language and communicate with officials in the orphanage, and coming to terms with both the lack of familiar food and the amount of food generally available. On the whole their partners agreed with this view but to a different degree, as seen in the following remarks by Mary and Alf, Dianne and Brian, Jean and Steve:

> It's hard to explain how I felt. I was just numb from the moment we landed. I knew there was going to be poverty but I just didn't expect the degree of it. The houses, the streets, the people. It's really strange as I have travelled all over the world but never felt like I did in Russia. I think numb is the best way to describe it.
>
> (Mary)

> The process itself ran relatively smooth although Mary found it quite hard which surprised me as she is very well travelled. I think the poverty was too much for her. I'm not saying I wasn't affected, but I wasn't too surprised by what I saw either.
>
> (Alf)

> I just felt lost but also excited. It wasn't what I expected but then I don't know what I expected, just not what it was I suppose. Everything was so different to here and not being able to talk to people was really hard. I just felt so lost and then there was the poverty and the poor children in the orphanage, It just broke my heart. I think I could have coped better.
>
> (Dianne)

> I was surprised by what I saw but not too much as I had seen stuff on the T.V about these places. On the whole the process went really well and the Court date came and went. Having to hang around for a couple of weeks was hard as I just wanted to get on with it.
>
> (Brian)

> I didn't find the process hard in Russia but it was quite stressful. Everyone went out of their way [to help] and our interpreter was wonderful but it was hard not being able to ask questions yourself to the women in the orphanage, or understand [their] replies. The food, or lack of food, was hard to get used to but we were able to survive.
>
> (Jean)

> Process in Russia was very good. Everything was organised and fell into place like clockwork. ICANZ people had looked after everything. I felt well prepared and did not have many surprises. ICA is like marriage, you can talk to others about it but it's up to you to make the decision.
>
> (Steve)

Overall, the stress was predominately felt by the women who also tended to experience a more varied range of emotions than their husbands. This could be because the women had invested more of their time and energy into the process of getting to Russia so that on

reaching this point the strain it had caused became evident through their already stretched coping ability. It may also have reflected the fact that the time had come for making the final decision of adoption, a decision that many of the women felt responsible for. This could be especially reflected in the instances where the husband returned to New Zealand leaving the wife to finish off the process.

The Legal Process

Most couples did not find the paperwork, or the legal adoption process, a problem in Russia and commented on how well looked after they had been by the people organised to help them over there. For example, Jean and Leah made the following comments:

> The paperwork took care of itself mostly and the court session went well. The Judge seemed to want to make sure we were decent people, we must have passed.
>
> (Jean)

> The legal process went better than we expected, it was very organised. The paperwork had all arrived and the Judge seemed to do a very thorough job of making sure the adoption was above board.
>
> (Leah)

This area was not a concern to either gender, a point of interest to note, as the paperwork was a major concern for couples in the New Zealand part of the process. However, the magazine and newspaper articles reviewed in Chapter 2 did indicate that couples found the paperwork process stressful, particularly in the sending country. These articles were written (in the main) during the early days of intercountry adoption in New Zealand, and with the increase in the amount of intercountry adoption the process may have become more organised.

Meeting the Child(ren)

Many of the women tended to focus on their initial feelings from meeting their child(ren) for the first time. This was a key part of the process for them. Fear over not being able to bond or cope with their

child(ren) was a common emotion experienced by many of the women at this time, as shown by Sue, Mary and Leah, respectively:

> The process went smoothly but nothing prepared me for the first meeting with one of the children we planned to adopt. I felt nothing for the child except fear that I would not be able to cope with bringing this child up.
>
> (Sue)

> Initially there was no emotional attachment; this child was touching me and calling me "Mama" and all I felt was fear. Fear that I would not bond with this child and that he would start to hate me. This was the hardest part of the process for me and one I just didn't expect to happen. I had wanted a child for just so long and here I was on the brink yet what I thought would be the happiest moment of my life was the most frightening.
>
> (Mary)

> I felt ill when I was about to meet Michael. What would happen if he didn't come to me or he didn't want us to adopt him? I was also scared that we would not bond and [we would] never have a mother/son relationship.
>
> (Leah)

Meeting the children for the first time and fearing the lack of a bond was not an issue for the men. This could be due to the men tending to focus on the more practical side of the process, whereas the women focused on the emotional side.

In the case of Monica, her feelings of fear and stress were increased by the fact that her husband left her on her own in Russia. Dave was completely unaware of his wife's feelings of fear as indicated in the following quotes from this couple:

> Russia is not an easy country to deal with. The paperwork is easier as it is mostly completed but when you go to the orphanage your heart just goes out to all the children. I ended up on my own, as Dave had to leave for a couple of weeks during our time in Russia. Although I had a place to stay and a guide it was a frightening time as I was also left with our two new children and I wondered if we were doing the right thing and felt somehow that it was my decision and if I got it wrong what would happen. Prayer was my salvation.
>
> (Monica)

> The Russian part was going really well, so due to some business commitments back in the UK, I had to leave Monica for a week but went back for the court day. It ran quite smoothly considering it was Russia.
>
> (Dave)

The above findings support the views expressed by couples in newspaper and magazine articles (Chapter 2). Stress and a fear of not bonding with their new child were a reality for many of the women featured in these articles, yet this did not come through as an issue for the men. A number of the men were reported, like Dave, to have left the wife behind to deal with the process while they returned to work.

Making the Wrong Decision

As stated earlier, the responsibility of initiating and organising the intercountry adoption process tended to fall on the woman. For many of the women this responsibility weighed heavily and showed when it came to the final decision to adopt their child(ren) in the sending country. Often it appeared that the women felt it was up to them to make this decision, as if they were on their own, and that if the adoption was not successful it would be their fault. This feeling of an overall responsibility came through in all the themes from the section on the process in Russia, and is particularly shown in the following comments from Sue, Jean and Monica:

> I don't know if it was a real fear or just the shock of being there but all of a sudden time was going too fast and I felt I had to make a decision on whether to adopt this child or not too quickly. I didn't know what to do and felt I could be making the biggest mistake of my life.
>
> (Sue)

> It wasn't love at first sight as I had expected and I just watched this child doing a lot of tasks she was asked to do. I went away thinking "I wonder if this is right". She was a complete stranger as we were to her. I felt if I didn't get this [decision] right we would regret it bitterly.
>
> (Jean)

> Seeing the children for the first time made me realise I might have made the wrong decision. I suppose I doubted whether I would be able to cope.
>
> (Monica)

Although doubts did occur for many of the women this was sometimes described as being similar to pre-wedding jitters, where

you know in your heart it is the right thing to do but still feel scared to take that step. In no cases did either spouse state that they went ahead with the adoption without wanting to, although this area was not specially discussed in the interview.

For the men, feelings of responsibility or making the wrong decision were not themes that came out of their interviews. The impression gained was that the men saw it as a joint decision and in each case were not aware that the wife felt the weight of this decision more so than he did. This indicates that there may have been a lack of communication between spouses with regard to how the process was affecting them, or a lack of recognition of how each partner was feeling. In the magazine and newspaper articles reviewed in Chapter 2 the woman was often left alone in the sending country to complete the adoption. Although this occurred in only one case in this study, many of the women felt left they had been alone emotionally to make this decision, which could account for why the weight of the final decision to adopt was felt more keenly by the women. Also, as discussed in Chapter 5, the women may have seen it as their role to provide children so, therefore, they may also have seen it as their role or duty to make the right decision with respect to an adoption.

Support

In regard to whether support was needed, the majority of the women stated there was a need for emotional support from their husbands whereas their husbands felt that little, if any, support was needed. Consider, for example, the following quotes:

> Well you can't exactly take your support network along with you can you. Kevin was it really, which was enough. I wouldn't have wanted to go through it on my own. It was good to have him there keeping a level head on everything when I was being an emotional wreck.
>
> (Sue)

> I don't know what support you would need? ICANZ had it all covered and we really just followed what they had organised.
>
> (Kevin)

> I would have been lost without Mark. He was a great support to me and sounding board, plus knowing that my family back home was thinking of us and would give their support on our return was good.
>
> (Carol)

> Well everything was pretty well covered when we got there. There wasn't much need for any support [as] we seemed to cope well. No, I can't think of any support that we needed.
>
> (Mark)

> Ohhh the whole thing was awful but I don't know what support you could have got in a foreign country where you couldn't speak the language. I think even Mike felt out of control, which I have never seen before. Mike was my support and I leaned on him heavily; he was the more practical when I was getting upset and teary over what I was seeing.
>
> (Beth)

> No, it was all right, we were ok.
>
> (Mike)

The following comment from Steve tends to reflect the general sentiment of the men:

> Practical support not emotional support is given while you are there [sending country]. I'm not sure you need support other than the practical side.

Again the difference between the practical and emotional focus of the wives and husbands is evident in this section. It was of interest to note that many of the women stated that they gained support from their husbands and that, in the case of Sue, this was enough. From the above comments the support gained tended to be on a practical level. It had become evident from the results earlier that many of the women felt they were on their own, especially on an emotional level. A lack of support, felt by the women, came through in all other sections of the study. It is unclear why this was different during the final stages of the process in the sending country. One explanation could be that the women's expectations of support were less in a foreign country, where they did not know the system, than they were within their own country. It may also have been due to their husbands being able to give more of their attention to the adoption

process, as the normal distractions of their every day life were no longer occurring. Another factor to consider is that while the women were in New Zealand they were typically childless. The women, therefore, not only had to contend with the stress that this had created for them but also the stress of having to complete an intercountry adoption process in order to gain their much anticipated child(ren). In the sending country they had gained a child or children and were finally completing the process that they had primarily initiated and organised.

WOMENS ADVICE TO FUTURE MUMS ON INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTED CHILDREN

At the end of my final interview with the women, I asked each one if they would like to share any 'tips' or advice to women who were contemplating adopting from overseas. All of the women choose to take part in this and have it included in this study so that their ideas and thoughts can to be shared with others. This part of the study was not analysed as I am merely reporting on the views of the women for others to interpret.

> Make sure you know what paperwork is required and who does what, for example what paperwork are you meant to supply and what paperwork does CYFS and ICANZ do. Also talk to as many people as possible who have adopted beforehand so that they can tell you what to expect in the process, then don't expect your process to be the same, and never expect your life to be the same again.
>
> (Dianne)

> I don't regret doing this, but it is so much harder than what I thought and so time consuming, that's even before we got our child. It is really hard and no matter how prepared you think you are you will find it so different. But the moments of good times make it all worthwhile. If there was any advice to give I would say make sure both you and your husband spend time with other children from Russia, offer to baby-sit for a few times so both of you get a full picture of what is involved.
>
> (Carol)

> Read as much as you can on the difficulties and problems some of these children have beforehand. This process isn't for the faint

> hearted and you have to be dedicated as your life will change completely and, although it is rewarding, it is also very hard work.
>
> (Ann)

> Get rid of any ideas that it going to be an easy road with lots of peaches and cream. It's not like that. Read all you can on the issues involved and then make your decision.
>
> (Mary)

> You need a lot of prayer and patience. Also knowing about the behaviours of children from institutions would be an advantage, and what to look for, as it can come as quite a shock. Talk to others who have adopted and meet their children [as this] would be really helpful.
>
> (Monica)

> Don't expect to bond to your child overnight. It takes time and a lot of hard work. Find out as much as you can about the process and what to expect beforehand so that you can at least be a bit prepared. After that just enjoy the moments you have. This is a vocation.
>
> (Leah)

> really hard work so parents have to be prepared to put in the time. Find out as much as you can before hand and have loads and loads of patience.
>
> (Beth)

CONCLUSION

This chapter has focused on the issues involved in the process of intercountry adoption both within New Zealand and within the sending country. The aim was to examine the experiences of the couples in order to identify any areas of concern that they had encountered and to investigate whether there was a gender differentiation in their roles, or division of labour, and their perception of the process.

In Chapter 5 the women were seen as the main instigators and decision-makers, a role which is reinforced in this chapter where the women were again found to take the more active part throughout the process of intercountry adoption. Responsibility for the process seemed to land squarely on the shoulders of the women, who felt the

pressure this entailed. It could be argued that this occurred because the role of providing children was perceived as a female one, and as such the process of acquiring a child through intercountry adoption was left largely to the women to achieve.

The actual process of achieving an intercountry adoption through CYFS and ICANZ also raised concerns for many of the participants, in particular the women. A major theme was that in many cases the process was very time consuming with the participants finding a repetition of material in the seminars conducted by ICANZ and CYFS. Some women also found ICANZ to be sexist and ageist in its practice. This causes concern as the results from this study show that it is women, in an older age group for mothers, who are the main organisers of an intercountry adoption and, therefore, would have the most contact with this organisation.

On the whole, the women felt that the process in New Zealand was emotionally tiring and that they did not gain the support needed from CYFS and ICANZ. Their partners tended to be less affected by the delay – for them the time the process took was more of a nuisance, reflecting perhaps the small part they played compared to the women.

The adoption process in Russia had its own issues. Although both partners in each couple saw the process in Russia as being easier with respect to the paperwork, the women appeared to be more affected, indeed stressed, by the culture shock of going to Russia and of seeing orphanage life first hand. The women also tended to focus on their initial meeting with their adopted child(ren) and the impact and fear this brought for them. For many of the women this part of the process caused them apprehension as to whether they were doing the "right thing". Often the women appeared to have felt that the final decision to adopt was theirs to make alone. Surprisingly, the issues experienced by the women were not

significant, or in some cases even recognised as issues, for their husbands. The men tended to focus instead on the bureaucratic slowness as they did with the New Zealand part of the process.

The results raised questions of whether women are given adequate advice, or are adequately prepared, for the process of achieving an intercountry adoption. The results also raise a question as to whether or not the husband was fully aware of the emotional effect that this process had on the wife. In this study it appears that for the most part the husband was not aware of the issues, stresses and strains felt by the wife. This lack of awareness proved to be the main difference between wife and husband.

The chapter concluded with advice that the wives wanted to give other women contemplating an intercountry adoption. In essence, this advice boiled down to the following key points: be aware that intercountry adoption is difficult and demanding, do as much preparation as possible beforehand, meet other adoptive parents if possible before you decide to adopt, and be patient and prepared for hard work.

CHAPTER 7 - THE HOMECOMING

The literature review (Chapter 2) revealed a lack of information on the experiences of couples following their homecoming with their adopted children. The majority of the literature appears to focus on issues surrounding the development and adjustment of the children. Issues relating to the adoptive parents, especially the women, during this period are not commented on. Accordingly the aim of this chapter is to bring forth the issues and concerns which have faced the respondents since returning home with their child(ren) in order to gain some insight into the initial homecoming period after the process of adoption is completed. The period termed the homecoming was limited to the first six months on returning home from the sending country. This time frame was chosen in order to assist participants in focusing on issues which affected them directly after the completion of the adoption process.

ISSUES AND DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED

The issues discussed in order to gain insight into this area are: health issues that may have occurred for the respondents on their return; the reaction respondents encountered from people commenting on their adopted children; professional assistance the respondents may have sought in relation to their children; and the adjustments to their lifestyles that the respondents may have experienced. I choose the above issues as I believed they would cover a wide spectrum of experiences and yield a rich body of information for the study.

Health Issues

Research in Chapter 2 indicated that many of the children adopted from overseas institutions may have a variety of behavioural and health issues that can cause a great deal of stress for the adoptive parents. I was, therefore, interested to see if the adoption had any health effects on the participants. For example, if the adoption had caused them stress which may have had an adverse effect on their

overall health. This was an area where there has been little previous research.

While the men felt that their health had not changed one way or the other with the adoption, the results showed that there were improvements reported by some of the wives. Four of the ten women felt that their health was the best it had been for some time. Consider the following quotes from Jan, Dianne, Monica and Sue, respectively:

> I have never felt better, very tired but very happy. Prior to getting my children I had experienced a few health problems with headaches and general aches and pains, yet since Vika and Michael have come the pains have gone. It's really a miracle; even my doctor has commented that I am seeing him less.
>
> (Jan)

> No health issues at all, I'm too busy with the children to have any. No my health has been fine, in fact it has been better than normal as I used to get migraines but don't anymore. I hadn't reallythought of it before but gosh my health has got better.
>
> (Dianne)

> My health has been fine. Dave used to tease me that I was a bit of a hypochondriac but even he has noticed that I have never felt better. Motherhood has been the best thing for me. I thank God each and every day.
>
> (Monica)

> Actually I used to suffer from severe migraines and abdomen pain, but lately I seem to be experiencing a period of abnormally good health, touch wood. But no, there have been no [adverse] health issues for me.
>
> (Sue)

Monica's husband (Dave) was the only one who commented on the health of his wife:

> If anything, Monica has got better since becoming a mother. She seems more relaxed and happy and not as sick as she used to feel.

There could be a number of reasons, unexplored by this study, to explain why these four women felt that their health had improved since the adoption. Their health problems, for example, might have been based on their experience of stress prior to the adoption, stress

possibly caused by their infertility. As it was only women who noted a positive change in their health after the adoption, it could be suggested that women felt the stress of infertility, and not being able to provide the marriage with a child, more than the husband. Of course stress could also have been caused through the pressure of employment, which was reduced once they became full-time child carers. This result points to areas of further research, in particular to see what links there are between illness and infertility. As I was unable to locate any research in this area, I was unable to compare my results with those of other researchers. It is also to be noted that the period of improved health occurred in what could be termed the 'honeymoon period' where the parents are still experiencing the joys of long awaited parenthood before the realities of some of the issues associated with this experience become fully apparent. It may be appropriate for future research in this area to widen the period investigated to at least the first year after returning home.

It was found, however, that while many of the women indicated no change in their overall health, they tended to focus on medical aspects only. An example is Leah who described her health status as follows:

> No change really. I haven't needed to see the doctor at all although I did get very tired and felt I needed some sort of a pick me up with everything happening, but my health stayed the same.

This raises a possible concern that many of the women may have experienced issues associated with a negative impact on their health but failed to recognise it as such or under-rated the impact, and so did not seek the assistance that may have been needed. It could also be suggested, of course, that the women did not want to admit that they had not coped as well as they had anticipated.

Support Needed on Their Return

A need for support has been a common theme in both the literature reviewed and in the preceding chapters of this study. Support

needed and received, on the couples return, came from a wide array of sources, ranging from family and friends to professional intervention of various types. Again the responses tended to differ on the basis of gender, although similarities did occur between the couples in relation to how they perceived acceptance of their child(ren) by family and friends.

Family and Friends

The similarity of responses with regard to the support gained from family and friends was well illustrated by Ann and Peter, and also by Leah and Bill:

> Everyone was very supportive, whether church, friends or family. Everyone was very excited with our new family and would help out wherever they could. But in saying that there was very little anyone could do in the beginning as the children had to get used to us and we had to establish boundaries and be seen as their parents.
>
> (Ann)

> Our extended family and church family were very supportive. The kids were like wild animals run riot. People helped us at church. I found people very positive and taking quite a sensible interest in the children.
>
> (Peter)

> Misha was accepted as part of the family and our friends were very excited and happy for us.
>
> (Leah)

> Our adult friends were excited, most people thought it was a great thing to do. We kept the adoption to ourselves, didn't go around telling everyone she was adopted.
>
> (Bill)

Reaction from Strangers

A major issue that emerged for the women, however, was a perceived negative reaction from strangers. This reaction was not so much to the child(ren) being adopted, but to the way in which the behaviour exhibited by their child(ren) was handled. Consider, for example, the points made by Dianne, Sue and Mary:

> I was in town one day and Victor decided he wanted to have a ride on the toy horse, you know the kind outside shops. Well I wouldn't let him and he did his normal tantrum and started to hit and bite me. All I can do is grab him any way I can and hold him down or carry him to the van. Well this day a women saw me and thought I was abusing him I think, and threatened to inform the authorities if I didn't let him go and said that people like me don't deserve to have children. I just burst into tears when I got home, if only she knew what I had gone through to get Victor and that this was all anyone could do to keep him safe. I was devastated and wondered what I was doing. Often I catch people looking at me as if to say "Can't you control your own children".
>
> (Dianne)

> It was about the tenth time Lucy had got away from me and ran off. I went to look for her when a women brought her to me and had a go at me by saying didn't I know how dangerous it was to let children wander off unsupervised. Let her! She [the women] had absolutely no idea of the situation. I just meekly agreed and apologised and took Lucy inside. You can't explain the situation every time something happens but I felt so angry and annoyed that this woman thought I was a bad mother. Situations like this still get to me.
>
> (Sue)

> I have always been in control of my life and situations, but adopting just one child has thrown all that. Now people look at me as if I don't have a brain and am one of those mothers who have no control over their child. Which is true at times, I don't [have control over my child], but people in the street don't understand the circumstances. All they see is an unruly child and [an] exasperated mother
>
> (Mary)

In comparison with the women, their spouses tended to see only positive reactions, as illustrated by Brian in the following quote, and did not mention any negative views at all:

> People think we have done something wonderful, saving the lives of two children so to speak. The blokes at work think it's really good and fuss over the kids when they come in.

The women found the attitude from bystanders very hard to deal with as it seemed to attack them as mothers, which is what they had striven to be for so long. This attitude would have been more noticeable to the women as they were the main caregivers, having to deal more with the everyday situations that their husbands were not party to. However, it is of concern that many of their husbands did

not realise this situation was occurring, as it could lead to a further perceived lack of support among the women.

Support From Other Mothers of Intercountry Adopted Children

The only support, outside of family and friends, which was mentioned by the women was that gained from other mothers of intercountry adopted children, as indicated by Dianne and Carol, respectively:

> After I got home from the incident in town with Victor I didn't know where to turn so I rang Ann and talked to her about it. She calmed me down as she had been through similar things. If it wasn't for the other mums I'm sure I would have gone mad by now.
>
> (Dianne)

> People in the street don't understand the needs of our children. Even at playgroup some mothers would make negative comments about my parenting or that I was unable to control my children. Its at times like this you realise how important having the support of other ICA mums is and having someone to talk to who can relate to your experiences.
>
> (Carol)

In coping with adverse reactions from strangers many of the women cited the support gained from other mothers of intercountry adopted children as being paramount. Being able to discuss their experiences with someone who understood what they were talking about, and had felt the same way, helped alleviate their stress and negative feelings. This view is illustrated by Dianne who found the support of other women vital in coping with times of stress.

> Being able to talk to someone who knows what you are going through has been such a blessing. At times I wonder what to do next and if this has only happened to me. Then I ring one of the other mums of ICA and find that she felt the same and we discuss what we have tried and what works and what we can try. If it wasn't for that I don't know if I would cope. Brian is good but he doesn't realise what happens during the day. By the time he gets home the kids are in bed or relatively quiet. They seem to save their outbursts for me. But this is common and other mums have said the same.

Due to their isolated location, three of the women did not have much contact with others who had adopted from overseas and found they had little support, as Jan indicated:

> I don't really get to mix with other couples who have adopted. We are a long way out and it's a bit of an ordeal to get into town. John's good when he gets home and I can talk to my friends but they tend to keep away and not really want us around at their homes due to the destruction and havoc these kids can cause. I should really make more of an effort to ring other mums through ICANZ but haven't really got the time.

The need for women to form support networks with other women seems very high in this study. Although ICANZ offers an avenue to gain contact with other women, it does not appear to facilitate such contact and, as mentioned by Jan, some of the women found they did not have the time to do this themselves. This could an item for future development by services involved in the area.

Although having other mothers to turn to is a great resource it highlights how women are being used to plug gaps not filled by professional services in society. The size of the gap and the need for such services may then be hidden. Gaining support from other mothers should be a compliment to professional services, not a substitute for them.

Professional Support

Whereas all the couples noted a need for professional input to assist them with their children, the women in particular perceived a lack of specific knowledge and expertise on intercountry adoption among the professionals to the point that they felt that they themselves had become the 'experts'. The majority of the men did not perceive this to be the case, as the following examples from couples illustrate:

> I have a really good Paediatrician but he thinks all that is needed is for me to have counselling....He [the Paediatrician] doesn't understand the issues these children come with. I asked him if he had ever come across ICA children before and he said "No". I believe a lot of these children are wrongly diagnosed as ADD [Attention Deficient Disorder] when they are really suffering from a form of attachment disorder.
>
> (Dianne)

> Dianne takes Victor to the doctor but that's about it. We haven't really needed anything else yet but we will be using other professionals as the kids get older. It's too early yet.
>
> (Brian)

> There doesn't seem to be much professional help, is there? My GP just keeps commenting on how brave I am taking on two children like this. That's not much help. I don't know if there is anything, you just have to do your best and read up on things yourself and then try yourself.
>
> (Jan)

> We haven't needed any professional support, the kids have been to the doctor and checked out but so far all is well. The family and friends from our church come round and give Jan a break now and then but on the whole we manage well on our own.,
>
> (John)

Therefore, in many cases the woman felt that she had to educate the professionals and, in the area of schooling, make time to look after her child(ren) in the classroom situation on her own. Often the women felt this assistance from the mothers was not appreciated by the professionals. This is illustrated in the following experiences of Ann and Carol:

> Well there just hasn't been the professional knowledge available. This is due to the relative newness of intercountry adoption. I have been gaining information myself and have found the inter-net an excellent source for this. Unfortunately the treatment and problems the kids have are new to the professionals who don't seem to accept a parent maybe knowing more than they do about this.
>
> (Ann)

> I have had to come in and sit with David during class time as there is no funding for extra help other than half an hour a week for English skills. I feel I am the expert on attachment disorders and social behaviour. SES [Specialist Education Services] have been next to useless. They keep trying to say David is ADHD [Attention Deficient and Hyperactive Disorder] when I know he isn't but has an attachment disorder, the symptoms can be similar but there are real fundamental differences that SES just haven't got the knowledge about. I give them articles on the disorders but they just think I'm being over protective as they haven't met kids like this before.
>
> (Carol)

The extent of the problems experienced by the women was not apparent with the men. This difference between the couples could

again be due to the women having more direct contact with the child(ren) and with professionals

It appears from this study that professional services in New Zealand are not well equipped to deal with the problems that children adopted from institutions overseas may have. This lack of knowledge may give rise to some professionals feeling threatened by the mothers of intercountry adopted children, who appear to know more than they do. I have not heard of any funding being put into this area, instead such children are left to complete for funding against New Zealand-born children. This lack of recognition may (ironically) have a negative impact on both children from overseas as well as New Zealand-born children. The problems of New Zealand-born children may not seem as serious compared to those experienced by adopted children from overseas, therefore, New Zealand-born children may lose access to the limited assistance available in favour of intercountry adopted children. As this assistance may not necessary be appropriate for the specific needs of intercountry adopted children (as discussed in Chapter 2) these children also experience a negative outcome.

To sum up, the lack of support found by the women does reflect the concerns revealed in the literature review, especially in the newspaper and magazine articles where women voiced concern over a lack of support from professionals, and in particular CYFS. This study did not reveal a lack of support from this agency in particular, but a more general lack of support from health and education agencies as well as the agencies specialising in the process of an intercountry adoption. Health and education agencies lacked the specialised knowledge to deal with the issues these children had and often the woman felt it was left to her to research and discover ways to assist her child(ren) to develop. In addition, a large gap appeared in the area of personal support for the parents of intercountry children, especially the women who are usually the main caregivers.

Whether there is a service already established that could be further developed to fill that gap, or whether a new service needs to be developed, could be an area for further research.

EFFECT OF THE ADOPTION ON LIFESTYLE

With regard to the lifestyle effect, the focus was on how the respondents viewed changes that may have occurred since adopting their child or children from overseas. My primary aim was to see if parents had been adequately prepared for the effect that the adoption would have on their lives. The review of the literature showed that couples may not be well prepared and, therefore, become disillusioned not only with their child(ren), due to having high expectations on what their child(ren) should be like, but also with their own parenting ability. If this is the case, I wanted to know if unanticipated changes in their lifestyle, caused through the adoption, had contributed to this outcome.

In order to elicit this information the following prompts were used: changes in friendships and relationships outside the home; relationships with the extended family; activities participated in prior to the adoption; and if the participant had left paid employment, the effect this had on them. Themes that emerged included the effect of a career change, friendships, relationship with their spouse and the perception of others. However the emerging themes from the participants did not seen to be specific to intercountry adoption alone and appeared to arise more from parenting in general, in particular first time parenting. This suggestion was illustrated by Ann who noted:

> There were many changes to my lifestyle but I think this would have happened whether I had my own children or adopted children. Children just open a whole new world to you.

Effect of a Career Change

The results showed that lifestyle adjustment tended to be more significant where a career change had occurred; for example, where

a person was working full-time in the paid workforce prior to the adoption then becoming full-time carer of a child or children in their home after the adoption. This adjustment, in all areas of their lifestyle, appears to have only affected the women. Ann, for example, summarised this with the following comment:

> ...you can't have a career short-term. For us it was me not working and putting the effort and time into the children. Our friends have also changed as we tend to associate with other ICA families as they have a better understanding of the children's behaviour. I used to be very involved in my job, I'm not a career woman anymore and have had to adapt to being a mother instead and changing my whole life to fit in with this new situation.

The following areas are the ones most discussed by the participants as being affected by this "new situation".

Friendships

Monica, like Ann, found that her friendships had changed as she sought out friendships with women in similar circumstances.

> My friendships have changed the most. I now seem to spend my time with other mums of ICA children as they understand what I am going through. My children will cause havoc in the homes of some of my old friends so I find it easier to stay away. Not that I have time to keep in close contact with my friends. My whole world now is centred around the children, not around social activities and work.

However, this did not appear to be the case where there were children already in the family, as noted by Dianne:

> My life was hectic before [and] it's just more so now. Friendships are still there but I see less of people as I just don't have the time and Victor could wreck a house in two minutes so its safer to stay at home.

Although the behaviour of their adopted children was an issue for women such as Ann and Dianne, overall it appears that friendships changed more dramatically for women who had gone from being child free to having children, irrespective of the process used in gaining children, (i.e. biological verses adoption. The men did not comment on any change in their friendships but tended to focus on the change in their marital relationship.

Relationship with Spouse

A common experience for the majority of the men was a feeling of being neglected by their wives, as illustrated by Dave and Brain:

> Well I am no longer the boss in my own home, the children are and Monica centres on them now, which is rightly so but I'm sure things will settle soon. I feel Monica may place too much emphasis on the children, she needs to let go and let others help. An example is that we don't go to home group together anymore or have it at our home which I am sure we could work around, but then as I said I am sure things will settle as Monica gets used to being a mother. I feel that she is not there for me as a wife as she used to be.
>
> (Dave)

> If I thought Dianne was child centred with our first daughter then she is completely taken up with Victor and Katy. At times I am glad I have work to go to. I can't remember the last time me and Di spent time alone together. The children always come first, she doesn't seem to have time for me now and to talk, but that's just life as a parent I suppose.
>
> (Brian)

Although Monica and Dianne were aware of their spouse's feelings they but did not put the same amount of emphasis on this effect, as shown by the following comments:

> I think Dave misses the attention I used to give him, but he realises things had to change for our children.
>
> (Monica)

> I feel for Brian at times, as by the time he comes home I have had enough and just want to go to bed, but you can't can you. I think he is coping fine though and I do try and make time for him when I can.
>
> (Dianne)

Whether or not there were children already in the home, the men felt hard done by. In general, the male view was that the wife gave too much attention to the child(ren) at the expense of their own need for spousal attention. The issue here is that in some cases the men may resent the impact that the child(ren) had on their marital relationship which could in turn cause disillusionment with the adoption placement and affect their relationship with the child(ren) as indicated by Rosenwald and Hoksbergen (1997) and their wives. I was unable to locate any research regarding the separation of couples post adoption.

Perception of Others

Many of the women claimed that they found that people perceived them as less intelligent now that they were full-time mothers and no longer seen as career women. The following comment from Mary aptly illustrates this view:

> Sometimes I think people think my mind has gone and I can no longer hold a conversation about world events or work situations. Its strange how people relate to me now I am a mother and not in the workplace. I really believe people associate a loss of brainpower with having children.

Again this would not be specific to mothers of intercountry adopted children, but a general societal view on the value of motherhood in comparison to paid employment, as discussed by Oakley (1994).

Children entail a major change in anyone's lifestyle if they go from having paid employment and no children to being a full-time caregiver. I had hoped that changes relating specifically to adopting from overseas would become evident in this section, but this was not the case. Although the results showed that the participants had experienced change to their lifestyle proceeding the adoption, it was the effect of having children that caused this change, not the fact that the children came from another country. The area of lifestyle changes may need to be further explored in order to determine if there are indeed any changer that are specific to an intercountry adoption.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter was to bring forward any issues or concerns the respondents faced on returning home with their child(ren). To this end, attention was focused on issues which occurred for the respondents in the first six months after they had returned to New Zealand.

With regard to personal health, both the men and the women were in agreement that there had been no decline in their health. Indeed, in some cases the women felt that their health had actually improved since the adoption, an improvement that in one case was noted by the husband. The improvement in health raises many areas for debate. One of the themes in the literature review was the stress that infertility caused couples as well as the stress of having to complete the adoption process in order to gain a child. It could be suggested, therefore, that the improvement in health was related to the reduction in stress once the adoption process was completed. Moreover, as health only seemed to improve in the women, it could be argued that they felt or experienced the stress of both infertility and the adoption process rather more than their husbands. This brings us back to the proposition that women feel it is their role to supply children (Oakely, 1974; Rowbotham, 1973) and the lead role played by them throughout the adoption process. Whether or not this positive effect on the health of participants persists in the longer term was not investigated in this study.

The issue of support revealed the greatest differences between the spouses. On the whole, the women stated a need for support, especially from other women who had adopted from overseas, in order to gain advice and guidance. Women also saw a lack of professional knowledge or expertise available to them within their community. This may have contributed to the need for women to turn to each other for support. Their spouses did not recognise this need and in general felt that the professional knowledge or expertise available was sufficient. Nevertheless, the lack of support felt by all ten of the women is a matter of concern, especially as they claimed that their need was not being recognised or adequately provided by any of the major social services. ICANZ seems to offer an avenue for parents to get together but this organisation did not appear to have co-ordinator employed to facilitate or organise such meetings on a local basis. Due to many women feeling the pressure of time,

they were unable to organise such meeting themselves. Agencies such as Plunket, new mothers groups and play centres can and do meet the need to a degree, but a recurring theme in the results showed that women needed an agency or support network that was specific to the needs of their intercountry adopted children. These needs centred round issues posed by children adopted from overseas and who had often spent a considerable part of their lives in an institution.

The women also noted an adverse reaction from strangers to how they parented their adopted child or children. Often they felt that strangers thought they were unfit mothers due to the behaviours their children exhibited. Their husbands did not raise this issue, perhaps because they were not the full-time daily caregivers responsible for the children and therefore had few opportunities to encounter or observe the reactions of others.

Lifestyle changes (including leisure activities) were more dramatic for women, as compared with their partners, especially if they had gone from having a full-time paid career to being a full-time mother. Not only did some feel that they were suddenly viewed by others as being less intellectual, but in some cases friendships changed as they sought out those who were in similar circumstances. Whether children were gained biologically or through adoption did not appear to be a contributing factor. Motherhood in general is not seen by society as a great career move, nor as needing many skills or abilities (Oakely, 1974; Rowbotham, 1973).

Finally, both spouses felt that their relationship as a couple had been affected by the addition of a child or children. This was the only area that men showed more concern about than women, with many of them feeling neglected by their wife due to the child(ren) taking up her time. Women did not seem overly concerned about this.

CHAPTER 8 WHERE TO FROM HERE? DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This thesis has focused on the process that couples go through in order to adopt a child or children from overseas. Particular emphasis has been placed on the role and experience of the woman within each couple because it appeared to me, through my work as a social worker in the area of intercountry adoption, that it was the woman who was the main initiator and organiser of this process. Given the paucity of both national and international research on this topic, the findings of this study represent a useful contribution to our knowledge and understanding of the process and the issues connected with intercountry adoption.

The study had two main objectives: first, to highlight the role of the woman in married couples who apply to adopt a child or children from overseas; and second to investigate if there are differences between females and males in their experience and perception of the process and issues involved in an intercountry adoption. It is hoped that the findings of the study will be of benefit to:

- the knowledge and understanding couples have, especially the woman, with regard to the process of intercountry adoption and the issues that may occur in order to assist them in their decision making;
- the current practice of social workers and others who provide the education and preparation services to couples intending to adopt intercountry;
- the practice of other professionals who deal with women affected by issues surrounding an intercountry adoption;

With the above in mind, the aims of this final chapter are to: briefly review the findings of the study; to consider the implications of the results with respect to policy and practice in relation to intercountry

adoption; and to briefly identify areas that would benefit from further research.

REVIEW OF FINDINGS

The findings are summarised and discussed under their chapter headings: socio-demographic characteristics, motivation behind choosing adoption, the process of achieving intercountry adoption, and the homecoming.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics

In general the characteristics of the participants matched the results from both national and international studies. The average age for women adopting a child from overseas was 39 years, and 42 years for men. All the couples were European, with at least one partner in professional employment. The length of marriage was from 5-11 years, which suggests an average somewhat less than the 10 years noted by Smith (1997). In four cases this was a second marriage for one of the participants of that couple and in seven of the couples at least one partner had prior parenting experience.

The following findings have not been covered in other studies so comparisons can not be made. Prior to the placement of an adopted child or children from abroad, 8 of the 10 women were in professional employment. This changed after the placement with only one women remaining in professional employment (with reduced hours). The professional status of the men remained the same as that prior to the placement with all 10 in professional employment. Eight of the 10 couples stated that they followed Christian beliefs. Although all of the couples had experienced travel overseas, only 4 couples had been to Europe for an extended period and none of the couples had been to an orphanage or similar setting. No participants were able to speak the language of the adopted child's birth country. The results indicate that there were no links to the country the couples chose to adopt from or prior experience of that culture. The lack of knowledge

of their adopted child's birth culture, and circumstances, may be a factor contributing to the unrealistic expectations described by Rosenwald and Hoksbergen (1997). Adoptive parents may not realise the impact the above factors have on a child, indicating a need to assess whether the agencies involved in the education and preparation of prospective adoptive parents adequately cover these issues.

Motivation Behind Choosing Adoption

The aim of this chapter was to investigate the motivation of couples to adopt from overseas and the related issues that they faced in making their decision. The findings here mirrored those of other studies with infertility being the major motivational factor for women choosing intercountry adoption. An emphasis on Christian and humanitarian reasons also supports the aim (portrayed in newspaper and magazine articles) of saving a needy child from overseas through adoption, although this motivational factor (rather than infertility) was more prominent for husband's than for their wives.

The results raised the question as to whether there is a link between Christian and humanitarian motives and infertility. In this study it was of note that only one couple, who cited Christian and humanitarian reasons as major motivators, did not have infertility. If infertility was not an issue for the couples would they have still sought to adopt intercountry? The results indicate that the women would not have done so, whereas the men would have. This difference between the spouses would be a useful area for future investigation, in order to gain a clearer understanding of perceived gender differences.

The findings from the present study could perhaps be interpreted to indicate that the men have not yet come to terms with the issue of infertility and, therefore, found it not only hard to discuss but also to identify as a factor. Women, on the other hand, may have come to terms with infertility and be more open to alternative ways to meet a

need for a child. Another view, of course, could be that men do not see infertility as an issue and emphasise Christian and humanitarian reasons as the primary motive regardless of infertility.

For the women, age proved to be a secondary factor in choosing to adopt from overseas. Many women felt that the older you were the less likely it was that your adoption application would be successful in New Zealand due to the very small numbers of babies available for adoption. It could be argued that this result reflects a societal view that with increasing age comes decreasing ability. Considering that New Zealand has an increasing older age for women having their first child this is surprising. The result may, therefore, also reflect a lower self-esteem experienced by the women through not being able to complete their role of producing children as well as feeling that they will be seen as too old to adopt. However, this feeling of being too old did not seem to be an issue for any of the women when it came to adopting from overseas. Why this occurred could be an area for further research.

Husbands did not mention age as a factor but concentrated on the low number of adoptions occurring within New Zealand, seeing overseas adoption as a "sure thing". Intercountry adoption seemed a more practical solution for the men whereas the women appeared to operate on a more emotional level.

Overall, the findings indicate that pursing an intercountry adoption was primarily to meet the needs of the participants to have a child or children. It can, therefore, be argued that the main motivational factor for intercountry adoption was an adult need to create a family and become a parent. It also appears from these results that in the majority of cases intercountry adoption was seen as a third option. It ranked behind (a) having one's own biological child or children, and (b) adopting locally. This finding also supports previous research where intercountry adoption was seen as the second or third choice

(Knoll and Murphy, 1994; Hoksbergen, 1997; Justice, 1996; Bachrach et al., 1991). With adopting a child from overseas being seen as a third choice, questions arise as to whether there will be unrealistic expectations placed on the child's ability to create the family so longed for by the applicants. If couples do have unrealistic expectations both towards the child(ren) and their own parenting ability, as indicated by Rosenwald & Hoksbergen (1997), are these issues being addressed in the education and preparation seminars currently given to prospective adoptive parents?

As stated in Chapter 1, the adoption of children from another country is usually from a third world country and concern has been expressed as to the exploitation of poorer countries, their women and their children. In this context, a "sure thing" for a couple in New Zealand may entail the exploitation of a birth mother in the sending country. It is perhaps significant, therefore, that throughout this study the participants rarely (if ever) mentioned the birth parents of their child or children. It was also noted in the introduction to this thesis that concerns have been expressed that adoption is meeting the needs of the adopting adults and not the needs of the child, a situation which seems to match the views of the participants. Christian and humanitarian reasons were given as motivating factors, but they only appeared to be relevant factors where infertility was an issue and the child or children chosen for adoption were of the same colour or race and easily attainable. A "needy" child from overseas had to met the criteria of the adopting parents. The results indicate that the "need" was not necessarily the child's need but that of the parents.

The Process of Achieving Intercountry Adoption

Chapter 6 looked at the process within both New Zealand and the sending country in order to determine the experiences of the couples, and any specific concerns they had to deal with, throughout this process. Women were shown to have the major role as they were

the main organisers of the process needed to gain a child through intercountry adoption. Authors such as Oakley (1974) and Rowbotham (1973) have raised the point that society sees the role of providing children as being the domain of women. It can, therefore, be proposed that adoption is an extension of this domain with women feeling that they need to be the providers of children, whatever the means necessary. As discussed earlier this can also bring feelings of failure for the women in not being able to fulfil this role. If this is the case, it raises a concern that women may feel obliged to proceed with an adoption when they are not ready to. The fulfilment of this child-providing role, in these circumstances, may be to the detriment of the adopted child and the adoptive parents.

Dissatisfaction was expressed by the participants over the length of time the process took and about the repetition of educational or prepatory material between the two organisations involved, CYFS and ICANZ. Whether these two organisations could work closer together in order to deliver a more complementary service to prospective intercountry adoptive couples could be an area for further discussion. Certainly the results showed that these two organisations were the main agencies that couples had involvement with. It would, therefore, seem logical for these agencies to work more closely together as they appear to have some overlapping services. It was also apparent that many of the women did not feel adequately prepared for the adoption. This tends to suggest that the current education and preparation programme of both organisations might need to be assessed to determine whether or not they are meeting the requirements of the recipients.

Personal support from both CYFS and ICANZ was another area in need of improvement. Women felt they gained little support from these agencies and in the case of ICANZ felt it was more male orientated and ageist. Whether either or both of these agencies are in a position to give this support needs to be further explored. It is,

however, a matter of concern that women saw ICANZ as less approachable. This is especially pertinent as it is the women, from an older age group of mothers, who are the main instigators and organisers of intercountry adoption and who have contact with this organisation. Organisations that deal in this area need to have their practice assessed in order to ensure that they provide a supportive and useful service.

Issues concerning the process in the sending country centred on the stress many of the women felt as a result of culture shock, coming face-to-face with conditions within the institution, and the fears they had over how they, and the child, would relate to each other. Similar fears were noted in the newspaper and magazine articles reviewed in Chapter 2. However, these were not fears or concerns held by their husbands who gave the impression that they were more distanced from the emotional side of the adoption. The distancing from the emotional side seems to be a recurrent theme for the men. This distancing may be responsible for some of the women feeling that the final decision to adopt was left to them alone. This is another issue which could be further explored in the education and preparation programmes in order to inform couples, and in particular the women, of the roles and situations they may find themselves in and corrective measures if needed.

It was interesting to note that although many of the women felt stressed in the sending country, and on their own with regard to the final adoption decision, they commented that their husbands supported them. Why this occurred was not clear. It may have been that at this stage of the process the women were finally in reach of their goal of having a child or children, and the anticipation of this moment took over all other feelings. It could also be due to the fact that in the sending country their husbands were a constant presence with no other external issues vying for their attention. This could have made a major difference in the level of support the wife felt. It

could, of course, also be a reflection of the level of self-sufficiency that the women had gained through dealing with the majority of the process alone. By the time they reached the sending country, therefore, the women were experts in the process.

The Homecoming

The aim of this chapter was to gain insight into the issues and concerns that faced the respondents during the first six months on returning home with their child or children. The main concerns of Chapter 7 pertained to a lack of support from professionals and a lack of knowledge with regard to the issues that women now faced with their child or children. Women felt this lack of support more acutely than their husbands did as they were the primary caregivers and often had to face the day to day issues on their own. This lack of support appeared to be due primarily to professionals in the area of child health not being aware of the needs of overseas children from an institutionalised setting and, therefore, not being in a position to identify and formulate an appropriate diagnostic and therapeutic programme. In cases where the women themselves had gained knowledge of these issues, professionals often negated this knowledge, and in so doing the women. Society needs to change the value placed on motherhood before this will improve across the board, but professionals working with mothers engaged in an intercountry adoption could be more pro-active in this area by acknowledging the skills the women have gained and work more closely along side them.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

The information presented in this thesis has the potential to assist and improve the perceptions, understandings and practice of various professionals working with couples, especially the women, through the process of intercountry adoption. It also highlights the important role that women perform as the main instigators, organisers and caregivers in this process and the lack of support that they have to

contend with. The implications this has for practice and policy are discussed in the following section.

Practice Issues

It became very clear throughout this study that women are the main organisers within the process of intercountry adoption. The practice of professionals in this area should reflect this situation. One area of improvement could be the education and preparation programmes offered to couples by CYFS and ICANZ.

Education and Preparation Programmes

The education and preparation programmes should be reviewed in order to bring to the attention of couples the role that women are currently taking in the overall organisation and management of the adoption process. In undertaking such a review it would be vital for couples who have already adopted from overseas, in particular the wife, to take part and be able to contribute to the programmes through their experiences.

Closer working relationships are needed between the agencies offering the education and preparation programmes so that they complement each other. It appears that currently they are repetitive of each other, which has the effect of causing couples to "switch off". In so doing, a valuable learning experience can be lost. By reducing the repetition and working together, more in-depth information can also be delivered to couples in the same time frame.

The results indicate that women may (and probably do) see it as their role to provide children in their relationship. This could be an area to incorporate into the education and preparation programmes so that thoughtful discussion can take place on these issues and the pressure that couples may feel to have children. Couples may then be able to make a more informed decision on adopting intercountry.

Infertility seemed to be, for the women in particular, a major motivating factor behind intercountry adoption. In the case of many husbands this appeared to be an area they had not come to terms with. Coming to terms with the emotions associated with infertility could be a topic in need of inclusion within the education and preparation programmes. If men have not accepted their infertility, and use intercountry adoption as a means of gaining their ideal child, the placement could be set up for failure. Men often gave humanitarian factors as their main motivation for adopting intercountry. It may therefore be appropriate to challenge applicants to determine why they are seeking an intercountry adoption. This could assist them in looking beyond their immediate thoughts to issues that may need to be resolved. A variety of areas may need to be explored and developed with their social worker or referred out to specialised counsellors before they continue with the process.

The realities and practicalities involved in the process of intercountry adoption, especially in the sending country, also need to be addressed further in these programmes. Many of the women stated the shock they experienced on arriving in the sending country and being unprepared for the effects this had on them. By including input from women who have successfully completed the process of an intercountry adoption, this need may be better met.

The Assessment Process

The assessment process for prospective applicants is another area for further investigation, as many of the concerns raised in this research have been with this process.

Rosenwald and Hoksbergen (1997) suggest that the attachment patterns of adoptive applicants should be assessed with attention focused on exploring and understanding their personal sense of well-being and security as a couple. This is an area that does not seem to be currently addressed in the assessment process. In the case of

Mary and Alf it became evident that they may not have been a secure couple. Incorporating the suggestions of the above authors may increase the success of a placement by assessing the success of a couple's marriage and their ability to form a secure relationship.

Other areas for consideration are the couple's expectations towards the adoption. This would include assessing whether the couple have unrealistic expectations about both their own parenting ability and the impact a child or children will have on their relationship. Previous research has indicated that unmet expectations, often due to the lengths couples may have gone to in adopting a child, can be a major factor in placement breakdowns (Hoksbergen et al., 1988, 1987; Jaffe, 1991; Marcovitch et al., 1995).

The need to assess the readiness of the women to adopt has also become apparent from this research. Is the adoption what they want or what they think they need in order to fulfil their role of wife and child bearer. The assessment process can be used as a vehicle to address these questions with the husband so that as a couple they can discuss any implications this may have for them. If this area is incorporated into the education and preparation programmes time is available for the couple, in particular the wife, to consider this issue more fully. The assessment process can then bring issues raised by the couple together and further explore them on an individual level.

Resolution of the grief related to infertility is another area that would be useful to assess. Infertility was a major factor behind choosing to adopt intercountry, with questions raised in the results regarding whether the couples have resolved this issue. Unresolved grief could lead to either the infertile or fertile partner being unable to attach to the adopted child or children, and may cause stress in the marriage.

Assessment could also investigate how the couples saw a child from overseas, in comparison to a biological child or a child adopted from

within New Zealand. It appears, from the results, that Christian and humanitarian reasons were a major contributing factor in the decision made by couples to proceed with an intercountry adoption. It was not, however, clarified by the couples exactly what they viewed as Christian and humanitarian reasons. In assessing such views, a clearer insight into the couple's understanding of adoption can be gained as part of the process to produce a complete and thorough assessment.

General Reviews Needed on Current Policy

A review of health and education funding aimed at providing appropriate services to intercountry adoptees is urgently required. Currently intercountry adopted children are competing for funding with New Zealand-born children which disadvantages both groups. Intercountry adopted children are disadvantaged due to the lack of professional skills and funding available, and New Zealand-born children are disadvantaged due to the funding available being absorbed by the issues presented by some of the children coming from an overseas orphanage or similar institution.

As the number of children being adopted from overseas is increasing it is of concern that there may not be the services in place to effectively assist these children. If the New Zealand government continues to allow intercountry adoption, it has a moral, if not ethical duty under UNCROC (1989) and The Hague Convention (1993), to provide appropriate services for these children. Article 21 of UNCROC (1989) states that parties permitting the adoption shall ensure that the best interests of the child shall be paramount. It could be argued, therefore, that all intercountry adoption should be halted until such services and professional knowledge is accessible to adoptive parents and the child or children adopted from orphanages or similar institutions in order to ensure that the best interests of the child are met.

ICANZ needs to reasses its practice with the women that approach the organisation for assistance. Ageism and sexism were both areas of concern that the women experienced and that ICANZ needs to address if it is to develop a more approachable service.

FUTURE RESEARCH

In light of the practice and policy implications outlined above the following areas are in need of further research.

- A full evaluation of the programmes offered by CYFS and ICANZ. This evaluation of service processes and outcomes should be carried out via interviews with a larger number of intercountry adoptive couples as well as the staff of these agencies. It would be of interest to see if the results would reflect the findings of this study.

- A nation-wide study on the needs of intercountry adoptive applicants and how they are being met with regard to the services and support currently available to them within the community. Areas in need of improvement should be highlighted for future service provision.

- The motivations for intercountry adoption, with particular reference to gender differences in relation to the relative importance of infertility, Christian and humanitarian reasons.

- Further investigation into the role of women in intercountry adoption and whether they feel obliged to proceed with an adoption in order to fulfil a child bearing role regardless of whether or not adoption is the right choice for them.

- Research on the effect that caring for a previously institutionalised child or children has on the adoptive mother, particularly in the

areas of health (with the stress it may incur), social and marital relationships.

- Research into placement breakdowns and the reasons why intercountry adoption has not been successful for the parties involved.

- Research on the knowledge of professionals working in the area of intercountry adoption and their practice(s), in order to identify gaps and practice issues.

CONCLUSION

By focusing on the process couples go through, in order to adopt a child or children from overseas, this thesis has identified a number of areas for further research as well as areas for improvement in professional practice and policy surrounding this process. The study has also established the primary role of the woman, within the couple, with regard to the process of intercountry adoption, and identified gender differences in motivation, perception and experience with regard to intercontry adoption. The experiences shared by the participants of this study, in particular the women, give a personal insight into their journey and provides a firmer knowledge base for the decision making of other couples as well as for future studies in this area.

APPENDIX 1 THE 12 PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICES FOR INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

Principle 1: That adoption is the best substitute for care by the child's own parents or close relatives, provided that adoption is based fundamentally on the welfare of the child.

Principle 2: That sufficient consideration should be given to possible alternative plans for the child within his own country before inter-country adoption is decided upon, since there are various hazards inherent in transplanting a child from one culture to another.

Principle 3: That increased efforts should be made in each country to examine at as early a stage as possible whether certain children should be adopted within the country, rather than remaining indefinitely in institutions because of rather slight family ties; that careful examination should be made of the values to the child of any ties which act as an obstacle to adoption.

Principle 4: That efforts should be made in each country to find adoptive homes, within the country, for children with certain mental or physical defects, and for children whose family background presents an obstacle to adoption.

Principle 5: That extremely careful consideration should be given to all possible alternatives before a child is removed from his own relatives for adoption; that a parent. Regardless of social and legal status, should have the opportunity for full consideration of what is involved, including legal and psychological consequences, before a decision is made that adoption is the vest plan for the child; that concepts of modern child and family welfare should prevail over economic and social factors.

Principle 6 That those who have ties, legal or emotional, to the child should be helped to understand thoroughly the meaning of adoption in the culture of the new country; that the child, if old enough, should also be prepared for the implications of adoption and life in the new country; that unless this can be done and the consequences accepted by all concerned, the child should not be considered for inter-country adoption.

Principle 7: That an adequate home study of the prospective adopters should be completed before a child is suggested to, or placed with a couple with a view to inter-country adoption, as well as an adequate study of the child's background. Physical condition, and personality development; that it is recognised that a home study of the child's background, physical condition, and personality

development; that it is recognised that a home study of the adoptive parents may have a limited value when the parents are living in a temporary setting, so that there are often valid reasons for not considering such couples as prospective adoptive parents unless they live in one setting for a sufficient length of time where they can be studied by a social worker who is sufficiently familiar with their culture, and an appraisal of them in their own community can be obtained, before a child is suggested or placed with them.

Principle 8: That the process of matching together child and adoptive parents in inter-country adoption should be a shared responsibility between the child welfare agency which makes the home study of the prospective adopters and the child welfare agency responsible for the child, with the participation of the specialised international social agency acting as intermediary between the two. All relevant factors which are accepted as valid in matching child and adoptive parents in local adoptions shall be taken into consideration, with special attention to the factor of religion.

Principle 9: That before the legal adoption is completed, there must be a trial period of not less than six months under the supervision of a social worker attached to a qualified agency, able to understand the cultural patterns of the prospective adopters and of the child; in the case of older children, this period should be longer. That there is opposition to proxy adoptions except under certain exceptional circumstances where prospective adopters and child have lived together for a reasonable time and established a satisfactory parent child relationship.

Principle 10: That care must be given, before the adoption plan is finalised, that pertinent documents necessary to complete the adoption are available, particularly that all necessary consents are in a form which is legally valid in both countries; that it must be definitely established that the child will be able to immigrate into the country of the prospective adopters and can subsequently obtain their nationality.

Principle 11: That care must be given to assuring adequate protection of the child in his new country, and that, in view of the difficulty of exercising guardianship functions across national boundaries, the value of the former legal guardianship needs to be examined; that legal responsibility for the child in the new country should be established promptly.

Principle 12: That steps should be taken to assure that the adoption is legally valid in both countries.

APPENDIX 2 UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD PREAMBLE AND PART 1

Preamble

The States Parties to the present Convention,

Considering that, in accordance with the principles proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Bearing in mind that the peoples of the United Nations have, in the Charter, reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights and in the dignity and worth of the human person, and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Recognising that the United Nations has, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the International Covenants on Human Rights, 4/ proclaimed and agreed that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status,

Recalling that, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations has proclaimed that childhood is entitled to special care and assistance,

Convinced that the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well0being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that is can fully assume its responsibilities within the community,

Recognising that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding,

Considering that the child should be fully prepared to live an individual life in society, and brought up in the spirit of the ideals proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, and in particular in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity,

Bearing in mind that the need to extend particular care to the child has been stated in the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child of 1924 5/ and in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child

adopted by the General Assembly on 20 November 1959 2/ and recognised in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (in particular in articles 23 and 24), 4/ in the International Covenant on the statutes and relevant instruments of specialised agencies and international organisations concerned with the welfare of children,

Bearing in mind that, as indicated in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, "the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth",

Recalling the provisions of the Declaration on Social and Legal Principles relating to the Protection and Welfare of Children, with Special Reference to Foster Placement and Adoption Nationally and Internationally; the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (The Beijing Rules); and the Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict,

Recognising that, in all countries in the world, there are children living in exceptionally difficult conditions, and that such children need special consideration,

Taking due account of the importance of the traditions and cultural values of each people for the protection and harmonious development of the child,

Recognising the importance of international co-operation for improving the living conditions of children in every country, in particular in the developing countries,

Have agreed as follows:

PART 1

Article 21

States Parties that recognise and/or permit the system of adoption shall ensure that the best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration and they shall:

(a) Ensure that the adoption of a child is authorised only by competent authorities who determine, in accordance with applicable law and procedures and on the basis of all pertinent and reliable information, that the adoption is permissible in view of the child's status concerning parents, relatives and legal guardians and that, if required, the persons concerned have given their informed consent to the adoption on the basis of such counselling as may be necessary;

(b) Recognise that inter-country adoption may be considered as an alternative means of child's care, if the child cannot be placed in a foster or an adoptive family or cannot in any suitable manner be cared for in the child's country of origin;

(c) Ensure that the child concerned by inter-country adoption enjoys safeguards and standards equivalent to those existing in the case of national adoption;

(d) Take all appropriate measures to ensure that, in inter-country adoption, the placement does not result in improper financial gain for those involved in it;

(e) Promote, where appropriate, the objectives of the present article by concluding bilateral or multilateral arrangements or agreements, and endeavour, within this framework, to ensure that the placement of the child in another country is carried out by competent authorities or organs.

APPENDIX 3 FAMILY PROFILE DOCUMENT

Background to Profile

child, youth and family

In general, adopting families face issues and challenges that are additional to usual parenting tasks when a child is born into a family. Adoption is a lifelong experience, incorporating losses and gains for all parties.

While adopting parents are not expected to be 'super' or 'perfect' parents, they must have the abilities and resources that will enable them to cope, and to provide the child/children with a safe and nurturing environment.

This document is a tool to assist:

a) You to decide if adoption is for you and your family
   and
b) The Social Worker to learn about you and your family, and assess your suitability as adoptive parents
   and
c) Local adopters plan what you may write in your Profile. The information contained in the Profile is used by the birth family to learn about you, your family and how you may successfully and positively parent their child
   or
d) In the case of intercountry adoptive applicants, the Social Worker to write the Home Study Assessment report which will inform any child's country of the origin about you, your family and how you may successfully and positively parent a child of their culture

Where possible and appropriate you should use actual experiences to illustrate the matter being written about.

Whilst you should include all information (where applicable to your situation) under the headings and about the matters raised, please feel free to add any additional information that you consider would be helpful for the reader.

Remember that any assessment report is based on your circumstances specifically at the time of writing. Should your situation change, or new information be introduced, the Social Worker may need to amend the assessment report.

When the background is being completed by a couple, sections labelled with an * should be completed by each applicant for himself or herself.

Personal Details

Begin with a summary of personal information:

Names: (Applicant 1)
(Applicant 2)
Date of Birth:
Home Address:
Postal Address: (if different from home address)

Family History *

Please discuss your childhood, where your were born, where you lived, your relationship with your parents and siblings, your family life, your schooling (including achievements), your religious upbringing or influences, and recreation and sporting activities.

How were you and your siblings parented and disciplined? Where did your parent(s) work (and average hours per week)? Looking back, how do you feel about your childhood and why?

Your Extended Family *

Describe your extended family/whanau, where they live, how often you have contact with one another, and your present relationship with them.

Are they aware of this application? What are their views on this adoption proposal and adoption (in general)? What experience do they have of adoption?

Martial Relationship

Prior to your current marital situation, have you had any other significant relationships?

Describe your current relationship, including first impressions and how your relationship has developed over time.

How do you communicate best? How do you resolve conflicts or differences that may arise? How have you (and your family) dealt with life events such as birth of children, building/moving home, changing jobs, divorce, health difficulties, infertility, marriage, parenthood, redundancy, separation, tight finances, death, or unemployment.

Single applicants discuss what impact a future relationship may have upon this adoption. Also discuss the current important people in your life.

Experiences Of Adoption

When did you first consider adopting a child? Why did you decide that you wish to adopt a child? Do you know other parents who have adopted a child? In what ways has that adoption affected those people, their family, the adopted person, and the birth parents? In what ways have these other parents been a source of support or learning?

Children

If you have children, detail their dates of birth and describe their personality and temperament, schooling (including educational achievements, religion), sociability, sporting and recreational interests (and achievements). How do your children relate to one another?

Are they adopted or born to you? Are they living with you? If not, what sort of contact do you have?

What do they know and understand about this application?

Parenthood *

Who is/would be the primary caregiver?

What is your relationship with your/other children? How do you celebrate or acknowledge important events and achievements?

Considering your own experience as a child and your observations of others, what do you consider to be the most important attributes of successful parenting? Please include your views on discipline. What impact will parenting a child have upon you, your future plans and ambitions?

Parenting by Adoption *

Do you see parenting a child who has been adopted as being the same as or different from parenting a child born to you? Please elaborate.

What does 'contact' mean to you? What do you feel comfortable with in regard to plans for openness and contact with the birth family, if this is available? What concerns, if any, can you see that might arise with on going contact? What are ways you could resolve these? What resources and services are available to assist you?

Discuss how you would approach the special difficulties that are faced when contact or information is not available?

Where Do You Live?

Write about your community – the geographic area, town, suburb and street where you live. This could include:

- Climate
- Community attitudes towards people who are different
- Economic base and employment opportunities/patterns
- Population – size and ethnic composition
- Resources – medical, educational, recreation, religious, social, etc. How close are they to your home?
- Setting – Rural? Urban? Small town? City?

Please describe your home and the immediate neighbourhood/local community. How long have you lived there? Why did you choose to live there?

Your Household

Does anyone else (other than you and your children) live in your home? If so, please record who they are, and their relationship to you and your family.

Will they continue to live with you should this application proceed? If so, what is their relevance to this adoption proposal?

What pets do you have? What impact would they have on the environment for the child? What changes might have to occur?

Personalities *

What type of person is your partner? Describe his/her personality, strengths and areas of most difficulty or vulnerability. How does

he/she deal with stress, crises, anger, sadness, fun, or loss? Does your partner see himself/herself the same way?

What type of person are you? What are your strengths and vulnerable areas? How do you deal with stress, crises, anger, sadness, fun, or loss? Does your partner see you the same way?

Health *

Your Medical Practitioner has already provided a full medical report on your health. Discuss here how you approach staying well and healthy in your daily life. Do you consider you have any medical condition/disability that may limit or affect your ability to parent a child until she/he reaches the age of independence? If so, please advise what strategies you have worked out to enable you to positively and successfully parent. Do you smoke, drink alcohol, or use drugs? If so, please provide details.

If you wish to adopt because you are infertile, please tell us when and how you first discovered this? What was the impact then and now upon you and your relationship with each other?

Has any family member had any life threatening or terminal illness, psychiatric illness, and severe or chronic depression? What impact did this have upon you and your children and other family members?

Religion/Philosophy Of Life *

Do you attend church? If so, describe how significant and important this is to you?

What is your philosophy of life and/or religious beliefs? What are the most important beliefs and values that shape your behaviour?

Cultural/Ethnic Background *

Where do your people come from (e.g., Ngati Porou, Anglo-Celt, Chinese, Tongan)? How important is your ethnic, cultural and racial background in your daily life?

Are there people of other cultures or races within your immediate or extended family?

In what ways are you personally involved with other races or cultures?

Education *

Please list the schools and other educational establishments that you have attended including that following:

- Year(s)
- Name of school
- Course/subjects studied
- Educational and other achievements
- Age did you leave school
- Subjects you enjoyed most

Are you still studying? Do you have any other qualifications?

Employment *

What is your present occupation and who is your employer? How long have you held this position? How many hours per week do you work? What gives you the greatest satisfaction at work? What causes you the most hassles?

Please list your work history including the following:

- Year(s)
- Employer
- Type of work
- Average hours worked per week
- Reason for leaving

What arrangements in regard to employment have you considered for the period after the adoption?

What flexibility is there within you workplace should you need to extend you initial plan?

Recreational Interests *

What are your hobbies, sporting and other recreational interests? Which of these do you share with your partner/children? Please list any achievements.

INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

This part of the Background covers your views, knowledge and plans about your proposed intercountry adoption. Some parts of this document may be quoted (as though you had spoken the words) in your Home Study.

Please consider the following information when writing your background:

As stated previously, adopting families face issues and challenges that are additional to usual parenting tasks when a child is born into a family.

Children who are adopted from another country often have life experiences that are very different from the adopting family. Children from overseas may have lived in an institutions, experienced severe poverty or deprivation, lived in a disaster area or war zone, and not had access to adequate food, education or medical services. Studies have shown that while many of these children adapt readily to their new situation, a significant number of them may have medical, developmental, behavioural and emotional difficulties.

Whilst some medical matters may be readily dealt with, other emotional, physical, intellectual, behavioural or learning difficulties may be long term. Children who have been institutionalised are often behind in their developmental milestones (i.e., they may be small for their age, and may walk and talk later than New Zealand children). Behavioural difficulties can include sleeping problems, eating difficulties, temper tantrums, hyperactivity, being destructive of property, hurting animals and making indiscriminate approaches to strangers. Emotional difficulties may include anxiety, depression, withdrawal and a diminished capacity to form attachments.

The child will come from a different family, culture, and often a different ethnic background. It is important that these links are acknowledged and maintained.
Intercountry adoption also has additional financial costs involved and any sending country will require a summary of your financial details to demonstrate to them that you and your family are in a sound position.

This section of the background is an opportunity for you and your family to identify how you might cope with the additional issues with an intercountry adoption.

When the background is being completed by a couple, sections labelled with an * should be completed by each applicant for himself or herself.

This Application *

Discuss when you first considered adopting a child from overseas? Why did you decide that you wish to adopt a child from overseas? Discuss the factors you have considered when you have thought about which country to approach. How do you feel your partner views this intercountry adoption proposal? In what ways do you consider both of your views differ or match?

Adoption And Child Rearing Plans

What would be the impact upon you and your family if the child exhibited some of the behaviours outlined in the introduction to this section? How would you approach these issues so that the child will be successfully and positively parented?

Have you or your extended families had experience with children with special or different needs? In what ways have these children's different needs affected the members of their family? In what ways have these families' experiences been a source of support or learning?

What resources and services are available to assist you?

Links With The Child's Culture, Birth Family, And Home Country

How will you teach the child about his or her own culture and race? Can you identify positive role models of different cultures in your community? How will you involve people of different races in the child's life?

How do you feel about the diminished prospect of openness that is commonly a feature of intercountry adoption? What impact will this have on the child? How will you involve and foster the relationship with family overseas, if this is possibility?

Financial Position

Please itemise:

- Your present annual incomes
- Major outgoings on accommodation (mortgage, rates, insurance etc, or rent), investments/superannuation
- The current value of any substantial assets, such as your home, other property or motor vehicles, superannuation, savings and investments
- Any substantial liabilities such as mortgages, large hire purchases, bank cards or loans, and tax liability

If either of you is self-employed, please provide a current statement of income and expenditure, profit and loss and balance sheet. Please comment on the financial viability of this venture.

This background document is one of the sources used to inform the Home Study Assessment Report completed by the Social Worker.

APPENDIX 4 CONSENT FORM

Project Title: **The Role and Experience of Married Women in ICA.**

I have read the information sheet for this study and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions about the study have been answered and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I also understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time during the collection of data, or to decline to answer any particular questions in the study. I agree to provide information to the researcher on the understanding that it is completely confidential, as explained by the researcher.

I agree/do not agree to the interviews being audiotaped.

I understand that I have the right to ask for the audiotape to be turned off at any time during the interview.

I wish to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the information sheet.

Signed:

Name:

Date:

APPENDIX 5 INTERIVEW GUIDE

1 Socio-demographic characteristics

- age

- ethic self-identification

- education (highest level or qualification attained)

- employment - past and present (type of job, skilled or otherwise etc)

- marital status - (previous marriages of either yourself or partner)

- children - (from current marriage and past relationships of both yourself and partner)

- previous experience of overseas travel and living abroad (when, where, duration)

- previous knowledge of any language(s) other than English (what, how learned and self-estimate of competence)

- religion (whether you affiliate with a religion or world view)

2. Choosing Adoption

- Could you please begin by telling me why you decided to adopt?

Suggested probes:
infertility issues
humanitarian reasons
knowledge of other people who had adopted
previous family experience of adoption

- Were there any differences of opinion between you and your partner about adoption in general?

Suggested probe:
if differences, how did you resolve them?

3. Deciding on intercountry adoption: the process and issues

- How did you come to decide on the possibility of intercountry adoption?

Suggested probes:
were there any particular events or other things that pushed you toward the decision in favour of ICA?
inability to find 'suitable' child in New Zealand?
If yes, what do you mean by suitable?
how did you hear of ICA?
what was your opinion of ICA at this stage?
where did you get information?

- Were there any particular issues that you (and you partner) encountered and had to deal with as part of the process of deciding on the possibility of intercountry adoption?

Suggested probes:
did you and your partner have differences of opinion or interest concerning ICA? (Eg did you both want to aim for ICA, which country, matters of race and /or ethnicity, sacrifices you needed to make in your lives etc)
if so what were the differences?
how did you resolve each of these differences?

4. Number of children and gender

- How many children did you (and your partner) want to adopt and how did you decide on that number?

Suggested probes:
was the number influenced by finance?
by the number of children (if any) you already had?
by your stage in life/career?
by your age?
did you and your partner have difference(s) of opinion on this matter?
if so, what difference(s)
how did you resolve the difference(s)?

- How did you and your partner reach a decision on gender(s) of child(ren)?
  Suggested probes:
  what factors influenced your choice (e.g. sex of existing child or children, you and/or your partner age)?
  were you and your partner always in agreement on this matter?
  if not, what was the difference and how did you resolve it?

5. The process of achieving intercountry adoption

- Can you explain to me the process you (and your partner) went through in New Zealand in order to adopt from overseas?
  Suggested probes:
  did either partner have defined tasks to do?
  if so, what tasks did you do?
  what is your opinion of the process?
  what support did you gain?
  if you gained support, from whom
  was this enough?
  if not, what would you have liked?

- Can you explain to me the process you (and your partner) went through, in the selected country, to complete the adoption?
  Suggested probes:
  what was your experience of this process?
  did you have support while overseas?
  how were you treated by the people of that country?
  did you feel well prepared for the experience?
  if not, what preparation would you have found helpful.

6. Issues on returning home

- *On returning home what developmental and/or health issues have you faced that have been brought about by this adoption?*
  Suggested probes:
  have you encountered any health issues?
  if so, what have they been?

7. Support needed on return

peoples reaction to your child(ren)
have you sort the assistance of any professional
if so, who and how helpful were they
have you gained other support for yourself and family?
if yes, from whom and was it helpful
do you feel there is enough support for parents of ICA children in NZ?
if no, what areas are lacking?

8. Effect of the adoption on your lifestyle

how have friendships and relationships outside the home changed?
How has the adoption effected the relationships with the extended family
Are you able to continue with activities you participated in prior to the adoption e.g. camping, exercise, hobbies etc?
who is the main caregiver of your child/ren?
did you or your partner leave outside employment to care for the children?
if yes, how have you found this change?

(For the woman only)

- *Based on your experiences, what would you like other women to know about ICA*
  Suggested probes:
  Lifestyle change
  Effect on relationship with spouse
  Support available/needed
  Other

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Achenbach, T. M., & Edelbrock, C. S. (1983) *Manual for the Child Behavior Checklist and Revised Profile.* Burlington. University of Vermont.

Ainsworth, M. D. S. (1982) "Early caregiving and later patterns of attachment". In Klaus, M. H. & Robertson, M. O. (eds). *Birth, Interaction and Attachment, Exploring the Foundations for Modern Perinatal Care".* Johnson and Johnson Baby Products Pediatric Round Table Series.

Ainsworth, M. D. S., Blehar, M.C., Waters, E. and Wall, S. (eds) (1978) *Patterns of Attachment: A Psychological Study of the Strange Situation.* Hillsdale. Erlbaum.

Allport, G. W. (1942) *The Use of Personal Documents in Psychological Science.* Social Science Research Council.

Altstein, H. and Simon, R. (1991) "Summary and Concluding remarks". In Altstein, H. and Simon, R. (eds). *Intercountry Adoption: A Multinational Perspective* (pg 192-193). New York. Praeger.

Ames, E. W., Fisher, L., & Savoie, L. (1994) *Behaviour problems of Romanian orphanage children adopted to Canada.* Paper presented at the International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development.

Anderson, R. (1993) *The Lifelong Search for Self.* Missouri. Badger Hill.

Andresen, I. (1992) "Behavioral and school adjustment of 12-13 year old internationally adopted children in Norway: A research note" in *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry.* Vol 33: 427-439.

Bachrach, C., Adams, P., Sambrano, S. & London, K. (1991) *Adoption in the 1980's* (Report No. 181). Vital & Health Statistics of the National Centre for Health Statistics. Washington. Department of Health and Human Services.

Bagley, C., Young, L. & Scully, A. (1993) *International and Transracial Adoption: A Mental Health Perspective.* Aldershot. Avebury publishers.

Bertaux, D. (ed.) (1981) *Biography and Society: The Life History Approach in the Social Sciences.* Beverly Hills. Sage Publications.

Bogdan, R. (1974) *Being Different: The Autobiography of Jane Fry.* New York. Wiley.

Bogert, C. (1994). "Bringing Back Baby". *Newsweek.* November 21:78-79.

Bowlby, J. (1951) *Maternal Care and Mental Health.* Geneva. World Health Organization.

Bowlby, J. (1969) *Attachment and Loss: Vol 1. Attachment.* New York. Basic Books.

Bowlby, J. (1988) *A Secure Base.* New York. Basic Books.

Campbell, I. D. (1957) *The Law of Adoption in New Zealand.* 2nd Edition. Butterworth. Wellington.

Campion, S. (1998) "Breaking the Rules." in *The Dominion.* August 18: 13.

Chaponniere, C. (1983). "A Question of Interests: Inter-country Adoption". *International Children's Rights Monitor.* 1: 2-5.

Chun, B. (1989) "Adoption and Korea". *Child Welfare.* 68: 225-260.

Coffey, A., & Atkinson, P. (1996) M*aking Sense of Qualitative Data, Complementary Research Strategies.* London. Sage Publication.

Cohen, J., & Omery, C. (1994) "Themes and Issues in Interpretation of Research". *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education.* 8: 32-45.

Couchman, J. (1997) "Intercountry Adoption in New Zealand – A Child Rights Perspective." *Law Review* Vol. 27. No 3: 23-31.

Cropp, A. (1991) "Saving Children – One by One" in *The Dominion Sunday Times.* July 14: 12-13.

Dennis, W. (1973) *Children of the Crèche.* New York. Appleton-Century-Crofts.

Denzin, N. K. (1970) *The Research Act: A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods.* Chicago. Aldine.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds). (1994) *Handbook of Qualitative Research.* Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Department of Child Youth and Families Services (CYFS). (1999) *Adoption Placement Manual.* Wellington. CYFS.

Dietrich, J. (1992) "A Study of Disrupted Adoptive Placements of Adolescents". in *Child Welfare* Vol. 17: 209-225.

Dietrich, F. (1992) "Adoption, Where Are We?" in *Adoption Quarterly*. Vol. 4: 121-129.

Dunbar, A. "Boys from Brazil Delight" in *The Press.* Friday February 27: 15.

Else, A. (1990) "Inter-Country Adoption", in *New Zealand International Review*. Vol. 15. No. 5: 20-23.

Else, A. (1991) *A Question of Adoption: Closed Stranger Adoption in New Zealand 1944-1974*. Wellington. Bridget William Books.

Fahlberg, V. (1994) *A Child's Journey through Placement*. London. BAAF.

Federici, R. S. (1998) *Help For The Hopeless Child – A Guide For Families.* Virginia. Hennage Creative Printers.

Feigelman, W., and Silverman, A. (1983). *Chosen Children: New Patterns of Adoptive Relationships.* New York. Praeger.

Flemming, D. (1997) "Our Special Christmas Gift" in *The New Zealand Woman's Weekly*. 29 December: 20-21.

Fonow, M. M. (ed.) (1991) *Beyond Methodology: Feminist Scholarship as Lived Research.* Indiana. University Press.

Garfinkel, H. (1967) *Studies In Ethnomethodology.* Englewood Cliffs. Prentice Hall.

Geiger, S. N. G. (1986) "Women's Life Histories: Method and Content" in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*. Vol. 11 No. 2: 334-351.

Glaser, B. G. (1992) *Emergence vs Forcing: Basics of Grounded Theory Analysis*. Mill Valley. Sociology Press.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967) *Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research.* Chicago. Aldine.

Goldfarb, W. (1943) "Infant Rearing and Problem Behaviour" in *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*. Vol. 13: 249-265.

Goldfarb, W. (1944) "The Effect of Early Institutional Care on Adolescent Personality" in *Journal of Experimental Education*. Vol. 12: 106-129.

Goldfarb, W. (1945) "Effects of Psychological Deprivation in Infancy and Subsequent Stimulation" in *American Journal of Psychiatry*. Vol. 102: 18-33.

Gottschalk, L., Kluckhohn, C., & Angell, R. (1942) *The Use of Personal Documents In History, Anthropology and Sociology.* New York. Social Science Research Council.

Griffith, K. C. (1997) *New Zealand Adoption – History and Practice – Social and Legal 1840-1996.* Wellington. ISBN.

Gross, E. (1992) "What is Feminist Theory?" in Crowley, H., & Himmelweil, S. *Knowing Women, Feminism and Knowledge.* Polity Press. London.

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1981) *Effective Evaluation.* San Francisco. Jossey-Bass.

Harper, J. (1986) "Intercountry Adoption of Older Children in Australia". in *Adoption and Fostering.* Vol. 10. No (2). (pg 26-31).

Harper, J. (1994) "Counselling Issues in Intercountry Adoption Disruption" In *Adoption and Fostering.* Vol. 18. No 2: 20-26.

Harvey, I. (1983) "Adoption of Vietnamese Children: An Australian study" in *Australian Journal of Social Issues.* Vol. 18. No 1: 55-69.

Herrman G., & Kasper R. (1992) "Adopting a Foreign Child, a Complex Phenomenon" in *International Child Welfare Review.* Vol. 64: 141-160.

Hodges, J., & Tizard, B. (1989) "IQ and Behavioural Adjustment of Ex-Institutional Adolescents" in *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry.* Vol. 30: 53-75.

Hoksbergen, A. C. (1997) "Foreign Adoptive Children Will Often Encounter Attachment Problems". In *Adoption and Healing.* New Zealand Adoption Education and Healing Trust. Wellington. pg 146-157.

Hoksbergen, R., Juffer, F., and Waardenburg, B. (1987) *Adopted Children at Home and At School: The Integration After Eight Years of 116 Thai Children in The Dutch Society.* The Netherlands, Swets and Zietlinger.

Hoksbergen, R., Spaan, L., & Waardenburg, B. (1988) *Bitter Experiences.* Lisse. Swets & Zeitllinger.

Howe, D. (1996) *Adopters on Adoption.* British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering London. (BAAF).

Howe, D. (1999) "Disorders of Attachment and Attachment Therapy". In *Adoption & Fostering.* Vol.23. No. 2.

Humphrey, M,. & Humphrey, H. (1993) *Intercountry Adoption: Practical Experiences.* London. Routledge.

ICWR (1984) "Bolivia: Trading in Children". In *International Child Welfare Review.* Vol. 6: 1-3.

Inter-country Adoption New Zealand (ICANZ) leaflet on *Inter-country Adoption.* Auckland. ICANZ.

Iwanek, M. (1997) "Adoption in New Zealand – Past, present and future" in *Adoption and Healing.* New Zealand Adoption Education and Healing Trust. Wellington. NZ.

Jaffe, E. D. (1991) "Foreign Adoptions in Israel: Private Path to parenthood" in *Intercountry Adoption: A multinational perspective.* New York. Praeger Publishers.

Jayaratne, T. E., & Stewart, A. (1991) "Quantitative and Qualitative methods in the social sciences: Current feminist issues and practical strategies" in Fonow, M. M. (ed) *Beyond Methodology: Feminist Scholarship as Lived Research.* Indiana. Indiana University Press. USA.

Justice, W. (1996) "Adoption Issues for Families in the Netherlands" in *Journal of Social Work and Ethnicity.* Vol.4. (pg 34-42).

Karpati, Z. (1981). "The Methodological Use of the Life History Approach in a Hungarian Survey on Mobility and Urbanization" in Bertaux, D. (ed.) *Biography and Society: The Life History Approach in The Social Sciences.* Beverly Hills. Sage Publications.

Katzer, J., Cook, K. H., and Crouch, W. W. (1982) *Evaluating Information: A Guide for Users of Social Science Research* (2nd Edition). New York. Random House.

Keir, J. (1990) "Mataura Couple Guiding Lights on Adoption" in *The Otago Daily Times.* Wednesday. May 16: 6.

Kim, D. S. (1977) "How They Fared in American Homes" in *Children Today.* Vol. 6: 2-6.

Kim, D. S. (1978) "Issues in Transsracial and Transcultural Adoption" in *Social Casework.* Vol. 59: 477-486.

Kim, L. (1993) *Journey of an Adopted Child at Loss.* New York. Harper Collins.

Kim, P., Hong, S., & Kim, S. (1979) "Adoption of Korean Children By New York Area Couples: A Preliminary Study" in *Child Welfare.* Vol. 58: 419-427.

Kirk, H. D. (1985) *Adoptive Kinship.* Washington. Ben Simon Publications.

Klockars, C. B. (1974) *The Professional Fence.* London. Tavistock.

Kluckhohn, C. (1942) "The Personal Document in Anthropological Science" in Gottschalk, L. et al *The Use of Personal Documents In History, Anthropology and Sociology.* New York. Social Science Research Council.

Knoll, J., & Murphy, M. (1994) *International Adoption: Sensitive Advice for Prospective Parents.* Chicago. Chicago Review Press. USA.

Kohli, M. (1981) "Biography: Account, Text, Method" in Bertaux, D. (ed.) *Biography and Society: The Life History Approach in the Social Sciences.* Beverly Hills. Sage Publications.

Langridge, L. C. (1982) "Adoption Survey" in *New Zealand Women's Weekly* 25th October: 12-13.

Law Commission (1999) *Adoption: Options For Reform, A Discussion Paper.* Wellington. The Law Commission.

Lewin, T. (1990) South Korea Slows Export of Babies For Adoption. *New York Times.* February 19:6

Lilly, C. (1994) "Open Hearts – Bringing up the babies from Romania and Russia" in *North & South.* September: 81-91.

Linaker, C. (1992) "What is Happening in Honduras?" in *The Independent.* London. March 16: 12

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985) *Naturalistic Inquiry.* Newbury Park. Sage Publications.

Lofland, J., & Lofland, L. H. (1984) *Analyzing Social Settings.* Belmont. Wadsworth.

Lundberg, G. A. (1926) "Case Work and the Statistical Method" in *Social Forces.* Vol. 5: 61-65.

Main, M. & Solomon, J. (1990) "Procedures of Identifying as Disorganised/Disoriented During the Ainsworth Strange Situation". In Greenberg, M., Cicchetti, D., & Cummings, E. M. (eds.). *Attachment in the Pre-School Years: Theory, Research and Intervention.* Chicago. University of Chicago.

Mandelbaum, D. G. (1973) "The Study of Life History: Gandi" in *Current Anthropology.* Vol. 14. No 3: 177-196.

Mandelbaum, D. G. (1982) "The Study of Life History" in Burgess, R.G. (ed.) *Field Research: A Sourcebook and Field Manual.* London Allen and Unwin.

Marcovitch, S., et al (1995) "Romanian Adoption: Parents, Dreams, Nightmares, and Realities" in *Child Welfare*. Vol. 74. No 5: 993-1017.

May, K. A. (1991) "Interview Techniques in Qualitative Research: Concerns and Challenges, in J. M. Morse (Ed.). *Qualitative Nursing Research: A Contemporary Dialogue.* Newbury Park. Sage.

McDonald, D. (1994) *Intercountry Adoption: An Examination of the Discourses.* Auckland. Moa.

McMullan, S. J., & Ames, E. W. (1993) *Gesell Developmental Assessment of Romanian Orphanage Children in Canada.* Poster Presented at the Meetings of the Canadian Psychological Association. Montreal.

Moore, R. (1974) *Pit-men, Preachers and Politics; the Effects of Methodism in a Durham Mining Community.* London. Weidenfeld and Nicolson.

National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW) (1994) *Rights of Minority Children.* New York. NABSW.

New Zealand Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Service (1996) leaflet on *Inter-Country Adoptions.* Wellington. NZCYPFS

Ngabonziza, D. (1988) "Inter-Country Adoption; in Whose Best Interest?" in *Adoption and Fostering.* Vol. 12. No(1): 35-46.

Oakley, A. (1994) *Women's Work: The Housewife, Past and Present.* New York. Vintage.

Oakley, A. (1981) "Interviewing Women: a Contradiction in Terms" in H Roberts (ed.). *Doing Feminist Research.* London. Routledge.

Ots, A. (1992) "Romanian Rescue?" in *The Evening Post.* March 25: 27.

Patton, M. Q. (1990) *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods.* 2nd Edition. London. Sage Publications.

Phillips, J. (ed.). (1985) *Biography in New Zealand.* Wellington. Allen and Unwin/Port Nicholson Press.

Plant, R. (1990) "No Man is an Island – Except in Ignorance" *The Times.* 1 January: 10.

Plummer, K. (1983) *Documents of Life: An Introduction to the Problems and Literature of a Humanistic Method.* London. Allen and Unwin.

Prichard, J. B. *The Ancient Near East.* London. Oxford University Press.

Rathburn, C., McLaughlin, H., Bennett, C., and Garland, J. (1965) "Later Adjustment of Children Following Radical Separation From Family and Culture" in *American Journal Orthopsychiatry.* Vol. 34: 604-609.

Rathburn, C., Virgilio, L., and Waldfogel, S. (1958) "The Restitutive Process in Children Following Radical Separation From Family and Culture" in *American Journal Orthopsychiatry.* Vol. 28: 408-415.

Reinharz, S. (1983) "Experiential Analysis: A Contribution to Feminist Research" in Bowles. G., and Duelli-Klein. R. *Theories of Women's Studies.* London. Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Rosenwald, T., & Hoksbergen, R. (1997) "Attachment in Intercountry Adoption: Do We Need to Stay With the Adoptive Parents?" in *Adoption and Healing.* Wellington. New Zealand Adoption Education and Healing Trust.

Rountree, K., & Laing, T., (1996) *Writing by Degrees - A Practical Guide to Writing Thesis and Research Papers.* Wellington. Longman Ltd.

Rowbotham, S. (1973) *Women's Consciousness, Man's World.* London. Penguin Books.

Sarantakos, S. (1993) "Documentary Research" in *Social Research.* Melbourne. MacMillan.

Saunders, P. (1990) "Products of the Romanian Nightmare" in *The Evening Post.* Wednesday July 25: 29-30.

Sedgwick, C. P. (1985) "The Life History Method: a Case of Chronic Marginality" in Phillips, J. (ed.). *Biography in New Zealand.* Wellington. Allen and Unwin/Port Nicholson Press.

Serrill, M. (1991) "Wrapping the Earth in Family Ties" In *Time.* November 4: 38-45.

Shaw, C.R. (1966) *The Jack Roller: A Delinquent Boy's Own Story.* Chicago. University of Chicago Press. (Originally published 1930).

Shawyer, J. (1979) *Death by Adoption.* Auckland. Cicada Press.

Skeels, H. (1966) "Adult Status of Children with Contrasting Early Life Experiences" in *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development.* Vol. 31: 1-65.

Smith, B., & Noble-Spruell, C. (1986) "An Overview of Feminist Research Perspective" in Marchant, H., and Wearing, B. (eds.) *Gender Reclaimed: Women in Social Work.* Sydney. Hale and Iremonger.

Smith, D. (1974) "Women's Perspective as a Radical Critique of Sociology". In *Sociological Inquiry.* Vol.44: 7-13.

Smith, D. S. (1921) "Adoption of Children in New Zealand" in *Journal of Comparative Legislation and International Law.* Vol. 3. Part4: 154-177.

Smith, S. (1997) "Overseas Adoption: Profile of a Parent". in *Social Work Now.* April: 30-36. CYFS. Wellington Media Collective.

Sorgedrager, N. (1988) *Report Into The Conditions of Children Adopted From Another Country.* Haren. Cicero.

Sorosky, A., Baran, A., and Pannor, R. (1984) *The Adoption Triangle.* New York. Doubleday.

Stanley, L.,& Wise, S. (1983) *Breaking out: Feminist Consciousness and Feminist Research.* London. Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Stonequist, E.V. (1961) *The Marginal Man: A Study in Personality and Culture Conflict.* New York. Russell and Russell. (Originally published in 1937).

Struss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990) *Basics of Qualitative Research Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques.* Newbury Park. Sage Publications.

Sutherland, E. H. (1937) *The Professional Thief: By a Professional Thief.* Chicago. University of Chicago Press.

Textor, M. (1991) in Alstein, H., and Simon, R. (eds.) *Intercountry Adoption: A Multinational Perspective.* New York. Praeger Publishers.

The Hague Convention – on the Protection of Children and co-operation in respect of Intercountry Adoption. United Nations. The Hague.

Thompson, P. (1981) "Life Histories and the Analysis of Social Change" in Bertaux, D. (ed.) *Biography and Society: The Life History Approach in the Social Sciences.* Beverly Hills. Sage Publications.

Tizard, B. (1977) *Adoption: A Second Chance.* London. Open Books.

Tizard, B. (1991) "Intercountry Adoption: A Review of the Evidence" in *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry.* Vol. 32. No 5: 743-756.

Tizard, B., & Hodges, J. (1978). "The Effect of Early Institutional Rearing on the Development of Eight Year Old Children" in *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry.* Vol. 19: 99-118.

Tizard, B., & Joseph, A. (1970) "Cognitive Development of Young Children in Residential Care: A study of Children aged 24 months" in *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry.* Vol. 11: 177-186.

Tizard, B., & Rees, J. (1975) "The Effect of Early Institutional Rearing on the Behaviour Problems and Affectional Relationships of Four Year Old Children" in *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry.* Vol. 16: 61-73.

Triseliotis, J. (1973) *In Search of Origins: The Experiences of Adopted People.* London. Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Triseliotis, J. (1993) "Inter-Country Adoption: in Whose Best Interest?" in Humphrey, M., & Humphrey, M. (ed.) *Inter-Country Adoption – Practical Experiences.* London. Routledge.

Trolley, B. C. (1995) "International Adoption: Issues of Acknowledgement of Adoption and Birth Culture" in *Child & Adolescent Social Work Journal.* Vol. 12. No 6: 465-479.

United Nations Children's Fund International Child Development Centre (UNICEF) (1999). "Intercountry Adoption" in *innocenti digest.* Italy UNICEF.

UNICEF (1986). "Adoption of Babies in Sri Lanka" in *Action for Children.* UNICEF Vol. 1: 11-13.

UNICEF (1992) "Intercountry Adoption Today" in *innocenti digest.* Italy. UNICEF.

UPI (1990). Midwife Held in Babies for $40. Jakarta: United Press International New Report.

Verhulst, F. C,. Althaus, M. S., & Bieman, H. J., (1990a) "Problem Behaviour in International Adoptees" in *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.* Vol. 29: 94-111.

Verhulst, F. C,. Althaus, M. S., & Bieman, H. J., (1990b) "Epidemiological Study of International Adoptees in the Netherlands"

in *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*. Vol. 32: 1135-1144.

Ward, T J. (1980) *Inter-Country Adoption, Attitudes and Concerns.* New York. Academic Press.

Watson, L. C. (1976) "Understanding a Life History as a Subjective Document: Hermeneutical and Phenomenological Perspectives" in *Ethos.* Vol. 4. No 1: 95-131.

Webb, B. (ed.) (1966) *Unobtrusive Measures: Non-Reactive Research in the Social Sciences.* Chicago. Rand McNally.

Webb, B. (1991) "To Romania, With Love" in *The Evening Post.* Wednesday May 8: 27-28.

Welter, M. (1965) "Comparison of Adopted Older Foreign Born and American Children" in *Social Service Review.* Vol. 39: 355-356.

Westhues, A., & Cohen, J. (1994) *Intercountry Adoption in Canada: Final Report.* Ottawa. Human Resources Development.

Wilkinson, H. (1981) *Birth is More Than Once: The Inner World of Adopted Korean Children.* Bloomfield Hills. Sunrise Ventures.

World Health Organization (1996) *Paediatric Incidence of HIV, HBV and AIDS in Romania.* World Health Organization.