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Perspectives on Legalistic ('Formal') and Indigenous ('Informal') Child Adoption in a Rural IsiZulu-speaking Community

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Social Science (Counselling Psychology).

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DECLARATION

Student number: 215068695

I declare that 'PERSPECTIVES ON LEGALISTIC '(FORMAL') AND INDIGENOUS '(INFORMAL') CHILD ADOPTION IN A RURAL ISIZULU SPEAKING COMMUNITY' is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S.M.', enclosed in a rectangular box.

Signature

Date: October 2018

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ABSTRACT

This study sets out to explore indigenous conceptions, views and understandings of child adoption within extended families of the isiZulu speaking community and is not only aimed at exploring but documenting, on a deeper level, the cultural influences on child adoption among a traditional rural isiZulu speaking community. It also looks at traditional/indigenous forms and practices of adoption so as to understand barriers, attitudes and perceptions towards formal (legalistic) child adoption within this community. The study makes use of an exploratory qualitative research design under the Afrocentric framework based on Ubuntu and the African understanding of family through purposive and snowball sampling. Data was collected by means of semi-structured interview schedules which were collected through individual interviews in isiZulu. The 14 sampled participants include those who have adopted using African approaches (informally), those who have not adopted a child (formally or informally), and the village elders (men and women). Cultural experts were also consulted for their views and understandings of the concept of adoption within this community. Data collected was then analysed using thematic analysis. The study found that people are still very much attached to their cultural ways of life and so to maintain such ways of life much emphasis is placed on the importance of cultural practices, identity and ancestry. Child adoption systems need to better integrate cultural ways of living and practices of such communities so people are less wary of utilising formal, legal systems.

**key concepts: adoption, family, ancestry, Ubuntu*

CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

South Africa is regarded as a rainbow nation; this is because of its diversity not only in race and language but in cultures, beliefs and viewpoints as well. These differences influence how one then conceptualises their viewpoint on certain notions, concepts and ultimately their way of life. The concept of child adoption is mostly defined and conceptualised in legalistic terms, based on Western ideologies. Implementing this kind of adoption in indigenous communities may be complex, due to differing cultural beliefs about the family, child rearing and social development. Indigenous communities place much emphasis on family and communal connections beyond the nuclear family structure with not only the living but also the non-living relatives (Mkhize, 2004). This chapter seeks to ease the reader into the different views on child adoption and provide some insight and background into the study thus also clarifying a few of the terminologies used in the study.

1.1 STUDY RATIONALE AND BACKGROUND

The area of interest for this study is the rural area of Mtubatuba which is located within the uMkhanyakude district municipality and lies on the coastline of north-eastern KwaZulu-Natal and is largely occupied by Zulu speaking people. It is not only the ethnicity and culture of the Zulu community that this study is concerned with but also their way of life embedded in their conceptualisation and understanding of being a traditional Zulu man/woman. The study therefore explores this community's views on child adoption, specifically indigenous conceptions and understandings of adoption within the extended family (umndeni), as well as the cultural influences on child adoption.

About four years ago I came across a magazine that made the assumption that black (African) people do not seem to be adopting as much as they should be despite the fact that the majority of the children in government systems (such as orphanages, child care facilities etc.) are black. This puzzled me because I knew my mom had raised some of her relatives' children who may otherwise have ended up in child care facilities. It was then that I decided to look at the child adoption rate in South African black communities. Indeed, studies indicate that the rate of child adoption in South Africa remains quite low amongst the black community (Mokomane & Rochat, 2011). What was quite interesting to note though was that although studies continued to mention that culture could account for the low rate of adoption, none had attempted to understand or explore those influences on adoption. Little is known about the conceptions, experiences, beliefs, and understandings of child adoption within indigenous

communities such as the Zulu community. This sparked an interest to understand the notion of child adoption in my own community.

Much of the past research that I came across was on transracial and cross-cultural adoption (Finlay, 2006); such research excludes children that are being raised by extended families (*umndeni*). In South Africa much research has also looked at the view of adoptees' experiences as adopted or abandoned children (Baltimore, 2008; Doubell, 2014). There is a paucity of research exploring the meaning of adoption or the process of raising children by the extended family or members of the community, using indigenous cultural adoption frameworks or understandings. It is against this background that this study explores not only the meaning of child adoption within the Zulu community but also the cultural influences on child adoption and barriers to formal/legalistic adoption.

Studies such as that of Mokomane and Rochat (2011) have emphasised the notions of family formation, cultural and ancestral belief systems as important in the understanding of child adoption as it is practised by indigenous communities in South Africa. It is acknowledged that culture does influence people's actions in a number of ways. The current study therefore explores indigenous conceptions, views and understandings of child adoption within extended families of the isiZulu speaking community. By 'informal adoption' we mean a process whereby children are simply raised by extended family members without any formal or legal arrangements. According to Mkhize (2004), traditional African thinking is very much influenced by the communal way of being and so psychological development is aligned with others within the community giving rise to the understanding, *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* (I am because we are).

1.1 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.2.1 Goals

The main goal of this study is to explore indigenous conceptions, views and understandings of child adoption (*ukukhulisa umntwana njengowakho*) among the Zulu people in the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

1.2.2 Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- I. To explore the meaning of adoption for isiZulu-speaking people in a rural Mtubatuba community;
- II. To explore and document the cultural influences of formal adoption among rural, isiZulu-speaking people;
- III. To explore traditional/indigenous forms and practices of the concept adoption amongst rural, isiZulu-speaking communities; and
- IV. To understand the barriers, attitudes and perceptions towards formal (legalistic) and informal child adoption within this community.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- I. What is the meaning of “child adoption” for isiZulu-speaking people in a rural Mtubatuba community?
- II. How do cultural beliefs and practices influence child adoption for people living in the rural isiZulu-speaking community?
- III. What are the indigenous forms and practices of child adoption (*ukukhulisa umntwana njengowakho*) in this rural, isiZulu-speaking community in Mtubatuba?
- IV. What are the barriers, attitudes and perceptions towards formal (legalistic) and informal child adoption in the rural community in KwaZulu-Natal?

1.4 METHODOLOGY SYNOPSIS

The research method employed in this study is exploratory in its nature. For the purpose of this study, non-probability, purposive and snowballing sampling were used whereby individuals between the ages of 35 - 75 of the isiZulu speaking community identified were the target population. The sample comprised of 14 participants comprising men and women as well as cultural experts. Data was collected using individual semi-structured interviews which were administered in isiZulu. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data.

1.5 DELIMITATIONS AND KEY ASSUMPTIONS

1.5.1 Delimitations

The study has chosen not to include or conduct interviews with the social workers and adoption agencies. These adoption systems do not reflect the indigenous approaches to child adoption but we do acknowledge that their perspective on their encounters/experiences with such indigenous communities would have provided us with another perspective. The study's use of this particular age group and location for this study was chosen in an attempt to capture the views of rural communities who are presumably as close as possible to cultural and indigenous child rearing practices.

1.5.2 Key assumptions

The main assumption of this study is the notion that there are still closely knit communities in the isiZulu rural areas that practice indigenous forms of child adoption. Another key assumption of the study is that people are still largely attached to their cultural beliefs and practices. The study also makes assumptions that communal and indigenous ways of life are still very much preferred ways of living.

1.6 DEFINITION OF TERMS

1.6.1 Formal adoption

Adoption is the legal process of placing the child with parent(s) other than those (the child was) born into. The process involves the transfer of parental responsibilities and the rights of the original parent(s) to the adoptive parent(s) (Omosun & Kofoworola, 2011).

1.6.2 Informal adoption (Ukukhulisa ingane njengengane yakho ngqo)

Informal adoption for this study refers to a process whereby a number of African children are simply raised by extended family members without any formal or legalistic arrangements.

1.6.3 Indigenous

For the purpose of this study, the term 'indigenous' refers to practices that originate in and are characteristic of a particular region or country; native, aboriginal, natural.

1.6.4 Indigenous community

For the purpose of this study, the term refers to people of a specific community that have strong attachments to ancestral territory and are members of a distinct cultural group and indigenous language whereby there is a presence of customary social institutions (Corntassel, 2003).

1.6.5 Community

Community for this study refers to a group of people living in the same defined area, sharing the same basic values, or organisations and interests and so basically, it is an informally organised social entity which is characterised by a sense of identity (Brieger, 2006).

1.6.6 Extended family (*Umndeni*)

Umndeni, roughly translated as an 'extended family' in English, comprises of grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins from both sides of the family of origin and one's in-laws. 'Extended family' refers not only to close relatives of the child but also to multigenerational family members and close members of the community. The concept of the family is not limited to the living: it incorporates those who have come before (*abaphansi*), the ancestors, as well as those who are yet to be born.

1.6.7 Informal Care

Informal care in this study refers to any private arrangement provided within a family environment whereby responsibility of the child is assumed on an ongoing basis by extended family (informal kinship care) who have the capacity to do so without arrangements from an administrative or judicial authority or a duly accredited body, until such time that the child is ready to leave home (Dunn & Parry-Williams, 2008).

1.7 OUTLINE OF THE REPORT

This study is made up of five chapters as follows:

Chapter 1 provides a general orientation of the study which includes: the introduction; rationale for the study; goals and objectives of the study; the research questions; delimitations and key assumptions. Chapter 2 presents the study's theoretical foundation. It also offers a critical look at the social and familial organisation of the Zulu community in its indigenous context. The study's methodological orientation is the subject of Chapter 3, while Chapter 4 deals with the analysis and discussion of the study findings. The recommendations emanating from the study are the subject of Chapter 5.

1.8 CONCLUSION

The orientation chapter in this study was used to direct the reader to the focal points of the study and to orientate the reader's thinking on some of the study's key ideas and arguments. These included the study's intention to explore people's views and understandings of child adoption as they are practiced within their community and extended family. It also focused the reader on some of the key arguments that one needs to keep in mind when one talks about indigenous ways of life as these often reflect upon people's cultural beliefs including ancestry/spirit world. This chapter therefore informs the reader of the intentions and direction of the study before they immerse themselves in the reading. It was also intended to provide an idea of the measures and the procedures followed and therefore provide the reader with a structural basis for the thesis thus setting the tone and pace for the reader.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Child adoption has not only gained global interest; it has evoked much-needed debates in a number of countries and nationalities wherein issues of cultural beliefs, origins, and illegal activities have been a major concern. Studies on child adoption, particularly in the African communities have issues regarding origin and culture of the child amongst other concerns. This chapter explores these myriad views on child adoption on both the global and domestic scale but specifically within an identified isiZulu speaking community located in South Africa. The following literature will shed light on some of the global views as well as challenges on both formal and informal adoption within indigenous communities and the world at large. It also looks at some of the studies done in Africa on child adoption of indigenous children and extensively examines the South African Zulu community.

2.1 GLOBAL VIEWS ON CHILD ADOPTION

After the First World War had left many children destitute, laws were established in other regions of the world to create legal kinship where there is no blood based family ties (Albrecht, 2005). Some regions, particularly those of Islamic religion but excluding a few such as Indonesia and Tunisia, rejected adoption as an alternative form of child care due to religious reasons (Albrecht, 2005). Interestingly though, in Roman countries adoption was forbidden for children who had not yet reached puberty but encouraged for adults in the name of patriarchy so as to avoid extinction of the family male line (Albrecht, 2005). Child adoption since then has become a crucial topic worldwide (Stolley, 1993). However it was only after the Second World War that international adoption continued to increase, thus eliciting immoral and illegal child adoption activities. This has led to concerns from human rights movements and international organisations (Albrecht, 2005).

Around the 20th century, modern practices of child adoption began to emerge due to the growing number of homeless children, particularly in North America and Europe (Palacios & Brodzinsky, 2010). Ultimately, these children would end up with non-relative families with the intention of providing them with stable homes whilst others were placed in child care institutes. The main priority was to get the children off the streets into homes raising the question, whose interests are being prioritised in this case? Whose best interests are being safe-guarded? Is this practice being implemented to promote the welfare of the actual child or society at large? As a result of the lack of care received by these children that were placed in homes, legislative efforts were undertaken in most Western countries to formalise and regulate child adoption

practices (Palacios & Brodzinsky, 2010). However this was not the only reason for new firm legislations on child adoption. Issues of “black market adoption” and “baby brokers” were also some of the reasons for stricter legislations and laws. So, as child adoption became a prominent practice by the Welfare Departments, various sectors of studies began to have an interest in the practice hence there continues to be interest in this topic but mostly now in the context of black African people (indigenous African communities).

What is concerning though is that just a few years later, despite the importance of this area of interest in many groups of people, it has remained an under researched topic whereby statistical data by country is largely incomplete or is based on estimated statistical information (Stolley, 1993). With this being said, there are still numerous studies that have been carried out on child adoption throughout the world and these studies have touched on multiple issues, such as open and closed adoption, interracial adoption, inter-country adoption, the role of the State and markets in adoption, and also the effect of adoption on the adoptive children and parents (Zhang, 2006). What is however noticeable is the lack of interest in African indigenous issues such as that of culture in the topic of child adoption. This could be the case because State laws, which are based on Western ideas of family formation that are quite different to those of African decedents, play such a large role in the process of adoption. Previously then, laws and processes pertaining to child adoption were not mindful of issues of culture when working with children of indigenous communities and as such international studies on child adoption tended to overlook these issues.

International views on child adoption

International adoption involves the transfer of a child for parenting purposes from one parent to another of different nations. This can be seen as an extreme sense of “stranger adoption” (Bartholet, 2005). This then means that adoption can go beyond not just one’s country line (nationality) but extend beyond race, socio-economic class, ethnicity, and cultural heritage. While adoption for many countries was a means of ensuring continuation of family and inheritance of property, it has come a long way since then whereby modern adoption is more child-centred or at least tries to be (Albrecht, 2005). Adoption in many Western societies is a widely accepted means of forming a family and is a welcomed alternative to childbearing, which is categorised as formal versus informal, related versus unrelated adoptions, domestic versus inter-country adoptions, and foster care adoption (Bernal, Hu, Moriguchi & Nagypal, 2007). So with that said one would think that it is a universal concept and practice but this is not so as is in the case of most Islamic countries and a few others such as Korea.

One country in which child adoption is still a foreign concept is Korea, which has close to no laws governing such a notion and so social workers are not trained in this field. This is because Korean societies regard lineage and family as heritage that needs to be preserved as it is a defining characteristic in identity formation (Albrecht, 2005). Therefore adoption would place a risk on such characteristics of identity formation and this seems to be the general consensus for most countries that oppose transracial and transcultural adoption particularly on an international and inter-country level. On the other hand, countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia have always embraced the practice of adoption but not within the context of State laws in terms of sanctioning the process (Albrecht, 2005). In other words, child adoption practices occurred with the context of common law without engagements of legal processes which allowed for the practice to extend beyond friends or relatives. It is quite clear therefore that although child adoption may be a universal phenomenon that has served various needs for both the child and the parent, it has been influenced by a number of issues such as social identity, religion, beliefs, and political systems.

An Australian study on past adoption practices identified a number of key themes which indicated that past adoption practices were utilised as a societal response to issues of marriage, infertility and poverty. It also indicated that the practice of adoption has lasting impacts on the many people beyond the parents and adopted person (Hallahan, 2015). Furthermore, international adoption not only presents financial and sociocultural issues but also psychological and moral challenges and so counselling professionals can play a vital role in the process of adoption through psycho-education so as to build resilience for all those involved (Hoshmand, Gere & Wong, 2006). Transracial and cross-cultural adoption need always to consider cultural socialisation with the intention to cultivate resilience and cultural competence so psychologists and counselling practitioners can contribute to both research and provide psycho-education on adoption in such contexts (Hoshmand, Gere & Wong, 2006). Although cross-cultural and transracial adoption and even fostering are common systems of family formation, adoptive parents are still not competent in addressing the cultural needs of the child or children joining their family (Gibbs, 2017). Similarly, professionals handling the adoption are also likely not culturally competent and therefore cannot provide the much-needed knowledge on such issues for the adoptive parents.

A study conducted in New Zealand (Gibbs, 2017) identified a number of barriers to transracial and cross-cultural adoption, amongst which were: racial and cultural difficulties; challenges to establishing a sense of belonging; a sense of tokenism by the adoptive parents; and parents fearing imposing their cultural and racial heritage on their adoptive children. Although the study established quite a number of barriers to adoption, these still seem to be taken from the

perspective of the adoptive parents rather than the adopted children and also do not address the extended family of the child? What about the child's disconnect with their religious and ancestral beliefs and practices? And most of all, the child's background of who they are (clan name and family name)? Such issues cannot be ignored and so cross-cultural adoptive parents need to be proactive in gaining knowledge and understanding about their adoptive child's cultural heritage and worldview for both themselves and for the adoptive child (Gibbs, 2017).

International adoption has grown quite significantly over the last few years and so patterns of adoption have changed from the objective needs of the child and the family to the politics and laws of international adoption (Bartholet, 2005). Hence international adoption is significant both globally and locally for countries concerned because the movement of children from their original country means a loss of human resources, racial and ethnic backgrounds, and ultimately cultural background. These factors can cause issues in the adoptee's identity development and with the psychological adjustment of the adoptive family (Hoshmand, Gere & Wong, 2006). It is said that parents who engage in international adoption are generally the rich, relatively privileged white people and the adoptee is of less privileged racial and ethnic groups and so such notions have generated much controversy. Those supporting international adoption have supported it on the basis that it serves the fundamental needs of the child and demonstrates love for others whilst others criticise it, labelling it as human exploitation and an exercise of power over racial minority groups (Bartholet, 2005). Some of those who criticise transracial adoption see it as an attack on black communities because it harms black children by depriving them of their heritage. On the other hand critics acknowledge that if there is not transracial adoption, many children from ethnic minority societies will be left destitute (Lind & Johansson, 2009).

In countries such as India, child adoption has been practised for many years whereby the child is adopted within the extended family but much emphasis was placed upon adoption of a male child so as to continue and preserve the family lineage (Lind & Johansson, 2009). The context in which adoption is practiced again taps on notions of family structure and family lineage and blood connections which are quite valid issues also in many of the indigenous communities. It is unfortunate that many of the adoption systems and policies have neglected to integrate such notions in their processes and regulations of such a concept. Beyond the issues previously mentioned, issues of cost, extensive background investigations and the lengthy time period have also created much scepticism for potential adoptive parents (Gumus & Lee, 2010).

Views on inter-country adoption

The act of creating a parent-child relationship within legal institutions by individuals is basically adoption in layman's terms for most countries, which today sees over 200 countries recognised by the United Nations whereby 170 have authorised both domestic and inter-country adoption (Mignot, 2015). Inter-country adoption refers to the adoption of children between countries whereby the adoptive parents are from a different country to that of the adopted child. Inter-country adoption has evolved from merely being a humanitarian act for childless parents wishing to have a family to now being viewed with a cynical eye mainly because of the power dynamics assumed to be involved (Rushwaya, 2014). This type of adoption of minors between countries appears to have increased from approximately 2,500 in a year between the 1950s and 1960s to about 40,000 a year in the mid-2000s (Mignot, 2015). This massive increase has therefore demanded that the legal framework on inter-country adoption be strengthened so as to ensure safer adoption processes. What is quite interesting to note though is that in the 1980s and 1990s there was a significantly lower number of inter-country adoptions from the African continent with the exception of Ethiopia and Madagascar who were ranked within the top 25 countries sending children abroad (Selman, 2009).

The decline raises a number of questions: does it suggest that there are fewer children needing homes? Is the decline due to the new stricter laws and regulations? Are people now taking into consideration the entirety of the child's wellbeing? Or are people and domestic institutions choosing alternative forms of adoptions? Moreover could domestic institutions for child care be finding alternative ways of solving the devastating challenge of child abandonment and orphaned children? There will continue to be more questions on such a topic because of the environmental, emotional and cultural dynamics especially in countries where the legal concept of child adoption remains contradictory to people's way of life and where there has been a vast history of imperialism and colonialism. Such questions and issues have had a knock-on effect on child adoption worldwide as in 2013, when three times fewer adoptions were recorded worldwide than in 2003 (Mignot, 2015).

Cultural identity is central when it comes to inter-country, transracial and transcultural adoption in Africa with critics denouncing it as modern-day imperialism by dominant, developed cultures by taking away its precious resources which are its children [The African Child Policy Forum (ACPF), 2012]. Culture is not only an important element because it constitutes identity but it is a way of life in black indigenous communities and so due regard should be given to it when adoption is considered. Children's identities need to be respected just as much as language and religion because of its link to family name, spiritual world, familial heritage, social

connections and the world of African people. Therefore it is vital that legal systems maintain elements of culture, such as the child's original name and surname, that open up for possible reconnection with one's origin especially with the older adopted children (ACPF, 2012). Some of the concerns raised on inter-country adoption included that it violates the child's right to cultural identity so rather than promoting the child's identity, it strips it away and is replaced by that of the adoptive parents (Rushwaya, 2014). Those opposing the practice of inter-country adoption strongly emphasise that adoption should be utilised as the last resort, only if it serves the absolute best interests of the child thus protecting what is the best interests of African children (ACPF, 2012). Therefore the best approach to meet these outcomes is to find a family for the child rather than finding a child for the family.

After 2003, Madagascar saw a decrease in inter-country adoption whilst Ethiopia rose, and France doubled its inter-country adoption numbers, and of course the USA and Spain saw a rapid increase, and by 2007 had become the preferred countries of placement for children (Selman, 2009). One would think that the increased number of inter-country adoptions in Ethiopia was influenced by the large increase in AIDS orphans but in actuality evidence shows that most of those children were cared for by their extended families. It therefore important that we recognise the role played by extended family members in raising their relatives' children and provide support for the caring guardians. The common pattern reflected in international and inter-country adoption seems to be that of adoption of children from the African continent where there is a significantly high number of child abandonment and orphaned cases thus becoming the new frontier for inter-country adoption (Rushwaya, 2014).

A study conducted in China addressed issues relating to inter-country adoption issues, describing international adoption as a widespread practice with 34,000 children adopted in 2001 from Asia and Central and Eastern Europe (Hoshmand, Gere & Wong, 2006). The study refers to the spread of international adoption as an economic disparity between developed countries influenced by geopolitics and policies relating to adoption. It was the rise in international adoption that saw the emergence of international regulations and laws to eliminate illegal trafficking of babies and corruption on the part of the intermediaries handling adoption (Hoshmand, Gere & Wong, 2006). The incident in France where 103 children from impoverished parts of the country of Chad were attempted to be flown out by aid workers created a fear of Africa becoming the new source of inter-country adoption thus replacing China and Russia (Selman, 2009). Such incidences re-affirmed the concerns raised about inter-country adoption for financial gain and child trafficking of children from undeveloped countries. It had become clear that African children were attracting attention from prospective

Western adoptive parents mostly because of media coverage on the increasing number of orphaned and abandoned children in Africa (Rushwaya, 2014).

With such an increasing interest in African children, the legislative framework regulating inter-country adoption failed, deeming it inadequate in maintaining what is in the best interests of African children (Rushwaya, 2014). The loopholes in legislations and laws governing the process of inter-country adoption and international adoption of African children opened up not only legality problems but also debates on the adoption of African children. In 2008, the President of Liberia suspended inter-country adoptions due to a number of reports on illegal adoptions and child trafficking so as to establish stricter laws, practices, and policies of inter-country adoption and in the same year Togo also suspended inter-country adoptions in their country for the same reasons and later Chad due to child trafficking (Rushwaya, 2014). So for the last few years, inter-country adoption has created debates on the practice that have resulted in divisions of those in support and those opposing of such alternative care to deprived children.

Worldwide general trends of child adoption

Quite a number of studies on global trends and policies on child adoption, according to reports issued by the UN in 2009, indicate that there are over 160 countries all over the world that recognise the legal institution of adoption (Jurviste, Sabbati, Shreeves & Dimitrova-Stull, 2016). In countries such as that of South Australia, adoption attempts to alter legal parenting arrangements in a way that extinguishes existing arrangements and replaces them with new parenting arrangements (Hallahan, 2015). This is reflected in the child's surname being changed and replaced with the adoptive family's surname which requires the state to intervene to ensure optimum integration of the child into the family. What is interesting to note is that the State recognises its limitation in how identity formation is disrupted by adoption and re-iterates the need for change. However, child adoption continues to increase globally without major charges to such issues of identity formation. There are now over 170 countries that have authorised both domestic and inter-country adoptions whilst others recognise only domestic adoptions and prohibit or have strong restrictions on inter-country adoptions.

In Islamic countries where adoption was prohibited by law, it was later replaced with the Kafalah as this indigenous practice does not dissolve ties between adopted children and their birth parents (Jurviste et al., 2016). What is also interesting in this research issued by the UN in 2009 was that there were fewer countries that allowed for married couples to adopt but

allowed for single people to adopt and only more recently have they allowed for same-sex couples. European countries and USA continued to be the preferred choice with regard to child adoption whilst China and Russia were the most predominant of those sending their children to other countries through adoption (Jurviste et al., 2016). With that said, there seems to be a slow growth in the rate of adoption globally because of the increasing regulations and growing sentiments in some countries on origin of the child and their connection to their people (Jurviste et al., 2016).

Lately the topic of ethnicity with regards to child adoption has attracted much focus due to Coalition Governments in countries such as England which promote the placement of children of minority ethnic heritage with white families due to the slow rate of other ethnic groups wanting to adopt (Wainwright & Ridley, 2012). Some of the themes and issues that arose from an adoption study focusing on matching black and minority ethnic groups and dual heritage children with black minority ethnic groups found that, ethnically matched placements encourage and nurture a positive black identity within Black Minority Ethnicity (BME) children, which is seen as central to their well-being (Wainwright & Ridley, 2012 pp.1). Other studies in the US and the UK have found no relationship between self-esteem and ethnic identity and have therefore concluded that trans-ethnic adoptees do not suffer any more adverse outcomes with regard to ethnic identity than their peers (Wainwright & Ridley, 2012). And so the question about ethnic matching still remains a topic that requires more research and understanding so as to better maintain the child's culture and ensure successful adoption of well-adjusted children.

However, debates have emerged raising even more debates on: potential to harm, illegal and unethical adoption practices, abuse, identity issues, issues of culture and origin and much more but most importantly that of what is truly in the best interests of the child. These debates have been both necessary and helpful in that international and domestic standards have been established to safeguard on such issues so to ensure that the children's best interest is of paramount importance to everyone involved. As a result adoption is an optional form of care within the child care system (place of safety, child care homes etc.) amongst others and should be considered after other alternative forms of care have been exhausted, so where there it is not possible to keep the child within their family (Jurviste et al., 2016). Interestingly enough though in the early 20th century in countries such as Canada, stranger adoptions practices were only performed by and were within religious associations and so both the adopted child and adoptive parent were of the same religion; this idea of matching was based on the notion of kinship between all parties involved (the biological parents as well) of shared religion (Lind & Johansson, 2009).

International policies on inter-country adoption

Adoption policies, laws, and practices have come a long way in countries such as the UK, New Zealand, Canada, and South Africa whereby adoption of children within their own communities has been prioritised (Mokomane, Rochat & The Directorate, 2011). In countries such as the United State of America (USA), the State courts decide whether to grant or deny a petition for formal domestic adoption whilst inter-country adoption is governed by international laws (Bernal et al., 2007). Laws governing international and inter-country adoption have had to be strengthened due to various concerns and illegal behaviour especially with inter-country adoption which saw *The Hague Convention on Protection and Co-operation in Respect of Inter-country Adoption* being established. In 1993 this convention (Hague Convention) was established to safeguard the child's interests in terms of their fundamental rights as recognised in international law and to prevent the abduction, the sale of, or traffic in children (Mignot, 2015; Rushwaya, 2014). Interestingly enough though the Hague Convention has only been ratified by the African countries and it is quite possible that this may be because they do not recognise inter-country adoption as an alternative form of care for African children (Rushwaya, 2014).

The Hague Convention provides guidelines on inter-country adoption for both the receiving and sending countries so as to ensure a much more ethical and transparent system that meets international standards (Selman, 2012). It emphasises that inter-country adoption be processed through central authorities rather than individual so as to avoid or minimise improper financial gain (Mignot, 2015). What is interesting though is that since the signing of the agreement there seems to have been a decrease in inter-country adoption. Although the Hague Convention emphasises what is in the best interests of the child in terms of the child's needs (love, nurturing, security, education etc), it also imposes that ethnic, cultural and national identity are to be considered as just as important (Selman, 2012). So really what one could argue that the policy is encouraging is that when considering what is in the best interests of the child, that extended families be considered as alternative placements for said child (Mignot, 2015). This then leaves the option of inter-country adoption as the last resort and places the extended family of the child as the first line of placement so as to maintain family connections, national identity, and the culture of the child. What is clearly imposed by such policies is the importance of government and international child welfare systems and social workers to recognise and advocate for the child's right not only to family but in all aspects of the child's wellbeing. Of course in certain cases inter-country adoption may represent the

child's only chance for a well-balanced home and as such it may be left to the adoptive parents to ensure a permanent, healthy and safe environment for the child (Selman, 2012).

Conditions of satisfaction that need to be met by potential parents vary from one country to another whereby some countries set limits on the number of children that can be adopted by one family or person whilst others set restrictions on relationship dynamics such as that of connected with biological family in cases of open adoption (Mignot, 2015). For example, in countries under Islamic law (excluding Indonesia, Turkey and Tunisia), the raising of children by those that are not biological parents is not sanctioned by both the law and religion (Mignot, 2015). So other forms of guardianship have been legalised such as that of the Kafalah whilst other countries such as Nigeria, Namibia, Tanzania, Bangladesh, etc. allow for domestic adoption (Mignot, 2015). Inter-country adoption in India only took off in the beginning of the 1960s but the practice created much controversy in the 1970s and 1980s because there were no laws that governed the process and so private adoptions were banned later on in 1984 (Lind & Johansson, 2009). However, as time went on people's attitudes and perceptions changed on non-relative adoption and the country signed The Hague Convention agreement in an attempt to regulate the adoption process (Lind & Johansson, 2009).

2.2 AFRICAN CONTEXT

African worldview versus Western worldview

African worldviews are somewhat different to that of Western worldviews and particularly with regards to human development and the human lifespan. The African worldview envisions the human lifespan in three distinct phases of life, according to Nsamenang (2006): the initial phase is referred to as the spiritual selfhood; the second phase is the social or experiential selfhood; then the last phase starts after death which is the ancestral selfhood. The initial phase begins from conception or even earlier than that from ancestral spirits that have reincarnated, and ends with the ceremony of introducing or naming the newly born child (Nsamenang, 2006). The second phase begins after the introduction or name calling of the child and ends at physical death; then the last phase starts after death which is the ancestral selfhood (Nsamenang, 2006). So the worldview of Africans on the human lifespan or life cycle is that human development is continuous and does not stop after death and so children are born into a cycle of life that is all encompassing of both the physical life and the afterlife. Ancestors are regarded as the living dead and are present in the affairs of those who are living

and so each stage of the human development is marked by distinctive developmental tasks which are defined within cultural realities and developmental agendas (Nsamenang, 2006).

Thus the African worldview is all encompassing and does not just look at the individual in relation to their community but it includes the wholeness of the person, their community, and spiritual harmony which of course is rooted in cultural values that are relational (Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013). These are the reasons for an African's desire to seek both individual and collective harmony in reaching one's true self. What is central to the African worldview is collective values, which are rooted in interconnectedness or interdependency whereby one's culture is their lens through which they preserve, interpret, and make sense of their world and create their reality (Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013). Of course individual development within cultural realms is brought about through participation in cultural activities through social interaction and so the child needs to be initiated into and actively engage in cultural life so they can undertake development of their levels of selfhood, identity, and existence (Nsamenang, 2006). So ultimately the African worldview on human beings is that humans need others to adequately develop as a holistic being and so a sense of self cannot be achieved without reference to others where there is enactment of social roles and so human development is not based on autonomy but is based on interdependence (Nsamenang, 2006).

Dominant Western views on psychological development differ from indigenous African thought in that it largely disregards or ignores the spiritual element of human development and concentrates on the physical measurable reality of human life and psychological development (Thabede, 2008). Basically, the supernatural world is not viewed as substantial explanations for human phenomena whereas the spiritual world is regarded to have a significant value to answering issues and problems of African people. The dominant Western worldview on childhood and family is based on the premise of an autonomous individual and independence (Lind & Johansson, 2009). So Western concepts such as adoption are based on ideologies of individualisation and institutionalisation of the child whereby the State assumes the responsibility of safeguarding the child's best interests (Lind & Johansson, 2009).

Indigenous African views on child adoption

Infertility has remained a global challenge for many countries but has had an even more devastating effect on African people because of the value placed on reproduction in terms of continuation of blood line, family name, and cultural heritage (Oladokun, Arulogun, Morhason-Bello, Bamgboye, Adewole & Oladosu Ojengbede, 2009). With that being said, there are

available alternatives such as adoption and fostering that can help alleviate the pain and devastation of not being able to have children but unfortunately these practices are still underutilised. This is also reflected in a study conducted in Nigeria at a time that the country had no uniform national guidelines, protocols, and laws governing the child adoption process (Oladokun et al., 2009). It was because adoption as a practice posed some concerns on both culture and identity that it was not formalised and so it was left to individual states and private organisations to arrange it. The Nigerian study found that participants would refer to an adopted child as a 'bastard' and so such name calling seems to discourage potential adopters whilst other others indicated that adopted children don't replace biological children (Oladokun et al., 2009). Furthermore, one of the focus group stated that there is no adoption in their community except that of their own relatives' children that they are raising (Oladokun et al., 2009). The continuation of such a study whereby we attempt to understand beliefs and child rearing practices of Africa's communities will allow for us to gain a wider understanding of why adoption is such an under-utilised practice in African communities.

Although African communities are familiar with formal (legalistic) adoption, they continue to practice traditional alternatives to childlessness and traditional approaches to adoption. This may also be due to some stigmas and challenges attached to formal adoption in certain countries. A study conducted in Nairobi, Kenya, found that people still associate adoption with buying children, which we have previously mentioned in our evaluation of global and international views on child adoption (Lalinde, 2012). The general consensus on this study was not only about people's concern for how they will be viewed or preserved by their families and their community but also the fear that the community will tell the child that they were adopted because of the close social networks of African community (Lalinde, 2012). So basically people in such close knit communities may fear stigmatisation and negativity directed to both them and the adopted child and so these may result in potential adopters being reluctant to engage in formal adoption. Again, the concern for culture and customs resurfaces which reiterates what has been mentioned consistently in previous studies about how culture, identity, heritage etc. can influence one's decision to adopt formally. These continue to be concerns because today the Kenyan society, just as many of the other African societies, is still very much a traditional society and so cultural perceptions and ideologies factor into whether the person chooses to formally adopt or not (Lalinde, 2012).

A South African study by Mokomane et al. (2011) suggested that the majority of national adoptions in the period under study took place within the same race so both the adopter and the adoptee were of the same racial group. This would therefore lower the transracial and

inter-country adoption rates for countries such as the USA which had a growing cross cultural adoption rate. Also this study brings to the fore the fact that child adoption is now viewed in terms of race whereby children are matched to same race adopters. This is however surprising since a study by Moos and Mwaba (2007) among students at a predominantly black university in Cape Town revealed that 87% of the respondents indicated support for transracial adoption by disagreeing with the statement: 'Black children should be raised by Black parents only'. Only 9% indicated that they believed that black children adopted by white parents were likely to lose their culture. By the same token, data from the key informant interviews showed encouraging attitudes towards transracial adoption and yet at the time there were still quite a small number of black people adopting formally (Mokomane et al., 2011).

Since the previously mentioned study on Nigerian people, adoption laws have become complex and differ from one State to another because of the various ethnic groups and their diverse socio-cultural beliefs (Agbo, 2014). Cultural indifferences continue to be a concern across multiple studies on child adoption and will continue to be of debate until cultural consideration is prioritised as what is in the best interest of the child. The inconstant laws and policies subscribed across Eastern and South-Eastern Nigeria open up the possibility of illegal adoption practices such as children being sold and human trafficking (Agbo, 2014). What is clear though is that the concept of adoption is a familiar one amongst such diverse communities even with its cultural challenges and stigmas, particularly that of the disconnection to the child's ancestors. It is such issues that have perpetuated the use of informal alternatives practices to adoption in numerous multicultural countries. Countries such as Morocco continue to utilise these various informal alternative practices of child adoption, even with the legal ban on child adoption, whereby the person asks another person for their child when faced with childlessness (Fioole, 2015). So the practice of adoption holds no juridical value in Morocco's family law which means that informally adopted children are not covered by law on any claims on adoptive parents' inheritance (Fioole, 2015). What is even more interesting is that because the adopted children are not regarded as related to the adoptive parents they can even marry the adoptive parent's biological children because kin relations are regarded to be blood related. Furthermore, the adopted child's surname is not changed as in formal (legal) adoption because it is not legalised hence the continuation of informal arrangements on child adoption (Fioole, 2015).

Child adoption in the South African black community

There is much coverage of the declining rates of child adoption in South Africa, which sometimes is associated with the renewed implementation of the recent Children's Act of 2005 (No. 38) but most frequently with 'cultural barriers' (Blackie, 2014). It has been reported that there is an increasing number of black children requiring adoption, whilst there are an increasing number of white parents who want to adopt. Why are there not enough black parents adopting? And if they are, why do the statistics not reflect that? South Africa is seemingly facing an adoption crisis where 98% of children on the local adoption registry are black, whilst 91% of the parents who want to adopt are waiting for white, Indian or coloured babies (Blasé, 2013). However, it is possible that adoption statistics do not take into account 'informal adoption' whereby black African children are simply raised by extended family members without any formal or legal arrangements. This study specifically aims to evaluate this gap in literature, namely the understandings and views of adoption in the isiZulu-speaking community and interrogate how culture influences adoption as well as what the barriers to formal adoption are.

Formal adoption rates in South Africa have remained relatively low throughout the past few years on both the national and local scales even though Western concepts of adoption have become more accommodating especially with regards to concepts of family structure (Gerrand & Nathane-Taulela, 2015). Such statements raise questions like: to what extent have African family structures been accommodated? Another question would be, what about the issue of culture and renouncing of the child's identity? And also what are the structural dynamics of these families who informally adopt? In many of the African families the family structure includes ancestry and so rituals, traditions and cultural ceremonies play a major role in their lives which are then passed on to succeeding generations predominantly through oral history (Ross, 2010). Unlike in the Euro-Western community, family systems are not confined to the typical nuclear family structure but extend to a larger kinship structure which includes extended relatives and the ancestors. It is those extensions that make up one's social, material and general kinship connections which are then reciprocated in culture, traditional practices and ancestral spirits (Gerrand & Nathane-Taulela, 2015).

Despite formal/legal child adoption being prioritised by the South African legislature, it appears the practice is still under-utilised by the black community which is unfortunate because they make up the majority of the country's population (Doubell, 2014). As a result of the low statistics a number of assumptions have been made to explain the low rate of black adopters in the African society, amongst which are cultural influences such as the importance of blood ties (Gerrand, 1997). The question then reasons, could the low rate be due to the fact that formal (legal) adoption is based on Western family building structures which are different from

that of a typical traditional African society? Traditional African family building structures also tend to be influenced by prevailing cultural norms and values, which includes how to cope with childlessness and maybe that could also account for the low rate of adoption by black societies. Hence this study explores indigenous conceptions, views and understandings of adoption within the extended family of the Zulu community and how these issues influence formal adoption.

For a South African community such as the Zulu, the ancestors represent the basic values of the community and so the inclusion of ancestors in their family structure is an important and integral part of understanding structures of kinship (Nel, 2007). Ancestors are deeply respected and honoured by the living through traditional rituals. Death is not seen as the end of life but a way of moving on to join the company of the departed (Ross, 2010). In South African traditional communities, particularly the isiZulu speaking communities, ancestors are spirits of dead (living-dead) members of the family lineage or clan, who lived an exemplary (ethical) life and who have been re-integrated into the family system by means of rituals of incorporation. It is therefore important to recognise the value of family togetherness or connections as all inclusive of both the living and the dead when attempting to understand Western concepts as they are practiced in African societies.

Connections or kinship patterns are not only limited to the nuclear family but rather include the extended family and generational connections hence the complex family structure that can result in a long line of fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters, both living and dead (Nel, 2007). It is therefore important to understand the family system as an emotional unit in South African traditional black communities rather than confined to nuclear and physical settings. Family lineage and clan in South African black communities are the basis of such connections and are just as important as the belief in ancestral spirits because continuity of the family name moves the family forward which then makes producing offspring extremely important (Ross, 2010). So the question of whether formal child adoption is being rejected on the basis that an adopted child is of different or unknown bloodline or family lineage remains unanswered?

It is also said that, in such a community, culturally the child is born spiritually linked to rituals specific to their ancestry and so it is assumed that cross-pollination of rituals may anger the child's ancestors thus causing all sorts of misfortunes for the child (Blackie, 2014). It may be on such basis that some studies are of the view that formal/legal adoption in black communities is rejected but it may well be that policies of child adoption alienates black people because of the discriminating nature of its regulations (Burnett, 2011). It is however notable that in such communities there is a strong notion of belonging and family boundaries with both

those living and non-living where there is much emphasis on blood ties and community participation in the socialisation of its children (Burnett, 2011). It is against the abovementioned background that this study explores a group of isiZulu-speaking people's views and understandings of child adoption.

South African Statistics on formal child adoption

Official adoption statistics are quite difficult to access but with that said, recent figures indicate that there has been a steep decline in the number of formal/legal adoptions in South Africa (SA) in the last nine years (News24, 2014). Even with the current legislative framework in SA supporting adoption as the preferred form of care for children with inadequate or no parental or family support, there are an estimated 3.8 million orphans in SA, with approximately 1.5 - 2 million children considered adoptable (Mazanderani, du Plessis, Lumb, Feucht, Myburgh, Mayaphi, Lekalakala, Swanepoel, Georgakis, & Avenant, 2014). Among South Africa's estimated 3.8 million orphans are children without a living biological mother, father or both parents; whilst an estimated 150 000 children live in child-headed households and over 13 000 are living in residential care (Mazanderani et al., 2014; Blackie, 2014).

Despite these overwhelming figures, based on the Registry of Adoptable Children and Parents (RACAP) as at November 2013, there were 428 unmatched children available for adoption of which 398 were black, 3 white, 9 termed 'mix raced', and the remainder are unspecified (Blackie, 2014). The statistics compiled in the RACAP research report also indicated that 60% of the children had been abandoned and less than 40% were formally consented for adoption by the parents or family (News24, 2014). Meanwhile, inter-country adoption statistics remain low, the numbers compiled by the International Social Service (ISS)/International Reference Centre (IRC) in relation to South Africa for 2014 estimate the latter was at 176 (News24, 2014). Although interracial adoptions are relatively common, there are still parents who prefer to adopt children of their own race. Blackie's study showed that a large number of the black people are not adopting reflected in that only 14 black parents had registered for adoption, whilst 398 black children were up for adoption according to the registry (Blackie, 2014).

Studies conducted in South Africa, suggest that more and more people have become aware of the significant number of children in need of homes and so adoption (specifically cross-racial adoption) has become more prevalent. The register of adoption at the Department of Social Development in Pretoria in 2005 published states, indicated that 2379 children were adopted of which 452 of these children were part of cross-racial adoptions while 191 of these cross-racial adoptions occurred in South Africa and the rest were inter-country adoptions (Finlay, 2006). Therefore there has been an increase in cross-racial adoption and yet cultural

understanding of indigenous children remains under researched and we remain colour-blind to cultural barriers and challenges on child adoption. The National Adoption Registry's (NAR) statistics for April 2004 - March 2009 indicated a low and static number of court ordered adoptions in the country which hovered around 2000 per annum (Mokomane, Rochat & The Directorate, 2011).

2.3 THE ZULU COMMUNITY AND CHILD ADOPTION

Gap in the concept of child adoption as it is defined and regarded in legal terms

The concept of child adoption in Western society is based upon principles of individualism and institutionalisation of the child whereby the State assumes responsibility for the well-being of the child thereby ensuring that the child's best interests are prioritised (Lind & Johansson, 2009). This then means that the concept of adoption is based on ideologies and notions of Euro-Western societies whereby the adoption order releases the biological parent's rights and responsibilities onto the adoptive parent. Also adoption as it stands in South Africa is based on Western family structures which are that of the nuclear family. However this conflicts with that of the African family structure which extends beyond the nuclear family to incorporate the extended family and a larger kinship structure that includes non-living relatives (Gerrand & Nathane-Taulela, 2015). Ultimately the basis upon which the concept is defined clashes with African views of family formation, cultural ways of living, and what constitutes adoption. This is evident in that South African policies on child adoption mostly favour formal (legal) adoption as alternative care rather than informal care because adoption is meant to be legally binding and therefore permanent (Mokomane & Rochat, 2011).

National child adoption in South Africa is characterised into four groups, according to Ross (2010): (i) biological adoption (adoption of a child by his biological father who was not married to the child's mother when the child was born); (ii) family adoption (adoption of a child by relatives such as uncles, aunts and grandparents); (iii) foster adoption (adoption of a child by a legal foster parent); and (iv) step adoption (adoption of a stepchild by a step-parent). The 'stranger adoption' categorisation often found in international literature is subsumed under foster adoption. What is interesting about these different categories of adoption is that they do not fit within the family structure of African black communities. This is firstly because extended family relatives are already regarded as family and so raising an extended family's child is not regarded as adoption. Secondly, this notion also extends to children of members of the family who have married into the family since spouses automatically regard those children as their

own and so this would not be regarded as adoption in this community. So the issue of child adoption goes beyond simply the much debated concerns of culture, lineage and blood relations as previous research has assumed (Mokomane & Rochat, 2011). But of course one cannot explore such concepts in such a traditional community such as that of the Zulu without looking at cultural beliefs and practices as they are a way of life and the lens through which one views the world.

Numerous studies continue to mention the issue of culture and its importance in the African black community but little research has truly explored the extent to which it influences formal adoption in the black South African communities (Ross, 2010; Mokomane & Rochat, 2011; Blasé, 2013). This study explore all these traditional and cultural notions so as to better understand people's views and understandings of the concept of adoption but within their context and how culture influences the choice to adopt formally and the barriers attached to it. It is important to explore people's views from their perspective because one interprets their world through their beliefs which thus sets the tone for the culture and the context in which it is practiced. For a traditional community such as that of the Zulu community, the notion of formal adoption tends to place much emphasis on the loss of the child's cultural roots because of options such as that of closed adoption and this seems to be reflected by the small number of black people adopting formally (Mokomane & Rochat, 2011). Rituals such as that of *imbeleko* (the process of introducing the child to the ancestors) help safeguard, protect and ultimately introduce the child to the family of both the living and the dead and so are very important to the Zulu community (Ross, 2010). So this may be challenging for a child whose origins are unknown such as in the case of closed adoption especially with regards to ancestry hence the utilisation of informal alternative care within extended families by indigenous cultural communities. This appears to be the preferred alternative to formal adoption because children are thought to be culturally sensitive. As such this study also sets out to explore these understandings and views of informal child adoption that have been utilised by indigenous communities for generations by looking at the extended family's role as well.

African customary family law and common law on child adoption

With South Africa being a multicultural society, there exists two laws amongst the indigenous people that pertain to child adoption which are customary and common law whereby for the longest time customary law was the only legal system recognised in this country (Boezaart, 2013). The common law and African customary law are now the major legal systems in South Africa as a result of the country's historical political construction of common law which was of

cause largely influenced by the dominant political power at the time (Faris, 2015). The construction and expansion of common law was based on Western knowledge systems and therefore disregarded African knowledge systems. Later changes to section 173 of the constitution of 1996 provided that the judiciary system is now responsible for developing the common law as well thus placing African customary law in equal footing with common law (Faris, 2015). The problem with the remodelling of the African customary law was that it was made to fit into the mould of Western legal values which ultimately disregarded African values such as that of *Ubuntu* or such values were infused into common law. This then meant that some of the indigenous community's cultural ways of living went unrecognised by formal law and these then fell under the common law and some of those ways of life include indigenous approaches to child adoption and ways of counteracting childlessness. However, both customary law and common law are not made up of a fixed body of rules but are formed on the basis of traditional and social practices accepted by the specific society whereby arrangements are made privately thus involving just the families concerned (Ferreira, 2009; Boezaart, 2013).

What this means for child adoption under these laws for people of indigenous societies is that laws of Western values were now being imposed on their ways of life and although there is still much leeway in these laws they remain challenging for such societies, particularly in the case of child adoption as adoption statistics do not reflect much utilisation of these laws. What customary law was intended for was to advocate for relatives of the adopted child and the adoptive parents involved in the process of adoption with both families having to agree on the decision but ultimately the decision remains that of the child's father and his family (Ferreira, 2009). Unfortunately this is not the only thing that common law then did; it provided structures and regulations on indigenous societies that contradicted with their ways of life, ways of being and ways of doing things and ultimately created a distance between the legal system and the people the law was intended for. Take for instance the Euro-Western concept of child adoption: as it stands now, this conception has resulted in a large number of black people in indigenous communities being sceptical about adoption whereas customary or traditional adoption presents an alternative approach to the Western approach of child adoption (Di Tomassoa & De Finney, 2015). This ensures that children are not separated from their families, communities, and more importantly their culture. This approach to adoption goes beyond just being an indigenous way of undertaking adoption but is a system of parenting that addresses the needs of the child in the context of indigenous people for indigenous children.

The lack of the term 'adoption' in the isiZulu language makes it difficult to translate it, let alone attempt to integrate it into such a traditional indigenous community (Di Tomassoa & De Finney,

2015). However, this does not mean that the concept or idea of adoption is not practiced but within the realms of kinship rather than the nuclear family structures as it is conceptualised within the Euro-Western society. So the terminology for formal adoption is defined within a kinship that does not exist within indigenous communities hence this study explores indigenous people's views and understanding of the concept in the context in which it is practiced; the extended family structure. What is clear though is that traditional adoption or child care per say in such a community does not alienate children from their biological connections, communities, and cultures (Di Tomassoa & De Finney, 2015). Furthermore, such a term fails to capture the essence of indigenous caretaking or child rearing values and practices of such as that of the Zulu communities not only because of its liquidation of the child's identity but also due to the realms of family structure in which it is practiced. However, laws have recently become more accommodating with regard to indigenous people and their culture and as a result have placed much emphasis on preserving the child's cultural identity (Di Tomassoa & De Finney, 2015). The new legislations stipulate that consideration be given to the child's extended family when evaluating what is in the best interest of the child. Child care under this law can also be permanent which usually happens when a couple who do not have children of their own or same sex couples request relatives or friends to give them their child (Ferreira, 2009). This is seen as one way in which members of extended family can assist each other in raising children within the family and within their own clan/tribe.

Customary law also makes a distinction between children adopted by a friend or a relative of the child in which case the parents remain the main custodians of the child and may therefore take the child back if need be (Ferreira, 2009). Customary law also focuses on family and children belonging to a family, the father's family, and the best interest of the child is captured in the concept of 'belonging' and yet family members have very few individual rights (Boezaart, 2013). Individual rights is very much a Western concept of functionality which in the case of child adoption pertains to rights of the parents based on their idea of family formation which differs to that of African indigenous societies. In the African community individual rights are conceptualised in terms of communal ways of life, functionality, collectivity and connectedness whereby "individual rights" to child care can extend beyond the individual. For example, the brother of the child's father is often regarded to have equal parental rights to that child. It is also under this customary law that adoption is usually considered to carry on the family name (for an heir), and therefore reasons for adoption are primarily for the benefits of the adoptive parents (Doubell, 2014). Therefore customary law in South Africa holds the idea of bringing up a child or maintaining of a child where there is shared responsibility of the child amongst the parents whereas in common law parental rights are shared beyond the parents therefore

extending to extended family members (Boezaart, 2013). There are two kinds of adoption accepted under the customary law; temporary adoption and permanent adoption and so when a child is sent to live with a relative for a while for whatever reason, it is regarded as temporary adoption under customary law (Ferreira, 2009). So under this law the transfer of a child from their biological family to an adoptive family is effective by an agreement between the two families, placing the child's best interest at heart.

The idea of family (Umndeni)

The basic nature of a traditional Zulu family is communalistic and this is apparent in their kinship bonds which are ramified through almost every aspect of their culture and serve to knit family relations together (Mzulwini, 1996). This then makes family in the isiZulu community diverse and all-inclusive in that it includes extended or multi-generations and also consists of one or more parents due to family formation (Amoateng et al., 2004). So ultimately a family unit in such a community is not only bound together by blood relationships but also by marriage or informal adoption where the adults are primarily responsible for teaching the children customary ways of thinking, feeling and behaving, language, values, norms, beliefs, and cultural skills but this responsibility also extends to extended family members as well (Mzulwini, 1996). Furthermore, a traditional isiZulu family is formed through polygamy and extended family, therefore placing great value on procreation of children and so because children are born into such large families there is always a family member who will absorb various facets of the parental role for whatever reasons the biological parents cannot (Gerrand, 1997).

The most powerful ties within the African Zulu community are that of consanguineous rather than that of conjugal and so child fosterage is an important aspect of the distinctive extended African family system (McDaniel & Zulu, 1996). For example when parents have to relocate for work, structural support arrangements are made with extended family members so as to enable them to rear their children. For generations the Zulu community have been extensively involved in such practices of child rearing whereby extended family members and even the community is involved in child rearing of children whose parents work far away and in child-headed households (McDaniel & Zulu, 1996). If the grandparent cannot take over the children for whatever reason (or have died), responsibility of the children is left to the next generation and so a system of kinship exists in indigenous communities such as the Zulu community regarding child rearing, caregiving or caretaking of children of extended family members (Gerrand, 1997). As such the burden and financial cost of raising children is not only left to the

biological parents but is shared by the extended family members, generations, and cross-family within generations (McDaniel & Zulu, 1996).

It is the traditional family system existing in the Zulu cultural group, comprising of related kin with mutual obligations and responsibilities for their own traditions that serve to maintain family life (Amoateng, Richter, Makiwane & Rama, 2004). It is therefore important that one looks at the role played by relatives in raising their relatives' children for those parents who are either deceased or living outside of home as they are more likely to be living with a relative than a non-relative in this type of community. It is such structures that facilitate the various childcare systems whereby extended families and even community members who are close to the family provide parental support to the child (McDaniel & Zulu, 1996). In other words families are social in their nature but related by blood (kinship), marriage, adoption or affiliation with close emotional attachments to each that endure over time and go beyond a particular physical residence and are a vital source of support throughout the child's life (Amoateng et al., 2004).

Family formation and social structure

Traditional African thinking is very much influenced by a communal way of being and so psychological development is aligned with others within the community giving rise to the understanding, *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* (I am because you are) (Mkhize, 2004). The concept of family is therefore centred on a communal way of being and so a child's first significant social act in such indigenous communities is that of being introduced to their family and family's ancestors by means of their clan name (Blackie, 2014). In other words, there is a collective mood of existence whereby members of the community are treated as members of one family irrespective of blood relations but this is also not limited to the living but extends to those that are non-living (Mkhize, 2004). Children in such a community are therefore believed to be born into a family community that is all inclusive of extended family (including the dead) and the community where everyone assumes some parental responsibility towards the child (Mkhize, 2004; Jini & Roby, 2011). In this case, your father's brother would be your father as well (*ubab'omncane or ubab'omkhulu*) and your mother's sister would be your mother as well (*umam'mncane or umam'mkhulu*). It is with such understanding and respect that child-rearing becomes a collective responsibility that is not limited to the nuclear family but extends to relatives and community members (McDaniel & Zulu, 1996).

Not only does such a kinship network give rise to notions of lineage but it provides a family structure that offers care to the child when the child is left in need of parental care (Davey,

2016). For example, uncles, aunts and grandparents all play a vital role in raising all the children living within the single household which would range from counselling them to ensuring their well-being and therefore everyone is considered as members of a single family unit (Mkhize, 2004). Such communities find kinship care more important in child-rearing and conserving cultural response because they are believed to strengthen collective survival, interdependency and responsibility for one another (Davey, 2016). In the isiZulu speaking community, kinship places emphasis not only on the living but also on ancestral relations which is regarded as the basis of traditional African life (Nel, 2007). It is because of such kinship ties that the view of formal child adoption may be unaccepted as it appears to undermine tradition and cultural uniqueness therefore creating disparities within families and among potential families (Burnett, 2001).

Could such notions of child adoption be based on ideas that black indigenous communities, such as that of the Zulu community, are constructed on the basis of old traditional practices, some of which include that the child will carry the family name if it is a male child. For instance, black South Africans regard adoption as a practice that severs the child's relationship with their family's origins and clan roots and as a result can lead to uncertainty regarding the question of 'who the child belongs to' which can potentially negatively impact the child's development later on in life (Gerrand & Nathane-Taulela, 2013). It is therefore noted that beliefs pertaining to family formation and lineage in most black South Africans, particularly the isiZulu speaking community, perceive the legal adoption process as being at odds with their cultural and ancestral belief systems (Doubell, 2014).

It is said that kinship is formed as a result of socially recognised relationships formed by the parents and so in societies that remain patrilineal, the child belongs to the father's clan and ancestors depending on cultural traditions such as marriage, paid damages (*inhlawulo*), proposal (*lobola*) etc. (Blackie, 2014). So once a man has given bridal cattle's (*lobola*) to the women's family then he is regarded as the pater of all his children even in the case of his death or even if the women decides not to marry him and so in marriage in the Zulu community the women's fertility is transferred absolutely to the husband's agnatic kin-group, making it very important that a women has children (Blackie, 2014). The modern concept of child adoption seems to be absent in the early ethnographic studies and so there is a continuous consensus on the notion of *Ubuntu* in such communities because it holds that no child should be regarded as an orphan because family formation in indigenous communities such as that of the Zulu community extends beyond the nuclear family and so even if the father has not reclaimed the child traditionally there are other family members that could do so (Blackie,

2014). This study will thus explore indigenous conceptions and understandings of child adoption within extended families of the isiZulu speaking community.

The role of extended family and community networks

Guardianship within the extended family is more often than not the most viable and preferred form of alternative care among indigenous communities for children who are orphans and/or vulnerable (Freeman & Nkomo, 2006). The utilisation of alternative forms of child care is still evident today as more children are cared for by relatives within the extended family system than are formally adopted. This is based on African cultural notions that there are 'no orphans' because parentless children are cared for within the kinship system (Mafumbate, 2012). This notion of a strong extended family system is based on the principal of togetherness and brings a sense of community brothers and sisters whom are also regarded as part of one family and ultimately are part of the extended family (Mafumbate, 2012). In such extended family networks within the Zulu community your father's brother has equal status within the family and equal responsibility hence he is referred to as dad as well (Mbatha, 2003). More importantly, African indigenous families such as that of the Zulu are based upon descent groups known as clans and lineages whilst the cult of the ancestors is regarded as the basis of African religiousness (Mbatha, 2003). Moreover, the concept or composition of extended family as a system of family organisation is usually determined culturally (Mzulwini, 1996).

Family, in such closely knit community systems, is regarded as the most basic source of individual development and is the building block of community linked by a common identity whereby family relationships (including the kin network) are regarded as important sources of support throughout the individual's life (Amoateng et al., 2004). This may be why today we see more and more families being carried by extended family members, more often the grandparents (Mbatha, 2003). What is apparent though is that a strong, supportive extended family will provide an optimum framework for a child's wellbeing and a great foundation for becoming a responsible adult whether they are raised by their parents or relatives (Amoateng et al. 2004). Therefore child care in such communities can extend to members of the community whereby they can provide support or become direct caregivers of children in their community with community members sharing the responsibility for providing nurturing for the child (Jini & Roby, 2011; Mzulwini, 1996). For example: teachers and religious leaders in the community have also been reported to have taken responsibility for some children who are orphaned or even cared for them on a permanent basis (Jini & Roby, 2011).

In some communities there is some form of traditional structure for assigning responsibility for nurturing of orphaned children with no known extended families whereby the village chiefs can provide temporary or permanent care for these children (Jini & Roby (2011). Such structures are of course not written in stone and in communities such as the Zulu community the community leader (*induna*) can be utilised as a mediator in processes of privately arranged informal care. Therefore the extended family and the community in the Zulu society play a vital role in child rearing and their importance is ramified in all aspects of their culture whereby the bonds of kinship are extensive (Mzulwini, 1996). These bonds serve to bring together people who would not otherwise be regarded as relatives in societies such as Western society. However, the emphasis on strong bonds amongst relatives can put pressure on importance of lineage, especially in the isiZulu speaking community where patriarchal systems still function (Mzulwini, 1996).

It is thus of paramount importance that when one looks to understand indigenous ways of life that African culture is interrogated as it allows for an in-depth understanding of traditional African cultural practices which include social organisation of clans, rituals, practices and beliefs (Mbatha, 2003). For example: boys are taught crucial aspects of their culture by their fathers and/or older male relatives so that they can form the stable basis for the prosperity of the clan in the subsequent generation; whilst girls are taught by their mothers and/or mature ladies (*iqhikiza*). Therefore extended family and community play a very important role in child-rearing especially in cases of loss whereby the brother will assume responsibility for the child even without the custom of levirate (*ukungena*) but ultimately responsibility for the child/children will fall within the extended family (Mzulwini, 1996).

2.4 BARRIERS TO FORMAL/LEGAL CHILD ADOPTION

Cultural barriers

There seems to be a correlation between child adoption subsiding and cultural beliefs which discourage termination of parental rights and hence the low adoption rates (Rochat, Mokomane & Mitchell, 2016). This implies that there are cultural barriers and beliefs within the black community (including the isiZulu speaking community) that prevent people from adopting children who are not related to them (Blasé, 2013). Blasé (2013) goes on to state that child adoption remains a restricted practice in African communities such as the Zulu, even though there are rituals that can counteract some of the ancestral beliefs and concerns about child adoption. This also implies that such indigenous communities are consciously choosing not to

formally and legally adopt but rather to rely on informal indigenous approaches to childcare and adoption.

What is however clear is with indigenous communities such as this one is that cultural beliefs and traditions are important and these include ancestral beliefs and so clan ownership of children is encouraged (Rochat et al., 2016). With that said, informal adoption of family children in indigenous communities, such as the isiZulu speaking community, is an acceptable, ancient practice. Formally adopting a child may be frowned upon because of issues such as family name and repercussions from ancestors so informal adoption or alternative care (Forster care, kinship care etc.) remains the most preferred and utilised form of child care (Davey, 2016; Delap, 2012; Nel, 2007). African traditions are also thought of as uniting the social, natural and supernatural world hence ancestral life is of vital importance in the Zulu community (Brittian, Lewin & Norris, 2013). Therefore these views on African traditions bear some concerns with regards to formally adopting a child whose origins are unknown, as in the case of abandoned children and closed adoption (information to biological parents unknown to adoptive parents). Also of concern is changing the child's name once formal adoption is finalised because if a child that is unrelated to the family is adopted formally, that child will carry their family name and so there's a concern that the child's ancestors will be angered at being taken into a new family, and the new family's ancestors will also be angered by the introduction of the child's ancestors (Blasé, 2013). In situations such as in the case of closed adoptions indigenous people view such adoption as causing a rupture in the transferring of ancestral knowledge, culture, and language of their values and custom for the child (Di Tomassoa & De Finney, 2015).

It is also important to note that African traditions are constructed through fluid oral traditions as a result of African people's interactions with their practices, beliefs and worldview of their society and so one's individual experiences is regarded as the society's collective expression of their ethnic culture (Brittian et al., 2013). Transracial child adoption is believed to lead to a sense of loss and disconnect in the lives of indigenous adoptees, making it difficult for them to reconnect with their cultural identity, ancestral relationships and land (Di Tomassoa & De Finney, 2015). Indigenous communities seem to play a vital role in supporting continuous connectedness of a child to land, community, and family as communities provide language and cultural identity for the entire family which includes extended family. Formal child adoption in this community seems to be thoughts of as anti-ubuntu because this concept suggests that no child should be left without a family since children are the responsibilities of the extended family, tribe and communities at large (Blasé, 2013). Of course the problem with this notion is

that if the origin of the child is unknown and their bloodline is untraceable, alternative care must be provided.

Ancestral beliefs

The essence of ancestral consciousness in the African society, which includes the Zulu community, is their beliefs and practices which underpin every aspect of their spiritual traditions (Edwards, Thwala, Mbele, Siyaya, Ndlazi & Magwaza, 2011). Such ancestral awareness can range from the person's experiences to customs and rituals in memory of personal, familial and communal ancestors which may include animal slaughtering and incense burning. Essentially then, ancestral spirits are deceased relatives and are believed to communicate through visions and dreams (Mbatha, 2003). Furthermore, ancestors in such indigenous communities inhabit the realm of Spirit which is recognised as surpassing time and human categories thus forming the basis of spiritual traditions which are believed to be a guide for humanity on the continuous cycle of life and death (Edwards et al., 2011). Hence ancestral spirits are both respected and honoured because they are thought to bring protection and harmony just as they can also bring destruction in one's life if not respected.

The ancestors (*amadlozi*) are an important arm of the extended family structure in a traditional cultural society such as this one whereby requests are made for an optimum life and so they are often linked to blood connection (Mbatha, 2003). For example, when one is faced with misfortune in life or even bad health divine intervention is found within the person's ancestral spirit world that guards them and their family. Therefore the lack of knowledge of one's ancestral history can cause havoc when it comes to rituals and practices that pertain specifically to the person's ancestral world. As such, ancestors in indigenous ethnic groups, such as that of the isiZulu community, have major power over the children and of all decedents since they are consulted at every key stage of one's life through rituals and practices specific to the clan (Blackie, 2014).

One of the most important issues in the Zulu community seems to be the sense that one belongs and so belonging to a family (especially to a multi-generational family) is vital for families where ancestors are believed to have an important role in the family and according to Nel (2007), the only way one can become part of a family is through marriage and birth. The sense of belonging in the context does not only refer to the integration of the person or child into the family but that they are integrated into the family's ancestral world as well so they are safeguarded and recognised by the ancestors that guide and protect the family. However it is

important to keep in mind that marriage and birth, as stated by Nel (2007), are not the only passages that one can become part of a family. For instance, children and even adults can be integrated into an existing family system whether it is through adoption or child exchange processes, just as long as they are introduced or integrated into the family's ancestral world traditionally. Integration of the person into the ancestral world is done because it is believed to bring both prosperity and suffering depending on their ancestor's approval or disapproval of them and their actions; for example a man could anger his ancestors by abandoning his child and not introducing them to the ancestors (Blackie, 2014). Punishment for lack of obedience can also extend to the relatives of the guilty party's family which includes the child and so the African culture is regarded to be quite fluid.

Cultural beliefs are therefore not only important but encourage clan ownership of children for traditional belief systems which make provisions for rituals and practices to address concerns around ancestry and parental rights issues of the child (Rochat et al., 2016). So because an individual knows they belong to the Zulu clan this provides a blueprint for not only the rituals and practices that they need to follow but also their social development in life. For example, the different cultural developmental life stages for a girl (*imbeleko*, *umhlonyane*, *umemulo* and so forth). It is therefore clear that the ancestors form part of the extended family and the clan and so for one to be connected with their ancestors they must be connected to their clan and will therefore need to know their cultural and ancestral roots (Mbatha, 2003). It is because of such notions that child adoption is regarded as depriving the child of their full identity because beliefs in culture, ancestors and traditions are not only a way of life for the isiZulu speaking community but an identity.

Bloodline or blood ties

In indigenous communities such as the isiZulu speaking community blood ties and lineage are paramount as they are believed to give the person access to ancestral spirits; spirits of dead members of the family lineage or clan (Ross, 2010). The concern of not knowing the child's origins (blood parents) becomes a huge one in any indigenous black community because it is thought that moral character is linked to blood thus blood relations are regarded as construction of not only family but also of social place in the community (culturally and traditionally).

The concept of lineage also appears to be an important one for the Zulu community as children are introduced to their close-knit family from the time they are born and these close-

knit kinships are conceptualised by members of both the living and deceased descendants of the ancestral spirits (Gerrand, 1997). Removal of such a community's indigenous children means that they are excluded from forming healthy development of them as black people so black children should be raised in black families so as to maintain their identity and help build a strong black nation (Morrison, 2004). Therefore blood ties are quite important in such a community because it links the person not only to their ancestral spirits but also to rituals and ceremonies pertaining to their clan name and this can sometimes contradict with child adoption, especially in cases of child adoption and abandonment (Gerrand, 1997). Therefore formal/legal child adoption in such indigenous black South African societies is perceived as severing the child's relationship with their family of origin and clan roots (i.e. closely knit relatives) and having serious repercussions for the adopted child's lineage and well-being (Gerrand & Nathane-Taulela, 2015).

2.5 THE NATURE OF ALTERNATIVE CARE UTILISED IN THE ZULU COMMUNITY

What do we mean by alternative child care?

Alternative care can either be informal or formal and includes residential and foster care. When we talk about informal care, it refers to any private arrangement provided by the family environment of which the child is cared for on a continuous or indefinite basis by relatives or friends (also referred to as informal kinship) at the initiative of the child without being ordered by an administrative or judicial authority or a duly accredited body (Dunn & Parry-Williams, 2008; Jini & Roby, 2011; & Leinaweaver, 2014). So basically, informal alternative care is not sanctioned or governed by any authority but is conducted or agreed upon within the families involved in the arrangement (Jini & Roby, 2011).

It is within such a context that child care extends to a larger pool of relatives rather than replacing one parent with another in indigenous communities such as that of the isiZulu community and so informal care such as kinship-based fostering is believed to preserve the child's identity, thereby allowing for continued relations with their biological relatives (Leinaweaver, 2014). Whilst adoption of a child in the Western context or in the formal legal sense would involve formal transferal of the child from one home to another, in numerous indigenous communities it is not formal or permanent. Thus children in the isiZulu speaking community are thought to be both the parent's and extended family's responsibility and so it is both accepted and seen as beneficial when children live with relatives to improve their opportunities whether the parents are alive or deceased (Dunn & Parry-Williams, 2008).

There are quite a significant number of children being cared for by extended family members for numerous reasons besides death, such as migratory work, location of better schools, financial difficulties, or an illness of a parent and so at times responsibility for caring for these children is frequently left upon extended family relatives (Dunn & Parry-Williams, 2008). It is because of such family arranged care and kinship that alternative informal care is most preferred and of course because it is believed to preserve continued contact with family (which includes siblings and relatives) so as to help maintain identity (Jini & Roby, 2011). These forms of care are believed to reduce trauma and distress for both the child and the parents and provide ongoing support throughout life because children and relatives provide mutual care and support.

In recent years however, child welfare agencies have begun to take notice of the fact that the specific cultural needs of the child need to be honoured for a successful adoption and so culture planning needs to be carefully conducted by appropriate channels that are culturally competent. And so the question to probe in this study is to what extent are cultural beliefs influential in notions of child adoption in indigenous communities such as that of the isiZulu speaking community? It has been said though that cultural sensitivity has always been at the forefront of indigenous communities when it comes to child adoption and child care whereby care extends to extended family members which is referred to as kinship care and informally referred to as 'caring' for in indigenous communities (Carriere, 2010).

Understanding kinship patterns and kinship care

The basis of kinship relations is its inclusion of both the extended and multigenerational members forming part of the family and this inclusive nature in the isiZulu community is expanded to those who are not living; the ancestors (Nel, 2007). In communities such as that of the isiZulu speaking community, kinship relations dating back approximately three or more generations may live together or near one another but cooperate as a unit (Rashe, 2006). However, in Western ideologies or legal terms, if they live separately and function as separate entities they are considered as separate families even though they remain members of a single kin group. Extended family in kinship relations also includes polygamous families and therefore extended family systems emphasise blood ties whether it is marital ties, biological ties or generational ties (Rashe, 2006). Gerrand and Nathane-Taulela (2015) point out that although a family nuclear system, typical of the Western definition, may move to urban areas it remains a large part of the kinship structure where family ties extend both horizontally and vertically (i.e. to the extended family and ancestors). This then means that even though there

are diverse types of families, none is without some form of familial pattern which is referred to as kinship systems and these kinship patterns provide relatives with committed relationships with family members (Mthethwa, 2009). Furthermore the strong kinship and tribal bond suggest that adults would show a high degree of concern and care towards children, as well as toward members of their families and communities because it is assumed that a family unit provides the ideal context in which a child may develop to their full potential (Mthethwa, 2009).

Rashe (2006) states that children are thought to belong not only to their parents but also to their kin group which is evident in the practice of the child exchange approach whereby children are sent to live with extended family members for years without parents worrying about how they are being raised. Such practices of kinship in such indigenous communities can be traced either through consanguinity (blood) or affinity (marriage) and it is therefore through these lineages that the individual can be guided and taught the rules, values and practices of their cultural and traditional beliefs (Gerrand, 1997). Furthermore, Gerrand and Nathane-Taulela (2015) elucidate that these kinship connections are regarded as primary sources of social, material and general reciprocity especially in ceremonies such as that of introducing the biological child to living relatives and ancestral spirits so that the child can develop a sense of belonging and identity in the isiZulu speaking community. For those living in rural areas, according to Mthethwa (2009), there is much value placed on such communal and relational ways of living as it demonstrates *Ubuntu* or humanity.

For generations extended family members were a dominant formation of the family structure in the black South African society where secondary relatives such as the grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins lived in the same household functioning as a nuclear family and as result the adults of the extended family would assume responsibility for the household and the children (Mthethwa, 2009). It is because of these strong beliefs with regards to family formation that the isiZulu speaking community appears quite resistant to the legal adoption process as it is currently presented in South Africa because it does not seem to concur with their cultural and ancestral beliefs (Gerrand & Nathane-Taulela, 2015).

However, the South African Child Act (No 38 of 2005) continues to strive to promote family kinship care whenever it is possible to do so and places residential care as a last resort (Rochat, Mokomane & Mitchell, 2016). Kinship care merely refers to care by extended family members or close friends of the family whereby the person assumes responsibility of the child and so this type of alternative care is most likely to be accepted because of its fluidity (Delap, 2012). The term kinship care seems to have a variety of meanings in different parts of the world whereby Western society appears to refer to kin in relation to blood relatives whereas in

the African society, such as the isiZulu speaking community, kin refers not only to blood relatives but also members of the wider community, clan, or tribe (Davey, 2016). Kinship care, according to Delap (2012) can be formal or informal and the type of care utilised by the Zulu community seems to be informal in nature whereby private arrangements are made within the family system for the child to be cared for on a continuous basis by relatives or friends without being ordered by a judicial authority. Kinship care in the African community such as the Zulu community is used to refer to relationships between the family and community and therefore extends to other people within the community that may be able to provide support (Ince, 2009). In this form of kinship care, the extended family member or friend then assumes most of the parental responsibility of the child (Delap, 2012). The use of informal care in such an indigenous community is believed to strengthen and maintain kinship ties and identity of the child (Loening-Voysey & Wilson, 2001). Traditional African families, according to Davey (2016), have been utilising informal kinship networks for years mainly to serve a common interest of the family and so these kinship networks are multi-generational in nature and regarded as lineage and therefore offer a broader family structure that can offer care for the child when need be. Furthermore this form of informal care is most common in rural areas where there is minimal or limited access to government services thus making it difficult to quantify the number of people who are raising children of members of their extended family (Loening-Voysey & Wilson, 2001).

In communities such as that of the Zulu such care is not only the most acceptable form of alternative care but is mostly utilised because of this community's strong sense of collective responsibility for child-rearing (Delap, 2012). The fluidity of such an informal arrangement allows for the child to be able to move between family members for example, in situations where parents return home after long stretches of being away from home due to work (Delap, 2012). This fluidity then ensures that the child always maintains their connectivity to their biological family, cultural ties and ancestral connections. However because this type of informal care falls outside of the welfare support system and caregivers are motivated by kinship obligations, cultural and community preservation and a sense of *Ubuntu*, rather than legal obligations, these caregivers go largely unnoticed or unaccounted for in the statistics on adoption by black people in the country (Loening-Voysey & Wilson, 2001).

Informal child fosterage

Child fosterage, according to McDaniel and Zulu (1996), is the assumption of the rights and responsibilities associated with child-bearing by someone other than the biological parents and

so a child is fostered when they are required to migrate from their biological parents and live with the people who have accepted to bear the child rearing responsibilities. Not only is this popular in the African population but is largely utilised within the isiZulu speaking community for numerous reasons where we see children being sent to live elsewhere for economic, social and demographic reasons thus fostering provides an important service to parents and their children (McDaniel & Zulu, 1996). It is also important to bear in mind that the concept of fostering and foster care in the African context is quite different to the Euro-Western concept whereby foster care is not considered permanent as it is considered long-term in specific legal cases (Rochat, Mokomane, Mitchell & the Directorate, 2016). For indigenous communities such as the Zulu community, fostering (more specifically kin fostering) is more fluid in that children move between and within families for various reasons. Therefore fosterage is perceived to be a custodial function that not only strengthens family bonds but enhances the child's opportunities in life and so fosterage provide a distinct overlap of Africa's extended family system (McDaniel & Zulu, 1996). It is because of alternative forms of care such as this one that formal/legal adoption remains the most unlikely option of child care in South African black communities. It is the use of informal alternative forms of child care that have resulted in the low rate of legal child adoptions amongst this nation. With that said though, there are children who have been left with no immediate family or are destitute and vulnerable to long-term effects of governmental child care institutes (Mokomane, Rochat & the Directorate, 2011).

2.6 ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS FORMAL CHILD ADOPTION

It is quite important to understand people's attitudes as it directly influences behaviour and so when we are informed about how people feel and think (with regards to child adoption by extended family members) then we can almost anticipate how they may behave in that regard (Gerrand, 1997). Take for instance the view on child adoption; by attempting to understand people's views and understandings of this concept as it occurs in their lives then one can be better informed of that particular society's ways of life and the way in which such a concept is practiced in their community. Of course attitude alone does not constitute behaviour but knowing how it factors into behaviour will help one understand a community's decision to adopt a child informally. It is therefore important that attitudes and perceptions of people towards formal (legal) adoption be noted in this case because it is these attitudes that maintain the behaviour of informal alternative care in indigenous communities. For example, the notion that transracial and cross-cultural child adoption eradicates the child's identity and perpetuates colonial ideologies about black African people. Such attitudes and perceptions on child

adoption in the African society can at times pose concerns for potential parents about the general community's attitude towards one's decision to adopt a child who is unrelated to them because formal child adoption is rarely spoken about (Gerrand, 1997). Although child adoption is the most effective way of placing children who are destitute or orphaned it is important to explore its limitations in indigenous societies such as the Zulu community so as to better accommodate both the child and the adoptive parents (Gerrand, 1997).

2.7 AFROCENTRIC UBUNTU FRAMEWORK

The term Afrocentricity can be dated back to the times of Asante (1980) who referred to the term as an approach that holds both African people and African culture as central in any analysis of study that involves African people (Asante, 1980, 1987; Thabede, 2008; Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013). Afrocentricity seeks to understand African people as subjects of African studies from their own viewpoints on matters of their world and experiences so Africans are viewed in the context of their own worldview (Thabede, 2008; Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013). The Afrocentric worldview, according to Asante (1980; 1987) reflects life experiences, history, and traditions of African people as the centre of analysis. Afrocentricity is not just directed towards Africa or African peoples; it emphasises that all cultural centres must be respected and not impaired by colour or location thus regarding people as agents rather than 'others' on the basis of equal and respectful mutual exchange and synthesis of information (Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013). The perspective is also defined as a study of concepts, issues, behaviours, and even provides a point of reference for African people that is developed by Africans from common cultural themes of their traditions which forms or informs their reality and worldview (Ince, 2009). The Afrocentric paradigm, according to Mkabela (2005), focuses on African identity, from the perspective of the African people, thus placing them at the centre of analysis. It deals with African identity from an African perspective as it relates to location, orientation and beliefs. In so doing it places much focus on Africa as the cultural centre for African experiences and interpretation (Mkabela, 2005).

The word *Ubuntu*, according to Idoniboye-Obu and Whetho (2013), stems from the isiZulu/Nguni expression which says: *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* which directly translates as "a person is a person because of or through others". *Ubuntu*, as a concept, is rooted in the understanding that one cannot become a human being in isolation. Rather, ideal (ethical) human-hood is achieved by virtue of participation in a community of other human selves. This points to the inevitability of the interdependence between the individual and the community

(Mkhize, 2004, 2008; Nussbaum, 2003). Child-rearing and caring for children by extended family members seems to be the most natural functionality of family structure which extends also to the community therefore resulting in interconnectedness and collectivity of communities. This framework attempts to understanding indigenous communities such as the Zulu in their most humanistic approaches and perceptions of child adoption. In *Ubuntu* philosophy, the self is not described as an individual, but is described with reference to its community. According to Mugumbate and Nyanguru (2013), the word *Ubuntu* relates to connectedness of people, symbolising being human.

This connectedness is extended to the connection between the living and the living-dead or spiritual ancestors. Idoniboye-Obu and Whetho (2013) also state that *Ubuntu* is regarded as the capacity to express and reciprocate elements such as humanity, compassion and dignity in the interest of communities with mutual caring for each other. Furthermore, the philosophy of *Ubuntu* is largely embedded within the African culture as both a way of being and a code of ethics that honours dignity, develops and maintains mutual affirmation, and enhances relationships, resulting in common humanity (Nussbaum, 2003). Understanding the isiZulu speaking community's ways of life through this framework will allow for us to better understand their family structure and its extensions as it pertains to indigenous communities and thus enable a more wholistic understanding of their beliefs and cultural practices in relation to child adoption. Lefa (2005) also explains *Ubuntu* as a vindication of the understanding that one's humanity is interwoven with the humanity of others, including the community. *Ubuntu* promotes caring, compassion and respect so as to ensure a fulfilled community life (Baloyi & Makobe-Rabothata, 2012; Engelbrecht & Kasiram, 2012).

Cultural practices in the black African community, are driven by collective ideologies such as the spirit of *Ubuntu*, which has at its roots great respect for children in general and is thought to have a great impact in both the person's life and in death and so child adoption models need to adapted to be culturally appropriate with regards to non-related children (Gerrand & Nathane-Taulela, 2015). Furthermore, in the Southern African context the general term, African humanism, is referred to as *Ubuntu* amongst the isiZulu speaking community and is equated to both communal values and customs of traditional African villages or ethnic communities which can be summed up to 'collectivism' (Pietersen, 2005). Moreover, the notion of *Ubuntu* is thought to elicit behaviors such as neighbourliness, friendliness but most of all the feeling of togetherness amongst people thus creating greater cohesion in communities and societies (Pietersen, 2005).

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter covers the research methodology that was utilised for this study. It looks at the research design, data collection methods and instruments, data analysis techniques, dependability and credibility and the ethical considerations under which the study was conducted.

3.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1.1 *Research design*

The study made use of an exploratory qualitative research design. According to Joubish, Kuhurram, Ahmed, Fatima and Haider (2011), qualitative research designs involve the use of methods such as empirical case studies, introspective, personal experiences, life story interviews, historical, observational, interactional and visual text, to mention a few. Usually, the primary objective of qualitative research is to get an in-depth understanding or meaning of phenomena under investigation. Doubell (2014) indicates that exploratory research is usually used in cases where very little is known about the research topic. An exploratory design is therefore selected, as the study aims to explore the meaning of adoption for isiZulu-speaking rural communities.

When I first started this research project I wanted to do research that was authentic in terms of how it addresses the reality of people's lives in order to produce more accurate accounts of the Zulu culture's views and understandings on child adoption and so an exploratory approach was taken utilising the Afrocentric paradigm. It was hoped that the exploratory approach would help develop insight into the way of life of the isiZulu-speaking community so as to answer questions such as what are the cultural influences and barriers towards formal/legal child adoption within the isiZulu-speaking community? One of the elements that has influenced the chosen research design was the strong arguments from both the participants and the cultural experts. I was also committed to interviewing the community leader to develop a clear understanding of the concept of adoption in such a community.

3.1.2 *Sampling*

According to De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delport (2011) a sample is a subset of the population in which the researcher is interested. For the purposes of this study, non-

probability, purposive and snowball sampling were used. Purposive sampling is based entirely on the judgement of the researcher, depending on the study purposes. The researcher selects a sample from the population that is composed of elements that contain the most characteristics or typical attributes that best serve the purpose of the study (De Vos et al., 2011). The aim of utilising purposive sampling in this study was to ensure that the participants selected were uniquely positioned to provide rich, qualitative information about the phenomenon of interest. Snowball sampling is a process whereby the researcher relies on the already-identified participant to assist in the identification of other participants with similar attributes. It is used especially in cases where participants have specific characteristics and rare experiences, which make it difficult for the researcher to identify them (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2011). The above-mentioned sampling methods were appropriate for this study, as the isiZulu-speaking community who practice the concept of informal adoption do so without going through the 'proper' adoption channels, thus no formal records exist.

The researcher also relied on resources such as word of mouth, community leaders, posters and social networks such as Facebook and WhatsApp to recruit possible participants that may be interested in the study. The disadvantage of using social media is that individuals outside those social networks are not sampled. To circumvent this, notices were posted in community halls and other venues frequented by the public. Community leaders were also briefed in advance about the study, through an *imbizo* (a general meeting of the community often called by traditional leaders through word-of-mouth to discuss some important matters).

The target population for this study were individuals between ages 35-75 of the isiZulu-speaking community who are strongly rooted in traditional norms of the Zulu culture. This age group allowed the researcher to explore experiences and views on formal and informal adoption, across generations. The following categories of participants were sampled:

- I. Those who have adopted informally using African approaches (including both those who are raising an extended family's child and/or those who have assumed responsibility for them);
- II. those that have not adopted/or taken any responsibilities for an extended family member's child;
- III. the village elders (men and women);
- IV. key community leaders, cultural experts, including academics teaching isiZulu at a local university.

The sample comprised of 14 participants. In selecting the sample, the heterogeneity of the participants was taken into account. There were, 3 participants who had adopted (informally),

approximately 3 who had not adopted were also invited to share their views, while the remaining 6 were selected from among the village elders/community leaders, men and women, and local academics teaching isiZulu.

3.1.3 *Data collection methods and instruments*

The interview guide was developed by the researcher based on the literature on the topic, the research questions and objectives of the study, as well as the *ubuntu* theorising that guides this study. The instrument used in this study was then translated into isiZulu by Dr. Hlonipani Ndebele, from the language department at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, who is a professional isiZulu language specialist so as to ensure that nothing was lost in translation. The instrument utilised for this study was a semi-structured interview schedule (*appendix 2*) used to guide the interview and so having invested significant time in forming the instrument, data collection commenced.

Most participants found conducting the interviews in the community hall to be too public for them and so chose to be interviewed in a location that was more private and convenient to them. Participants were introduced to the study and given an opportunity to ask questions before they could partake in the study. Once participants had signed a consent form, guided by the Afrocentric theory, participants were interviewed in an engaging, conversational semi-structured interview about their views and understandings of child adoption within indigenous communities such as their own. Each conversation was audio recorded and after the first few interviews, the recordings were listened to by both myself and my supervisor as well as one of my supervisor's PhD students. Guidance was given on my interviewing skills and my ability to extract rich information from the participant. I was also given guidance on techniques of probing in areas that would enrich my data collection and on how to make the interviews feel more authentic; more of a conversation rather than a methodical interview.

Each interview was conducted in isiZulu (*appendix 2b*) which was the participants' native language and yet interestingly enough some interviews felt different from others because of the various locations of Dukuduku. Dukuduku has sub-areas (*izigodi*) and so the interview structure and feel were quite different according to the *izigodi* in which they were conducted because some areas had been exposed to Western concepts thus there was some use of English terminologies. The use of a semi-structured interview allowed for an in-depth discussion on the topic and the recording of the interviews ensured that no information was lost during the interview process and that the interviewer was able to better facilitate the

interview without the stress of taking detailed notes. The recording enabled better transcription and analysis post-interview.

3.1.4 *Process of gathering data and procedure*

Initial contact was made with the community leader (*induna*) to introduce myself and the study. The study was explained to both the community leader (*induna*) and his advisor (*ipoyisa le nduna*) which was then announced at a community general meeting (*imbizo*). I also put forward a request to interview the community leader at a later stage on the topic so as to hear his views which he agreed to. I then began to form a list of participants that were interested in participating in the study based solely on their shared interest on the topic of child adoption in the context of indigenous knowledge and practices of the isiZulu community.

The list of participants that I would later interview was formed based on the sample criteria of this study and included a number of people who had engaged in some form of child rearing or had raised a child of an extended family member. Interview schedules and appointments were made by the research assistant through verbal arrangements as not everyone had access to a phone or email and the research assistant lives within the community so it was much easier for her to make appointments directly. Interviews then commenced through means of semi-structured interviews (*appendix 2*).

Having introduced myself as the researcher, I then explained the study purposes and responded to questions of clarity (*appendix 1a and 1b*). The participants were then requested to sign a consent form for taking part in the study. This included the consent for the audio-recording of interviews (*appendix 1a or b*). Ideally, the interviews were held in places where it was most convenient for the participants, such as their homesteads, if privacy could be guaranteed. Otherwise, the researcher negotiated with the community leadership to secure a private room in a community hall or social premises familiar to the participants.

3.1.5 *Data analysis*

Analysis of interview transcripts, according to Mauthner and Doucet (1998), is not only confined in the moment when one analyses the interview transcripts but is an ongoing process. During the interviews I actively listened to the participants' knowledge, understanding, and experiences whilst posing questions that directed the interviewee to the intentions of the study thereby deciding on which questions to probe further. Analysis was guided by the

research question and objectives, the participants' responses and my own analytical thinking and experiences.

After data collection was complete, my supervisor and I sat down and listened to some of the audio recordings and looked at my transcriptions so as to help me develop my data analysis skills and also to provide a different view on some of the themes that I had already formulated. Data for this study was analysed using thematic analysis and a brief word count was done to verify the frequency of key words which gave a good indication of their meaningfulness. During interviews I began interpreting the meaning of the participants' responses and making note of overlapping material and that which was different. It is however important to note that little attention was paid to non-verbal, physically observable data or even information added outside of the interview.

For the purpose of this chapter, attention was given to the interview transcriptions of the audio recording as the source of data. Approximately three months were dedicated to analysing the interview transcripts using the thematic breakdown of data analysis. With this said, it is also important to keep in mind the researchers' influence in shaping the research process and the product. It was therefore important that I recognize the power dynamics whereby I now had the power of control, deciding upon certain aspects of the participants lives I chose to use in my analysis. I now held control over the interpretation process of participants' words and the decision over which extracts to use as quotations and how they are used. It is therefore vital that one keeps in mind that accounts reproduced here have been dissected and reduced thereby losing much of the complexity, subtleties and the depth of the participants' narratives.

To counteract some of these issues, participants were given an executive summary over a short feedback session so to ensure that their voices are heard and represented as they had intended. In analysing the data collected, the following steps were followed as recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006):

Phase 1: Familiarisation with the data: This included repeated reading of the data in an active manner, where meaning in the text was searched for identifying patterns.

Phase 2: Generating Initial Codes: This phase involved organising the data into codes. The codes identify specific features of the data (either semantic or latent), whereby semantics are regarded as either explicit or a representation of surface meaning, whereas codes can be understood as being interpretative and already based on previous findings. This study hoped

to utilise latent codes for themes, as it endeavoured to analyse more than just the surface meaning of data. Theory driven coding was also employed, as the study seeks to draw from indigenous belief systems to understand participants' views on adoption.

Phase 3: Searching for Themes: This phase involved sorting out the different codes into potential themes. Some codes were combined to make one theme. At this stage the researcher utilised visual representations of the data, using such tools as mind-maps, thematic maps, tables, theme piles, etc., to identify relationships between themes, therefore establishing main themes, sub-themes or deciding which themes to discard.

Phase 4: Reviewing Themes: This involved the refining of themes that were associated with all the candidates. During this phase it became clearer which themes were more relevant; those that seemed to overlap, and those that needed to be broken down. It was at this phase that external heterogeneity or internal homogeneity was used to organise the themes more accurately, or if some themes needed to be discarded, combined or broken into sub-themes.

Phase 5: Defining and Naming Themes: In this phase the researcher needed to go back and collate data to support each theme. The researcher illustrated how each theme fits in the broader story that the overall data represents, ensuring that each theme related to the research questions. The researcher clearly defined each theme, taking care that each theme can be described through the scope and content in its sentences.

Phase 6: Producing the Report: This involved the final analysis and writing up of the report. Phase six could only begin when the researcher had managed to fully work out themes, where the report involved an academic summary of the story that the data tells. The report needed to be: convincing of its validity; provide a logical, coherent, non-repetitive and appealing account of the story that the data tells and be in proof of sufficient verification of the themes. The researcher then picked vivid examples or extracts that signify the essence of the points that the data represented, where the write up provides more than just offering data - but rather an engaging analytic narrative that illustrates the story that the data represented.

3.1.6 Reliability and validity

Some people do not regard qualitative research as robust or significant due to the poor quality of some early efforts but since then qualitative studies have improved in rigor and these include areas of validity and reliability (Swinton & Mowat, 2006). Reliability and validity are

terms largely used in quantitative research but conceptualised differently in qualitative than in quantitative research. Instead of the terms reliability and validity, qualitative research encompasses terminologies such as credibility, dependability, transferability, and trustworthiness so as to ensure the quality of the study. Terms like dependability closely relates to the notion of reliability or consistency in qualitative research and so consistency of data is therefore achieved when the steps of the research are verified through examination of such items as raw data, data reduction products, and process notes (Golafshani, 2003). According to Swinton and Mowat (2006) validity refers to whether or not the final product (usually referred to as a 'model') truly portrays what it claims to portray whilst reliability refers to the extent to which the results are repeatable; so if someone else repeated the study, will they obtain the same results. Validity in qualitative studies refers to the appropriateness of the tools, process and data whilst the essence of reliability for qualitative research lies with consistency whereby a margin of variability for qualitative research is tolerated (Leung, 2015).

Swinton and Mowat (2006) talk about ensuring trustworthiness of data, data which is rich in its use of metaphor, and descriptive, and expresses deeper levels of meaning and nuance compared to everyday language which is likely to yield a trustworthy final model because the investigator has done a credible job of completely describing and understanding the topic that is being studied. Noble (2015) suggests that trustworthiness of findings can be ensured by maintaining a number of strategies which include: acknowledging personal biases that may influence the method, sample and analysis; ensuring that interpretation of data is consistent and transparent; and ensuring that different perspectives are represented. Therefore to ensure reliability in a qualitative study, examination of trustworthiness is crucial while establishing good quality studies (Golafshani, 2003).

Qualitative research also encompasses terms such as credibility and transferability. Credibility of the study in qualitative research looks at the narratives and themes generated by the participants and the researcher's ability to attain participants who will be a true representative of the phenomena being studied (Golafshani, 2003). Transferability in qualitative research then emphasises that the study is conceptually sound for that specific context and population represented rather than generating findings that can be generalised to a greater population. It was therefore vital that in order to allow for accurate identification of interesting aspects of the data ,the analysis of this study was not rushed through but instead was characterised by careful transcription and identifying codes from the data using highlighters or coloured pens, or even noting where the data is contradictory (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Validity for the study is also enhanced by the use of participants' own words to back up the themes instead of just providing them with labels; the use of the concept of member checking also enhances validity whereby certain themes were followed up on with other participants during other interviews and also with the cultural experts. Findings were also shared with all the participants (members) who were invited to check the findings and give feedback. Member checking involves the researcher showing the interpretations or findings to the participants, which increases trustworthiness of the findings and allows for greater accuracy (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007). The brief use of word counting also increased the reliability of the study whereby phrases, words and statements frequently used are noted. The interviews were conducted in isiZulu and carefully translated into English so as to ensure trustworthiness and credibility; data was carefully transcribed with the help of an efficient bilingual translator that listened to the tapes again, re-read the transcriptions over and over again so as to amend where necessary. Also notes were taken during the interview to identify common themes and additional information that was not covered by the interview questions.

According to Finlay (2006) there are constructs that need to be considered for the validity of a qualitative study: credibility; transferability; dependability; and confirmability. In terms of credibility, the participants selected in the study are believed to be a relatively good representation of the described sample which focuses on those who had adopted children, those who had not and those who merely wanted to share their views on this topic. The specific population focused mainly on informal adoption of extended family's children within an indigenous community. Therefore the study deliberately chose a specific location, race, ethnic group and language and focused purely on their views and understandings of the concept of adoption within their context. As such results are presented as they are believed to be credible hence original quotes of participants are presented along with the translated versions.

With regards to transferability, although generalisation of the study is questionable at this point, the results of the study could be said to be representative of a greater population of the isiZulu-speaking community. However it is felt that the result collected can be taken as a representation of the Mtubatuba people rather than the isiZulu-speaking population at large.

Against the construct of dependability, because the phenomenon of study was within a specific context, it is important to note that the term itself does not exist in the Zulu context and so how the participants in this context understood it may not be the same for those who have been exposed to it or those who have grown up in a much more Western influenced environment and so results may change due to the change in phenomenon contextualisation and this is due to the changing world which alternately changes one's viewpoint.

Lastly on the construct of confirmability, the study can be argued to have met its objective in terms of understanding indigenous views on child adoption and how cultural beliefs influence formal (legal) child adoption in a particular isiZulu-speaking community. Data has assisted in both validating and disregarding some of the views that exist about adoption within indigenous communities. The use of experts has further validated the views about adoption in the isiZulu community but has also illustrated that there is much more to be explored about such topics in our communities. The results have therefore been presented accurately by providing original quotes of the in-depth exploration of participant's understandings and views.

3.1.7 Ethical consideration

Ethical Approval

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The study was then approved and the ethical approval number given to the study is HSS/2222/017M. It was once the committee had granted ethical clearance that data collection commenced.

Respect for Persons: Informed Consent

All participants partaking in the study are in entitled to both respect and confidentiality. An informed consent form was to be signed by the participants. The consent form briefly outlined the nature of the study, privacy and rights of the participant during their participation in the study and throughout the research process. Participants then signed the informed consent form that included consent to audio recording (*appendix 1a or b*). Although announcement of the study was done at a community general meeting (*imbizo*), participants were directed to the research assistant if they were interested so as to maintain confidentiality. Confidentiality was also maintained when findings were published in the summary form, using pseudonyms to refer to participants. Participants were interviewed individually, at different times, to maintain confidentiality. Participants were fully informed of any potential limits to confidentiality and how confidentiality will be upheld so as to ensure the autonomy and dignity of participants (Muchinsky, Kriek & Schreuder, 2006).

Benefits

The intention of such research was to prompt further research on indigenous communities with regards to isiZulu/African concepts of child adoption so as to help bring about an

understanding of not just the communities conceptions but their ways of life, family structures and cultural perspectives. The benefit of such studies is that they open up a world of different perspectives and ideas for those outside of such communities but the most benefit is derived by those who participate because that they get to tell their own stories and view about their lives, from their understanding and experiences rather than from someone else. The research then had an ethical and moral responsibility to ensure that these views and understandings of child adoption are well presented whilst maintaining every participant's dignity, privacy, and perspectives.

Risk/harm associated with the study

To ensure that the risk of harm is never greater than that encountered in normal everyday lifestyle, participants were given pseudonyms to protect them from any discrimination and judgments. There were no personal details published in any way that will allow for participants to be recognisable to others and so confidentiality was maintained even though the participant withdrew from the study even with a signed consent form. It was very important that autonomy and respect for the participant's dignity be maintained at all times and participants were allowed to withdraw at any point of the study if they felt uncomfortable with continuing with the study and their data was not used nor were they forced into continuing with the study. Fortunately there were no withdrawals encountered and so all participants who had consented participated in the study.

How data was mitigated

Data collected from the study was presented in a codebook for analysis whereby pseudonyms were used so as to maintain participants' confidentiality and privacy. The research data will be kept in secure storage for the next five years and will ultimately be disposed of after such time has come to pass. The audio recording and transcripts will then be incinerated and shredded of any identifying information of the participant.

Dissemination of findings

Pseudonyms were used in all aspects of dissemination of the research, in order to ensure that confidentiality is upheld. The research study was presented on a hard copy written publication which will be available to UKZN students and the public. Those who have partaken in the study were given a copy of the executive summary from the study. If there is a need for data to be used by others, informed consent will be requested from the participants in order to access such data. All data was presented in summary or aggregate form, without personal identifiers.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

This chapter interprets data collected from the various participants, which includes those who have adopted informally using African approaches (including both those who are raising an extended family member's child and/or those who have assumed responsibility for them), those that have not adopted/or taken any responsibilities for an extended family member's child, the village elders (men and women), and key community leaders and cultural experts. Responses from all the participants were based on sub-questions structured as a lead-up to answer the main research questions. The researcher also formulated follow-up questions so as to guide the interviews and ensure that participants elaborated adequately on questions and stayed on track. From the answers given by the participants data was then organised so as to identify meaningful and significant patterns emerging from the data. It was noted that most of the participants at some point had taken a parental role for their extended family's child or had even assumed responsibility for the child using informal indigenous African approaches to adopting the child.

4.1 DATA PROCESSING

THEMES

I. 4.1 The meaning of "child adoption" for isiZulu-speaking people in a rural Mtubatuba community (Kuyini kona ukukhulisa ingane njengeyakho)

4.1.2 General consensus of what child adoption is

According to participants, adoption is a practice in which one extends a helping hand in terms of childrearing because of one's humanity and compassion for others. This view of adoption is based on the structural formation of family within the Zulu community whereby the notion of family extends beyond the nuclear family and blood relations. The practice is deduced to *Ubuntu* and collective caring for one other. The practice of adoption is undertaken to ensure that the child's needs are met both physiologically and culturally hence ensuring that the child's identity is not renounced in the practice.

Manana: Ayikho into embi kuthina bantu ngoba vele kwaku khona esikweni lwethu ukuthi akungabikho muntu ohluphekayo isizwe sikhona, abantu bekhona. Eeeh....Mina ngibona kulungile ukuthi umuntu athathwe akhuliswe uma kukhona isidingo...Mmm...noma ngingazi kahle ukuthi kuye kuthiweni esenzweni kodwa khona sasikhona lesenzo emandulo. Anginalo igama kahle ukuthi kuye kuthiweni.

Manana: *I see nothing wrong with raising a child that is not your own as our culture states, 'a person should not suffer or be alone in a community which they were born or raised'. I see this as a good deed if a child is taken and raised by someone else if need be. Though I do not know what the correct term for this is, it was however done during the days of our forefathers.*

Sithokozile: *Ngokuthathwa kwelungelo lokukhulisa ingane usuke umuntu ethatha ingane ngokubona isimo ehlala phansi kwaso, ebese eyayicela izohlala naye ukuze akwazi ukuyisiza njengomzali ayinekeze zonke izidingo eyizidingayo okungaba imfundo, okokugqoka nokuthi ingane ikhulele endaweni ephephile nenokunakekeleka khona.*

Sithokozile: *An adoption process is where a person requests to take in a child due to its current circumstances. They opt to have the child reside with them so they can take up full parental responsibility fulfilling needs such as food, clothing, education and a safe home and environment.*

Mr X: *Lokho ngokwesintu kuwukulula isandla noma ukusiza uma ungabe ubona ukuthi kukhona osweleyo noma isihlobo esingakwazi ukukhulisa ingane. Yilapho ke uye ucele ukuthi bakunike ingane ubakhulisele noma bona bakucele ukuthi ubakhulisele.*

Mr X: *Culturally, its lending a helping hand. It is seeing that a person is in need help, whether it be a relative or otherwise, in raising a child and helping. It may be that you offer to help take care of the child, or they approach you and ask for assistance.*

Popayi: *Ngabona ukuthi lomntwana uma ehlezi kanje angeke aye phambili noma emuva kuncono ukuthi asondele eduze kwami ngimnikeze impilo. Eeh akwazi ukukhula kahle, akhulele esandleni somuntu othole iziyalo...Ngezwa ubuhlungu ukuthi akasekho ongayinika uthando ngaphandle kwami...Akubalulekile kakhulu lokho ngoba phela noma ungamazi ukuthi uzalwa ubani, kuphela uya umthathe umkhulise.*

Popayi: *I realised that this child would not amount to much should she continue to live under these circumstances, so I saw it better to take her in to give her a chance at a better life. It hurts that there was no one else to love and care for her...It's irrelevant who the biological parents of the child are, all that matters is that you take the child in, and raise them as your own.*

4.1.3 Adoption: An Act of Ubuntu and connectedness

The general understanding or perception of adoption amongst these participants is that it is an act of caring for one another. It is through both compassion and humanity about one's situation or circumstances that such informal care is understood and practiced. Lending a helping hand in raising extended family's children is understood to be an act that reinforces ideas of connectedness and a sense of collective childrearing. The practice of child adoption for these

participants is understood to be a way of being and so compassion for the child is merely a part of being human. It solidifies the notion of interconnectedness and collective childrearing but most of all that no child should be without a family especially with such dynamic family structures of close knit indigenous communities.

Manana: *Ubuntu phela yibo ukuthi umuntu akalahlwa. Uma ubona ukuthi ei lapha kumnyama, mhlambe umawakhe wamushiya esibhedlela weqa, naye akazazi ukuthi waqhamuka kuphi. Nawo amaphoyisa akamtholi umama wakhe namanje. Ebese kuba khona ozomthatha lowo muntu. Ubuntu lobo phela umuntu akalahlwa...Ngakhoke yonke ingane ekhona emphakathini kufanele kube ngeyakho. Ungasho ukuthi hhayi angimazi, angihlanganiswe lutho naye noma uthi hhayi lona akusona isihlobo sami. Ingane ingeyomphakathi, eyethu sonke njenge sizwe.*

Manana: *Ubuntu is not giving up on a person. It is for instance, if a child was abandoned in hospital and the parents are nowhere to be found. Having someone take that child in is a concept of Ubuntu, it is being a parent to all the children in a community and not just your own.*

Sithokozile: *Isenzo lesi esiyaye sisenze thina njengabantu sigqugquzela Ubuntu ukuthi ingane uma uyizele akusiyo eyakho kodwa eyomphakathi wonke umuntu ungumzali kuyona lokho kwenza ukuthi ingane la ihamba khona ikwazi ukuhlonipha noma ubani ngoba ungumzali, kuphinde kunciphise izingane okuthiwa ezasemgwaqeni ngoba akukho ngane engahlupheka uma omakhelwane beneso lokubona ukuthi ayiphilile ayihleli kahle besebekwazi ukuyisiza ngaleyondlela...kwenza ukuthi umphakathi ubambane umphakathi ube nozwelo umphakathi ube yinto eyodwa.*

Sithokozile: *the practice of adoption for us as people encourages the act of Ubuntu and the notion that when a child is born into the community they are not only born into the child's family only but also into the community and so belongs also to the community therefore everyone is a parent to the child. This encourages and instills respect in the child for all elders, as they would their own parent. This act also serves to decrease the amount of street kids as the community will all lend a hand to those children in need. This also helps bring the community close and creates a bond of unity amongst the community members.*

Simalo: *Isihe, ukuba nesihe uhawukele omunye umuntu, mawumbona esebunzimeni uthi ake ngimkiphe ebunzimeni...Ngiyaye ngicabange ukuthi ukube kuqondene nami, nami ngabe nginosizi ngaphakathi enhliziyweni yami. Njengoba sengiyithatha ingane sengiyibheka ngifuna ukumsiza ohluphekile.*

Simalo: *Humanity, it is having compassion for others, when you see others in difficult situations and want to help them get through it. I usually put myself in their shoes and think what if it were me or how*

would it be like if it were in the same situation and that I would want someone to help me too. That is what compels to take the the child in.

Popayi: *Ukumthatha umkhululise noku mdabukela ukuthi kumele afunde...Leso sintu ngingasithatha ngokuthi yisihe ukuthi usize lowo mntwana, NgesiZulu siye sithi isihle... Lokho enganeni kuchaza ukuthi... eeh.. ngishumayela umoya wokuthi nayo uma isikhulile isikwazi ukuzimela iphinde ngelinye ilanga ikwazi ukuthatha omunye imkhulise...Eeehena...mmm. Kufanele ukwazi ukushumayela ukuphathana kahle ezinganeni, uziphe umoya wothando.*

Popayi: *Having sympathy for the child to want to take them in and educate them. Showing this sort of compassion teaches the child to relate and have the same sympathy and compassion for others who may also be in need so that they too may also help those who are in need. It is important that as a parent that you teacher children values of humanity and love for one another.*

Dixon: *Akukhathalekile ukuthi kufanele ukhulisi ingane yomhlobo wakho kuphele noma iyiphi ingane uma uzazi ukuthi unawo amandla uyayithatha leyongane uzikhulisele yona...Uma ngithi ngiyibheka ngazizwa mina ngaphakathi enhlizweni yami ngabona ukuthi lomntwana kuncono ukuthi ngizithathele yena ngizomkhulisa. Mina ngikhule nje kuthiwa umakhelwane kungaba uyamazi noma awumazi kudingeka ukuthi umsize futhi ungalindeli lutho emva kwaloko...Loku kukhombisa ukuphila.*

Dixon: *It does not matter whether the child is of a family member or not, you can help raise any child as long as you feel you can afford to do so...if I you look at the child and feel in my heart that it would be better to take the child in and raise them myself then you can take the child. Growing up I was taught to always lend a helping hand to my neighbours irrespective of whether I know them personally or not, and expect nothing in return...that shows humanity.*

4.1.4 Family structure

Family for African communities is a broad concept that encompasses both the person and the spirit. It also extends beyond blood relations whereby close friends and community members can also form part of one's family structure. It not only includes the nuclear family but also the extended family. This structural view of family differs to that of the Euro-Western conception of family.

Mr X: *Umndeni ngokwesiZulu mukhulu ngoba uzalo lonke liwumndeni. Kulandwa uzalo likagogo, nozalo likababa bonke bazohlangana babe umndeni. Kuba khona ikhaya elikhulu nala abaphumayo bayokwakha ezindaweni ezithize bayabuya beze ekhaya elikhulu. Umndeni ngesiZulu mukhulu kakhulu, awuhlukani...Umuntu uma ebona ukuthi ingane kadadewethu lena*

asikho isidingo ukuthi ngize ngiye ngoba vele umndeni. Thina umndeni asiwuhlukanisi, umndeni lo okuthiwa umndeni wangaphandle, uzalo nje umndeni. So ayikho i family okuthiwa i-immediate family yami lena, siba umndeni sonke thina...Eehena kuba ubaba awukwazi ukuthi malume kubaba wakho. Kuye kube nzima ngisho ukuthi izingane mhlambe enye izalwa u aunt enye umalume lapho zibizana ngobhuti no sisi. Kuba nzima ukuthi mzala because umndeni uwumndeni asihlukanisani.

Mr X: Zulu people's concept of family includes all relatives, it stretches as far as our grandparents relatives. There is a main family home, even though people may leave the home and have their own houses, they may always go back to the main family home. Zulu people have huge families, there is no division, there is no distant or immediate family, family is just family. Your uncle is basically your father and your cousins are your siblings. It is therefore difficult to make divisions because family is just that family.

Simalo: Usukela mina angithi ngizalwa umaMsweli mina ngiwowakwaMlambo ubaba uzalwa intombi yaseMagengeni umndeni njalo ubaba ungowakwa Mlambo kuya ngokuya umama ugo ngowakwaNdlovu umndeni njalo undawonye lowomndeni usangahlala nalapho...Umbhekele omunye...Ukuthi phela ngiwumama wazo ngigane ubaba wazo futhi ngangingeke ngingaziphathi izingane zomyeni wami esenginikeza zona ethi nazi izingane ngicela uziphathe, ngangiziphatha njengezingane zami uma ngizipha ukudla ngizipha zonke, Uma kukhona ezingakutholanga zingakutholi zonke.

Simalo: The start for me, I was born by MaMsweli and my surname is Mlambo. My father's mom is MaMgengeni and his surname is Mlambo. My great grandmothers surname is Ndlovu, they are all a part of my family and can live together...they look out for one another...Even the children that my husband fathered from other relationships are my children because I am their mother for I am married to their father. So of cause I would raise them since he gave them to me to raise and treated them as though they were my own children.

Thulani: Kungaba nzima because into eyiwubuhlobo yinto engapheli angisho njalo nje. So kuthina njengoba ngike ngachaza ukuthi uku adopter awubhali lutho. It's because uma umuntu ewumndeni noma isihlobo ebese nihlanguana somewhere, ubuhlobo abupheli lapho. Ubuhlobo bude lakuthina, obabelungu busheshe buphele eduze...Ubuhlobo buyaphela kubona ngoba isibongofana omakoti abakwenzi njengathi. Okwethu kuyalula kude, thina siye sithathe isibongo sagogo sibe umndeni.

Thulani: It would be a little difficult because family is forever; blood relations don't end or can't be terminated. As I mentioned previously there is no official documentation that is because adoption

happens between family members or relatives where family (umundeni) extend wide far. Relatives stretch long and wide, unlike in the Western community it's fairly limited. Our relatives go as far as sharing our grandparents' surname with someone else and regarded as a relative/family.

Clamentine: *Angazi kwenzeka kanjani ngane yami, angazi ngempela. Nami ike ingihluphe kabi lento ngithi eyi kunzima, uthole ukuthi umuntu uswele. Khona noma kungathiwa awuzwananga nomalume kusho ukuthi no aunt awuzwananga naye, no cousin nogogo...Bonke? Eyi kusuke kunzima kodwa izimo ezenzekalayo, eehena imizi iyabhubha. Uma kuthiwa ibhubhile kusuke kushone wena mama, baba bashone bonke. Nokuthi nje kubalulekile ukuthi izingane sizivakashise ezihlobeni. Ingane ayazi ukuthi khona komalume, ayazi ukuthi khona o- aunt, mina lapha ngihlobene kanjani.*

Clamentine: *I don't know how it happens, I really don't. It also tends to bother me, seeing people in hard times and suffering alone. Even if you don't get along with one member of your family, does it mean you didn't get along with everyone? Not the aunts, cousins, grandparents etc. that is a tough one to swallow. In some cases families die out whereby no known relatives is alive and so it's important that children know of all their relatives, where they live and how they are related to maintain family relations.*

II. 4.2 Cultural beliefs and practices influencing child adoption for people living in the rural isiZulu-speaking community

4.2.1 Historical background

The historical background of the child as described by participants here is considered important information to have when adopting. Participants consistently emphasised the importance of knowing the child's background for both the child and the adoptive parents as it may pertain to cultural and traditional practices. Background information is not only important for the child's identity but also for their wellbeing.

Clamentine: *Nje abupheli ubudlelwano nabantu bakubo futhi uyazi ukuthi ngizalwa laphayana kodwa ngihlala lana. Ayi abupheli, buhlala njalo nje. Yebo ayazi imvelaphi yakhe, ihlale imile akushintshi lutho...Ungayaphi ungazi ukuthi uphuma phi? Kufuneka wazi ukuthi ngiphuma layindlini ngiyaphi, ngiyogibela imoto. Akengeke nje ugulukudeke emotweni ungazi ukuthi isuke phi futhi iyaphi?*

Clamentine: *the fact is that blood relations don't end and so the child's relationship with their biological family doesn't end. The child always knows of their heritage/origins and so they always know of whom they were born into and yet knowing that this is my family now. It's important that the child*

knows of their origins, where they come from because that doesn't change. Yes, the child needs to know their roots, because those will never change...There's no future without a past. You need to know where you come from in order to know where you are going.

Mr X: Uma ufika nayo ekhaya kukhona usiko olwenzayo fanele phela nayo lengane yenzelwe usiko manje uzomenzela kanjani ungazi, so kuba nalezo zinqinamba...Yingakho abantu abamnyama bengazi adopt izingane zabantu abangabazi...Akengithi nje umndeni uyagcaba, awukwazi ukuthatha lengane uyigcabe ngoba awuyazi ukuthi ekabani...Uyakwazi ukubuyela eNkosini usho ukuthi ingane awusaneme ngayo ngoba isiyahlupha manje sengibongile...Uma ngabe izalwa eduzane uyakwazi ukuthi uyise ekhaya kubo.

Mr X: Usually when a new born comes home for the first time a ritual is performed welcoming it into the family. It becomes challenging to do these rituals if you don't know where the baby is from. This is why black people don't adopt children from people they don't know. For example, my family take parts in the ritual of making small incisions on the face, I can't now take that child and perform such ritual not knowing of their own traditions...You are also allowed to go back to the Chief and let them know that you're no longer happy with the behaviour of the child, you have had enough...If you know the family you can always take the child back home.

Dixon: Kubaluleke kakhulu loko ngoba imvelaphi yakho uyayazi...kwingane yomzala, angithi leyo uyayazi ukuthi ekabani futhi uma inenkinga uzogijima uye kuphi, ayihluphi kakhulu yona.

Dixon: It is very important to know your roots...if it's your relatives child, because you know where the child is from if any issues arise you know where to go, in that case its easier.

Qhamukile: Oyukubeke emqondweni wakho uye ukubeke ukuthi ey ngizoyithatha lengane izohlala kimi kodwa manje angiwazi amasiko wayo njengezinye ngingasasho le eyomndeni wami kodwa awuyeki ukuphosa isandla noma ngingayiphethe noma ingafika, ngiyinike uthando njengoba ngithanda ezami...awazi ukuthi uNkulunkulu uyokumukela ngakuphi nasemasikweni kwakuvele kusizwana kodwa nakuloya muntu ongamazi ukuthi isimo sakhe sinjani ukumukele ukuthi ngizokwenza lokhu kodwa ngeke ngifinyelele laphaya.

Qhamukile: What you may to keep in mind when you're taking in the child the concern that you don't know it's culture and traditions, especially if it's not a child of a relative, but I still lend a hand, show it love and care for it like I would my own and just give them love. You know not what the Lord will hand you and even culturally, you accepted doing something for someone in the name of helping out because traditionally lending a hand is an innate practice.

Thulani: Uzwe kuthiwa amadlozi ayiziwula noma izilima so kuyinto ekanjalo. Umuntu osuke engazi ukuthi owakabani so ugcina enga connect ndawo. Konke loko kubiza ama bad luck ngoba naye akazazi ukuthi ubheke kuphi, ubiza noma ubani. So kuba wumuntu olahleka ephila... Yes cause yonke into yakho iba clear.

Thulani: We're told that ancestors can sometimes be fools/oblivious or something like that. So if a person doesn't know where they come from they lost, they have no connection with the ancestors. That is what causes bad luck. You lose direction because you know not what which ancestors to call upon. You become a lost individual... Yes, because nothing of yours clear.

4.2.2 Ancestral connection

One of the cultural influences raised by the participants was that of ancestral connection of both the child and the adoptive family. The connection to ancestry is heavily emphasised by participants as it is an important part of the human life cycle of any isiZulu-speaking person. Ancestral connections are seen as important when adopting because they are vital for family integration, maintaining cultural practices, and forming the child's identity.

Thembanani: Kufanele ingane izazi ungabe usuyifihlela okwangempela ngoba umuntu nomuntu unesidalwa sakhe.

Thembanani: The child needs to know who they are, the truth should not be hidden because each person has their own ancestors specifically meant to guard them.

Dixon: Kubalulekile ukuthi umntwana abikwe ekhaya aziwe amadlozi...kufuneka uma ingane ifika ngisho kuthiwa akusiyo yaleyikhaya...So kufuneka ubatshela ngayo usho ukuthi lengane kusukela namhlanje eyakuleli khaya so ucela ukuthi bangayikhathazi. Ucela ukuthi bangayikhathazi konke okwenzakayo niyivikele.

Dixon: It's important to introduce the child to the ancestors...Even if the child is not yours, the child should still be introduced...It's important that you inform the ancestors about the child and let them know that from now on this child is a part of this family and that they should not give the child any trouble, instead to please protect them child.

Sithokozile: uma uwumuntu okholelwa osikweni kubanazo lezonkinganyana kodwa uma sekubikiwe ngendlela efaneleyo nazo lezonkinga azibibikho ngakho usiko akusiyo into e affectayo uma kwenziwe ngendlela

Sithokozile: *If you are a person who believes in culture and traditions you may come across a few problems, but once the ancestors have been informed the correct way, there should not be any problems. Culture does not become a problem if things are done the correct way.*

Mr X: *awukwazi ukwenza usiko okungasilo olwayo futhi nemiphumela ingase ibe mibi ekugcineni, ungathola ukugula ngoba ukhulume izinto ebekungafanele ukuthi uzikhulume phezu kwayo.*

Mr X: *You can't perform rituals for the child that doesn't belong to this family, this may end badly. You may get sick for speaking upon thing you have no right in speaking for.*

Ncenga Impilo: *Noma ingezukungena ngaphansi kwesibongo sakwaZungu kodwa azoyivikela ngoba abikelwe isegcekeni labo. Babikelwe ngalengane bayayazi, abathuki... Uzohlangabezana nokuthi lengane ayibikiwe le bayayi funa, ayibikiwe ndawo noma yena angathi uyayibika lana kodwa ngale bayayifuna ingane. Ekugcineni mhlambe izogcina isigula angithi abanye bayazibaleka izinto asindiswe umuntu uthole ukuthi ingane ize iyahamba emhlabeni. Uma isihambile emhlabeni kuthiwe uyabangwa wena bayakufuna abakini. Thatha ingane uye ngale babikelwe ebese ibuya ingane izohlala inethezeke.*

Ncenga Impilo: *Even though the child won't use the Zungu surname, the ancestors will still protect it because the child was rightfully introduced to them, so they know the child and aren't confused by it... You may also find that the ancestors of the child were not informed of the child's move to the other family child and because you have now introduced them to yours, this may cause confusion amongst the ancestors. This may lead to the child falling ill and may lead to death if ignored and then you will hear that the ancestors of both families are fighting over the child. You should take the child back home so they can inform their ancestors about that child moving to the new family, so the child can live in peace.*

Thulani: *Angeke ibe covered...So kunabantu abangazi lutho ngalowo muntu and engeke igadeke. Ngamanye amazwi animazi, anikho clear. Umbika vele ube ungekho clear and lento oyikhulumayo ayikho straight nabo abanayo i- information ngayo. Uyakhuluma nje nabo bayambona ukuthi umuntu, ukuthi kwenzakalani ngaye nabo abana clue njengoba nawe u confused. So uma u-confused nabo ba confused.*

Thulani: *The child won't be protected...If there are people (ancestors) who know nothing about the child, they will not protect it. If there is no clarity and when you introduce the child to the ancestors and you're aren't saying the right things, the ancestors see the child but are still confused by it because you yourself are confused.*

4.2.3 Last name

The adoptive child's surname is depicted as one of the cultural elements that influence formal adoption. The undisclosed surname in closed adoption is a concern for these participants as there is a huge emphasis on the value of one's surname for both tradition and identity.

Surname is believed to link one to their ancestral practices pertaining just to their surname, it also links one to others such as those of the same family but most of all it informs cultural ways of living.

Clametine: *Ngicabanga ukuthi ingane yangaphandle into engacishe ikunikeze izinkinga wukungayazi kahle isibongo sayo. Isibongo sibalulekile kakhulu kuthina maZulu. Kuyinto yokuqala esiyibukayo uma sibheka imvelaphi yakho. Kubalulekile ukuthi usazi isibongo sengane nayo futhi izazi. Isibongo sayo asisele, sibalulekile siwu 'number one'...isibongo angeke usishintshe.*

Clamentine: *I think taking in a child that isn't from your family or relatives may give you some problems because you may not know its family. For the Zulu people ones surname is very important, it's the first thing people look at is your surname when finding out about your roots. It's important that you and the child know of the child's biological surname. You cannot change the child's surname.*

Simalo: *Yebo, Khona inkinga ngoba layikhaya uma sebona ngenza lento nabo bazothuka ukuthi hawu lengane uthu sekungeyethu manje njengoba seyinquma umunwe sekwenzakalani manje.*

Simalo: *Yes, there is a problem because now the child has been introduced as one of our own, so they (ancestors) will be confused when rituals of removing the tip of the child's pinky are done here which are of the child's biological family.*

Sithokozile: *kodwa lapho ingane kweyentombazane isiganile kufuneka lapho ke yazi ukuthi imvelaphi kahle kahle ingeyakwaMkhize noma ingeyakwaMthembu ngoba wenzela lokho ukuthi ingane ingatholakali isithandana nomuntu wakwaMthembu kanti nayo eyakwaMthembu ngoba isizibiza ngoMkhize akufani nezinye izizwe makuwusibongo fana nje abanendaba ngoba bathi asizalani thina kwubuhlobo ngokosikompilo lwethu*

Sithokozile: *Once the female child is of age she needs to know where here roots are and know whether she's a Mkhize or a Mthembu to ensure that she doesn't date or fall in love with someone with the same surname as her or is of relations to her. Unlike other ethnic groups we cannot get romantically involved with someone of the same surname.*

Clamentine: Ngicabanga ukuthi yizona zinqinamba zokungazi isibongo nokuthi thina bantu sibuye sikholelwe ezintweni zesiZulu uma ingane izophathwa umkhuhlane usulokhu uya e clinic into engapheli. Umusa uyacabanga ukuthi akengithi ukushisa impepho mhlambe mekuthi eyakwa Zulu ingane ngingase ngicele naka makhelwane ka Zulu ngithi 'makhelwane ake ungisize bandla, ake uthethe nalabantu bakini ngoba bayakwazi ngiyihambise khona lapho kuleso sibongo.' Angeke phela ngikwazi ukuyithethisela ngala kumina ngaphandle mase ngenzile ngokosiko. Uyakwazi nokuyi thenga ingane ngesiZulu uyicele uyibike emadlozini ebese kuba eyalikhaya. Uma usulandele lowomgudu ayi cha ayikho inkinga kodwa inkinga enkulu iba sesibongweni. Kubalulekile ukuthi usazi isibongo sengane nayo futhi izazi.

Clamentine: I think not knowing the child's surname is one of the challenges for us Zulu people because of our cultural beliefs and so if the child fall ill and Western medication doesn't work then you fall back on what you know which is burning of incense for the child and call upon the child's ancestors to intervene. So if the adopted child is a Zungu then I can get someone of the same surname to burn the incense and speak to their ancestors as the Zungus because they know them due to the same surname. This is because I can't speak to my ancestor upon a child of aother surname unless traditionally the child has been integrated into the family's ancestral world. Also one can pay dowry for the child in the Zulu traditions so the child is integrated into the family and once the process of integration has been fulfilled duly then there's no problem but problems come only if one has not followed traditional processes and procedures. Even if this is done, it is still very important that you and the child know the child's real surname.

Manana: Yiwo phela wokuthi abanye kudingwa ukuthi basikwe abanye banqanyulwe iminwe njengabo o Ngubane kanjalo kanjalo. Uma sine sure ukuthi lengane eyakwa Ngubane sekumele yenziwe kodwa angeke lezi izingane zalayikhaya zenziwe. Kuzokwenziwa yona kuphele ngoba igazi layo elakwa Ngubane. Eehena ngoba kukhona layikho okungafani nezingane zalayikhaya futhi uma nisika ezalayikhaya angeke nimsike yena. Abalulekile phela ngoba ayimpilo yayo, ayikwazi ukuphila ngaphandle kwawo.

Manana: Some of the challenges of not knowing the child's surname are that of specific rituals such as that of face mutilation (ukugcaba) and that of cutting off the tip of the pinkie finger as in the Ngubane clan. If we are certain of the child's surname then their rituals specific to them will be maintained for that child only but not my own children. Such traditions are important because they are our ways of living and we can't survive without them.

Them bani: Engani phela izokuhlupha mhlambe umqondo awusapheleli noma igula njalo noma ivelelwa amabhadi athize. Kuloku kuthiwa isibongo, eyi isibongo sibaluleke kakhulu.

Themani: *not knowing the child's surname can bring great implications on the wellbeing of the child, where you find that the child is consistently ill or disturbed and so one's surname is important.*

4.2.4 Traditions

Traditions for these participants are not just the basis of culture or identity but they are the basis of life, a way in which one lives. Participants also place much emphasis on the importance of maintaining traditions for the adopted child. It is because of the value placed on maintaining traditions that informal adoption is preferred over formal legal adoption.

Popayi: *Mmm phela mase umthathile umntwana wamubeka la ekhaya wamukhulisa uyafana nabantwana bakho. Okusho ukuthi uyambika nase madlozini uchaze ukuthi nangu umntwana ngamthola kanjani ebese uyabacela abadala ukuthi bakuphe amandla okumkhulisa. Lowo mntwana sekufana ukuthi ngowakho ngoba konke okwenzakalayo ngaye kuye kudinga wena... Yebo uyifake phakathi emndenini wakho... Into engaba wububi ukuthi uyithathe kodwa ungayifaki emndenini wakho. Bese iyakuhlupha ngazo zonke izindlela angithi phela awuyibingaka ndawo.*

Popayi: *Once you've taken a child in and is under your care they are no different than your own child. Meaning you have to introduce them to the ancestors, and explain to them how you have come to care for the child then you can ask them to help you raise the child. That child now belongs to you because you assume all responsibility of the child... The child then becomes a member of your family... What would be detrimental is if you take in a child and don't introduce them to your ancestors and family. The child will become troublesome.*

Dixon: *Sengisho ukuthi uzohamba uyobhula noma uye kwabantu abakholwayo bakubhekele ukuthi lengane ngingayenzela ini, yiliphi isiko engingalenza, angeke ngihlangabezane nenkinga yini ngale ngane. Ukuze ngikwazi ukuthi ngihlale kahle nalengane futhi ngikwazi ukuthi ngiyibike kuleli khaya. Kuzothi uma sengikutholile ebese ngiyafika ekhaya leyongane ke ebese ngiyayigcinela usiko lelo. Ungahlaba imbuzi but ngikwazi ukuthi ngiyibike ukuthi kusukela namhlanje lengane sekungeyakuleli khaya.*

Dixon: *What I mean by this is, you will need to consult a spiritual mediums (sangoma and prophets) to find out about the child's traditions that may be specific to them, what culture should be followed for the child and also to check if there are any challenges that I may come across with in raising this child as my own. So that I can live in peace with the child without any problems so that the child can be then integrated into the family. So once I have consulted then I can go home and maintain the child's rituals. I can slaughter a goat to integrate the child into the family.*

Mr X: ikhaya uma liqiniswa, kuya hlanganiselwa wonke umuntu ohlala ngaphansi kwalolu phahla So uma kungaba kukhona okuthize asimukhipheli ngaphandle, uhleli lapha ekhaya. Uma befika abantu abadala ebusuku naye iphunga lakhe bayalazi...Uma ngabe kukhona isehle esithize ebesizofika ekhaya, uma bevikela ikhaya nayo uyavikeleka kodwa nje awukwazi ukuthi uyenzele amasiko alalikhaya ingeyona yalayikhaya, ungayigulisa nokuyigulisa loko.

Mr X: When we perform rituals to strengthen the family and the home, everyone who lives in this home is included, so if there is anything going on, we do not exclude the child because this is their home as well. When the ancestors come to visit, they acknowledge them too...If there is any form of trouble brewing for the family because the family is protected then they will be protected as well...But I cannot perform the rituals of our family for the child, because this will cause problems for them.

Clamentine: Ayi cha zibalulekile angifuni ukuqamba amanga, zibaluleke kakhulu. Noma zingasalandeleki ngendlela kodwa zibaluleke kakhulu. Yiyona ndlela esikwazi ukuxoxa kahle nezingane. Isigaba senza ukuthi ukwazi ukuhlala phansi unabe nengane nixoxe. Ake ngithi ingane isingena esikhathini, usuzohlala phansi nayo nixoxe ebese yenzelwa loko okufanele okwesintu. Nawe usuthole ithuba lokuxoxa nayo nisabalale, umyale, uchaze ukuthi sekwenzakalani empilweni yayo usho nokuthi axwaye kuphi nakuphi.

Clamentine: They are important, I won't lie. Even though we don't follow the traditional developmental stages accordingly but they are still important. Rituals and practices of rite of passage are a way of communicating properly with the children. These stages allow you to be able to sit down and have a conversation with the child. For example, if she enters into puberty, you need to sit her down and explain to her about menstruation, and then a traditional ritual done at this stage is performed. This is your chance to have the conversation about female conduct and explain what exactly is happening to her body and in her life.

Sithokozile: Abalulekile kakhulu, enza ukuthi ingane yazi kangcono ngemvelaphi yayo ukuthi uyikhulise ngalezigaba ukuze phela, ngoba phela lapha wakha ubaba wakusasa/wakha umama wakusasa uzohamba wena mama ushone ingane isale ayisazi...naye phela manje ngoba utshala ubaba wakusasa ukuze akwazi ukuthi naye adlulisele ezinganeni zakhe.

Sithokozile: Rituals of rite of passage are important; they ensure that the child knows a little better about who they are in their development as a person because you are developing tomorrows mothers and fathers of our society so that when you die they know and can teach their children.

Thulani: Usiko lunye nje...Ukusiza umuntu ongamazi kuba yinkinga uvele ungazi ukuthi uzohlanganisa kanjani kanti uma usiza umuntu omaziyo one background yakhe kulula ukumsiza ngoba uyazi ukuthi uzothola umuntu onesibongo esithile esifana nesakhe mhlambe angacishe

enzelwa lelo siko...Kodwa uma wazi isibongo sakhe uzothola umuntu ozokwenza ngendlela okwenziwa ngayo kuleso sibongo.

Thulani: *Culture will always remain just that, culture. It does not change and so when one's background is unknown it may be hard/challenging to maintain one's culture but if the person's background is known then it's easier to help because you know you will find someone of the same surname to do the ritual for the child...but is only you know their surname you will find someone who will do the tradition the right way in which the ritual is done in that surname.*

III. 4.3 Indigenous forms and practices of child adoption in a rural, isiZulu-speaking community (ukukhulisa umntwana njengowakho: Izindlela zokwenza ngokweSintu)

4.3.1 Indigenous adoption process: Consultation with izinduna (traditional leadership)

We speak a lot about government laws, regulations and policies on adoption in the study but what was clear for these participants was that the Zulu community has its own regulations and standards pertaining to the practice of adoption and its processes. Participants described in details both the process and the practice of adoption as it is practiced in the Zulu community, sharing both their experiences and views of the traditional practice of adoption.

Mr X: *EsiZulwini kuhlukile kancane ngoba esiZulwini yonke into uyenza ukhuluma neziNduna. Shuthi uma kukhona ingane oyibonile ukuthi idinga usizo noma uma kukhona asebezile kuwena bezokucela ukuthi ubasize ngokuba bakhulisele ingane ube usuya eNduneni. Ufike ubike udaba lwakho ukuthi kunengane yasemndenini abacele ukuthi izohlala kwami ukuthi ngibakhulisele yona futhi nivumelene ebese ne Nduna nayo iyavuma. EsiZulwini kuba yilo hlelo lolo ayikho into ebhaliwe, alikho i office yonke into ihlala enqondweni yeNduna futhi isuke ibazi abantu bayo isuke yazi ukuthi ingane kabani isendaweni ethize.*

Mr X: *with the Zulu community it's a little different because one has to consult the community leader (Nduna) as well when there's a child you have seen is in needs of help or the family has come to you seeking for assistance with raising their child then you have to report that to the community leader. You go there and state your case, let him know that there is a family which has asked you to take in their child and help raise it, that you and the family have agreed upon it, then the Nduna will also agree. In the Zulu community that is how initial process begins, there is no written documentation. There is no formal office, the Nduna keeps in mind everybody's stories and knows everything about its people and their whereabouts.*

Popayi: *Kufanele ngiye eNduneni. Ngibikele iNduna, umndeni wami kanye nomphakathi ukuthi sekukhona umntwana engimtholile lana...Ngaqala ngokubikela umndeni wami ngase ngiya eNduneni.*

Popayi: *I have to go to the community leader. I have to inform the community leader, my family and the whole community that I have taken in a child to raise as my own. I first informed my family, then the community leader.*

Simalo : *Kwakuvunyelwana phela ngomthetho wesiZulu naye athi cha kulungile ngiyakupha lengane ninikana ngomthetho hhayi njengamanje okubuye kujikelwane...Umthetho wesiZulu wayemnika nje umuntu ingane ethi ngoba awunangane nansi ingane ngiyakupha.*

Simalo: *There were agreements made in accordance to the Zulu culture, the parents of the child would agree to giving you their child and the exchange would happen accordingly, not like today where people change their minds... Within traditional practices of the Zulu traditions, one would give you a child to raise as your own merely because you didn't have your own.*

Sithokozile: *Ngokwesintu uma uthatha ingane ukhuluma nabazali bayo nivumelane ukuthi siyavuma uyithathe ingane ukuthi ihlale nawe yonke into uyenzele ngakuwe njengoba usucelile, akubi into enzima akufani nokwaseNtshonalanga okufuneka kubonakale iphakethe lakho ukuthi usebenza kanjani, umuzi ohla kuwo unjani akufani kanjalo kithi nje uma ukhulume nomndeni abadala bakulowo muzi bakuvuma ingane uyakwazi ukuyithola*

Sithokozile: *Traditionally if you want to take a child in, it is with agreeance with the child's parents, that you will assume all responsibility for the child as you had asked for it. It is not like in Western societies where you are evaluated, where they look at where you work, how much you earn and what your home looks like, it's not like that with us, we merely talk to an elder of the family and if they agree, you can take the child.*

Qhamukile: *Ukuthatha ingane yomndeni kuyikho ukuthi kusuke mina ngicele sihlngane nomndeni walayikhaya sikhulume ukuthi hhayi mina ngizoyithatha ingane ngizoyigcina.*

Qhamukile: *Taking a child of the family is merely my asking to have a family meeting and we speak about me wanting to take the child to raise.*

4.3.2 Consultation with affected families, the community and the ancestors

Participants spoke at length about the consultation within and between the families involved. This is not limited to just the adoptive parents and the biological parents; it includes both the extended family and the community at large. Moreover, it also includes the ancestors. This

reinforces the notion of family being inclusive of extended members of the family and the ancestral world.

Mr X: *So ke kulelo hlelo kuba umndeni ohlanganayo kwesinye isikhathi awuyi naseNduneni ngoba eka aunt uhlala endaweni ethize. Into evame ukuyelwa eNduneni ingane yakwesinye isibongo...Emndenini kuba sengathi uvakashile usibani bani noma usehlala khona kwamalume wakhe, asikuthathi njengokuthi kube official akubikwa ngisho ukubikwa. Okubikwayo kuba ingane yangaphandle ozoyihlalisa nawe. Kuba into eyenzeka emndenini ukuthi usibani bani usehlala nobani...Kuye kwenzeke ukuthi kuhlalwa phansi mhlawumbe abazali bobabili balahlekile, kuhlalwe phansi emndenini kuvunyelwane ukuthi ayi usibani bani mhlambe uma zimbili zintathu uzothatha noma usibani bani athathe naye akhulisi kube kanjalo ke.*

Mr X: *The family usually gets together to discuss it and sometimes you don't even go to the community leader because the child is of a relative who lives in a different area. What usually requires the community leader to be present is if the child is not of family... If it is family, it's as if the child is visiting or that they are now living with their uncle, it doesn't need to be official nor does the child needs to be integrated into the family. You only inform the community leader if the child is not a family member but generally the raising of a relative's child is discussed within the family. Sometimes it happens that both parents of the child are no longer alive and so the family sits together to discuss who takes the children, whether one person takes them all, or they will be separated.*

Simalo: *nje ngibona abanye banabantwana mina anginabo abantwana yingakho sengicela ngithi ake ningisize ningiphe ingane ngoba anginayo useyanika ke lomuntu kusho ukuthi uyangisiza lapho uyangisiza kuleyondlela enjalo ngoba ngihluphekile anginamtwana mina bese engisiza ke anginike lengane...Siyabika ukuthi ihlezi kusibabani noma kuwo umndeni niyibheke ningayikhinyabezi nami uma isifika ngapha kimi sengizoshisa impepho ngalengane ehlezi layikhaya ingane kamzala ningethuki nibona ingane eningayazi.*

Simalo: *I see that everyone has children and I don't, that is why I asked that they help me out and give me a child because I don't have one. Someone would then give me one of their own, in that way, they are helping me since I don't have any of my own...The child's family then inform their ancestors that the child is now going to be raised by me and I to do the same whereby I inform my ancestors of the child so they too will not be weary of the child.*

Sithokozile: *Uma ingane uyithatha kuya ngesivumelwano enisuke nivumelene ngaso sokuthi lengane bayayithatha bayinika wena permanent kwesinye isikhathi ikhuliswa umuntu omdala ozibonelayo nje naye ukuthi uzofa ayishiye yodwa uyakwazike ukukunikeza yona permanent ngaleyondlela kwenziwe ngosikolwesintu lapho ke kuyaye kudingeke khona nofakazi*

abangahlobene nezingane futhi abangahlangene nazo ukuthi kwenziweke lokho nabo bazi ukuthi ingane lomuntu esizimnikeza yona sekuzoba eyakhe ihlelelwe ingane ifakwe ngaphansi kwezinto zami zonke enginazo ifane nezingane zami zomndeni, Nami ngibize owami umndeni ngibize izingane zami ngizitshela ukuthi lona usefana nobhuti wenu /nodadewenu.

Sithokozile: *When you take a child to raise as your own, agreement are made between the two family on whether the child is being taken on a permanent basis or not. In some cases the child is being raised by and elderly who is now unable to raise the child because of old age, they too can give you the child to raise as your own because they can't physically care for a child anymore. The traditional way of the practice of adoption requires that there be a witness who are not related to both families so that the family now that the elderly women is giving the children to you. So that preparations of the child's move can commence and be integrated into the family properly so that I can also inform my children and family as well to inform them that this child is now your brother or sister.*

Thulani: *Umphakathi wawudlala indima enkulu kabi ekukhuliseni izingane kudala and ingane kwakuba eyomphakathi. Wawungeke ubone izingane eziningi kangaka emgwaqeni ngoba nomphakathi wawudlala indima ekukhuliseni.*

Thulani: *The community would play a huge role in raising a child; the child would be a child of the community. You would have never seen so many children on the streets because the community used to play a huge role in raising the children.*

4.3.3 Practice of the concept: Retaining the child's family and clan identity

Participants' understandings of child adoption is in their practice of the concept, a practice that is informal in terms of the Western legal laws but is very much culturally and traditionally encompassing. The perception of adoption as it is practiced is not regarded as legal/formal adoption but the practice of taking in a child to raise as your own and assume all responsibility for the child exists. The practice is understood to be transparent, of compassion, and does not relinquish identity nor does it disconnect the child from their family connections and cultural practices.

Thulani: *No lokhuyana kunzinyana uku adopter because esiZulwini angithi omunye ukhonza i culture, so ngokwe culture asi adopt. Kucishe kube yinhlamba uma uthi 'adoption'. Isikhathi esiningi uthola ukuthi umakoti akazali abe eseya- adopter, kuba yinhlambanyana ngoba abantu bathi inyumba what, what. Usu adopter nge reason, usene reason on why e- adopter. Whereas uku adopter akusiyo into... eeh uma umuntu ehleli nengane akangasho ukuthi u adoptile akathi uyasiza. Kuba into enjalo nje uthatha ingane ngoba uthi uyasiza hhayi ngoba u- adoptile. Uma*

kufika umuntu engibuza ukuthi ngi adoptile na, ngingathi cha ngisiza abazukulu ayi ngoba ngi adoptile. EsiZulwini akukho ukuthi u adoptile or something ebhalwa phansi.

Thulani: *It's a little difficult to adopt as a Zulu person as we are cultural people, and culturally there's no such thing as adoption. The term 'adoption' may be deemed as somewhat of an insult. On most occasions when a wife can not have her own children she considers adoption, this is where people may insult her, calling her barren. So now there's a reason to adopt. Adoption is not merely having a person stay with a child, that person shouldn't use the term adoption, they should say they are helping. That's all it is, it is taking in a child in need in order to help them, it's not that you've adopted the child. If I were asked if I have adopted the children, I'd answer no I'm merely helping out my grandchildren. In the Zulu culture there is no adoption or any documentation of such.*

Qhamukile: *into eyayenziwa ekudaleni yayisuka ingane yomunye ngicele ingane ngoba mina njengoba ngihleli kanje ngicele ingane kadadewethu ukuthi izongigada kodwa ngiyiphathe njengengane yami.*

Qhamukile: *What use to happen in the past is that one would ask someone for their child, I for instance, asked my sister for her child to come stay with me so they can look after me, but I treat the child like they are my own.*

Mr X: *Ngokwesintu uma uthathe ingane yomuntu uyayikhulisa njengezingane zonke, uyithatha njenge ngane yakho. Kube sekuba wukuthi kuhlukene esivumelwaneni, uma isivumelwane sithi muthathe abe ngowakho. Then umthatha njengowakho ngisho esegana umganise noma ngabe kwenzakalani ngisho angafa ukwazi ukumgcwaba. Uma ke ingane uyicelelwe ukuthi sicela ukuthi usikhulisele yena then uma esefika kuleso stage sokuthi ukhulile uyakwazi ukuzimela then kuba uyena umntwana owenza i decision ukuthi ucela ukubuyela ekhaya noma mhlambe useyasebenza usefuna ukulanda uMama wakhe odadewabo aphile nabo. Kuba isivumelwano lesa esenziwayo. Uma mhlambe kuyintombazane nayo ibuyela ekhaya kodwa mhlazane kwafika isikhathi sokuthi mhlambe iyagana, njengomzali wena usubonga ukuthi ungikhulisele kahle ingane yami manje isiyagana. Abanye baye bathathe noma inkomo eyodwa elobolweni bayinikeze lo okade ekhulisa ingane bathi naku esibonga ngako usibanibani useyagana manje, usikhulisele kahle yena...Uma umntwana ekhula noma kukhona okuthize ekufanele enzelwe kona uyakwazi ukuya ekhaya eyokwenzelwa kona, uyakwazi futhi ukuvakasha ngezikhathi ezithile abone abafowabo nodadewabo aphinde abuyele la akhuliswa khona.*

Mr X: *Culturally, if you take in someone else's child, you raise it as one of your own. But it differs according to the agreement one has made with the child's biological parents. If the agreement is that you are completely responsible for the child then you take charge of all important aspects of the child's*

life such as marriage and even in death. On the other hand, some may agree to raise the child to the point where the child can make their own decisions and are independent. These are agreements made between both parties. If for instance you were raising a girl, and she chooses to go back home, then later on gets married, it's at this point that the family finds a way to show their gratitude. Some families would share a portion of the lobola to the adopted parents to show gratitude...When raising a child there comes a time when specific rituals are needed, they are welcome to do so at the child's home, the child is also welcome to go home to visit and build a bond with their siblings.

Sithokozile: Kwakuthiwa ingane uyayithatha izohlala nawe uyikhulise lokho kwakwenzeka futhi mhlawumpe nginawo amandla okuthi ngikwazi ukuyikhulisa ingane kodwa anginayo inzalo mhlawumpe ngihambe ngiyoyicela ingane, ungayicela ingane noma mhlawumpe abantu babegana ngababili/ngabathathu emakhaya mhlawumpe kuthathwe ingane kamnakwenu kuthiwe lengane ekasibanibani ingane imazi umama wayo kuthiwe siyinika wena ke ngoba awumtholanga umntwana ahlale nalengane azikhulisele yona ngendlela ayikhulisa ngayo ize ifike lapho ifika khona kungekho umuntu okuthiwa akazele. Kungekho umuntu okuthiwa akazele. Lokho kwakusiza kakhulu umphakathi noma athathe ingane kamfowabo ngoba engenaye umntwana yena ahlale nayo lengane ayikhulise ayenzele yonke into, bekuyinto ekhona leyo eyenzakalayo.

Sithokozile: it was known that one can take in a child to raise as their own and it happened in our society. For example, if I have the means to raise a child but could not have my own children, it is then that I may ask for a child maybe those who may have quite a lot of children or ask your spouse's partners who have father a child with him or even someone you have no family or biological ties with. The child would know their biological mother but be given to you to raise as your because you have no children and you would then raise the child as your own in your own way and so they would be no one who would be referred to as barren. This helped the community a lot, you could even take your brother's child and assume all responsibility for the child and raise them as your own. This has been a long standing practice that happens.

Dixon: Ayi ukuthi uyiphathe kabi, kufuneka uyiphathe kahle njengane yakho. Ubuhlungu obuziwa ingane nawe kufuneka ukuthi ukuthatha ukulethe ngakuwe...Njengoba lona ubezazi izihlobo zakhe akuzange kube nzima ngoba ngibone ukuthi uma ngiba nezinkinga ngizomthatha umntwana ngiye naye le komenzela isiko labo ebese ngibuya naye futhi ngizohlala naye.

Dixon: One shouldn't ill-treat the child you must treat the child like one of your own. You should always try to understand the child's pain, take that pain and make it your own...In the case of the child that I am raising, it's not difficult because they know their relatives and so when the child needs any

form of traditional rituals, I can always take them home to get those rituals performed and bring them back with me again.

Simalo: *Ngiyaye ngicabange ukuthi ukube kuqondene nami, nami ngabe nginosizi ngaphakathi enhliziyweni yami. Njengoba sengiyithatha ingane sengiyibheka ngifuna ukumsiza ohluphekile...Kuyinkinga njenganamanje kodwa kuqala wayiphatha nje ngisho ingane yomuntu phaqa ubuyibheka uma ungenangane ungakaze ube nangane wawuyicela ingane yomuntu izongena kuwe ibe ingane yakho kodwa ungayizali kuze kuthi uma ushona kube iyona ezogcina amafa akho mawunamafa ithathe konke okwakho...angithi mina ngizocela ingane kumakhelwane umakhelwane lengane avume nayo uyangisiza ngoba angizele anginabantwana uyangisiza ngalengane ungiduduza inhliziyo yami njengoba ngingenabantwana*

Simalo: *I usually think what if it was me? I would also have a heavy heart. I decide to look after a child as my way of lending a helping hand...It's harder now but in the past one would merely hold someones child, and if you don't have one of your own or aren't able to have one of your own, would form a bond with the child and a parent-child relationship is formed...I'd ask for my neighbours child, she would agree to it thus helping me fill the void of not having my own children.*

4.3.4 Legal recognition of cultural laws: Imithetho yesiZulu

For these participants there are standard ways of doing things and adoption is no exception even in its informal practices as described by Western ideologies. Participants made some valuable points on the limitations imposed by traditional "laws" of Western legal systems. They also spoke of the loss of their cultural ways as people become more modernised but more importantly how Western laws and ideologies have been imposed on black people and their way of life.

Clamentine: *Ngenxa yokusabela ukuboshwa uzoyithatha uyise emaphoyiseni uyobika ukuze phela kwazeke kungabe sekuthiwa untshontshe ingane...Sesithathe kakhulu okwase Ntshonalanga kakhulu. Sewuvele ungabe usazi ukuthi into ongayithini...kuya kuphele nje Ubuntu angazi ukuthi yinto ongayithini.*

Clamentine: *Out of fear of being arrested, you would take it to the police station to report it so you are not accused of stealing the child...We have adopted the Western culture abit too much. We now tend to be confused as to how to approach this practice...The concept of ubuntu is dying and this is concerning.*

Manana: *Kuyadingakala ukuthi kuyiwe eziNduneni, emaKhosini noma ezinkantolo. Manje awukwazi ukugcina umuntu ongaqondile ungazange wayithinta iNduna. iNduna would be held accountable one day...Abanye basakwenza abanye abasavamile ukukwenza. Bavele abanye*

bakubuyisele ngale esilungwini baye emaphoyiseni abanye kuma social worker kodwa basaya e Nduneni uma kwenzeke isigameko esinjalo emphakathini. Basakwenza abantu kodwa ke sekubukeka kwehla, akusafani nakuqale. Abantu sebesuke ba Western kakhulu izinto sebezenza nje ngenkani, ngaloyo ndlela ethokozisa yena umuntu.

Manana: *It's necessary to go see the community leaders, the chiefs or the court. You cannot stay with a person who doesn't 'belong' there without consulting the community leader first. The community leader would be held accountable one day...Some still do it, some don't. Some choose to go the Western route and go report to the police, others to social workers but there are still those that still go to the community leader if unforeseen circumstances happen in the community it will be the community leader that will have to answer to that. People still do it, but not as much as it was done before. People have become much Westernised and do things forcefully, which ever way that best suits them.*

Mr X: *Singabantu singama Afrika thina isilungu siqhamuke nje sasesifika sifuna ukugubazela konke kodwa kukhona loku kokuthi singabantu izinto sizenza ngendlela yesintu sethu... Siphila esikhathini sesilungu yonke into isiyenziwa nge computer so akusekho ukubalekela okwesilungu manje nokwesiZulu sekuhamba kuhambe kufike kuzoxhuma lapha esilungwini. Ngenxa yokuthi imithetho, akengithi kukhona okwenzakalayo enganeni sekufanele kubizwe amaphoyisa kutholakale ukuthi ubayena lona, uhlala kuphi, kukhona yini okunigunyaza ukuthi nihlale naye. So singazitholi thina sesiphendula imibuzo yokuthi lo ufunani lona engeyena owalayikhaya kuyinto ezifana nalezo eziphoqa ukuthi uma ungabe uthatha umntwana kube okhona okuthize either ama affidavits or isivumelwane sokuthi nangu umntwana uza ngapha manje.*

Mr X: *We are ethnic people, Westernism arrived and took over, but there is still that, that we are black people and we do things according to our culture...We live in an era of technology where everything is computerised, there is no longer any separation between Western and what is Zulu, because everything has to end up documented, because of the law. For example, if something has to happen to the child and the police have to get involved, they will want details of the child and documents stating that you are legally allowed to have the child with you. So you may end up having to answer as why this child stays with you, it is situations like this that force you to have some form of documentation or paperwork that the child now belongs to you.*

Dixon: *Cha angiyanga ngoba ngazi ukuthi ingane ngiyithathe ngendlela, angiyintshontshanga mhlambe. Sivumelene ukuthi banginikeza ingane ngezi nhliziyo zabo ezimhlophe ezivulelekile. Loko ngingakwenza uma kungathiwa sikhona isidingo, uma ngibona ukuthi lomntwana kudingeka ukuthi kuhanjwe lomgudu.*

Dixon: *No, I didn't, because I know I took the child the right way. I did not steal it. We had an agreement that they were giving me their child with pure hearts. I would do that if there was a need, if I feel it would be in the child's best interest.*

Thulani: *So isilungu lesi esimoshayo. Kungathi isilungu sichitha isiZulu. Eehena yonke into yesiZulu kungathi iyasichitha... Yaa ikhona loko okusihlula kakhulu because indlela eyenza ngaso isilungu sixhosha isiZulu. IsiZulu nesilungu akufani kuyaphikisana.*

Thulani: *Westernism ruined everything. It is as if Westernism is putting an end to culture. Yes, it seems as if it is putting an end to culture... That's the hard part, because the Western procedures tend to sideline culture. Zulu culture and Westernism is not the same thing, they differ.*

4 4.4 Barriers, attitudes and perceptions towards formal (legalistic) and informal child adoption in a rural community in KwaZulu-Natal

4.4.1 Behavioural and emotional challenges relating to ancestral beliefs

Participants reported on a number of challenges that they have faced personally whilst others resported on possible challenges of adopting a child through the formal system, in other words a child of unknown origins. Participants mentioned both emotional and behavioural challenges that can come with being unable to integrate the child into the adoptive family's ancestral world and also failing to maintain the adopted child's traditonal practices as they are done in their family.

Dixon: *Kukhona ukuthi uma ungayibikanga ingane kuba khona loko kokuthi ingaphili kahle ngokomqondo. Uthi ukhuluma naye mhlambe angezwa, mhlambe uthi ukhuluma naye kube khona ukukhohlwa nje izinto ezinjengalezo. Manje kuyadinga ukuthi abikwe umntwana, aziwe layikhaya kungabikho ukusangana.*

Dixon: *Sometimes when you have not introduced the child to your ancestors, the child may become sick. The child may be deaf or forgetful. So it is important that you introduce the child to your ancestors to avoid all of this.*

Simalo: *Ngingayikude nje nangu owami owomfana akusiyena owala emndenini, sengizwa manje nje ukuthi bayasika sekuthi noma makukhona engingakutholi kahle ngicabange ukuthi ingane yami ayizange yasika cishe yikho lokhu yenze nje...manje leyonto iyabulala ehhe iyabulala leyonto kuyagcatshwa kubo kwakhe...khona ingane engatholi abantwana icabanga ukumthenga umntwana ngathi mntanami uzomthenga umntwana uzokunikeza umuntu angakutsheni ukuthi lomntwana ukuthi kwenziwa kanjani uzokuhlupha umntwana usumthengile*

wena usujabule besekuvele izinto eziningi engisho ukuthi kuyayekubebuhlungu kuleyondawana noma umntwana umthanda kodwa masekuvela izimpawu ezimbi kubuye futhi kubebuhlungu.

Simalo: *I have an adopted son; he's not from a relative. I just recently found out that his biological family does the ritual of face mutilation, so now when there's something I'm not happy with that he does, I'm going to think it's because he never got the face incisions ritual done... Things like this really do cause the child harm. There's a lady who can't have children and is considering adopting. I said to her, you'll adopt, receive a child and not know what his family's rituals are. You'll be happy and excited that you have a child now, to find out that there are a lot of things that this child needs traditionally only when things are not going right.*

Thulani: *Okay ngiyayibona, iyenzeka kukhona ukuthi ingane yenze izinto ezi negative. This is because i- background yayo ayiyazi, uthola ukuthi kukhona izinto ekufanele zenzeke kuyona kodwa zingenzeki. It's because i-background yayo awuyazi nokuthi isibongo sayo sithini... omunye agcine esentshontsha ekhaya because izinto ekufanele zenzeke azenzeki so yena u actor negative ngaso sonke isikhathi. Izinto azihambisani kahle... Noma kungathiwa uyagula awazi ukuthi uzomenzelani, so wenza ngeyakho indlela yakho mhlambe engamukelekile kuyena. Noma kungathiwa yena uyayamukela mhlambe laba abamphethe angeke bayamukele. Ayimusizi ndawo ngamanye amazwi wenza into ephela emoyeni. Wena usuke uthi umsizile kodwa kunga connect kuma ancestors akhe, kuba yinto e half way.*

Thulani: *I've seen it happen, sometimes the child will do something negative. This happens because the child does not know their background, you find out that there are certain traditional things that have not done for the child. That is because you also don't know the child's background or even their surname... Things just aren't going well... Even when the child falls ill, you don't know what rituals to do to help them, so you perform your own ritual which doesn't work, because you're calling upon ancestors that do not know the child.*

Sithokozile: *Iba ingane engaqhubekeli phambili nasesikoleni kungahambi kahle kungabi engathi ingoba idelela kodwa kungaziwa ukuthi kwenziwa yini. Okunye ingane iphenduke ibe umdlwembe ishintshe nje ithathe izinto iyozidayisa.*

Sithokozile: *the child finds it hard to progress even at school and things just don't go well. It's not because the child is intentionally self-sabotaging themselves but no one has any idea why the child is struggling. In other cases the child just changes and begin to steal things in the house and sell them.*

Popayi: *Kukhona phela ukuthi ingane ingezwa, mhlawumbe igule njalo, mhlawumbe kungafundeki yabona izinto ezinjalo njena... Ngakhuthazwa wukuthi ngifuna ngelinye ilanga kube khona amagalelo engawenza emphakathini ngokusiza abantwana...*

Popayi: *Sometimes the child misbehaves, or is ill all the time or doesn't do well at school, things like that...but I was compelled to raise the child because one day I will look back and say that I have contributed to my community by raising the community's children.*

4.4.2 Demanding and tiresome rules and regulations attached to the process of formal adoption

Participants reported the formal adoption process to be tiring, intrusive and most of all founded on Western ideologies of family functioning. Participants found the rules and regulations of the adoption process to be demanding of a specific way of living that differs to that of theirs as one of the barriers to formal adoption.

Clamentine: *Iinto esuke ibe yinkinga kakhulu kulento yoku adopter ngokwesilungu wukuthi kunemithetho eminingi. Ake ngilinganise njengokuthi unekhaya manje wena ujwayele ukuthi kune kamero lamantombazane kanye nekamero labafana manje ngizwa lapha esilungwini kuthiwa ingane kufanele ibe nekamero layo yodwa nombhede wayo. Okuchaza ukuthi ziningi kakhulu izindlela zokulungiselela manje uyilungiselela kakhulu kuze kudlula kwezakho. Lezi ezakho ziya share i double bed ekamelweni lazo mhlambe futhi kube i bunk bed. Kanti lona kufanele kube khona izinto i social worker ezizozibona uma lifikile kuchazwe ukuthi loku okukabani. Kanti wena ujwayele ukuthenga i Colgate toothpaste enkulu ubeke lana ebese uhlukanisa izixhubho kuphele. Manje lona udinga izinto eziningi zakhe yedwa ngoba kuyabuzwa ukuthi kuphi okuthize kwakhe kanti wena layikhaya ujwayele uku share, siyasebenzisana. Uma ngase bathambise kancane imithetho ngoba yiko okudala ukuthi izingane zinga adophwa.*

Clamentine: *What tends to be the problem with adopting the Western way is that there are a lot of laws that go along with it. For example, in your home you have two bedroom, one for the girls the other for boys. But now law requires that the child should have its own room with its own bed, privacy. Meaning there are numerous things required to prep for having a child which then goes beyond what you do for your own children. Your children might be sharing a double bed in their room, but now this child will need specific things which the social worker will be checking for. Law causes division between the children because of the special requirements of the adopted child. I think if the law was little lenient more children would be adopted.*

Sithokozile: *Akukho njalo, ingane asiyithathi lezi ezihamba ziyo adophwa ngesizathu sokuthi izinto ezizodingeka kimi njengokuthi mina mangizihlalela la emakhaya nje, angizukwazi uku qualifier kuzo, ukuthi kufuneka ngihole imali engaka, ngibe umuntu osesimweni esinje ekubeni nginawo amandla nginayo indlela yokuthi ngingayikhulisa lengane kahle kodwa ngalesosizathu*

nezinto ezizofunwa ama social worker ukuthi sizithole anginazo yingakho ken je abantu bengekhobengenalo ufuqufuqu icuriosity into enjalo yokuthi bahamba beyofuna leyonto.

Sithokozile: *Its not like that, we choose to not to adopt formally because there is a lot asked of us, like for instance, I would not qualify for adoption because I live in the rural area, they will want to know how much I earn. I may be able to take care of the child, but because I don't meet their requirements and that I may not have everything the social worker may want, I won't be able to adopt. That is why people have no interest.*

Thulani: *Yes kunemigomo nemibandela nokulandelelwa okuningi. Njengoba nje ngihleli nabazukulu angilandelwa muntu ngi feeler at home, ngenza noma yini. Uma ingane uyi adoptile iyalandelwa kunemigomo nemibandela, abantu ke bayayibalekela into ekanjalo.*

Thulani: *Yes, there are too many rules and regulations. Right now I live with my grandchildren, no one follows up on me, and I feel at home and can do as I please. If you adopt a child, you are checked up on at all the times, there are laws to follow, and that is what people run away from formal adoption.*

Popayi: *Ngaqala ngokubikela umndeni wami ngase ngiya eNduneni...Angiyithandanga indlela yasemthethwenini...Ngabona ukuthi kuzokwenza ukuthi ngingakwazi ukukhulisa lezingane, ngiphelelwe uthando...Esilungwini nje uma u adopter kunemigomo nemibandela kufanele ukuthi uqaphele ukuthi wenza ngendlela yini.*

Popayi: *I first told my family then wet to the community leader...I didn't like going the lawful route... I saw that they weren't going to allow me to raise the children. In the Western community adoption has a long list of regulations, you must be cautious of how you do things.*

Them bani: *Kubalulekile phela kwabanye mhlambe kuthiwa hamba uyokwenza ama affidavits, angazi ke mina lapho. Ngiye ngibone ukuthi yiyo imithetho emisha, umthetho vele. Thina sikhulele phansi kwemithetho ukuthi isiZulu sithi...Yebo thina singamaZulu asiyazi lento. Sekugijinywa ngokwesilungu manje.*

Them bani: *It's important for others to have some form of paper work like an affidavit. I think it's the new rules. We grew up under cultural rules which also had its own procedures...yes, we are Zulus and so Western laws are foreign to us, we don't understand running around.*

4.4.3 Communal interference and breaches

Participants reported on informal adoption or use of indigenous African systems bearing a number of challenges but mostly that of communal interference. The concern for the level of involvement of the community in one's life was one of the major concerns for participants,

implying that at times members of the community will cross boundaries when it comes to the adopted child. Participants were overly concerned with members of the community informing the child that they are adopted when the adoptive parents have yet to inform the child. Others state that at times community members will cause a rift between the adopted child and the adoptive parent by pointing out parenting differences to the child between all the children.

Clamentine: *Abantu vele bahlezi beneso abaliphonsayo futhi bafuna loko okuyi cashazane, okuhle abandaba nako. So uma ngithenga u yellow, kuba u-yellow kubo bonke noma kuwu red kuzoba uwona kubo bonke.*

Clamentine: *People will always have something to say and will always see and the negative. So I get all the children the same things right to the colour.*

Simalo: *Kusemqoka phela ngoba iyezwa ngabantu ukuthi wena ungowasekuthini noma nje izwe umama wakho wena umasibanibani manje iyaye ifise ukuthi uma ephila imbone uqobo noqobo uma ingamazi imazi ngoba manje isingaze idlule emhlabeni ngoba wena ungafuni ukuyazisa leyonto iyokuvimba... kanti kumele ukuthi uma isicela ngiyikhombise kodwa ngiyitshela ukuthi wena usungowami kodwa ke nangu umama wakho imubone ingane.*

Simalo: *It's important because the child will hear it from other people who their real family is and may have the desire to meet them if the child does not know them. If it comes to that where the child wants to meet their family, I will take them to their parents because its important that the child knows of them but explain to the child that they are my child now.*

Sithokizile: *Ngokwesikhathi sakudala babungebuningi ububi kodwa ngesikhathi samanje kuyenzeka ingane ikhule ikhule omakhelwane besebeyayitshela ukuthi wena kawuzalwa lapha mhlawumbe uyithathe incane ingakahlakaniphi bayitshela wena awuzalwa lapho unekhaya lakini wena mhlawumbe uyayithuma noma uyayithethisa nje kukhona iphutha elenzile sebethi hhayi ingoba besebeyifaka umoya sekuyagcina uzozwa kuthiwa istepchild sibulale ubaba walapha or umama walaphayana noma udadewabo lo oyis stepchild yigakho nje uzothola lokhu kuwububi obudalwa omakhelwane mhlawumbe benomona ukuthi ingane ikhula kahle bayibone ingane iyaprogresser idlula lezi zabo abathi bona bakhona bayaphila bayikhulisa ngesingabo besebegala beyifaka umoya omubi enganeni ize igcine nayo seyibona ngoba umqondo usuke usemncane bese iyakuthatha lokhu abayitshela khona ikusebenzise ikhule nakho.*

Sithokizile: *In the past there weren't a lot of ill-feelings for other people, but today, you can adopt a child and as it grows the neighbours begin to tell it that this is not its real home. Then when you reprimand it for bad behaviour, the child no longer listens or acknowledges you; it could go as far as*

the child killing its adopted parents and siblings. This is the damage some neighbours do out of pure jealousy that the child is progressing in life.

Dixon: *Into engaba umthelela enganeni wukuthi uma isithole imimoya yokuthi wena ngane awusiye owakuleli khaya. Lokho kwenza ingane ukuthi ihlukumezeke emqondweni, ayibe isazi ukuthi kahle kahle yikuphi ekhaya kubo. Izinto ekade izenza mhlambe kade iyingane ehlakaniphile esikoleni kuyakwenza ukuthi kube khona ukulahlekelwa. Noma kungathi uyayitshela ivele ingezwa nase sikoleni ivele ingenzi kahle. Konke kuyaphazamiseka emqondweni wakhe ngoba usuke esecabanga ukuthi ngifike kanjani kulelakhaya. Lezi zinto zinomthelela kwabanye komakhelwane ngoba kukhona lowo muntu ozofaka umoya omubi enganeni...Kukhona ukuthi mhlambe akhethe ukuthi aphume layikhaya, usedibene nabantu bangaphandle abamfaka umoya uthola ukuthi uyaphuma akasafuni ukulawulwa layikhaya. Manje uzomthini mase kunje ngoba ubona izingane ziphumela ngaphandle uze uthole sezisemgwaqeni zingafuni ukulawulwa manje.*

Dixon: *What can be an influence on the child is if the child hears on the streets that this is not its home. This has an impact on the child's emotions, and it confuses the child and it feels like it doesn't know where its home is. This disrupts the child in all aspects of life. The child questions how they came to be in this home. Some of the neighbours may be a bad influence on the child. The child may even decide to leave this home because of these influences and refuses to follow the rules set in the home. This is part of the reason why we find children in the street, its because they refuse to follow rules set at home.*

4.4.4 Biological family reclaiming the child

Another major hindrance on adoption is that family members will reclaim their child injudiciously and sometimes without even displaying gratitude. The chance that the biological family can take the child from the adoptive parents at any time seems to be of much concern for these participants. Also the concern lies in the fact that the child has been integrated into the adoptive family's ancestral world and therefore needs to be taken out appropriately and so the way in which the child is reclaimed sometimes does not allow for that.

Mr X: *Azibanga ningi [izinkinga] ngaphandle kokuthi bathe sebembona ukuthi uyakhula, uyahlakanipha use wumuntu base beqale ke izihlobo zisikhumbuza ukuthi lengane njalo eyalaphaya. So yiloko nje okwakusi disappointer.*

Mr X: *There were not a lot [of problems], except for when they saw that the child was growing older, that they starting reminding us that they were the child's family. That is what was disappointing.*

Sithokozile: *Yikho phela ukuthi uma ingane isihlale layikhaya ikhula kuyenzeka mhlawumpe ngoba phela sabantu uma beyibona ingane isiphumelela noma isiyinto thizeni besebeqala manje ukuthi bafune ukuyithatha ngaleyo ndlela.*

Sithokozile: *It's just that when a child grows up living with you, it happens sometimes because we are all human that if the child's family sees the child prospering or doing well that they may want the child back.*

Qhamukile: *Nami ngiyabona ngoba ngisale ngikhala ngaba naso isilonda ukuthi ngingazikhulisela ingane izinyela inganakwa muntu namhlanje sebengiphucile njengoba ngihleli nje njengoba nawe ufika nalokhu nje kukhona lokhu kokuthi nkosi yami ukuba lengane yakhulela esandleni sami mhlawumpe nga kukhona okubonakalayo.*

Qhamukile: *I was hurt and left with a broken heart, after raising a child that no one had any interest in but today the family has taken the child away from me...as well talk about this topic, it hits me that if they had not taken the child that they may have had a better life today.*

Popayi: *Uye uhlabe isilwane ubike ukuthi nangu umntwana ngimthole kanjena usengowalayikhaya. Ngisho noma eseqede ukufunda esesebenza, uma ke esefuna ukuphuma layikhaya ngokosiko lomthetho uyaye athenge isilwane avalelise, achaze ukuthi manje useyaphuma uyozimela. Kuyindlela abonga ngayo ukuze izinto zakhe zichume phambili.*

Popayi: *You make a sacrifice to introduce the child to your ancestors and you explain to them how you got the child and that this child is now a part of your family. If they then choose to leave this family at a later stage, they then need to make their own sacrifice to let the ancestors know that they have chosen to leave the family. This is also a way to show gratitude to both the family and the ancestors.*

4.4.5 Sense of identity: ngingubani mina?

The relinquishment of the child's identity by formal adoption whether it's culturally or socially, is a major concern for many in indigenous communities. Participants' perceptions on child adoption is that the child's identity needs to be secured because it not only builds morale for the cultural group but instils values and standards of the group that forms the child's identity as um'Zulu. Child adoption for these participants is viewed through the lenses of their belief systems which ultimately form their identity.

Sithokozile: *Usiko luhle ekukhuliseni ingane and usiko alusho wona amadlozi abantu bayakudidanisa lokhu, Usiko inqubo mpilo yomphakathi wonke umuntu uyazi ukuthi uma intombazane ikhuliswa yenziwa kanje angithi.*

Sithozile: *Culture is a beautiful way to raise children, it does not mean you must worship the ancestors, people tend to confuse this. Culture is a way of life/being for a community whereby every member knows how certain rituals and rite are performed.*

Popayi: *Abalulekile ngoba phela kumele yazi ukuthi ikhule kanjani. Nangelinye ilanga yazi uma isinomndeni wayo ukuthi kumele naye akhulise abantwana bakhe ngosiko.*

Popayi: *Culture is important because the child need to know how they were raised. So that one day when the child has their own family, they know that they should encompass culture when raising their own children.*

Clamentine: *Yebo yiyonanto ekumele uziqhenye ngayo ngane yami leyo ayikho enye. Ukuziqhenya ukuthi mina ngingubani akukho okunye ngoba okunye awukwazi uzwa ngendaba kodwa loku kwesiZulu ukwazi qho, uzoziqhenya ngaloko oyiko.*

Clamentine: *Yes, it is something that the child should be proud of and nothing else. Be proud of who they are because thats the one thing you can be sure of, there is no surety in anything else because you hear other things from other people but that which is of the Zulu culture you know because you are part of it and so the child will be proud of it.*

Simalo: *Yebo, bese uhamba ubuzela ngoba nakhu nje abakwaNgubane banquma umunwe ngizobuza ukuthi lengane eyakwa Ngubane manje usiko luni bazoshoke ukuthi hhayi bayanquma.*

Simalo: *Yes, you have to go around asking. For instance the Ngubane family have a ritual of cutting a finger. You can then ask any of them what rituals they perform and they will tell you that this is what they do.*

Mr X: *Yebo kubaluleke kakhulu loko ngoba phela sonke namanje sisahlukene ngokwezinhlanga zethu. So uma ngabe uwumZulu ubonakala ngendlela yakho owenza ngayo izinto, ngendlela ophila ngayo nangendlela ogqoka ngayo lapho ke sekuvela khona ukuthi ohh amaZulu agqoka kanje ngemicimbi ethize...kubalulekile kona ukuwagcina amasiko ethu nokwenza kwethu izinto ngoba nalokho kusiza kakhulu ekukhuleni kwayo ingane izazi ukuthi inhloboni yomZulu. Iphinde yazi ukuthi uma ikhuluma nomuntu omdala kumele yenze njani, uma ingena egcekeni lakomunye umuzi kuyakhulekwa, kwenziwe zonke izinto. Noma kungathiwa ikhulele edolobheni iye kovakasha emakhaya kufanele yazi ukuthi kumele iziphathe kanjani uma ingena emzini womuntu..*

Mr X: *Yes, it is vey important because we are of different tribal groups. So if you are Zulu, you're seen by the way in which you do certain things, how you live and how you dress, and that is how people see*

and know that you are Zulu. It's important to preserve our culture and how we do things as this helps in how we choose to raise our children, and having them know that they are Zulu so they know how to behave as one. This is how they learn cultural values and standards of the Zulu society even if they grow up outside of the rural homesteads; they still need to know such values.

Dixon: *Yebo kubaluleke kakhulu loko. Okunye nokunye ungakwenza nje kodwa uma ukhohlwe yilaba abangasekho uzobe usuzilahla wena uqobo lwakho... siye sibone nje esikhathini samanje ngoba abanye baye bathi abantu abangasekho akusenasidingo ukuthi baba khumbule kanti kubaluleke ngoba labantu laba badinga ukuthi ubakhathalele...Njengoba siphila nje lapha emhlabeni kubaluleke ukuthi sibakhathalele ukuze sithole izinhlanhla. Sihlezi sikhala ukuthi umsebenzi asiwutholi nasesikoleni akuhambi kahle, asinayo inhlanhla yokugana noma yokuganwa zonke lezi zinto zibuyela kubantu abangasekho. Angithi wena uthe abasekho abantu abadala ebese bevala izinto eziningi ngokuthi ulahle amasiko akho.*

Dixon: *Yes, this is very important. You can do everything but if you forget your ancestors, you're throwing away your own sense of being. We see nowadays that people tend to feel that there is no need to remember our late family, which shouldn't be the case. It is important for us to remember them and care for them so they can bless us with good luck. We always have complaints about finding employment and so forth, this is related to our ancestors. They hinder progress in your life because you chose to believe they do not exist.*

4.2 INTERPRETATION OF DATA

DISCUSSION SECTION

I. 4.1 The meaning of "child adoption" (*Kuyini kona ukukhulisa ingane njengeyakho*)

The general consensus of adoption (in the legalistic, Western sense) as described by participants is that it is a term and concept that does not exist within the isiZulu language and community but the practice of it is more informal and traditional in the form of alternative child care. In participants understanding of the meaning of adoption there emerged two sub-themes: *an act of ubuntu and connectedness* and *family structure*. Participants' understanding of child adoption is quite different to that of the legal definition of what constitutes an adoption. Child adoption in legal terms is rigid in its processes and often conceals or disconnects the child from biological connections and knowledge of their origins but most of all it tends to relinquish the child's identity and parental rights of the biological parents. Child adoption as it is practiced in the community under study is very different to that of formal adoption whereby it is quite

informal, fluid and transparent, from the initial process of taking in the child, all the way through to raising the adopted child until they are old enough to leave the nest. Therefore what is referred to as child adoption in Western or European society and now by South African laws does not coexist easily with the concept of child adoption in African indigenous communities such as this one.

Participants' general consensus of child adoption is that it is a way of lending a helping hand, being human and merely caring for one another. The taking in of the child into one's family as their own is seen as a way of helping when one sees or is aware of the non-conducive situation or unsatisfactory living environment of the child. It is therefore deduced to humanity and compassion for one another - *ubuntu*. Participants generally referred to child adoption as a foreign concept in that it is a Western notion that tends to completely dissolve the child's original identity in terms of cultural, social and ancestral connections. However participants still emphasised that the *practice* of "adoption" does exist in the Zulu community whereby children continue to be taken in or cared for by both blood relatives and non-relatives through informal traditional adoption processes. So for these participants there is no adoption by the legal definition of adoption within the Zulu community but however there exists the practice of placing the child with a parent(s) other than those that the child was born into. This practice then extends to members from both the maternal and paternal sides of the child's family and also extends to community members and close family friends of the child's family.

For these participants, informal adoption also means that the child need not be stripped of their original identity, connection to their biological family if they are known, and perhaps most importantly, their cultural practices and traditions. Writers such as Asante speak extensively about the loss of identity in African societies and this seemed to be reiterated by participants in this study. It is paramount for these participants that the child knows who they are and what their traditions are just as it is important that their physiological needs are met.

Formal/legalistic adoption speaks only of the person or child as a physical being which is very much a Eurocentric view of the person and such a worldview differs to that of the African worldview. For African people the being is made up of three phases as previously mentioned by Nsamenang (2006) whereby the spiritual being is an integral part of the human being which so often is disregarded. Therefore for these participants it is important too that the child's identity is not lost because it speaks to the child's spiritual being which cannot be relinquished even in the face of adoption. Hence child adoption needs to be both a transparent and all encompassing one in that when one adopts a child they are not only adopting the human being but all that they are; their practices, traditions, and ancestry because those will need to be maintained for the child.

What was quite prominent in this study was that *adoption is an act of ubuntu and connectedness*. The spirit of *ubuntu* is not just about caring for each other, humanity, and compassion but is a way of being for these participants because ultimately no man exists in isolation. It also speaks to the connectedness of people rather than the individual as an autonomous entity despite the person's background. Note the term spirit coming through again and so *ubuntu* is not just a way of being but a state of being hence the the importance of the spirit which also forms the basis of the human cycle for the African worldview. It is with such views that participants understood adoption (*ukukhulisa umntwana njengowakho*) whereby a helping hand is extended to those struggling to raise their children or to children in need of a loving family more than anything else. Participants actually refer to the practice of adoption as merely *ubuntu*, and what is even more interesting is that such compassion also extends to the elderly living alone. Whereby, those without children can adopt from a family member who has quite a large number of children whilst other children can be shared with those who have same sex children or even a grandparent or an elderly person who lives alone. Such compassion for one another strengthens interconnectedness and collectivity for such close knit communities. This then means that more children are adopted within families and communities because people are in close proximity or have knowledge of the struggles faced by these children and their families. This in turn then excludes those children who are in adoption systems and therefore go unnoticed by such closely knit communities because people are not directly impacted by their circumstances or situations. The maxim that comes to mind is, out of sight out of mind.

It is because of such connectedness of people that legal child adoption for such a community can be regarded as disconnecting the child from their land, people, and way of life (Di Tomasso & De Finney, 2015). Connectedness in such a community seems to transcend blood and social relations and even the physical being but extends to ancestral relations that are closely linked to cultural practices and traditions. What was interesting for this community is that the practice of caring for a child as your own "adoption" is prompted by one's sense of humanity, compassion and the idea of collective child rearing. For some of the participants children born into the community are seen as belonging to both the parents and the community. This truly speaks to the notion that no child should be an orphan because the formation or structure of family that exists within the isiZulu-speaking community opens up for a wider pool of family members that could adopt these children (Blasé, 2013). Therefore having *ubuntu* is important for these participants mostly because it speaks to the essence of being which propels these participants to lend a helping hand (*ukwelekelela*). Participants continue to explain child adoption as a humanist practice (*isihawu, uzwelo*) whereby the

practice is to enhance or better the child's life rather than to certify the needs of the adoptive parents.

The human nature characteristic of caring for one another in such a community is done in the name of collective connectedness, and empowerment or betterment of the child's future. This natural sense of humanism amongst this community seems to go beyond cultural challenges once one is filled with a sense of compassion (*uzwelo, isihe*) for the child in need of help but only if things are done accordingly with regards to ancestral traditions. Practices of giving, assisting and welcoming of others by these participants are expected, instilled and practised within extended family members. This again reaffirms the notion of *ubuntu* that no child should be regarded as an orphan or is orphaned because family formation in indigenous communities extends beyond the nuclear family. Furthermore, even if the father had not reclaimed the child traditionally there are other family members that could (Blackie, 2014). This brings us to the second sub-theme which is the *family structure* as it is the basis upon which child adoption is understood. First and foremost, it is people that make up a family and the person from an African perspective is made up of three phases of which the spirit is one. For African people it is therefore impossible to separate the physical being from that of the spirit being because it is the essences of one's lifecycle. The spirit for African people not only speaks to the development of the person but also to their ancestry and ancestral traditions. This viewpoint differs from that of the Euro-Western view of both the person and family, which speaks only to the physical realm. The difference between the two views of what constitutes a person continues into family structures/formations whereby while the Euro-Western view of family is limited to a nuclear concept, the African family structure includes extended family and ancestors.

It is such contradicting views that make understanding and implementing of Western concepts of adoption quite challenging for indigenous communities such as this one. Alternative family structures that extend for generations and go beyond blood relations are quite common in societies and communities such as this one. Family for the Zulu community is not limited to birth or generational ties but encompasses those who have been adopted into the family, those who are married into the family and also close family friends as well as different families with the same surnames. It is within such family structures that child adoption is understood by these participants whereby cultural norms and values on family influence the way in which child adoption is practiced. Those cultural norms and values of family are based on concepts of *ubuntu*, the spirit (ancestry), and traditions which see members of the family assuming responsibility for other's children and raising them as their own. Moreover, solutions to African problems especially those pertaining to children are often resolved within family structures and

adoption is no different for these participants. The person cannot be separated from the *spirit* hence it is impossible to neglect the spirit/ancestry of both the person and of the family and this makes it difficult for one to formally adopt because formal adoption deals with just the physical being and not the spirit. It is on such a basis that informal traditional approaches to adoption are preferred because they are all encompassing thus maintaining cultural and traditional practices of both the adoptive family's traditions and those of the child.

The inclusion of ancestors is an important one for these participants and so they are both respected and valued just as Nel (2007) had mentioned previously, and this may be because they govern ways of life for those still living in the physical world and how things are done within the family. Again formal adoption as defined by law distances African people because of the different viewpoints of family formation and this is not just on the basis of the lack of its African worldview of the person but also on its narrow view of family. The Western notion of adoption is founded on the idea that children that can be adopted are those outside of the nuclear family so any child that is not biologically yours but this doesn't reflect traditional concepts of family for these participants. Hence participants have also referred to the concept of adoption as a way of lending a hand (*ukwelula isandla*), being human and merely caring for each other. Such family structures for this community constitute a family support system and a sense of caring for one another. For these participants because of the large structural dynamic within the Zulu community where there are no divisions between family members and everyone is regarded as family as long as there is some family connection and so participants do not see the need to go through the legal system to adopt the children because children of extended family are already family. Responsibility for children within the family is assumed voluntarily when the need arises because there are no divisions; this then implies that it is only with people outside of one's family structure that one would need to formally adopt.

Therefore children born into the family belong to the entire family and even those married into the family have the same responsibility towards the children, interestingly enough even those born outside of marriage by married husbands. One can only imagine then how many children are raised by extended family members without formally adopting them whilst such informal adoption practices go unnoticed and are therefore unaccounted for, hence the low rate of formal adoption within black communities in South Africa. Furthermore, family relations even extend to sharing of the same surname. Therefore such large family structure makes it much easier for one to adopt within the family which according to these participants is not regarded as adoption because it is within the family and so the formal system is not utilised. Participants have also referred to the practice of adoption as *ukusiza umndeni* (assisting or helping family) rather than adoption.

II. 4.2 Cultural beliefs and practices influencing child adoption

Previously mentioned studies speak a lot about culture being a major influence in the black community not adopting enough but these studies rarely explore or attempt to understand the extent to which culture truly influences traditional indigenous communities to formally adopt. This theme explores some of the cultural influences on formal (legalistic) adoption, so how they are viewed and understood by participants in their influence on adoption. The sub-themes that were quite prominent in understanding how culture influences adoption were of one's *historical background, ancestral connections, last name and traditions*.

The sub-theme of *historical background* speaks to the person's origins so who they are. Knowing one's background is of paramount importance for these participants. It is not just about having knowledge of one's family history but is regarded as a point of reference to developing one's character and a sense of being. Knowing one's background seems quite important for these participants in that family history holds one's identity; identity in how one lives and function as um'Zulu of that particular family name. Participants emphasised how biological relations never end because of one's link to ancestry and so termination of such in formal adoption contradicts with such ideas. The importance of knowing one's origins is emphasised by participants in statements such as: *ungayaphi ungazi ukuthi uphuma phi?* Which translates into, one must know where they come from in order to know where they are going. Knowing one's background not only develops the child's character but informs their cultural and traditional being. Because it holds information on the child's cultural and traditional practices, transparency is deemed important by these participants in order to maintain rituals and traditions need for the child's wellbeing. The concealment or restriction to such knowledge of the child in formal adoption seems to be one of the reasons people distance themselves from adopting through the legal system. It is because people are not privileged to information that will help the adoptive parents to maintain traditions specific to the adoptive child hence informal traditional approaches are more preferred.

Participants in this study were not majorly concerned with blood ties when deciding to adopt or even as a reason for not adopting as previously stated by studies such as that of Ross (2010). They however place much emphasis on the importance of knowing one's background rather than regarding it as an obstacle or a hindrance for adopting. For these participants it is vital that there is transparency and that nothing is concealed for both the adoptive parents and the adopted child as background information contains one's identity and ancestral connections but most of all one's traditions. Cases such as that of closed adoption and abandonment where

the child's background information is concealed or unknown traditional practices are difficult to maintain has major implications for the child. The loss or lack of background information in formal adoption is a major concern in such communities where ritual or traditions need to be maintained for the child hence informal traditional practices of adoption continue to be utilised by such communities. This all comes back to what Selman (2012) has mentioned about adoptive parents needing to educate themselves on the child's origins and cultural ways of life so as to ensure that they raise a well-balanced child.

Traditional informal practices of adoption by these participants ensure that adoptive parents are able to maintain traditional practices pertaining to that specific family such as in the case of *ukucaba* which refers to face mutilation/scaring. The loss of the child's origins through formal adoption whether its domestic or inter-country adoption will remain a major concern for indigenous communities especially for Africans (Hoshmand, Gere & Wong, 2006). This is reaffirmed by participants in their emphasis on the importance of knowing one's background and the challenges that both the adoptive parent and the child may face if such information is lost or is unknown. For these participants, knowing one's heritage propels you forward thus giving you a sense of pride in knowing who you are. Furthermore, knowing one's background (*ukuthi uzalwa ngobani*) links the child to their surname and traditions that are specific to them which ultimately link them to their ancestral world. Therefore adopting a child whose background is unknown can be challenging culturally as they will ultimately need their surname because one's last name is important as loss of such means loss of one's connection with both the living and the dead. Knowing the child's background also helps the adoptive parents in that when there is a cultural issue that requires the child's ancestral spirits, the adoptive parents can go back to the biological parents or relatives and seek assistance in fulfilling that cultural need. This then becomes difficult to do when one has adopted formally especially in cases of closed adoption where background information is not disclosed and so this contradicts with the Zulu community's ideas of transparency. Furthermore when the historical background of the child is transparent, there's continuous connection to the biological family where the child can maintain relationships with their biological family and even move between families. What was also noteworthy among these participants was that background information was also used in the cultural integration of the child into the adoptive family's ancestral world, when introducing the child to the ancestors the ancestors are informed of who the child is and why they are now part of this family. Of course then if origins are unknown then the ancestors are informed that this is the case and it is pleaded that they protect the child as well as they are now an additional member of the family.

The sub-theme of *ancestral connection* was quite prominent in this study. Ancestral connection is of vital importance to those in this study, not only because it speaks to the essence of one's being but also because ancestral connections transcribe to traditional ways of living for such a community. For the Zulu community children are believed to come from one's ancestors and so they come into this world already embodying the spirit hence the belief that one is born with their guardian angel (*isithunwa*). Ancestral connections are therefore formed through blood relations and cannot be separated from the person even through adoption. Although the formal/legal approach to adoption relinquishes the child's identity, the one thing that always remains for indigenous communities is the child's connection to their ancestry. It is therefore important for these participants that ancestral connections be maintained because ancestral neglect or disregard can have serious implications for the child's wellbeing and development. Maintaining ancestral connections for the adopted child means the adoptive parents be privileged to information about the child's background, last name, and family practices or rituals which is not always possible with formal adoption particularly in cases of closed adoption and abandonment. One's connection to their ancestors means that one's traditions and practices will always need to be maintained and so maintaining connection with the family or relatives of the adopted child will privilege the adoptive parents to rituals that pertain specifically to the child, such as *ukucaba* (face mutilation/scaring).

Ancestral connections and practices do not just pertain to the child only but also to the adoptive family. According to the participants, the adopted child needs to be integrated into the adoptive parents' family system so that the ancestors are not wary of the child and is protected by them just as any other family member would be. The integration of the adopted child is to say that the child is now part of the family just as the other children born into the family are. It is done to inform the ancestors of the new member of the family and to integrate the child into the family's ancestral world so they too can be protected when the ancestors protect the family. Therefore communication or connection with ancestors needs to be continuously maintained, not just by the adoptive family but also the child's family as well, as they too need to inform their ancestors of the move by the child into the new family.

Thus the link between the physical world and the supernatural world is a prominent one in this study whereby continuous communication and respect is shown to the ancestors. Ancestral connection links people to both family and traditions which are important to maintain as they can effect one's development and identity. The level of respect given to ancestors in this study truly confirms Nsamenang's (2006) notions of how the ancestors' presence is felt in all affairs of those who are living which pertain to human development within cultural realms.

Another sub-theme that was prominent in this study was that of one's *last name*. Surnames for these participants are considered to have major effects on the child and the adoptive family if cultural practices are neglected but most importantly because one's surname links one to their traditions and ultimately their ancestors. One's last name is not only an identity but is a manuscript for rituals and customs pertaining to that surname. Because of the rituals and customs attached to one's last name, it is important that the adoptive parent is aware of the child's last name so as to maintain such practices. Neglecting or failing to maintain such practices may result in misfortune and so the concealment of the child's last name is a challenge that influences people's views about formal adoption. In Western society one's surname is also linked to blood relations but some families may share a surname but not be related. This is not the case in the Zulu community where all people with the same surname are regarded as related and therefore held in the same regard as those of blood relatives hence same surname romantic relationships are frowned upon. This is also the reason why participants placed emphasis on knowing the adopted child's surname so as to avoid same surname sexual relations as people with the same surname with one another are treated as family even though there is no blood relations.

Knowing the child's surname is vital for these participants not only because it bears one's identity but also because of its relation to traditions and so it is vital that one knows their surname because it is one thing that one should never lose even in marriage and adoption. One's surname is perceived to be of paramount importance for this group as it links people to one another and also people to traditions specific to their surname. Therefore knowing one's surname is vital particularly in the case of adoption because the loss of a surname possibly means a loss of one's cultural traditions. This validates concerns mentioned by previous studies on child adoption resulting in loss of cultural and social identity (Mokomane & Rochat, 2011; Hoshmand, Gere & Wong, 2006). The child's surname is also deemed important for the child because it links the child to their ancestors which is needed in the appraisal of the ancestors when communication to the ancestors is required. Participants also placed much emphasis on the importance of the child knowing one's surname because of family lineage especially for males in their continuation of their surname. Participants also emphasised that that even though the child is placed under the adoptive family's ancestral world, at some point in their lives they may need their surname and so being integrated into the adoptive family's ancestral world does not mean loss of one's identity which includes their last name.

So in summary the loss of surname as in cases of closed adoption and abandonment could ultimately mean loss of some traditions pertaining to the child which in the long run can have significant implications in the child's life. The fact that one is not always privileged to such

information when adopting formally makes people more comfortable in their traditional approaches to adoption. There's quite an emphasis on the importance of both the child and the adoptive parents knowing the child's last name as there are certain rituals and customs that pertain specifically to certain surnames. Knowing one's surname becomes quite important for practices of *ubungoma* (traditional healer training) or even in illness where one needs to speak directly to their ancestors. Participants also spoke a lot about traditions such as *ukucaba* (face mutilation), and *ukusikwa umunwe* (removal of one's end of the top part of their pinky finger) as some of the traditions specific to particular surnames and how the lack of knowledge of the child's surname make it difficult to maintain such practices. Such concerns form part of the cultural influences that affects adoption for indigenous communities and are therefore important to keep in mind when interrogating Euro-Western concepts such as that of child adoption in such communities.

The above discussion leads us into the last sub-theme that speaks to culture as an influence of adoption, which is that of *traditions*. Traditional practices and beliefs are of significance for these participants because they are not only a way of life for them but they connect one to their ancestral world, which ultimately influences the physical world. Traditions therefore require that one knows of their origins even in the mist of adoption because traditions form the basis of living. Loss or concealment of one's historical background and surname means not only of one's connection to their ancestral world and identity but also to some of their most important traditions of that cultural group or surname. Interestingly enough for these participants, informal approaches to adoption here are preferred and mostly utilised because they embrace one's culture, traditions, and ancestral beliefs. Formal or legal adoption is disregarded because it disconnects the child from their culture and traditions. Participants strongly emphasise continuation and maintenance of traditions for the child whether the adoptive parents are privileged to the child's background information or not because caring and providing for the adoptive child is what is important and ensuring that traditions are kept alive also speaks to the needs of the child. The transitional process between the two families for these participants does not only involve those living in the physical world but also those in the afterlife and so the move of the child needs to follow traditions too. Traditions then involve both worlds, the physical and the spirit world and so traditions are very important for these participants and tend to influence formal/legal adoption.

For example, traditions such as rite of passage are regarded by the participants as vital to the personal growth and development of a Zulu child by the participants. Rite of passage marks a transitional stage in the person's life noticeable through cultural ceremonies and rituals and participants emphasised the importance of maintaining such ceremonies for the adopted child

once they have been traditionally integrated into the family whether their origins are known or not. According to these participants, these transitional ceremonies are performed for the child because they introduce the child into the next stage of their life and the occasion to gain new knowledge and understanding of who they are and provide an opportunity for the child to integrate new values associated with that particular stage of life. Such traditional developmental life stages not only form scripts for one's identity but also provide one with a framework for personal and social identification. Rituals such as that of *imbeleko*, *umkhuliso*, and *umemulo* to name a few appeared quite important to maintain for these participants even if the child is adopted into another family so as to ensure optimal development for the child into a fully functioning adult of the community. These traditions pertaining to one's developmental stages link the child not only to their community but also to their ancestral world and so such traditions are regarded as a necessary part of the Zulu culture and are just as vital as the need for food and clothing. For these participants, knowledge of one's origins informs the type of traditional practices to follow especially those that are specific to one's surname as previously mentioned. This is why traditions in such a community can have some influence on formal adoption for black people especially for those who are still strongly rooted in their cultural beliefs and practices. Participants continue to describe the process of introducing or integrating the child into the adoptive family's ancestral world as an important one to follow. The traditional ritual of integrating the child into the adoptive family is important to maintain for these participants not only for the child's wellbeing and protection but also for the ancestral world. Such practices are extensively emphasised by participants in this study and are regarded as quite important and so the lack of acknowledgement of such practices by formal adoption systems has much influence on adoption by black people. But ultimately, it is clear that traditions are quite important for the child because they inform or speak to who one is as um'Zulu and one cannot know of their traditions without knowing their origins.

III. 4.3 Indigenous forms and practices of child adoption (*izindlela zokwenza ngokweSintu*)

The sub-theme named *indigenous adoption process: consultation with izinduna (traditional leadership)* illustrates how child adoption is practised within the Zulu community. People themselves serve as the agency to the process of adoption within this community whereby the families are the organisation that facilitate the process and the adoption. The family or families oversee the terms in which the child is taken in with the community leader acting as a witness to the process and with the inclusion of the ancestors. The process by which child adoption

takes place in this community is considered quite formal and transparent by these participants. Adoption is intended to be a permanent transfer of rights and responsibilities which disconnects biological parents to the child in cases of closed adoption and thus the child's identity is relinquished or lost. Such practices of adoption in formal legalistic terms contradict with those of this community where adoption is regarded as just as legitimate and formal as the legalistic practice of adoption. The process may not follow legal formal procedures which involve the judicial system and written arrangements but interestingly enough, there exists a formal process of adoption within the Zulu community too. There seem to be common laws and regulations that the practice of adoption follows in this community that seem to have transcended throughout the participants responses. Agreements may be verbal but they are binding; they involve both families and include the spirit world and there is no discontinuation of any affiliation of the biological family or relatives with the child.

The word child adoption in an indigenous community such as the Zulu community does not seem to exist but the concept of child adoption as defined in Western terminology seems to be partly present whereby the raising of a non-biological child, the transferring of care and responsibility of a child to another remains the same. The process in which this is done may differ but the practice of adoption seems to have existed for generations, one participant dating it back to the biblical times of Moses. The transfer is made within communities and by the community so as to ensure that the child's identity is maintained as they remain connected to their community, birth family or history and culture. Traditional ways of adoption are believed to ensure both cultural identity and connectivity for the child as these contribute to the child's identity formation. The general consensus by participants is that the child would need to be reported to the *induna* (community leader) whether it's before or after the child has been informally adopted. Traditionally the two families get together to discuss the terms of adoption and it is only once the families have agreed upon those terms that the child's family will perform certain rituals such as burn incense and/or even slaughter a goat to report to the ancestors that the child will be living with that particular family.

When the child is received into the new family they will also slaughter a goat or merely burn incense depending on the family's rituals to introduce the child to the new family's ancestors and ask that the child be protected as they are now part of the family. The terms of adoption, if the child has been given on a permanent basis or a temporal basis, are also reported to the ancestors. This practice discounts any harm that may come to the child as a result of cross pollination of cultures and so this is important to do for an adopted child according to these participants. This form of approach then allows for the child to maintain their connection to their family and culture because at some stage the child may require their own family traditions

and rituals that may not be tradition for the new family. The child can also continue a relationship with their biological family whilst being raised by the new family and may even leave once older to form their own family using their biological family name depending on the terms of adoption and circumstance of the child. In the case of unknown origins of the child, participants spoke of consulting a traditional healer (*isangoma*) as means of tracing the child's surname so they can at least begin to trace the child's cultural practices.

Informal kinship care in this community seems to be the most preferable approach to child rearing as there is continuous contact with the child's family and this ensures that the child maintains their identity. The challenge with formal legal adoption then seems to be the option to not be in contact with the adoptive family and this is what makes it challenging for the indigenous communities. If it is a closed adoption then there is no contact with the child's family history and traditions thus making it difficult for the cultural socialisation of the child and their identity formation as culture and traditions are regarded vital in the development of the child. Linkage to biological family is also believed to allow for continuous relation with not only the biological family but also to the ancestral world of the child and this connectivity will ensure that the child is a well-grounded person who knows their identity as an isiZulu-speaking person.

Consultation with affected families, the community and the ancestors was one of the sub-themes in exploring indigenous forms and practices of child adoption. The family's role in the adoption process is to facilitate and oversee the process and ensure that the child's best interests are being catered for which includes their cultural and emotional needs. Speaking of cultural, all processes seem to be enforced through indigenous approaches of interaction and remain important for these participants that traditional practices are maintained. There is a collective involvement in the process just as there is in the raising of the child and utter transparency in the role and terms of the community adoption process. The process facilitated by the families is an informal one which means that no judicial authorities are involved in the process and some participants truly did not see the need to involve the authorities because one's word is regarded to be true. This is the Zulu way of practising the concept of adoption.

Families seem to be the agencies in cases of informal processes of adoption amongst this community and family as we have established is not limited to the nuclear family but encompasses extended family, the community and close friends. The family establish the rules of adoption such as the type of adoption (whether is on a permanent or temporal basis) and the rules of engagement. The role therefore of the agency (the family) is to ensure the wellbeing of the child, physically and emotionally as well as culturally. The adoptive family will

ensure that the child is well integrated into the family and that all their cultural milestones are reached and executed properly and so the family serves as the agency and the keeper of the child's cultural and emotional wellbeing. All adoption decisions are therefore made by the family or families if the child is from another family and so nothing is set in stone and decisions can change or be altered in the interest of both the child and the family or families.

Practice of the concept: retaining the child's family and clan identity was also a prominent sub-theme in the illustration of how the adoption is practiced within the Zulu community. The practice of child adoption is a very informal one for these participants whereby nothing is formalised or standardised in the way in which the concept is prescribed by Western legalistic terms. The practice of child adoption for these participants does not relinquish the child's identity nor does it disconnect the child from their biological family but most of all it is practiced within the realms of cultural beliefs and practices. Family structure, cultural practices and the notion of *ubuntu* are what forms the basis of the practice of child adoption for these participants whereby the aim is to ensure a better life for the child and ultimately for their family. It is because of the extension of family within the Zulu family and collective connectedness that child adoption is not regarded as adoption here but simply helping whereby taking in of a children of extended family (including friends and community member's children) to raise as your own is an act of compassion, humanity, and caring for each other. Although adoption is mostly practised amongst relatives the practice is not limited to blood relations and also includes those who are non-living. These structures are also reflected in studies conducted by Nel (2007) and Ross (2010).

Participants also went on to refute the idea that child adoption in the black community is rejected if the child is from a different and unknown blood-line or family lineage as suggested by Blackie (2014). This was an interesting observation in that the only element present in the definition of adopted as defined by law is that of placing the child with parent(s) other than those the child is born into and so adoption in this community rarely utilises formal systems and does not completely relinquish all right and ties to the biological parents and the family at large. The process which one engages in when seeking to adopt a child as explained by the participants is an informal in legalistic terms but seems to be quite formal and transparent at the level of the community. Therefore there seems to be a formal procedure followed in a cultural and traditional manner. This includes involving both families, the community leader, adhering to ancestral practices, and maintaining biological connections all in the pursuit of sustaining the child's identity. Participants spoke very much on the way in which informal child adoption would take place generally within the isiZulu speaking community and who would be involved in the process, this was not standard procedure as it had slight variations with each

participant. What was however common was that the process would be facilitated by the families involved and for most an outside witness would be present which in most cases would be the community leader (*induna*) or a close community member. If the potential adoptee was a child of a relative, the family would sit down to inform the entire family of who the child or children would be care for by if the biological parents have deceased or are no longer able to care for the child or children. The family as a whole would support the person who has offered to take in the child/children in whatever way possible but with the knowledge that they are the primary care giver for the child/children. What was even interesting was this theme was the instinctive nature of family member to volunteer or nominate themselves as custodians of the child/children without being pressured into it and grandparents are usually the first in line.

The informal process followed for adoption is not intended to relinquish parental rights from the biological family nor is it intended to renounce all cultural and self-identity of the child so to create a new one but it embraces one's retainment of their identity and culture. So the general consensus on the adoption process is that it is important that the child is introduced into the adoptive family's ancestral world but also that the child's biological family reports to their ancestors of the child's move to the other family. This was heavily emphasised by both the participants and the experts because neglecting this aspect of tradition can result in huge consequences and confusion amongst the ancestors of both families. What was quite interesting though is that this process does not mean that the child loses their traditions and practices specific to their surname and biological family or even their identity, so if and when need be the child can always reconnect with their ancestral world. The practice of adoption is one that is based on collective caring for others, humanity, and compassion for other's situations and circumstances whether it is on the basis of barrenness, lack of a particular gender, work obligations, financial, and even death. Indigenous or informal traditional approaches to adoption are disregarded or go unnoticed because they do not fall within the Western legal system and ideology of the concept of adoption but it was clearly illustrated by these participants that there are also legitimate recognisable cultural adoption laws for indigenous communities too.

The following sub-theme, *legal recognition of cultural laws: imithetho yesiZulu* demonstrates standard ways in which adoption forms and practices of child adoption are practiced within the Zulu community. Cultural and traditional ways of living for these participants also go unnoticed by the Western legal system mainly because it sometimes cannot be enforced upon as it is not documented by being written on paper. In South African law as it stands what constitute legitimacy is what has been agreed upon in writing and so this sometimes can make people feel as though the Western legal system of doing things is being imposed on them rather than

integrating their ways of life. For these participants they already have a way in which child adoption is practiced in their community and so for them it feels as though the legal system is saying that their way holds no significance within the legal system and so people have issues with that because they feel that their ways of living are justified by a long history of culture and tradition. Also the way in which the legal system is structured especially when it comes to who qualifies and how the process is done, it seems to be structured for another society in particular whereby black indigenous communities are meant to fit into the system rather than incorporating these societies and communities. According to these participants the question is that if the fundamentals are being maintained such as all the child's physiological and emotional needs and ultimately the child's cultural needs if done traditionally, then why is it that Western ideologies are being imposed on them? For these participants, they also have cultural laws and beliefs that govern their ways in which they do things and so these are just as important as the Western legal system of laws. This theme is an interesting one in that it is a way of life, a way in which things are done specifically in the case of informally adopting a child whether it's on a permanent basis or not but it is not a way of doing things that is written in stone nor is it a standard process of doing things yet there are specific patterns and procedures in place as discussed above that emerged from interviews with the participants.

IV. 4.4 Barriers, attitudes and perceptions towards formal (legalistic) and informal child adoption

There were quite a number of barriers, attitudes and perceptions expressed about adoption by this community throughout the sub-themes that have been presented on this dissertation but some of the more prominent were that of the following: *behavioural and emotional challenges relating to ancestral belief; demanding and tiresome rules and regulations attached to the process of formal adoption; communal interference and breaches; biological family reclaiming the child; and sense of identity: ngingubani mina?*

Behavioural and emotional challenges relating to ancestral beliefs as a sub-theme, was regarded as one of the major barriers to formal (legalistic) adoption for this group of participants. There are a number of challenges that one can encounter when they adopt a child that they are unrelated to by blood or a child of unknown origins when it comes to ancestry. Encountered issues relating to ancestral beliefs can range from emotional, scholastic to behavioural issues and these may be due to the child being disconnected to their ancestors or traditional practices that have not been upheld by the adoptive family. These of course then require that the adoptive family be aware of the child's origins and their cultural traditions and

so this requires that potential adoptive parents have access to knowledge of the child's biological parents which is restricted in cases of closed adoption. It is these beliefs that are so often mentioned in various articles as reasons in which formal/legal child adoption is so often rejected by black indigenous communities such as this one (Mokomane & Rochat, 2011; Blasé, 2013; Brittian, Lewin & Norris, 2013). What these studies certainly do is reinforce the idea of the level of importance of the ancestors and the ancestral world.

The belief in ancestors is a major one for these participants and such beliefs have a great influence in the way in which child adoption is practiced and to a large extent can be cited as the main reason why informal adoptions are preferred in such a community. Beliefs in ancestry inform not only how child adoption is practiced within this community but also people's way of life. Informal adoption therefore allows for people in this community to be able to continue to respect their ancestors by following ancestral rituals and practices which make it difficult for such a community to adopt formally because of the disregard for the importance of culture in the definition and process of adoption by the legal system. For people in indigenous communities such as this one, represented by these participants, there are still strong ties to cultural beliefs and practices and these have strong influences in their lives and in everything that they do and so it's important for them that things are correctly done in a respectful manner that will ensure that one does not discount their ancestors. Disregard for the ancestry world for these participants could result in severe consequences for both the adoptive child and the adoptive parents therefore one needs to be mindful of these when working with such communities. The transparency of informal adoption allows for these participants to maintain their cultural and ancestral practices which then means that less people utilise the formal approaches hence the low volume of people recorded to be adopting in such communities. This reaffirms statements made on the importance of adoptive parents and adoption services working to educate themselves on both the child's heritage and the cultural beliefs of the communities in which they work because not only do these beliefs form part of the child's identity but will allow for government systems to find new ways of integrating such cultural practices (Gibbs, 2017; Davey, 2016; Delap, 2012; Nel, 2007).

Another barrier to formal adoption according to these participants was that concerning the rules, regulations and criteria attached to the formal adoption process hence the next sub-theme, *demanding and tiresome rules and regulations attached to the process of formal adoption*. Rules and procedures have been put in place for numerous reasons of which some have been previously mentioned which make absolute sense but it eliminates large pools of potential adopters because of these regulations. The main issue with the legal process of formal adoption is that the process is based on Western ideologies and way of life and not

African collective ways of child rearing which ultimately disregards traditional ways. Many of the participants seemed to have some idea of the due process involved in legal child adoption and found the process tedious, intrusive and lengthy. Western ideas on autonomy, privacy and financial stability or monumental achievement seem to be some of the issues that participants have difficulties with in the formal/legal system and therefore would choose African informal approaches to child adoption because they embrace African ways of living and raising a child.

Above all challenges mentioned by these participants, the most prominent one was that of the technical legal process of formal adoption. For the participants who are familiar with the process of adoption, the requirements needed by the legal system when adopting formally seems quite daunting for these participants. The process for them is both lengthy and unnecessary when they believe there is a more effective informal indigenous manner of adoption that is both culturally sensitive and practical. One of the primary issues with the formal/legal process is that it is based on Western ideologies of both child rearing and ways of life whilst African indigenous approaches to adoption are informal and more accommodating of African ways of life and beliefs. So the requirements regulating both the process and the practice of formal/legal child adoption continue to distance black indigenous communities from adopting formally because child rearing practices of such communities differ to those of the Western society. Rules and regulations on child adoption were regarded as one of the reasons why black people in such communities avoid using the formal system to adopt. Some participants consistently emphasised that they too as indigenous communities have rules and regulations that are particular to them and their ways of life and so these also need to be regarded as important in regulating policies and procedures of child adoption. It is when indigenous practices on child adoption are better incorporated into Western legal processes that such indigenous communities will begin to utilise formal adoption practices.

Another sub-theme that came out of this study was that of communal interference and breaches which participants found to be a challenge to both formal and informal adoption. As much as close knit communities can be supportive and caring for each other, the closeness can also be a challenge for those who are known to have adopted a child. The challenge is that because the community knows that the child has been adopted and how that came about they sometimes can leak the information to the child before the adoptive family has told the child. Sadly according to these participants this information can also be used in a malicious way which can ultimately negatively affect the child. Sometimes because the community has the sense that the child also belongs to the community, they also feel that it is their duty to inform the child of their origin. Whether this is intended to be malicious or not, it still speaks to

the importance of the child knowing their origin and the importance of transparency when adopting a child.

The community's judgements and interference is not only a concern for this community but for various communities and societies as well whether it is with regards to formal or informal adoption. For closely knit indigenous communities such as this one, boundaries can be crossed within a split second whereby community members will consistently remind the child that they are adopted. In this study there was clearly a concern about members of the community's influence on the adopted child and of course their thoughts about them specifically pertaining to child rearing of the adopted child. Although participants felt that it was important for the child to be aware of their heritage, background and origins, they also felt that sometimes the influence of the community on the child can impact on the child's relationship to the adoptive family or even on the child themselves both emotionally and behaviourally. This can be a challenge for both formal and informal adoption and can result in the adopted children feeling as though they don't belong or even running away from these communities. Participants therefore emphasised that it is important for the adoptive parent to make sure that the child always feels that they are an equal part of the family. Child adoption for these participants is a difficult practice because not only does one have to worry about the child, their culture and their wellbeing but one also has to sometimes deal with the community's meddling but with that said, it is important that one helps when need be.

The sub-theme of *biological family reclaiming the child* is another barrier to child adoption for these participants. In the previous sub-themes we mentioned the issue of indigenous practices not being documented and agreements on the terms of adoption also not being recorded on paper as everything is arranged orally. This can sometimes be challenging in that it opens up opportunities for families to alter or even terminate the verbal contract with the adoptive family at any time. Participants agreed that the adoptive child should at some point go back to the biological parents to support the parents or even continue their family name but the issue is that the biological relatives do not reclaim the child in the correct traditional manner.

As much as it is a challenge for these participants to have no knowledge or connection to the biological parents or relatives of the adopted child for reasons previously mentioned, it seems knowing the relatives of the adoptive child can also pose a challenge. Participants indicated that a primary challenge encountered with biological relatives of the adopted children was of relatives reclaiming the child. The issues here is that parents reclaim their children in an aggressive manner that does not follow traditional procedures. Just as the child was indoctrinated into the adoptive family's ancestral world they also need to be traditionally

removed, so to speak, from the family's ancestral world as and so when parents abruptly and viciously take their children back they cause confusion and a disturbance within both the physical and ancestral world. Another issue is that people can change their minds on both the agreement and conditions of the adoption of the child and this is due to the fact that nothing is contracted in written form. It is such challenges that make people wary of traditional approaches to adoption and so there clearly needs to be some compromise on both informal and formal adoption so it can accommodate such indigenous communities.

The final sub-theme of this theme is that of the child's *sense of identity: ngingubani mina?* The attitude on loss of one's identity in formal adoption was a prominent one for these participants. As has been discussed previously, child adoption for these participants needs to not only fulfil the child's physiological needs but also social and cultural needs. Cultural identity is believed to provide the child with a sense of belonging and self-concept thus giving them a sense of who they are. It was quite noticeable is that cultural identity is believed to give the child a point of reference in their discovery of 'who they are' as a member of isiZulu-speaking society. Knowing one's clan name and practices is also of vital importance for the child as it provides a map of how a child develops into an adult born of the Zulu clan and cultural group. Teachings such as respect for any adult and form of greeting are some of the values mentioned by participants as important to instil in the child of the Zulu clan and so relinquishment of the child's identity means loss of such values of the society. Cultural identity seemed to be quite strong in that much emphasis was given to cultural values that allow the child to develop social and ethnic identity, a way of life and a way of being as a child of the Zulu community.

Some participant also argued that when one loses part of their culture or religion, such as in the case of closed adoption, it can anger the child's ancestors thus leading to behavioural issues and misfortunes for the child. Hence participants placed much emphasis on ensuring that cultural practices are met when adopting so that the child is also accepted by the adoptive family's ancestors. This is why it is so important that we explore or make use of culturally sensitive approaches to adoption practices when working with such indigenous communities because for them the topic of culture is not just a way of being but an integral part of identity formation. The question of 'who the child belongs to' was also raised and this is closely linked to clan and family origins of the child. Knowing one's origin in terms of clan roots is believed to impact largely on the child's emotional and psychological development throughout their life. Knowing that one belongs to the Zulu clan gives the child a sense of pride, a sense of belonging, and an identity which with this group of participants seems to also then hold the child to a certain level of standards. This is reflected in participants' statements such as: *we as abeZulu are respectful, have compassion and ubuntu.*

These values then form the child's identity which the child can only model if they are amongst their original society or if they have knowledge of what ethnic group they are when adopted. Participants also placed emphasis on the importance of creating and maintaining social identity for the child in order to provide the child with a point of reference because people understand who they are much better when they are able to identify themselves with others. For these participants the child will be able to establish what is appropriate and acceptable behaviour and norms of being um'Zulu when they can reference with those of the same group as theirs thus forming values and standards expected of them as um'Zulu which forms their identity by knowing who they are, *ukuthi ngingum'Zulu* (I am Zulu). Of course we can only adopt the identity of the group only if there's social inclusion in which one can be able to develop emotionally and form self-concepts in relation to the group that one identifies with. This is why trans-cultural or trans-racial formal adoptions are not viewed favourably amongst indigenous communities.

Our beliefs partially create our identity because what we believe in informs our thoughts, how we approach the world and interpret things. Participants' beliefs in this study absolutely inform their way of life and how they view and do things and in terms of child adoption it was quite interesting to hear how strongly it is influenced by ancestral beliefs. Beliefs in ancestors for these participants shape the way in which child adoption is practiced and viewed and these beliefs seem to form participant's identity and thoughts. Many of the practices and views on child adoption for these participants are defined by one's beliefs in ancestors or an ancestral world that influences how things are done which forms part of one's identity as a traditional isiZulu-speaking person.

Participants' beliefs pertain to what is regarded as accepted as true or exists with regards to these participants and is therefore reflected in one's personal and social identity as the values that form part of their identity. Beliefs in this group were viewed as a framework in which people make moral judgements and decisions on their lives and how they live. This was quite noticeable amongst this group of participants whereby beliefs in ancestors, cultural traditions, and the supernatural were eminent themes used as a framework for the decision to adopt and how to go about adopting the child. Views on these beliefs and upholding practices pertaining to such beliefs are validated in African people's perspectives on human development and the cycle of life (Nsamenang, 2006). These views really show us how beliefs can shape one's personal and social development and ultimately one's identity especially when one has grown up under those beliefs. Therefore in this group of participants, one's beliefs need to be reflected in one's behavior as um'Zulu and hence held to those standards. For example, if you believe in ancestors then one is expected to slaughter or burn incense to appease or

communicate with their ancestors especially in practices that touch on one's cultural and traditional identity.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

This chapter provides a brief summary of the findings pertaining to the research questions. It also provides some recommendations on adoption policy, education and training of indigenous practices, and future studies. It further gives some illustration of certain limitations of the study.

5.1 CONCLUSION

The general understanding of what child adoption is for these participants is that it is an act of humanity and compassion; *ubuntu*. It means taking in someone else's child into one's own family as their own and is thus seen as a way of extending a helping hand. Therefore the decision to adopt the child is based on the betterment of the child rather than to fulfill the needs of the adoptive parent. Furthermore, adoption for these participants does not only mean having humanity and compassion for others but also a sense of caring for one another including children of members of their extended families and community. Having *ubuntu* is considered important for these participants because it speaks to the essence of African being and collectivity. For this community, child adoption means also providing the child with their cultural identity and this includes a history of their origin, their surname, ancestral connection, and also maintaining biological relations. This requires that one ensures that all cultural practices are met so to that the child develops into a well-rounded, content member of the community who knows exactly who they are.

Many studies (Hoshmand, Gere & Wong, 2006; Doubell, 2014; Blasé, 2013) have alluded to how socio-cultural issues and lineage somehow influence patterns of adoption in indigenous communities such as this one but have failed to explore in depth how exactly culture influences child adoption. What seems to influence patterns of adoption amongst this group of participants is the process and practice in which adoption is performed. The way in which formal child adoption is practiced in Western society differs significantly from the practices of the Zulu community whereby culture is central in the practice. The general consensus is that the process of adoption should be done traditionally so as to maintain cultural socialisation, traditions, and identity of the child. Also central to the influence of culture on child adoption is the belief in ancestry and so it is important for these participants that child adoption does not relinquish the child's identity but embraces it and that ancestral connections are maintained.

Cultural influences and blood ties are consistently referred to as hindrances to black people adopting formally thus resulting in the low number of black adopters but this is not the case. It seems a large number of people are unaccounted for because they utilise traditional

approaches of adoption. Many of the participants interviewed in this study had adopted children of extended family members whereby this was done between the families with the help of the community leader or an elder in the community who then serves as the mediator. These people had not approached the formal systems and so they are not accounted for in the statistics of black adopters in South Africa therefore it is not quite accurate to state that not enough black people are adopting. It is quite clear that there is a greater number of black people raising children that are not their own through informal patterns of child care. It becomes apparent that culture in the indigenous community under study is regarded as crucial in securing identity formation of the child and so traditional approaches of adoption help to ensure that. Moreover, providing help and care in such a community is seen as an obligation because being helpful is the essence of life. This is reflected in statements such as: *it takes a village to raise a child* in the case of child rearing in indigenous communities such as this one.

What was also apparent from this study is that people sometimes felt as though Western ideologies and systems are being imposed upon them and their ways of life are regarded as illegitimate. This was reflected in the rules and regulations attached to the formal legal process of adoption whereby agreements need to involve the judicial systems and be documented. Child rearing by non-relatives according to the South African laws requires that potential guardians or caregivers legally establish such rights formally and so what this is saying is that indigenous ways of child rearing and adoption practices as a way of life are beneath Western legal ways of life. Participants also explained child adoption as something that is of nature in the culture of black people because of the belief that no one should struggle amongst other people hence idioms such as *izandla ziyagezana* (one hand washes the other), and *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* (I am because you are). So the process of formal (legalistic) adoption of a child does not feel natural for these participants.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study sets forth four recommendations in order that more and more children are taken out of adoption centres and childcare systems into loving homes. The first is for policy change; recognition of black people's understanding and practice of child adoption. This means that legal child adoption policies would have to recognise the way in which black people practice cultural and ancestral belief systems, for example looking into joint adoption where the child is raised by both the adoptive parent and the biological family to maintain the child's clan name and cultural practices. Therefore a culturally sensitive child adoption policy based on the concept of *Ubuntu* needs to be developed that will ensure that all networks (family, extended,

and community) that care for the child do so in the name of what is in the best interest of the child.

It seems in order to encourage child adoption in communities such as the Zulu community, state legislations and policies would not only have to be more sensitive to culture but also be more family-centred. Services of child care would not only focus on the best interest of the child but also focus on kinship triad and the family system, which would include extended family members and their role in child rearing in such communities. This would then mean that the social workers would have to educate themselves on the cultural dynamics and functionality of kinship care within families so as to be able to monitor and ensure that the child's best interests are being met. It is also important that the definition of child adoption in public policies be expanded upon to include traditional African forms of child adoption therefore being inclusive of extended family members and fictive kin (non-relatives). Ultimately, family should be defined by family structures, culture, and experiences therefore allowing for informal kinship care to be legally recognised and encouraged in their informality so as to lower the number of children that end up in government systems.

The second recommendation is for the implementation of an indigenous curriculum in higher education and training institutes. Traditional African knowledge and practices continue to be lost and altered as a result of modernisation, industrialisation, and urbanisation and so relying on just oral keeping of such is not enough anymore. Traditional knowledge has become surpassed by Euro-Western ideologies that seem to eradicate or undermine that of Africans; this is evident in both the South African laws and in educational curriculums. It is therefore important that higher training or education institutes also introduce indigenous curriculum not only because it's just as important but it provides a different perspective on topics such as child adoption and will ensure that African knowledge, norms and values are maintained and also represented thus embracing its importance too. Understanding the different perspectives of what the meaning and practice of adoption as it is formally (legalistically) defined would help both the professionals and potential adopters better approach adoption of indigenous children.

The third recommendation is for further studies. Replication of this study with different ethnic groups in South Africa and other parts of Africa, and combining the use of quantitative and qualitative studies in order to access a larger population, will improve the generalisability of the findings. More studies of this nature on a larger scale will provide a better understanding of indigenous communities' ways of life, being and views on such a complex and debatable topic such as adoption of indigenous children. It is also important that we continue to tell our stories

about our lives so that others can better understand our ways of life and thereby hopefully influence change on the rate of adoption both formally and informally.

The fourth recommendation builds on the third to propose the inclusion in further studies of representatives such as Social Workers so that they can provide their perspectives and experiences from a socio-legalistic aspect especially those working within the rural traditional communities. It would be interesting to know how they navigate the adoption process, the challenges they face and what would be the most appropriate way of working with indigenous communities so that more children are removed from the government adoption systems.

5.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is not without limitations. The first is the fact that it is a qualitative study with a fairly small sample population which means that results cannot be generalised to the rest of the population. The external validity is therefore limited to generalisation within the context of this study only and so further studies would need to be conducted to explore African ethnic groups so as to understand the full extent of cultural influences on child adoption in South Africa. The use of interviews may reflect subjectivity in the responses as the responses were participant specific. This limitation was counteracted through the use of semi-structured interviews in an effort to gain as much in-depth information from the participants as possible. A further limitation anticipated was that of translation of all the documents and data from isiZulu into English and vice versa. To compensate for this limitation both the researcher and the research assistant were proficient in both languages and the study also made use of a qualified language translator. Also the research assistant was given appropriate training regarding to what the study is about and the type of information it is intended to elicit. One of the issues that came up in the consenting process was that of signing the consent form, where some participants found it difficult to produce signatures as they were unfamiliar with such a concept and this issue was addressed by participants merely writing their initials and surname. Confidentiality was maintained; findings were then published in the summary form, using pseudonyms to refer to participants. Participants were interviewed individually, at different times, to maintain confidentiality.

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APPENDICES



Appendix 1a: English version of the Information Sheet and Informed Consent

CONSENT TO TAKE PART IN RESEARCH

My name is Claire N. Mondlana, and I'm doing my Masters degree in Psychology at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, under the supervision of Prof. Nhlanhla Mkhize (Mkhize@ukzn.ac.za). We're looking for people between the ages of 35-75 to take part in a study about the indigenous conceptions and understandings of child adoption within extended families amongst the Zulu community. Participants will not be required to provide information that may identify them personally, during the course of the research. Data will be collected by means of semi-structured, individual interviews. Taking part in the study is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any point of the study even though you have signed the consent form. We are interested in hearing your views and remember there are no wrong or right answers but just your conceptions and understanding of child adoption within such a community.

We would like to invite you to take part in our study. Participation will involve:

- 1) An interview lasting approximately 60-90 minutes.
- 2) We would like to audio record the interviews for transcription and analysis purposes.

As a participant, you have the following rights:

- 1) **Voluntariness:** You have the right to choose to take part in this study. This means you are free to decide whether to take part or not, and furthermore, you have the right to withdraw at any stage, without fear of penalties or consequences. Participation is entirely voluntary.
- 2) **Confidentiality:** You have the right for your identity to be protected. To ensure this, you will be given a pseudonym to protect your identity. The recorded interview will also be safely

stored by in a locked cabinet or five years, before it is completely destroyed. Apart from the researcher and the supervisor, no other person will access your interview data without your consent. Any personal information that is revealed during your participation will be concealed or anonymous by the researcher in the report to protect your identity.

The questions asked do not require you to give details of events nor will you be required too and if you would like to make reference to your previous experience, it is up to you to decide what level of detail you feel comfortable providing. Your data will be used as part of my masters' short dissertation, and the findings may be published in academic journals, books, or other outlets. In all these cases, **your identity will always be hidden by the researcher.**

If you have any questions you would like to ask, you are welcome to contact me, the researcher, and/or my supervisor, Prof. N.J. Mkhize (031: 260 1249, Email: Mkhize@ukzn.ac.za.

You may also contact Ms Phume Ximba of the Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee via phone (031) 260 3587 or email ximbap@ukzn.ac.za.

PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT

I have read and understood the information sheet. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions, and agree to take part in this research project, knowing that my participation is voluntary and I can withdraw at any time.

PARITICPANT SIGNATURE

RESEARCHER SIGNATURE

DATE

.....

PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT FOR USE OF AUDIO RECORDING

I agree that my interview may be tape recorded, on the understanding that my identity will remain anonymous.

PARTICIPANT'S SIGNATURE

RESEARCHER'S SIGNATURE

DATE

.....

Appendix 1b: isiZulu version of the consent form

IMVUME YOKUBAMBA IQHAZA OCWANINGWENI

Igama lami ngingu Claire N. Mondlana, ngenza iziqu ze Mastazi kwi Psychology eNyuvesi YaKwaZulu-Natali, ngaphansi komaluleki uSolwazi Nhlanhla Mkhize (mkhize@ukzn.ac.za). Sibheka abantu abaneminyaka ephakathi kwama-35 nama-75 abazobamba iqhaza ocwaningweni olumayelana, nemicabango kanye nokuqonda ngesiko lesintu lokuthatha ilungelo lokukhulisa (adopt) ingane ngaphakathi emndenini, njengomzali wayo emphakathini wamaZulu, kanye nomthelela wesiko. Ababambiqhaza ngeke kudingeke ukuba banikezele ngemininingwane yabo ngesikhathi sokubuzwa kwemibuzo eyoqhutshwa ngendlela yemibuzo engahleliwe. Sicela imvume kuwe yokuba ube ingxenye yalolucwaningo. Ukubamba iqhaza akuphoqelekile; kuwukuzithandela kwakho. Unalo futhi nelungelo lokuyeka ukuba yingxenye yocwaningo noma yinini ngesikhathi socwaningo nakuba ulisayinile ifomu lemivume. Silangazelele ukuzwa imibono yakho, khumbula azikho izimpendulo ezilungile noma ezingalungile kodwa nje imicabango kanye nokuqonda kwakho mayelana nelungelo lokukhulisa (adopt) ingane ngaphakathi emndenini, njengomzali wayo.

Sizothanda ukukumema ukuba ubambe iqhaza ocwaningweni. Ukubamba iqhaza kuzohlenganisa lokhu:

- 1) ukuxoxisana okufushane nomuntu ngamunye okuzohlenganisa nemibuzo engahleliwe, okungathatha cishe imizuzu engama-60-90.
- 2) Sizothanda ukuqopha izingxoxo ngezinhloso zokuzibhala phansi kanye nokuzihlaziya.

Njengombambiqhaza, uzoba namalungelo athile:

- 1) **Ukuzithandela/ukuzikhethela** – unelungelo lokukhetha ukubamba iqhaza kulolu cwaningo. Lokho kusho ukuthi ukhululekile ukukhetha ukuthi uyalibamba iqhaza noma cha. Ngaphezu kwalokhu, unelungelo lokuhoxa noma yinini; ngeke uhlawuliswe ngalokho, nganoma iyiphi indlela. Ngamanye amazwi, ukuhoxa ngeke kube nomphumela omubi kuwe.

- 2) **Ukuba yimfihlo** – uma ubamba iqhaza kulolu cwaningo, unelungelo lokuba igama lakho livikeleke. Ukuqinisekisa lokhu, igama lakho langempela ngeke lisetshenziswe; uyonikezwa igama locwaningo. Izingxoxo eziqoshiwe ngiyozigcina endaweni ephephile iminyaka emihlanu ngaphambu kokuba zishatshalaliswe futhi akekho umuntu oyovunyelwa ukuba azisebenzise ngaphandle kwemvume yakho. Lonke ulwazi ngawe oluyochamuka ngesikhathi socwaningo luyofihlwa noma laziwe njengolomuntu ongaziwa ngumcwaningi embikweni wakhe ukuze avikele imininingwane yakho.

Imibuzo ezobuzwa ayidingi ukuba unikezele ngemininingwano yesenzeko ngaphandle uma wena uzithandela ungakwenza lokho, mhlawumbe ngosuke wakubona ngaphambilini, kukuwe ukuthi uzizwa ukhululekile ngokunikezela ngolwazi olungakanani. Ulwazi lwakho luyosetshenziswa njengocwaningo lwami olufushane lweziqo zeMastazi. Imiphumela yocwaningo kungenzeka ishicilelwe kumaJenali ezemfundo, izincwadi, noma yikuphi lapho kutholakala khona isikhala. Kukho konke lokhu, **imininingwane ephathelene nawe siqu sakho, iyohlala iyimfihlo.**

Uma unemibuzo othanda ukuyibuza, wamukelekile ukuthi uthinte mina, umcwaningi, kanye/noma umqondisi wami, u-Solwazi NJ Mkhize (031: 260 1241; Mkhize@ukzn.ac.za).

Ungakwazi futhi ukuthinta uNksz Phume Ximba we Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee ngocingo ku (031) 260 3587 noma imeyili (*incwadi yomoya*) ku ximbap@ukzn.ac.za.

UKUVUMA UKUBAMBA IQHAZA

Ngilifundile futhi ngaliqonda iphepha lolwazi. Nginikeziwe ithuba lokubuza imibuzo, futhi ngavuma ukuba yingxenye yalomklamo wocwaningo. Ngiyazi ukuthi ukubamba kwami iqhaza kuwukuzithandela futhi ngingayeka noma nini, ngisho ucwaningo seluqalile.

ISIGENESHA YOMBAMBIQHAZA

USUKU.....

ISIGENESHA YOMCWANINGI

.....

UKUVUMA UKUBAMBA IQHAZA KUSETSHENZISWA ISIQOPHAMAZWI (RECORDER)

Ngiyavuma ukuba izingxoxo zami ziqoshwe, ngokuqonda ukuthi imininingwane yami iyohlezi iyimfihlo.

ISIGENESHA YOMBAMBIQHAZA

USUKU

ISIGENESHA YOMCWANINGI

.....

Appendix 2a: Semi-structured interview schedule

Thank you very much for your participation in this research. I will be asking you open-ended questions about adoption (from a legal and indigenous/African or Zulu perspective). Please note that there is no right or wrong answer. Do elaborate on each question, giving full examples. If you are not sure about the question, please let me know, and I will explain.

1. What is your understanding of the term ‘child adoption’?

- When you think of child adoption, what’s the first thing that comes to mind for you?
- What would you say is the most important thing to keep in mind when thinking about the term child ‘adoption’?
- Have you (yourself), or, are you aware of a family or community member, who have adopted a child/children using the formal / legal adoption system? **IF YES:**
 - What motivated you (family, community member)?
 - What was happening?/What led to the adoption taking place?
 - How did you (family/community member) go about doing this?/What was the process?
 - What do you consider to be the advantages of formal legal adoption?
 - Formally (legally), adopting a child means that the child assumes all aspects of your life, which includes taking on your family name, your culture, and family traditions: the child is therefore completely immersed into your family. What is your stance and view on that?
 - As a Zulu man/woman, embedded in culture and traditions, what do you think the challenges of formal/legal adoption might be?
 - How does culture influence your decision to adopt legally?

- In what ways is the term 'adoption' related or compare to the African ways of raising children within the extended family, by other family members, even though the children are not their biological offspring?

2. What does child adoption mean for the isiZulu speaking community

- What do you understand by the African practice of taking in or assuming responsibility for children belonging to the extended family members, even though they are not your biological offspring? What would you call, or refer to this, in IsiZulu?
- In your own words, how would you define adoption, from an isiZulu cultural perspective?
- What do you consider to be the advantages of Zulu/African ways of adoption by means of the extended family?
- What do you think the disadvantages may be?
- Have you (yourself) taken in an extended family member's child or assumed responsibility for a child within the extended family (eg. Your sister/brother/cousin/aunt's child)?
- If YES, what is your view or experience on that?
 - What motivated you to do so and what was the process? What was happening?
 - What led to the adoption taking place?
 - How did you go about doing this?
- Can you tell me about the examples in your own community, where you have seen this happen?
 - What was happening in that community/family?
 - What led to the adoption taking place?
 - What was the process involved?
- In the case of extended family members assuming responsibility for the child/children:

- How is decided which family member/s take which child/children?
- Are the duties (responsibilities) between family members shared and if so, HOW?

. It seems quite important that the child knows where they come or have a sense of belonging and that seems to be very much linked into lineage and blood ties. How important is bloodline and how does that factor into adopting a child?

3. In the Zulu community/culture, what is the meaning of the term ‘family’ and who does it encompass/where does it begin and end?

4. In the Zulu community, it is said a child is born not only born into the family but also into an entire community:

- What would this mean for an adopted child and what does it mean to belong into a community, specifically the Zulu speaking community?

What would you say are some of the cultural influences on child adoption in the Zulu community?

- When a child is born or introduced into the family which includes the non-living (ancestors, abaphansi), what are some of the traditional practices that need to be done? [mention each traditional practice, and then take the participant to describe each, according to the stages of the child: Some probes if not volunteered: *Imbeleko/ukufaka isiphandla? Ukuchambuza? Umemulo?* etc
- and how important are these practices to both the family and the child?

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULD LIKE TO SAY OR ADD?

- **THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION**

Appendix 2b: Zulu version of the Semi-structured interview schedule

APPENDIX 2: UHLU LWEMIBUZO ENGAHLELIWE

Ngiyabonga kakhulu ukubamba iqhaza kwakho kulolu cwaningo. Ngizokubuza imibuzo evulekile ngokuthatha ilungelo lokukhulisa ingane (adopt) njengomzali wayo, **ngokwendlela yezomthetho (legal adoption)**, kanye nesiko lesintu noma lesizulu lokukhulisa ingane njengeyakho, emndenini. Ngicela wazi ukuthi ayikho impendulo eyiqiniso noma eyiphutha. Phendula umbuzo ngamunye kabanzi, unikeze izibonelo eziphelele. Uma ungawuqondi kahle umbuzo, ngicela ungazise ukuze ngikuchazele.

1. Igama elithi “ukuthatha ilungelo lokukhulisa ingane, njengomzali wayo” (adopt) lichazani ngokuqonda/ngokwazi kwakho?

- Uma ucabanga ngokuthatha ilungelo lokukhulisa ingane njengomzali (adopt), yini efika kuqala emqondweni wakho?
- Yini ongasho ukuthi into ebaluleke kakhulu ukuyigcina emqondweni uma ucabanga ngetemu elithi “ukuthatha ilungelo lokukhulisa ingane njengomzali wayo”?
- Ngabe wena siqu sakho, noma ilungu lomndeni, noma umuntu omaziyo emphakathini: sewake walisebenzisa ithuba lokuthatha ilungelo lokukhulisa ingane njengomzali wayo usebenzisa uhlelo lwendlela esemthethweni? **Uma uthi YEBO:**
 - Yini eyakukhuthaza (umndeni, ilungu lomphakathi)?
 - Kwakwenzakalani? Yini eyenza ukuthi ingane ithathwe ikhuliswe ngalendlela?
 - Wena noma umndeni noma ilungu lomphakathi lakwenza kanjani lokho? Yiluphi uhlelo olwalandelwa?
 - Yini ocabanga ukuthi yinhle ngokuthatha ilungelo lokukhulisa ingane njengomzali wayo, ngendlela esemthethweni?

- Ngokomthetho, ukuthatha ilungelo lokukhulisa ingane njengomzali, kusho ukuthi leyo ngane iba ingxenye yempilo yakho yonke, okuhlanganisa ukusebenzisa isibongo sakho, isiko lakho, kanye namasiko omndeni: ngakho-ke ingane isiyingxenye yomndeni wakho ngokugcwele. Kuthini ukucabanga kanye nombono wakho ngalokho?
- Njengomuntu wesifazane noma wesilisa olandela amasiko nendlela yokuphila yeSizulu, ucabanga ukuthi yiziphi izinselelo okungenzeka uhlangabezane nazo ngokuthatha ilungelo lokukhulisa ingane njengomzali, ngokusemthethweni?
- Isiko lakho linamthelela muni ekuthatheni kwakho isinqumo sokuthatha ilungelo lokukhulisa njengomzali wayo, ngendlela esemthethweni?
- Itemu elithi “adopt, noma ukuthatha ilungelo lokuba umzali, ngokusemthethweni” lihlobene noma lifana kanjani nezindlela zase-Afrika zokukhulisa ingane emndenini, nangamanye amalungu omndeni, noma izingane zingazalwa yibona?

2. Ukuthatha ilungelo lokuba umzali wengane, uyikhulise, kuchaza ukuthini emphakathini okhuluma isiZulu

- Yini oyaziyo ngokwenza kwesintu ukuthatha noma ukunakekela izingane zelungu lomndeni, noma zingazalwa nguwe. NgeSizulu lesi senzo sibizwa ngani noma ungasichaza kanjani?
- Ngawakho amagama, ungakuchaza kanjani ukuthatha ilungelo lokukhulisa ingane, ngengomzali wayo, ngokwesiko leSizulu?
- Yini ocabanga ukuthi iwubuhle bezindlela zeSizulu noma zesintu zokuthatha noma ukunakekela ingane yasemndenini?
- Yini ocabanga ukuthi ingaba ububi mhlawumbe?
- Ngabe wena siqu sakho, wake wathatha ingane yelungu lomndeni noma wanakekela ingane yelungu lomndeni (Isibonelo: umfowenu, udadewenu, umzala wakho, ingane kababekazi)?
 - Uma uthi YEBO, Ucabangani ngalokho?
 - Yini eyakugqugquzela ukuthi wenze lokho futhi yiluphi uhlelo owalulandela? Kwakwenzakalani?

- Yini eyeholela kulokhu? (Ukuthatha ilungelo lobuzali)
- Wakwenza kanjani lokhu?
- Ngicela ungazise ngezibonelo emphakathini wakho lapho obone khona kwenzeka lokhu
 - Kwakwenzakalani emphakathini noma emndenini lowo?
 - Yini eyaholela kulokhu?
 - Yiluphi uhlelo olwalandelwa?
- Kumalungu omndeni athatha isinqumo sokunakekela ingane noma izingane:
 - Sithathwa kanjani isinqumo sokuthi yiliphi ilungu/amalungu omndeni azothatha ingane futhi azothatha yiphi ingane noma izingane?
 - Yimiphi imisebenzi phakathi kwamalungu omndeni awabelana yona futhi uma kunjalo, abelana kanjani?

- Kubukeka kubalulekile ukuthi ingane yazi imvelaphi yayo noma ibe nomqondo wokuzazi futhi lokho kuncike kulibo nobuhlobo begazi. Ubuhlobo begazi bubaluleke kangakanani futhi bunomthelela muni ekuthatheni/ekunakekeleni ingane njengomzali?

3. Emphakathini wamaZulu noma esikweni lesiZulu, yini incazelo yegama elithi “umndeni” futhi libandanya bani? Liqalaphi futhi ligcina kuphi?

4. Emphakathini wamaZulu, kuthiwa ingane ayizalelwa umndeni kodwa izalelwa umphakathi wonke:

-Lokhu kuchazani enganeni futhi kuchazani ukuba ilungu lomphakathi, ikakhulu umphakathi okhuluma isiZulu?

-Ucabanga ukuthi yiphi imithelela yesiko ekuthatheni ilungelo lokukhulisa ingane njengomzali, emphakathini wamaZulu?

- Uma ingane izalwa noma ibikwa emndenini okuhlanganisa abaphansi, yimaphi amasiko okufanele enziwe? {Qagula/isho isiko ngalinye, bese ucela umbambiqhaza ukuthi achaze isiko ngalinye, ngokwezigaba ezehlukene zengane: Ezinye izinto ongazibuza uma zingashiwo ngokuzithandela: **Imbeleko/ukufaka isiphandla? Ukuchambuza? Umemulo? Etc**

- Lawa masiko abaluleke kanjani emndenini nasenganeni?

KUKHONA OKUTHILE OFISA UKUKUSHO NOMA UKUKWENGEZA

- **SIYABONGA KAKHULU UKUBAMBA KWAKHO IQHAZA**

Appendix 3a: English version of the letter to the community leaders

PO Box

Mtubatuba

3935

29 March 2017

Dear Respective Community Leader

My name is Claire Nonjabulo Mondlana, a student at the University of KwaZulu Natal. I am currently doing my masters in counselling psychology. I am currently doing a short dissertation under the supervision of Professor Nhlanhla Mkhize, on indigenous conceptions and understandings of child adoption within extended families amongst the Zulu community. I am also interested in the cultural influences on adoption. I am writing to you in the hopes that you can assist me in conducting a study within the area for the purpose of exploring and sharing with others the indigenous conceptions and understanding of child adoption within extended family in a community so rich in indigenous practices. I therefore write this letter firstly to request permission to announce the study to people in the community through specific forums such as imbizo (communal meetings), secondly to paste posters around the area to advertise the study, and lastly to have a short interview with you regarding indigenous knowledge about the Zulu community with regards to the study. I would also like to request permission to use the grounds used for *izimbizo* (communal meetings). I will be working with another person on the study, that is, my research assistant (Mtholi Khanyile).

Please contact me with any concerns and further clearance on details so to approve the request.

Thank you

Warm Regards,

Claire Nonjabulo Mondlana

Telephone number: 072 664 1622

Email: clairemondiana@yahoo.com

Professor Nhlanhla Mkhize, PhD

Supervisor: University of KwaZulu-Natal

Phone: 031: 2601249

Email: Mkhize@ukzn.ac.za

Appendix 3b: isiZulu version of the letter to the community leaders

PO Box

Mtubatuba

3935

29 March 2017

Sawubona Mholi Womphakathi Ohloniphekile

Igama lami ngingu Claire Nonjabulo Mondlana, umfundi waseNyuvesi YaKwaZulu-Natali. Njengamanje ngenza iziqu zeMastazi eKwelulekweni ngezengqondo. Okwamanje ngenza ucwaningo olufushane ngaphansi komaluleki uSolwazi Nhlanhla Mkhize mayelana nemicabango nezindlela zesintu (zesiZulu) zokuthatha ilungelo lokhulisa ingane njengeyakho, ilungelo lobuzali, ngaphakathi emndenini, emphakathini wamaZulu, kanye nomthelela wesiko. Ngakho-ke ngikubhalela ngethemba lokuthi ungangisiza ngokulawula ucwaningo endaweni ngenhloso yokucwaninga nokwabelana nabanye ngemicabango kanye nokuqonda ngokwesintu, isiko lokuthatha ilungelo lokukhulisa ingane, njengomzali, ngaphakathi emndenini emphakathini onothile ngokugcina amasiko.

Ngakho-ke ngibhala lencwadi okokuqala ukucela imvumo yokumemezela ngocwaningo kubantu basemphakathini emihlanganweni ethile okungaba imbizo (umhlangano womphakathi). Okwesibili, ukunamathisela amaphepha endaweni ukukhangisa ngocwaningo. Okokugcina, ukuba nezingxoxo ezimfushane nawe mayelana nolwazi lwesintu mayelana nomphakathi wamaZulu oluphathelene nocwaningo. Ngizothanda futhi ukucela imvume yokusebenzisa izindawo zemihlangano yomphakathi. Ngiyobe ngisebenza nomunye umuntu ocwaningweni lwami okungumsizi wami wocwaningo (Mtholi Khanyile) oyonginikezela ngazo zonke izinto zokusebenza ezidingeka ocwaningweni.

Ngicela ungithinte uma udinga ulwazi oluthe xaxa kanye nokucaciseleka ngemininingwane ukuze wamukele isicelo.

Ngiyabonga

Ozithobayo

Claire Nonjabulo Mondlana

Inombolo yocingo: 072 664 1622

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Solwazi Nhlanhla Mkhize, Ph. D

Inuvesi yakwa Zulu-Natali

Ucingo: 031: 260 1249

Emeyili: Mkhize@ukzn.ac.za