

Why adoptees should have birthrights open to them research paper example

[Family](#), [Children](#)



- Introduction

The question on whether adoptees should be allowed to have the knowledge on their birthrights has remained a food for thought and has been debated at different capacities. The debate has not only taken political direction but also psychological, emotional and social spheres, as well. The existing laws do not allow the adoptees to have access on information that pertain to their birthrights. Therefore, various groups and individuals have been concerned about this matter and have expressed their contempt towards such laws. The question that many have asked is, why should adopted children not be given access to information on their birthrights? Awareness of one's birthright is important as it enables an individual to understand his/her historical background, genealogical traits, cases of diseases and illness that may be associated with his/her family. More often than not, adopted children are faced with myriad of challenges and problems that affect them psychologically and emotionally. In most cases, they feel out of place and lack a sense of identity. Lack of knowledge on the birthrights has been seen argued to have very negative effects on the victims. It does not only affect them politically but also emotionally and socially. The psychological effects, particularly, have been seen to be very detrimental. Laws that deny the adoptees a chance to access information on their birthrights are, therefore, barbaric and need to be reviewed. The aim of this research is to discuss the rationale for denying the adoptees a chance to have information on their birthrights, assess the political, social and psychological effects and provide recommendation on the same.

- Statement of the Problem

The fact that existing laws deny the adoptees a chance to access information on their birthrights has been argued in different perspectives in order to reveal the utmost danger that lies behind it. Concerns have been raised on various grounds that adoptees should be allowed to have access to information that pertain to their birthrights. It can be stated in this research that it is important to allow the adoptees to have information on their birthrights. The problem to be researched in this dissertation is that adoptees should be allowed to access information on their birthrights.

- Research Questions

As stated in the proposal for this research, the research seeks to answer the following questions:

- Does adoption affect an adopted child
- What effects does adoption have on a child?
- What is the solution for a positive adoption?
- Background of the Problem

The desire by most of the adopted children to have knowledge of their birthrights has been a matter of concern in the society. A number of resins have been stated o stress the importance of allowing adoptees to know their birth histories. To begin with, a child's knowledge on his/her birthright helps him/her to beware of vital information about the family history, genealogical characteristics and traits that may affect the normal growth process as in the case of hereditary diseases like diabetes, eye problems, sickle cell anemia and other heredity diseases. In other words, birthright knowledge has immense medical significance. Moreover, the effects associated with adoption are countless, ranging from physical problems, emotional problems,

and social to psychological problems. All these problems can best be handled if the history of the child is known to both the adopted and the adoptee. It is on this basis that this research seeks to determine the challenges that adopted children undergo due to the fact that they are not allowed to have access to their birthright information.

The purpose of this research is to prove that adoptees should have the rights of knowledge to their birth history, not only for medical purposes, but also to help ensure that they have a healthy mental state and healthy emotional growth throughout their adolescent years. This research will also show that adoptees that do not have the advantages of knowing their birth history after adoption are tremendously more affected than adoptees that have birthright knowledge. It is to advocate a new law to be created to mandate the information be accessible to all adoptees.

- Significance of Research

The significance of this research is to prove the harmful effects on the closed adoption system. Denying adoptees their birthright history is not the best approach to be taking during an adoption process. Laws need to be changed in order to give adoptees their answers to their unanswered questions. To help adoption to be more of a healthier and positive experience for everyone one involved, but mainly the adoptee.

- Literature Review

The issue on the adoptees search for their birth parents has been debated for a number of years. The debates have been intense on this matter due to its significance in the society. It has a lot of impacts on the psychological, emotional and social developments on the child. This research recognizes

the fact that adoptees need to know their birthrights has been studied and researched by several scholars. In this section of the research, the views of various scholars and their findings on this research topic are analyzed in order to generate findings that can provide responses to the research questions so that an informed conclusion on this study. I must reiterate in section that the findings of this research will be based on the information derived from the research conducted earlier by various scholars.

According to Melina in 1998, the answers to questions on why adopted children want to know about their birth parents have remained unclear.

Melina argues adoptees seek for different things while on the verge to know about their birthrights. According to him, some adoptees seek for health and genetic information while other want to establish relationships with their families in order to seek clarifications on issues that are unclear to them about their lives (Fischer).

It is reported in the numbers of studies that most of the adoptees in the United States face several challenges while in search of information on their historical backgrounds. As indicated in the research report by Carp in 1998, the laws and policies in place do not allow the adoptees to be given access to information on their birthrights (Schwartz Ph. D.). The adoption records are sealed and, therefore, deny the adoptees an access to information on their backgrounds. For instance, the Minnesota Act of 1917 led to the sealing of the adoption records. The records were only accessed through the court, and it was made too difficult to be reached by concerned parties because it was under a court seal. Adopted children have, therefore, remained at crossroads while searching for information on their birthrights (Busharis).

The adopted children have, therefore, been forced to live believing that their adopting parents are the real parents. According to Baran and Pannor, the intent for sealing the adoption records in the United States is to remove any form of stigma of illegitimacy from the child (Baran). In this sense, it was not meant to close the information for the child.

Tracing back the history of sealing the adoption records, the researches that were conducted in the 1960s and 1970s laid emphasis on the theories of the parent-child attachment and the losses that are related to the adoption of the child. It was, therefore, argued that the best way. In 1970s, researches already established that secrecy and denial in adoption had very devastating effects and was to be replaced by open adoption. By 1980s, policies were put in place that allow adult adoptees to keep in touch through the registries on government sponsored-adoption. In the contrary, most adoptees began to violate this policy and did their search for information behind the laws.

Since then, the U. S laws on the adoptees access to information on their birthrights differ from state to state. In some states today, the adoptees are allowed to seek for non-identifying information about their families. For example, they can request for information on medical history and physical descriptions. However, limitations are set on the scope of information that the adoptees can access. For instance information on names, social security numbers and the addresses are limited depending on the state in question.

It has been argued that adoption is associated with emotional and psychological problems. Statistics on adoption show that over 120, 000 children in America are adopted annually. It is shown further that most of the adopted children grow up happily and in healthy conditions. According to

researchers at Minnesota University reveal that a small percentage of the adopted children constituting about 14% are noted to have a behavioral disorder or mental problems that make them be in contact with a psychologist mental pathologist at adolescence. Compared to the non-adopted teen, adopted teens face a more psychological and mental problems. In a research titled " Adoptees More Likely to be Troubled," the researchers admitted that although adoption is widely practiced, many adopted children become victim off mental and psychological problems. In the past researches conducted before that of Keyes, it was believed that the families that adopt children are rich and are, therefore, capable of accessing psychiatric services whenever their children would show abnormal behavior. However, Margaret Keyes sounds a warning that this assumption may be fallacious after studying over a thousand children; both adopted and non-adopted children. Being a psychologist at Minnesota, Keyes, and her counterparts found in their research that the variations in behavior of the children can be attributed to the innate characteristics such as genetic makeup. They conclude that some of the problems associated with the adopted children may be present within the child long before the adoption is done.

Through their primary research that was done by face-to-face interview adoptees, Keyes and her colleagues generated firsthand information based on interaction with adoptees themselves. Their research mainly targets teenage adoptees and non-adoptees. All respondents used in their study were taken to the laboratory where they were asked questions in turn.

Among the most striking findings in their research is that adopted children

form within the United States are more prone to the behavioral disorders compared to the adopted from outside the United States. They reported that most adoptees from outside U. S are capable of keeping their problems to themselves while those from U. S cat out their feelings of anxiety, separation and depression (Keyes). It is argued clear that the findings that were generated by Keyes show a different story from what had been believed that adoptees from foreign countries may be the most affected due to the challenges of having to adjust. According to their research, the male adoptees are the most affected psychologically while they struggle to find their birthrights and identity.

In a study by Donaldson, he reasons out that denying adult adoptees access to their original birth certificates wrongfully denies them a right that is enjoyed by all others. This is not in their best interest as far as their personal interest and medical needs are concerned. He further argues that even the alternative solutions to giving adopted adults access to their birthrights are not sufficient enough to address the needs of the adopted children. The adopted children have more concerns then can be addressed through the alternative ways such as mutual consent registries.

It has also been reported that most of the birthmothers of the adopted children have come out that they do not want to remain anonymous anymore to their children. They argue that the adoption issue came through a mutual agreement and, therefore, there is nothing to be hidden about them to their children. Therefore, birthmothers are advocating for policies that do not deny the adopted children an opportunity to access their birthrights.

- Findings and Conclusion

After analyzing literatures on regulatory policies on access to birthright information by the adoptees and the challenges associated with it, number issues can be noted in response to the research questions. First, it is noteworthy that the policies regulating access to birthright information by the adoptees vary depending on the state in question. Adopted children have been reported to be on a constant search for information on their birth histories in order to satisfy different curiosities. Most of the reported of such searches are associated with the need to gain information on the medical history and family genetic concerns. Moreover, others also wish to determine their identities.

Lack of information by the adoptees on their birthrights is associated with myriad of challenges. As reported on the research by Keyes and her counterparts, adopted children experience a lot of mental and psychological problems due to the limitations and confines regarding information on their birthrights. Adoption is not bad, but the denial of the adoptees a chance to access information on their birthrights is very detrimental. It affects their physical growth, emotional and psychological development.

Works Cited

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