Assessment of AIDS Related Orphans

African Network for Protection and Prevention of Child Abuse (ANPPCAN)

February 2006

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Objectives of the Study

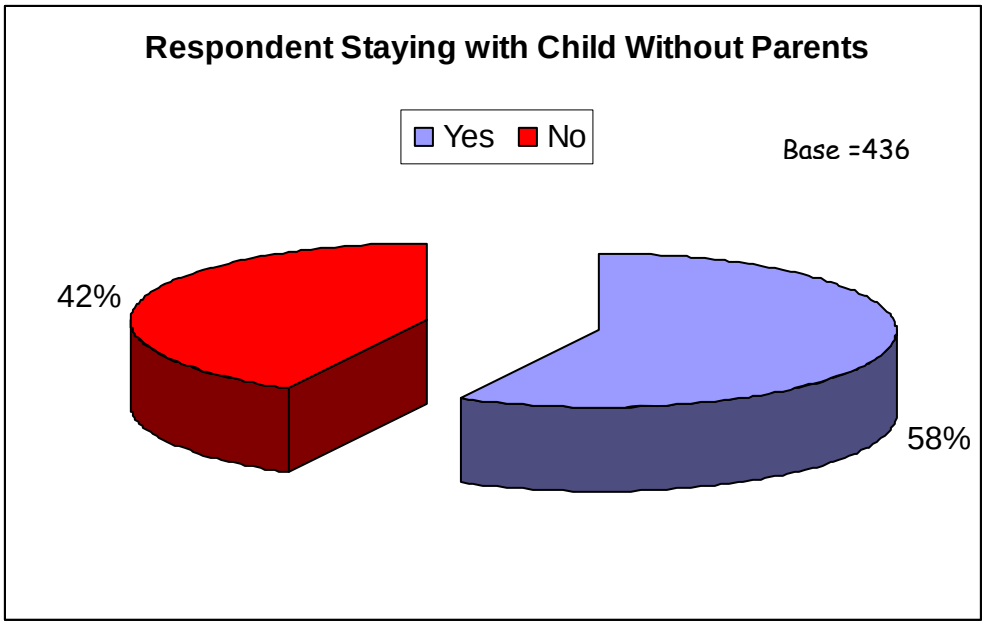
The specific objectives of the study were to:

- Assess the number of people taking care of orphans
- Determine family earnings and the number of children being taken care of
- Assess the employment status and responsibility of orphans
- Determine awareness levels of presence of orphans in the villages

1.2 Basic Data of Respondents staying with children without parents

A total of 436 respondents were included in the study. The percentage distribution of those hosting children without parents is as illustrated on figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Respondents hosting children without parents



The findings show that 58% of the respondents were hosting at least a child that had no parent(s). The number of such children was found to range from 1 to 7. Majority or 46% of the respondents hosted 1 child and those with 4 or more made up 11% of the

respondents with hosted children. The average number of children was 2 and the standard deviation was 1.2.

Hosts Educational Level

The study sought to determine the educational level of the hosts. It was anticipated that hosts with higher levels of education can afford to give children better care and more access to education. The findings are as shown on the table below.

Table 1.1 : Hosts' Level of Educational

Educational Level	Frequency	Percent
Primary	178	70.9
Secondary	52	20.7
None	21	8.4
Total	**251**	**100.0**

Majority (71%) of the hosts had primary level education, those with secondary education were 21% while 8% of the respondents had no education at all. A chi-square test done to test for significance in relationship between hosting children and level of education yielded a Pearson chi-square value of 4,455 at I degree of freedom and an asymptotic significance of 0.237 at 0.05 confidence level. This result implies that no statistically significant relationship exists between the two variables i.e. taking up orphans is not influenced by level of education.

Gender and Marital Status of Hosts

The study observed the gender and marital status of the respondents caring for children with no parents. It was found out the orphans were predominantly in the hands of female caretakers who made up 87% of respondents caring for children. Only 13% of the hosts were male.

A chi-square test conducted showed that a significant relationship existed between hosting of children and gender. The implication is that any child that loses a parent or parents is more likely to land in the hand of a female caretaker.

A child's normal upbringing is compromised when they a lose one or both parents. It is in child's best interest if they are placed in normal families preferably with both male and female. In the circumstances however, the children hardly have a choice but to stay with whoever is willing to take them in. The table 4.2 below shows the marital status of the hosts.

Table 1.2: Hosts marital status

Marital status	Frequency	Percent
Legally married	31	12.4
Customarily married	117	46.6
Never married	31	12.4
Separated	17	6.8
Divorced	9	3.6
Friendship living	23	9.2
Widowed	23	9.2
Total	**251**	**100.0**

It can be seen from the table 4.2 that 59% of the respondents taking care of orphans were married while 9% were casually living with the partners. Those that did not have partners comprised 33% of the group. A chi-test showed lack of a significant relationship between marital status and hosting of orphans.

The average number of hosted children was found to be 2 and 44% of the respondents had one child with them, 30% had 2 while 14% had 3. Only 4% of the respondents stayed with 5 or more children.

Of the children hosted, 259 were girls and 237 boys. This does not therefore show any clear bias on the gender of the child to be supported.

Hosts Income

The level of income of a host would directly influence the quality of care that would be given to the orphaned children. It cant be gainsaid that families that co-opt orphaned children add to themselves an extra burden considering that they already have their own children to look after. Moreover, parent deaths occurring due to HIV/AIDS deplete the resources available leaving barely nothing for the children to survive on. Therefore the hosts are left to fend for the children from their own means.

Figure 2: Hosts Monthly Income

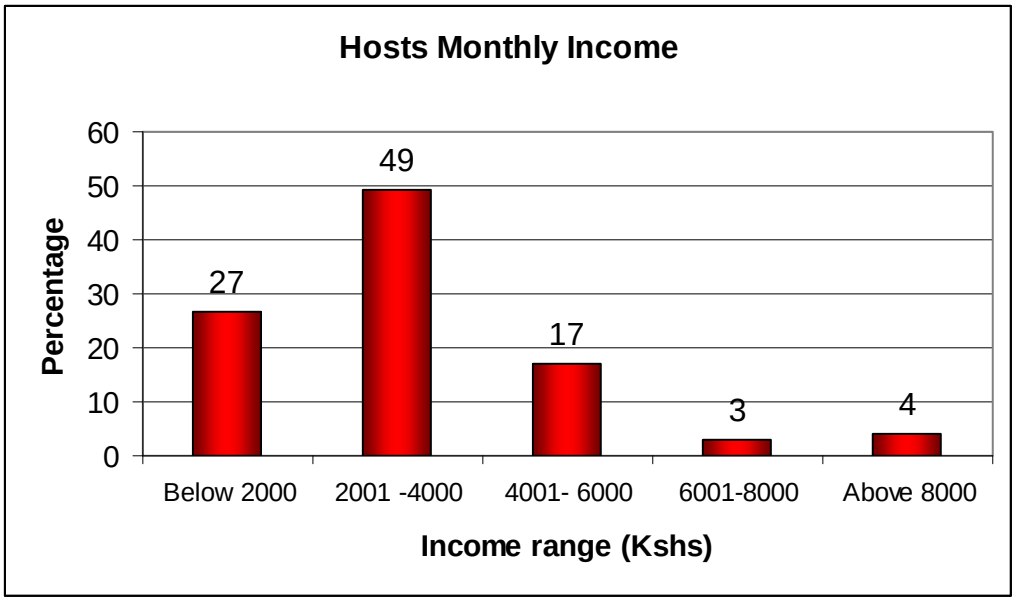


Figure 4.2 above illustrates that 76% of the respondents taking care of orphaned children had monthly incomes not exceeding Kshs 4,000. Only 4% earned above Kshs 8,000 monthly. With such findings it is evident that hosts that are constrained by resources are taking of most orphaned children. It can therefore be postulated that majority of the orphaned children are brought up in difficult circumstances. These findings paint a gloomy picture on the kind of assistance the caregivers can afford to give these children with the limited resources at their disposal.

There was found to exist a significant relationship between the income level and hosting of children without parents. This implies that income influences hosting of orphans.

Number of Children

The study endeavored to find out whether the respondents taking care of orphans had any children of there own. As shown only 8% had none. Majority of the respondents had between 1-3 children. Those with more than 6 made 8% of the group.

Table 1.3 Hosts' Number of children

Number of children	Frequency	Percent
None	21	8.4
1-3	134	53.4
4-6	76	30.3
More than 6	20	8.0
Total	**251**	**100.0**

The study sought to find out the extent to which the number of children a family has would influence their decision to take in orphans. To find out this a t-test was conducted to compare the means of the number of children of those that were staying with orphans and those not. The table 7 on appendix 1 shows that significance level to be 0.074 testing done at 0.05 confidence level.

The findings imply that the number of children a family has does not significantly influence their decision to take in an orphan.

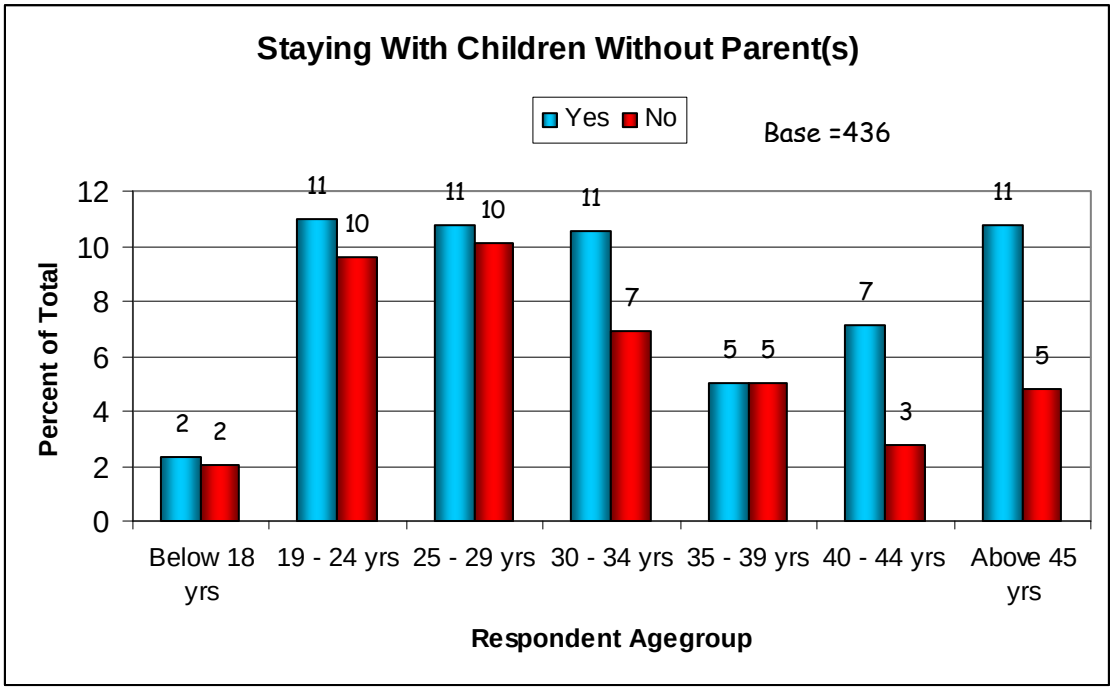
Respondent Age and Hosting of Orphans

It can be presumed that the quality of care the children get would be a function of the host's age . Of interest in the study therefore was to determine the age of the respondents that were taking care of the orphaned children. The table 2 appendix1 shows the age distribution of such respondents. The youngest and the oldest hosts were aged 15 and 87 years respectively. Hosts in the 19-24 years age bracket made up the highest percentage (22%) while those below 18 years and looking after orphans comprised 6% of the hosts.

Respondents staying with children were than those that did in all age categories except 35 -39 years and below 18 where the proportions were equal.

Further, respondents that can be said to be elderly i.e. ages 55 above years and were taking care of children made up 7% of the hosts. This contradicts the common assumption that most of the children orphaned are left in the hands of aging grandparents.

Figure 3: Age And Hosting of Orphans



As illustrated on the figure 2.2.2, respondents below 18 years of age (children) who were found to be staying with children without parents made up 2% of the studied population.

A chi-square test was on the relationship between age and staying with orphans yielded results on table 8 appendix 1. With the testing done at 0.05 significance level it was established that a significant relationship existed between age of and staying with orphans. This suggests that some consideration is made on the age wise capability of a person to fend for the orphans before they are co-opted.

1.3 Awareness of Parentless Children

All the respondents were asked if they knew of a child that had no parent. In total, 81% of the respondents could identify such a child in their locality. The table 2.1 below shows the awareness levels across the sampling points.

The table 2.1 above attests that majority of the respondents across the villages knew of at least a child without parents. Awareness levels were highest in Highridge where 100% of the respondents knew of such children. Kisumu Ndogo had an awareness level of 96% while Grogan had 87%. KA had the lowest level of awareness at 45%.

Table 1.4: Awareness of Children Without Parents

	Knowledge of a child without a parent	
Name of village	**Yes**	**No**
Gitathuru	78%	22%
Nyayo	86%	14%
Grogan	87%	13%
K Ndogo	96%	4%
KA	45%	55%
Ngomongo	76%	24%
Highridge	100%	-
KB	80%	20%
Total	**81%**	**19%**

The findings are an indicator to the fact that orphans were ubiquitous across localities rural and urban alike.

1.4 Caregiver Relationship With the Children

Table 1.5

	Frequency	Percent
Parent	44	18
Uncle/Auntie	121	48
No relationship	5	2
Grandparent	36	14
Cousin	7	3
Brother/Sister	26	10
No response	12	5
Total	**251**	**100**

Uncle/Aunts made up the majority (48%) of those taking care of the children. This indicates that a child losing a parent(s), is most likely to be raised by the an uncle or aunt.18% of those caring for children were surviving parents, while grandparents comprised 14% of the respondents. 2% of the respondents were not related to the children at all.

It was also found out that 91% of the parents were female compared to males that were only 9%. This implies that children are ten times more likely to be displaced from home when the surviving parent is male as opposed to female.

Most respondents,37%, that took up children did so out of sympathy for the orphans. 9% adopted the children while 2% intervened because the responsible parents were negligent.

1.5 Status of Hosted Children

Table 1.6

Status of Child	Frequency	Percent
Half orphan	92	36.7
Total orphan	159	63.3
Total	**251**	**100.0**

Majority (63%) of the children being hosted were total orphans while 37% were half orphans i.e. had one parent.

Table 1.7

	Frequency	Percent
Fostered	15	6.0
Adopted	32	12.7
No response	204	81.3
Total	**251**	**100.0**

Only 13% of the respondents had officially adopted the children they stayed with and a further 6% were foster parents. Majority (71%) of the respondents preferred to stay with the children in the traditional way, whereby they would later on go back their original homes.

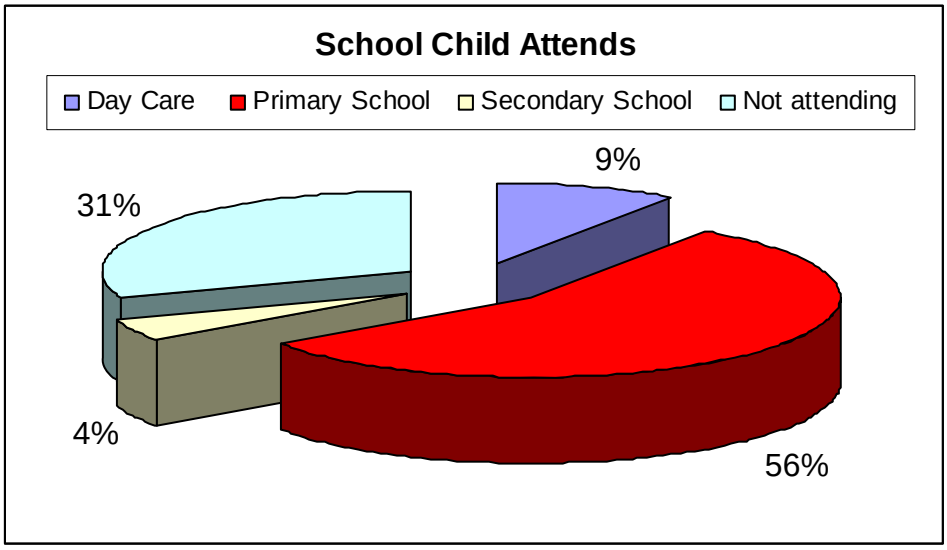
Among the reasons given for this kind of arrangement was that they caregivers were guardians or relatives, implying they only intended to raise the children to become independent but not to adopt them as their own.

1.6 Children's School Attendance

Disadvantaged children such as the ones with no parents need to be given education opportunities the most. Only this way will they have real chances of becoming independent adults capable of assisting their siblings and the society in general.

The study found out that 56% of the respondents had the children in primary school, 9% were in day care centers while 4% were in secondary schools. But of interest were the proportion that were not attending school. These were found in 31%of the respondents.

Figure 4



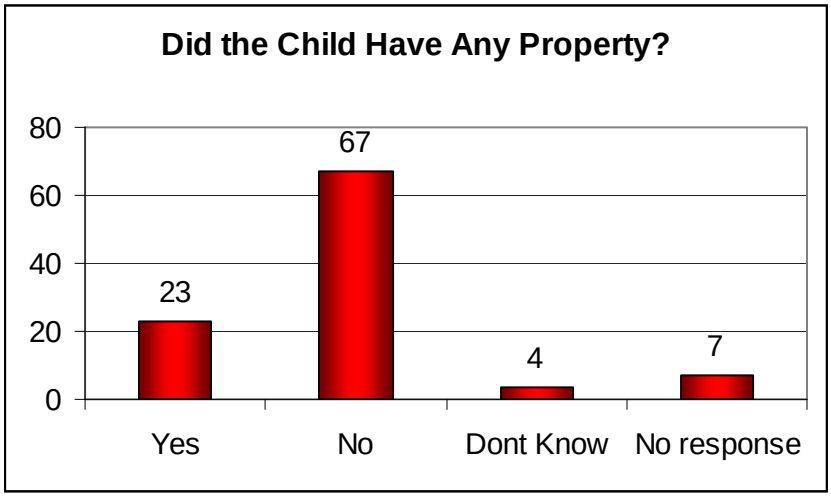
Among the reasons given for school non attendance of these children were lack of money (49%), completed primary level and did not proceed to secondary (20%) while 7% had not attained school going age. 12% of the respondents had children that had refused to attend school!

1.8 Property Ownership

It is common practice for greedy relatives to grab or misappropriate properties or resources left behind by the deceased. The interests of the children left behind are seldom considered when such decisions about such property are made.

As shown on the figure 2.4.1 below, only 23% the respondents said that the deceased parents left behind some property while 67% said none left. 4% did not know while 7% did not respond.

Figure 5



According to 54% of the respondents that had children with property, land was the property inherited. 40% said houses or buildings were inherited while only 5% said there was cash money left behind.

Of interest in the study was whether any such property left behind by deceased parents had been was benefiting the children. As shown on table 8 appendix 1, it was found out from 25% of the respondents that the said property had been inherited. 33% said it had been grabbed by other relatives while it had been leased out according to 12% of the respondents. In 10% of the cases, the property was idle or unutilized.

1.9 Challenges of Caring for the Children

It was anticipated that the respondents caring for these children would face a myriad of constraints. The deceased parents, some of whom die after a long illness, deplete whatever resources they had available. They children to be taken care of often are in dire need of not only material but also psychological needs.

Lack of basic needs i.e. food, clothing and shelter was mentioned in 62% of the total responses. School related expenses came up in 20%of the responses while lack of medication made up 14% of the total responses. Counseling, though often overlooked was mentioned in 3% of the responses.

Table 1.8

Problems faced caring for children	Frequency	Percent of responses
Lack basic needs(food, shelter, clothing)	403	62
Lack of school fees & uniform	131	20
Lack of medication	89	14
Lack of counseling	19	3
Lack of birth certificate	4	1
Total Responses	**646**	**100**

Only 7% of the children were said to be suffering form the ailment that had killed the parents.

1.10 Cause of Parents Death

According to table 8 on appendix 1, HIV/AIDS with 28% was the biggest culprit in the deaths of the children's parents. It was followed by malaria 12%, tuberculosis 11% and other unknown disease 11%. 21% of the respondents did not disclose what they thought killed the children's parents.

The impact of HIV/AIDS is likely to be much higher than mentioned because of stigma and secrecy with which such deaths are shrouded. Further, the respondents easily mention the opportunistic infection rather than HIV/AIDS.

There were no major differences between what was said to have killed the parents and what respondents actually thought was the killer.

The respondents were asked whether the children knew what had caused their parents death. 35% of the respondents had children informed of the parents cause of death while 58% did not.

Table 1.9: What children say killed the parents

What children say killed parents	Frequency	Percent
HIVAIDS	26	10.4
Food poisoning	3	1.2
Illicit brew	1	.4
TB	5	2.0
Accident	8	3.2
Others	11	4.4
Malaria	10	4.0
N/A	164	65.3
No response	23	9.2
Total	**251**	**100.0**

Although 28% of the respondents knew the cause of the parents to be HIV /AIDS, only 10% of them said the children identified the disease as their parents killer. It comes out generally that children are not clear as of the cause of their parents death.

1.11 Respondent's Opinion on Fostering and Adoption

Table 1.10: Respondent opinion on fostering and adoption

Would you recommend any parent to foster or adopt orphaned children?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	223	88.8	88.8	88.8
	No	28	11.2	11.2	100.0
	Total	251	100.0	100.0	

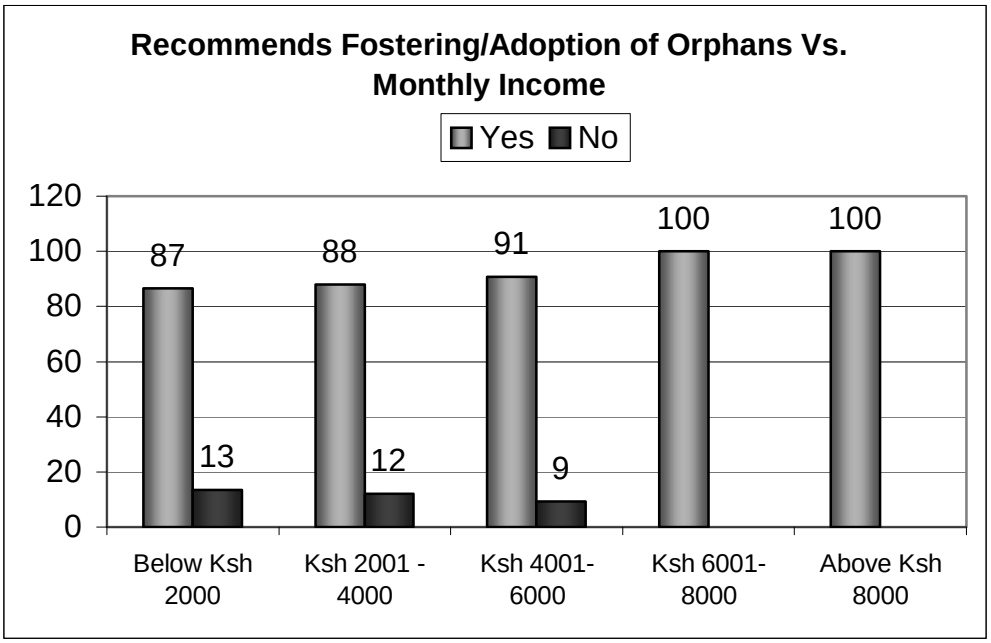
Majority or 89% of the respondents that were staying with orphans would highly recommend parents to adopt or foster orphaned children. Only 11% are opposed to it.

The main reason for supporting adoption was to give the children care and attention, provide for their basic needs and the much needed love and protection. Those opposed to adoption were afraid that the orphans could be exposed to mistreatment and exploitation

from the adopters. Some respondents felt it was the government's duty to offer solace to the orphans through children's homes.

The figure 6 below, depicts the relationship between opinion on adoption and income levels. It can be seen that resistance to adoption little, is highest among the lowest earning group.

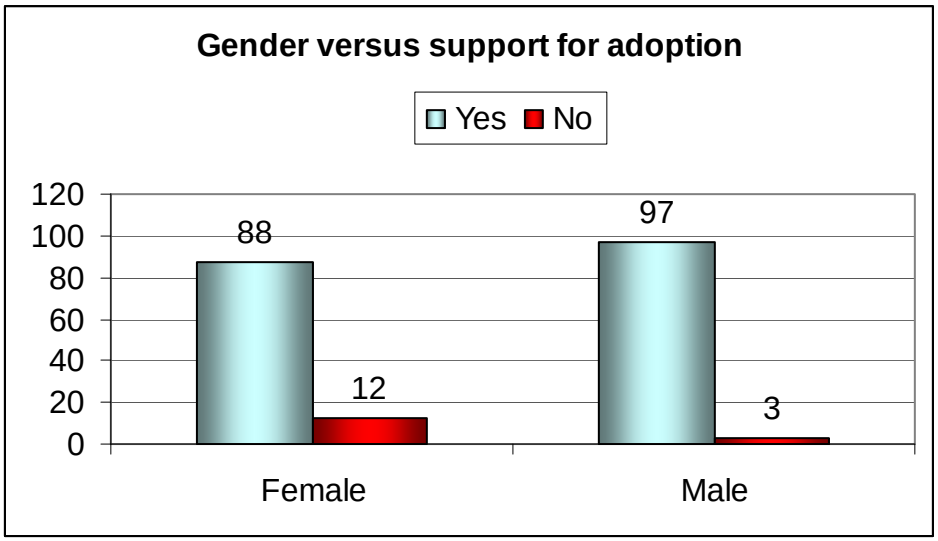
Figure 6: Opinion on adoption vs monthly income



The figure 6 above depicts that all respondents with monthly income levels exceeding Kshs 6,000 supported adoption. The lowest support level of 87& was observed among the respondents with the lowest income. The trend observable is of increasing support with increasing income levels.

The respondent opinion on adoption and fostering differ ,marginally between males and females as illustrated on the figure 7 below.

Figure 7: Gender versus opinion on adoption



It can be seen that more males compared to females were in support of adoption. These demonstrates that males were more receptive of adoption and fostering than females.

The relationship between educational level and opinion on adoption was as illustrated on the figure 1.1 on appendix 1. No major differences in opinion were observed among respondents with different educational levels.

APPENDIX 1: REFERENCE TABLES

The table 1 shows the villages involved in the study.

Table 1: Villages Studied

Name of village	Frequency	Percent
Gitathuru	54	12.4
Nyayo	57	13.1
Grogan	55	12.6
K Ndogo	55	12.6
KA	51	11.7
Ngomongo	54	12.4
Highridge	55	12.6
KB	55	12.6
Total	**436**	**100.0**

Table 2 : Respondent Age Group

This table shows the age distribution of the total respondents included in the study.

Age group	Frequency	Percent
Below 18yrs	15	6.0
19-24 yrs	55	21.9
25-29 yrs	51	20.3
30-34 yrs	43	17.1
35-39 yrs	24	9.6
40-44 yrs	25	10.0
45 yrs & above	38	15.1
Total	**251**	**100.0**

Table 3: Respondent Educational Level

The table 3 shows the educational level of respondents

Educational level	Frequency	Percent
Primary	307	70.4
Secondary	94	21.6
None	26	6.0
No response	9	2.1
Total	**436**	**100.0**

Table 4: Respondent Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	365	83.7
Female	71	16.3
Total	**436**	**100.0**

Table 5: Respondent Marital Status

Marital status	Frequency	Percent
Legally married	45	10.3
Customarily married	202	46.3
Never married	61	14.0
Separated	27	6.2
Divorced	15	3.4
Friendship living	53	12.2
Widowed	33	7.6
Total	**436**	**100.0**

Table 6: A t-test result

The below bears the results of a t test comparing the means of the number of children of the group staying with orphans and that without. The testing was done at 0.05 level of significance.

	t-test for Equality of Means				
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	1.789	434	.074	.39	.22
Equal variances not assumed	1.788	393.980	.075	.39	.22

Table 7: Fate of property left by deceased parents

What happened to property	Frequency	Percent
Inherited	14	24.6
Grabbed by other relatives	19	33.3
Leased out	7	12.3
It is idle/unutilized	6	10.5
No response	11	19.3
Total	**57**	**100.0**

Table 8: Respondent opinion on cause of parents' death

Disease thought to have killed the parents	Frequency	Percent
HIVAIDS	70	27.9
No response	53	21.1
Malaria	29	11.6
TB	27	10.8
Other disease	27	10.8
Accident	19	7.6
Meningitis	9	3.6
Don't know	5	2.0
Food poisoning	4	1.6
Witchcraft	3	1.2
Kidney failure	2	.8
Asthma	2	.8
Spinal cord	1	.4
Total	**251**	**100.0**

Table 9a

number children * Would you recommend any parent to foster or adopt orphaned children? Crosstabulation

			Would you recommend any parent to foster or adopt orphaned children?		
			Yes	No	Total
number children	3 and below	Count	138	17	155
		% within number children	89.0%	11.0%	100.0%
	Above 4	Count	85	11	96
		% within number children	88.5%	11.5%	100.0%
Total		Count	223	28	251
		% within number children	88.8%	11.2%	100.0%

Table 9b

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.014[b]	1	.904		
Continuity Correction[a]	.000	1	1.000		
Likelihood Ratio	.014	1	.905		
Fisher's Exact Test				1.000	.529
Linear-by-Linear Association	.014	1	.905		
N of Valid Cases	251				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 10.71.

Table 10a: Relationship between income and caring for orphans

Crosstab

			Do you have a child staying with you that is without a parent(s)		
			Yes	No	Total
Monthly income	Below Ksh 2000	Count	67	30	97
		% within Monthly income	69.1%	30.9%	100.0%
	Ksh 2001 -4000	Count	125	106	231
		% within Monthly income	54.1%	45.9%	100.0%
	Ksh 4001- 6000	Count	43	31	74
		% within Monthly income	58.1%	41.9%	100.0%
	Ksh 6001-8000	Count	7	13	20
		% within Monthly income	35.0%	65.0%	100.0%
	Above Ksh 8000	Count	10	4	14
		% within Monthly income	71.4%	28.6%	100.0%
Total		Count	252	184	436
		% within Monthly income	57.8%	42.2%	100.0%

Table 10b: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.672	4	.020
N of Valid Cases	436		

a 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.91.

Figure 1.1: Opinion on adoption versus respondent educational level