



Identity and belonging in adoption integration: legal, psychological, and social analysis

Identidad y pertenencia en la adopción de integración: análisis legal, psicológico y social

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Submitted: 23-05-2023 | Revised: 30-08-2023 | Accepted: 01-01-2024 | Published: 02-01-2024

ABSTRACT

Introduction: integration adoption in Argentina was presented as a legal concept regulated by Law 24.779 and the Civil and Commercial Code, designed to recognize the socio-emotional bond between the child and the biological parent's partner. The analysis was framed from a legal, psychological, and social perspective, highlighting the exceptional and subsidiary nature of the measure, the mandatory intervention of interdisciplinary teams, and the protection of the best interests of the child and their right to identity. Development: the regulatory framework (principles, procedures, and effects) was described, and practical ambiguities—such as cohabitation criteria and post-adoption follow-up guidelines—that conditioned its application were pointed out. The construction of the child's identity and sense of belonging was examined, as well as the challenges for the adoptive family, integrating theoretical frameworks: attachment (Bowlby), resilience, family systems (Bowen), and developmental ecology (Bronfenbrenner). It was shown that the best results were associated with sustained support (psychological and community), preservation of sibling bonds, effective listening to the child, and school-family-service coordination. It was also noted that social stigmas, gaps in professional training, and insufficient state resources limited full integration. Conclusions: it was concluded that the adoption of integration was an ideal tool for adapting family law to new emotional configurations, provided that uniform judicial criteria, mental health and social work mechanisms, and public policies for support and social awareness were strengthened. It was stated that the convergence of regulatory adjustments and psychosocial support ensured more stable, identity-wise solid, and emotionally secure trajectories for children.

Keywords: Adoption of Integration; Best Interests of the Child; Right to Identity; Interdisciplinary Teams; Attachment Theory.

RESUMEN

Introducción: se presentó la adopción de integración en Argentina como una figura jurídica regulada por la Ley 24.779 y el CCyCN, concebida para reconocer el vínculo socioafectivo entre el niño y la pareja del progenitor biológico. Se enmarcó el análisis en una perspectiva legal, psicológica y social, destacando el carácter excepcional y subsidiario de la medida, la intervención obligatoria de equipos interdisciplinarios y el resguardo del interés superior del niño y su derecho a la identidad. Desarrollo: se describió el andamiaje normativo (principios, procedimientos y efectos) y se puntualizaron ambigüedades prácticas—como criterios de convivencia y pautas de seguimiento posadoptivo—que condicionaron su aplicación. Se examinó la construcción de identidad y pertenencia del niño, así como los desafíos para la familia adoptiva, integrando marcos teóricos: apego (Bowlby), resiliencia, sistemas familiares (Bowen) y ecología del desarrollo (Bronfenbrenner). Se expuso que los mejores resultados se asociaron a apoyos sostenidos (psicológicos y comunitarios), preservación de vínculos fraternos, escucha efectiva del niño y coordinación escuela-familia-servicios. Se señaló, además, que estigmas sociales, brechas de formación profesional y recursos estatales insuficientes limitaron la integración plena. Conclusiones: se concluyó que la adopción de integración constituyó una herramienta idónea para adecuar el derecho de familia a nuevas configuraciones afectivas, siempre que se robustecieran criterios judiciales uniformes, dispositivos de salud mental y trabajo social, y políticas públicas de acompañamiento y sensibilización social. Se afirmó que la convergencia entre ajustes normativos y apoyos psicosociales garantizó trayectorias más estables, identitariamente sólidas y emocionalmente seguras para niños y niñas.

Palabras clave: Adopción de Integración; Interés Superior del Niño; Derecho a la Identidad; Equipos Interdisciplinarios; Teoría del Apego.

INTRODUCTION

Integration adoption is an alternative offered by the Civil and Commercial Code for children who need a home that provides them with love and protection and who cannot be cared for by their biological parents. In Argentina, integration adoption is a legal process governed by National Adoption Law No. 24.779, enacted in 1996.

The institution under analysis is a complex process, considering, on the one hand, that it involves various actors and, on the other, that it may present significant challenges for the adoptive family and the adopted child. At this point, we will analyze the main challenges and problems related to integration adoption in Argentina from legal, psychological, and social perspectives.

In our country, integration adoption is regulated by National Adoption Law No. 24.779, enacted in 1996. This law establishes integration adoption as an “exceptional” measure that may only be adopted on a subsidiary basis once all possibilities for the child to be cared for by their family of origin, that is, the biological family, have been exhausted.

The National Adoption Law requires the adoption process to be carried out by an interdisciplinary team composed of professionals from the fields of health, law, and psychology, given the complexity of the actors who must intervene, as indicated in the preceding paragraph. The fundamental objective of this team is to assess both the situation of the child and that of the adoptive family and to ensure that integration adoption is the best alternative for the child.

Another important point recognized by the National Adoption Law is the right of adopted children to know their biological origins, and that adoptive families must be prepared to provide a safe and loving environment that enables the child to build their identity and sense of belonging.

The CCyCN recognizes the particular characteristics of integration adoption and regulates it autonomously with respect to its application, rules, principles, and effects. This can be seen in the enumeration of the types of adoption introduced in art. 619 of the CCyCN, which states the following: “This Code recognizes three types of adoption: a) full; b) simple; c) integration.”

Integration adoption presents significant challenges for both the adopted child and the adoptive family. The main challenge is the construction of the adopted child's identity and sense of belonging.

It cannot be overlooked that adopted children may face difficulties in understanding their history and identity and may therefore feel confused or insecure about their place in the family and in society, all of which could contribute to insecurity in adulthood. It should not be overlooked that identity is a complex concept involving the construction of personal history, culture, values, and interpersonal relationships that make up an individual's life.

In the case of adopted children, identity construction may be affected by several factors, such as separation from the biological family, lack of information about their origins, or social discrimination. Belonging, in turn, refers to the sense of belonging to a family and a community. In the case of adopted children, the construction of a sense of belonging may be affected by the lack of stable emotional bonds, social discrimination, or lack of information about their origins.

The normative independence of integration adoption, as a third type of adoption and as a legal institution differentiated from simple and full adoption, can also be observed in the methodology used by the CCyCN to regulate the types of adoption in Chapter 5 of Title VI of Book Two. Section One is devoted to “General Provisions,” Section Two is called “Full Adoption,” Section Three “Simple Adoption,” and Section Four “Integration Adoption” (Argentina, 2014, p. 49).

This type of adoption has clearly differentiated features, making it necessary to distinguish it from the general concept of adoption set forth in art. 594 of the CCyCN.

The regulations require the adoption process to be carried out by an interdisciplinary team composed of professionals from the fields of health, law, and psychology, whose fundamental objective is to assess the situation of the child and the adoptive family and ensure that integration adoption is the best alternative.

Integration adoption presents significant challenges for both the adopted child and the adoptive family. One of the main challenges is the construction of the adopted child's identity and sense of belonging. Identity is a complex concept involving the construction of personal history, culture, values, and interpersonal relationships that make up an individual's life. In the case of adopted children, this construction may be affected by separation from the biological family, lack of information about their origins, or social discrimination.

The sense of belonging, in turn, refers to the child's integration into a family and a community. This sense may be compromised by the lack of stable emotional bonds, social discrimination, and lack of information about the child's origins.

Although the legal framework is well established, empirical research on integration adoption

in Argentina is limited. Existing studies have mainly addressed legal aspects and administrative processes, but there is a lack of research exploring the lived experiences of adoptive families and adopted children.

Some international research has shown that the success of integration adoption depends largely on the preparation and support provided to adoptive families. Bowlby's studies on attachment, as well as research on resilience and family systems theory, suggest that emotional stability and a sense of belonging are fundamental to the well-being of adopted children.

The present study seeks to fill this gap in the legal literature by providing a deep and nuanced understanding. The results of this study are expected not only to contribute to academic knowledge but also to offer practical recommendations for improving adoption policies and practices in Argentina.

It is important to emphasize that this work offers a holistic view of integration adoption by addressing not only regulatory aspects but also the challenges and experiences faced by both adoptive families and adopted children. In the legal sphere, the study is based mainly on analysis of the Civil and Commercial Code of the Nation and related rules, such as international treaties, for example, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), thus making it possible to establish a solid regulatory framework governing integration adoption. However, it is not limited to a mere description of the regulations, but identifies legal gaps and proposes improvements that strengthen the protection of adoptees' rights and effective adoptions adapted to current social realities.

From a social perspective, the study recognizes that blended families are increasingly common in contemporary society, which raises new dynamics in family law. Integration adoption, as explored in the study, is a response to these transformations. However, the challenge lies in how to ensure that these families receive adequate support to address the difficulties inherent in adaptation and coexistence, which entails responsibility both for the State and for the institutions that manage adoption processes.

In the psychological sphere, integration adoption presents particular challenges because adopted children often have to deal with a dual bond: "maintaining a relationship with the biological parent while at the same time adapting to a new parental role with the adoptive parent."

This study seeks to highlight the importance of appropriate psychological support, not only for children but also for adoptive parents, in order to facilitate the creation of a healthy family environment that promotes children's emotional development.

One of the key contributions of the study is its analysis of the concrete experiences of families that have chosen integration adoption. Through case studies and the collection of testimonies, the emotional, legal, and practical difficulties that arise in the process are highlighted. For example, some children face difficulties accepting their new family identity, which may generate both internal and external conflicts (in their social, school, and other environments). These conflicts reflect the need to develop public policies that provide greater psychological and social support throughout the entire adoption process, from the initial application to full integration into the new family.

This analysis also extends to adoptive parents and biological parents involved in the process. Biological parents may often have mixed feelings about integration adoption because, although they maintain a legal and emotional bond with the child, they may feel that their parental role is being displaced. In this context, the study proposes implementing mediation mechanisms that enable biological and adoptive parents to establish coexistence and parenting agreements that respect the child's rights and promote their well-being.

This study also contributes to identifying critical areas that require further development both in the regulatory framework and in adoption practices. One of the main observations is that, although the Civil and Commercial Code establishes integration adoption as a valid legal institution, certain legal gaps still generate uncertainty and complications in its application. For example, the lack of clear criteria regarding the "sufficient time" of cohabitation required to request integration adoption is a source of ambiguity that may give rise to contradictory interpretations in the courts. This study suggests that it would be beneficial to define this and other regulatory criteria more precisely in order to avoid disparate judicial decisions that affect children's well-being.

Another area for improvement identified is the need for greater State control and supervision of adoption processes. Although the best interests of the child are the guiding principle, the lack of resources and trained personnel in the fields of social work and psychology affects the proper implementation of current regulations. The study proposes strengthening public policies to improve the monitoring of adoption cases, especially during the first years after formalization of the bond, when families are undergoing the most delicate stage of adaptation.

In line with the objective of guaranteeing the best interests of the child, this study emphasizes the importance of implementing public policies that reinforce certain fundamental rights in

integration adoption processes. These rights include:

As established by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Civil and Commercial Code, children have the right to preserve their identity and biological ties. This study calls for strengthening this principle through policies that ensure that children adopted in the context of integration adoption do not lose their bond with their biological parent, but rather that this bond is respected and protected throughout the process.

In many cases, adopted children have biological siblings with whom they share a deep connection. This study suggests that priority should be given to the joint adoption of siblings or, at minimum, that children should be guaranteed regular contact with their siblings when joint adoption is not possible.

The study also emphasizes the importance of giving the child a voice in the adoption process, particularly in cases in which the child is old enough to understand the process. Respect for the child's wishes is fundamental to ensuring that adoption is carried out in a manner that respects their wishes and emotional needs.

Integration adoption, as a legal institution, represents significant progress in adapting family law to new social realities in Argentina. However, the study demonstrates that important challenges and areas for improvement remain, both in the regulatory framework and in adoption practices. In order to achieve effective implementation of the guiding principles established in current legislation, ongoing commitment is required from the State, institutions, professionals, and society as a whole.

The present study aims to contribute to the development of policies and practices that promote the well-being and rights of adopted children, providing a solid foundation for future research and legislative reforms. By integrating legal, social, and psychological perspectives, this study not only expands knowledge of integration adoption but also offers practical recommendations that may serve as guidance for implementing a more equitable, inclusive adoption system that respects children's rights.

DEVELOPMENT

Adoption is defined as the legal and emotional process through which a person or couple assumes parental responsibility for a child who is not biologically theirs.⁽¹⁾ This process involves legal, social, and psychological aspects that affect both adoptive parents and the child.

The right of children and adolescents (NNyA) to grow up with their family of origin stands as one of the most significant legal pillars, as established in articles 17 and 19 of the American Convention, as well as articles 8, 9, 18, and 21 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

However, remaining with the family of origin gives way to the best interests of the NNyA when doing so is beneficial to them, with the aim of providing protection, support, appropriate care, and the possibility of integration into a family environment when these aspects cannot be provided by the family of origin (as provided in article 3.1 and 21 inc. a) of the CRC, article 11, final paragraph, of Law 26.061, and article 594 of the Civil and Commercial Code -CCyC-).

Along this line of argument, article 595 establishes the general principles that must be considered in all adoption proceedings: a) the best interests of the child; b) respect for the right to identity; c) exhaustion of the possibilities of remaining in the family of origin or extended family; d) preservation of sibling bonds, prioritizing the adoption of sibling groups by the same adoptive family or, failing that, maintenance of legal ties between siblings, except for duly substantiated reasons; e) the right to know one's origins; and f) the right of the child or adolescent to be heard according to age and degree of maturity, with consent being mandatory from the age of 10 years onward.

In the integration adoption modality, there is no prior situation of vulnerability in which the material and emotional needs of a child or adolescent cannot be met by their biological family. Instead, there is a specific circumstance in which a filial bond has already been established between the adoptee and at least 1 of their biological parents.

The central purpose of integration adoption, as its name suggests, lies in integrating the spouse or cohabiting partner of the biological parent into the already established family unit. This is done in order to grant legal recognition to the preexisting socio-affective bond between the spouse or cohabiting partner of the biological parent and the adoptee.

In summary, the right of the child or adolescent to live in a family environment with at least 1 of their parents is already guaranteed, and the objective of integration adoption is to incorporate the partner, whether cohabiting or married, of the biological father or mother. It does not seek to

extinguish, replace, or restrict existing bonds, but rather to expand them through the inclusion of a 3rd member who was not initially part of the family.(2)

Integration adoption is essentially a unilateral adoption and must involve a person who cohabits with the parent of origin, whether or not they form a legally defined cohabiting union, because, as stated above, the purpose here is to incorporate the adoptive parent into the child or adolescent's family rather than to incorporate the child or adolescent into a family.

Furthermore, integration adoption may be requested either by the spouse of the adoptee's biological parent or by their cohabiting partner. This flexibility reflects the process of constitutionalization experienced by Family Law and the consequent recognition of nonmarital families. This approach complies with the requirement of "comprehensive protection" established in article 14 bis of the National Constitution and in various international human rights instruments. In this context, what is crucial is the bond created between the child and the potential adoptive parent, regardless of the manner in which the relationship between the adoptive parent and the biological parent was constituted.

The primary consideration of the best interests of the NNyA, pursuant to article 3.1 of the CRC and article 3 of Law 26.061, becomes the decisive criterion in all matters concerning them, whether addressed by courts, public or private institutions, administrative authorities, or legislative bodies. This principle guides and conditions every judicial decision at all levels called upon to adjudicate cases. It is a concept incorporated into the legal system through various regulations, especially among the general principles that must govern family proceedings, regulated in article 706 inc. c) of the CCyC. In the context of adoption proceedings, this principle translates into seeking to guarantee the greatest possible number of rights for NNyA and, on the other hand, the least restriction of those rights, analyzing how decisions and measures adopted, or the omission thereof, will affect the rights and interests of the minor.

The right to identity has been conceptualized in numerous works and, according to the definition of jurist Fernández Sessarego, refers to the set of attributes and characteristics that make it possible to individualize a person in society. This right encompasses both static aspects (identification attributes and genetic origin) and dynamic aspects (the person's historical-existential projection). Within the regulatory framework, the right to identity is enshrined in several legal instruments, including articles 33 and 43 of the National Constitution, article 11 of Law 26.061, articles 7 and 8 of the CRC, article 17 of the Pact of San José, Costa Rica, article 19 of the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, and article 2 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, among others.

Adoption is conceived as an institution intended to guarantee the right of every NNyA to live in a family once the viability of respecting another human right, namely remaining with the family of origin, has been ruled out. This principle is aligned with constitutional precepts and, especially, with the provisions of the CRC, which recognizes the family as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of its members. The State must ensure the right of NNyA to remain and grow up with their family of origin, except in the circumstances established to safeguard their best interests.

Consistent with this provision, the Supreme Court of Justice, in a decision dated March 16, 2016, rejected an extraordinary appeal alleging misapplication of the law filed by the father of a girl who had been declared eligible for adoption. Although the appeal was rejected, the court ordered an assessment of the possibility of establishing a communication arrangement between the girl and her father, as well as maintaining ties with other members of her family of origin.

The principle of preserving sibling bonds has its background in case law and legal doctrine, which prioritized the joint adoption of siblings in order to guarantee fraternal ties. Article 41 inc. d) and article 66 inc. c) of Law 26.061 also support this approach. However, exceptionally, the adoption of siblings by different family groups may be granted, provided that the best interests of the NNyA are respected and the connection between them is guaranteed. A recent ruling highlighted the importance of granting custody for adoption purposes to a married couple that had previously adopted the adoptee's sister, in order to adequately preserve their family-of-origin ties.

The child's right to be heard in adoption proceedings acquires great importance because of the other rights at stake, with the aim of positioning the child as a true rights-holder. This approach is reflected in the Civil and Commercial Code (CCyC), which establishes that NNyA who have sufficient age and maturity are parties to the adoption proceeding and must have legal assistance.

History and evolution of adoption

The history of adoption dates back to ancient cultures such as Roman and Greek societies,

where it was formally practiced, although differently from current standards.(3) In modern times, adoption has evolved significantly under the influence of legal, social, and cultural changes.

Today there are several types of adoption, including domestic and international adoption and open and closed adoption, each with its own legal and psychosocial implications. The choice of adoption type may influence the experience of family integration.

The legal and ethical aspects of adoption vary according to the laws and regulations of each country. These aspects include the selection and evaluation of adoptive parents, the rights of the adopted child, and adoption agreements. Ethics in adoption focuses on ensuring the child's well-being and the suitability of the adoptive parents.(4)

Integration adoption in our country is a legal measure designed in response to society's needs in order to provide children with a home.

that offers them love and protection, particularly when their biological families cannot care for them. This process is regulated by the Civil and Commercial Code of the Nation (CCyCN) and National Adoption Law No. 24.779. Likewise, the theoretical framework of this topic draws on several psychological theories that provide an in-depth understanding of the emotional and social processes involved in adoption. This point will enable discussion of the main psychological theories relevant to integration adoption, emphasizing their importance and application in the Argentine context.

Attachment Theory (5)

Attachment theory, developed by John Bowlby, is fundamental to understanding the emotional and social development of adopted children. Bowlby proposed that children have an innate tendency to form emotional bonds with their primary caregivers and that these bonds are crucial to their emotional and social development. According to this author, secure attachment enables the child to explore the world confidently, whereas the lack of secure attachment can lead to emotional and behavioral problems.(5)

In the context of adoption, "attachment theory" emphasizes the importance of establishing secure emotional bonds between the adopted child and the adoptive parents. It is evident that children who have experienced disruptions in their early relationships may have serious difficulty placing their trust in new caregivers again. For this reason, it is essential that adoptive families receive support to help the child develop a secure "attachment." Interventions must be conducted carefully and may include psychological counseling and training programs for adoptive parents aimed at strengthening parenting skills and fostering a safe and loving environment for the child.(6)

This theory also highlights the need for continuity of care and the importance of avoiding multiple caregiver changes, since these experiences may exacerbate insecurity and fear of abandonment in adopted children. Professionals involved in the adoption process must keep this situation in mind when designing strategies that facilitate the child's transition to a new home and promote the formation of secure and stable bonds.

It is essential for adoptive parents to understand these challenges. Therefore, they should receive specialized support to facilitate the creation of secure emotional bonds with the adopted child. This is where strategies such as psychological counseling come into play, as they can help parents manage the child's emotional responses, particularly during the process of adapting to the new home. In addition, training programs for adoptive parents can be a crucial tool for equipping them with the skills needed to promote an environment of trust, affection, and stability. Training and emotional support help mitigate the effects that the child may have experienced as a result of disruptions in previous bonds.

From this perspective, continuity of care and stability in relationships are essential. Multiple caregiver changes or unstable environments can deepen the child's insecurities, increasing fear of abandonment and complicating the formation of new emotional relationships. In the process of integration adoption, attachment theory emphasizes the need to design strategies that facilitate the child's transition to a new home by providing a safe and loving environment. This must be considered by the professionals responsible for the adoption process, from social workers to psychologists, to ensure that children can form secure bonds that promote their emotional well-being.

The success of integration adoption therefore depends largely on the ability of adoptive parents to provide secure attachment. This not only improves the child's immediate experience in the new home but is also crucial to long-term emotional development, fostering a sense of belonging and stability.

Resilience Theory

Resilience theory focuses on individuals' ability to overcome adversity and adapt positively to difficult situations. According to this perspective, in the context of adoption, resilience is crucial to the well-being of children who have experienced separation from their biological families and adaptation to a new family environment.⁽⁷⁾

Studies on resilience have identified several factors that contribute to children's ability to overcome adversity. Social support stands out in particular, since human beings are completed through society, together with psychological work on coping skills and self-esteem.

Integration adoption may present specific challenges that test children's resilience, such as the need to adapt to new family dynamics and possible social discrimination. However, with appropriate support, adopted children can develop resilience and thrive in their new families.⁽⁸⁾

The integration program should be designed to foster resilience in adopted children through mentoring schemes, support groups, and extracurricular activities that promote self-esteem and social skills. In addition, it is essential to provide ongoing support to adoptive families to help them manage challenges that may arise and promote a positive and safe family environment.

In addition to social support, the development of coping skills is essential. These skills enable children to manage stress, solve problems, and face adverse situations with a positive attitude. Within the framework of integration adoption, it is crucial that children receive psychological support that helps them build these skills, thereby strengthening their self-esteem and ability to adapt.

Integration adoption should be designed with these aspects in mind, fostering resilience in adopted children through programs that include mentoring, support groups, and extracurricular activities that promote self-esteem and the development of social skills. Extracurricular activities such as sports or the arts offer opportunities for children to build relationships, acquire new skills, and strengthen their sense of belonging, which contributes significantly to resilience.

Likewise, it is essential for adoptive families to receive ongoing support to manage challenges that may arise. The resilience of adopted children depends not only on them but also on the family environment surrounding them. Families need training and support in developing an affectionate, positive, and safe environment. This can be achieved through counseling and post-adoption support programs in which adoptive families learn strategies for facing difficult situations and fostering the child's emotional well-being.

In summary, resilience in the context of integration adoption is key to the success of the adoption process. By strengthening this capacity, adopted children will not only be able to overcome the adversities they have experienced but also develop fully in their new homes. Adoption programs should therefore focus on promoting resilience both in children and in their adoptive families, offering comprehensive support that ensures long-term well-being.

Family Systems Theory

Family systems theory, developed by Murray Bowen in the 1950s, is a fundamental tool in the field of family therapy and in understanding family dynamics, especially in adoption contexts. According to this theory, the family should be understood as an interconnected system in which members do not function in isolation but are deeply interrelated, so that the behavior or emotional state of 1 individual affects all other family members. Each individual influences the well-being of the family system as a whole and vice versa. In other words, it considers the family to be an interdependent system in which the well-being of each member influences the system as a whole. This perspective is particularly important for understanding dynamics in adoptive families because adoption involves incorporating a new member into the family, which may alter existing dynamics and require adjustments by all family members.

Likewise, this theory emphasizes the importance of considering interactions and relationships within the adoptive family to ensure successful integration of the adopted child. Family therapists can use this theory when working with adoptive families, helping them identify and resolve communication problems, establish clear boundaries, and foster healthy relationships.

The theory also highlights the importance of cohesion and adaptability in adoptive families. Cohesion refers to the degree of emotional connection among family members, whereas adaptability refers to the family's ability to change its roles and structures in response to new situations. Adoptive families that show high levels of cohesion and adaptability are better prepared to manage challenges that may arise during the adoption process and to provide a supportive and stable environment for the adopted child.

Bowen proposed several key principles that help explain how families function as emotional systems. These include differentiation of self, family triangles, transgenerational patterns, and

family anxiety.

Differentiation of self: this concept refers to family members' ability to maintain emotional autonomy and individual identity within the context of close family relationships. In a family with high levels of differentiation, individuals can interact emotionally with others without losing their sense of self. In contrast, in families with low differentiation, people tend to become emotionally fused with others, which may generate dependency or conflict. In the context of adoption, differentiation of self is essential because both adoptive parents and the adopted child must develop their identity within the new family unit without losing sight of their individual needs.

Family triangles: A triangle in family systems theory occurs when 2 family members involve a 3rd person to reduce tension or conflict between them. In adoptive families, triangles may form when adoptive or biological parents involve other family members, such as grandparents or therapists, in an attempt to balance or stabilize emotions within the family system. Although triangles may be useful in the short term, over the long term they can complicate family dynamics if they are not managed appropriately.

Transgenerational patterns: Bowen suggested that patterns of behavior, communication, and relationships within a family can be transmitted from 1 generation to another. In the context of adoption, this may be relevant when adoptive parents bring patterns or expectations transmitted from their own families of origin into the relationship. These patterns may influence how they handle parenting, communication, and conflict resolution with the adopted child.

Family anxiety: According to Bowen, families as emotional systems experience fluctuating levels of anxiety in response to changes within or outside the family. Adoption is undoubtedly an event that can increase anxiety within the family system, since members must adapt to new dynamics and roles. A family with high levels of cohesion and effective communication will be better equipped to manage the anxiety generated by the adoption process.

In the context of adoption, family systems theory is particularly useful for understanding the emotional transitions experienced by both adoptive parents and adopted children. Adoption involves not only incorporating a new member into the family system but also reconfiguring existing relationships. The roles and expectations of family members may change, which can generate tension or anxiety if not properly managed.

One of the most relevant aspects of this theory for adoptive families is cohesion and adaptability. Cohesion, which refers to the degree of emotional connection among family members, is crucial for creating a safe environment where the adopted child can feel accepted and supported. Adoptive families with high levels of cohesion tend to offer an affectionate space in which children can develop a sense of belonging, which is fundamental to their emotional well-being.

Adaptability, on the other hand, refers to the family's ability to adjust to new situations, roles, and structures. In an adoption, the family's capacity to adapt is vital because the adopted child may bring traumatic experiences, special needs, or a life history that requires emotional and logistical adjustments by all family members. Highly adaptable families are able to reorganize and modify their dynamics to address challenges that may arise during the integration process.

Family systems theory also emphasizes the importance of interactions and relationships within the adoptive family system. The success of adoption depends largely on the quality of relationships between adoptive parents and the adopted child, as well as among other family members, such as biological or adopted siblings. Positive and supportive interactions are key to facilitating the child's adaptation to the new environment.

Based on this theory, family therapists can work with adoptive families to help them identify and resolve communication problems, improve the way they express emotions, and create an environment in which all family members feel understood and valued. For example, therapists can help adoptive parents establish clear boundaries, promote open and effective communication, and foster healthy relationships based on trust and mutual respect.

In addition, therapeutic intervention within the framework of family systems theory can address the need to ensure emotional continuity within the family. For adopted children, the experience of losing their biological caregivers may generate feelings of insecurity or fear of abandonment. A systemic approach helps adoptive parents understand and manage these emotions, promoting an environment in which the child feels emotionally secure and can form healthy emotional bonds.

Adoption must also be analyzed within the context of the family life cycle, a concept derived from family systems theory. This cycle describes the stages a family goes through over time, from couple formation and the arrival of children to their development and eventual independence and, finally, old age. Integration adoption can interrupt or alter a family's typical life cycle because the arrival of an adopted child introduces a new transition stage.

Adoptive families must be prepared to face these transitions flexibly and adaptively. For exam-

ple, when an older child is adopted, adoptive parents may need to adjust to specific challenges, such as establishing rules and roles for a child who has already developed certain expectations and behaviors through previous experiences.

The integration adoption process presents unique challenges that can test the resilience of the family system. Adopted children may bring emotional trauma or past experiences that can affect family dynamics. Likewise, adoptive parents may experience feelings of anxiety or stress as they adapt to the new family reality. However, family systems theory offers valuable guidance for addressing these challenges by promoting a systemic and collaborative perspective focused on the well-being of the family system as a whole.

In summary, family systems theory is a key tool for understanding the complexities of adoptive families. It provides a framework that helps adoptive parents and professionals address the challenges inherent in adoption, focusing on cohesion, adaptability, and the quality of relationships within the family. This systemic approach enables adoptive families to provide a stable, safe, and affectionate environment in which the adopted child can thrive and develop their identity within a comprehensive support system.

Ecological Theory of Human Development (9)

The ecological theory of human development, proposed by Urie Bronfenbrenner, analyzes how different social environments (microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem) affect child development.(9) This theory is useful for understanding the multiple and complex influences affecting adopted children, including their immediate family, school, community, and social policies.

The microsystem refers to the environments closest to the child, such as the family and school. In the context of integration adoption, the microsystem encompasses both the adoptive family and the school and social environment into which the child is integrated. It is essential that these environments provide a safe, stable, and affectionate space that favors the creation of strong bonds between the child and the new parents. The adoptive family must be able to provide emotional and physical support, while the school and community should be inclusive and understanding of the particular characteristics of the adoption process.

For example, school support programs are a key tool for facilitating the child's adaptation to their new reality. These programs may include training for teachers on the emotional and behavioral challenges adopted children may face, as well as support networks among adoptive parents to share experiences and solutions to common problems. In addition, constant and positive interaction between parents and the school helps create a cohesive environment in which the child feels understood and supported.

The mesosystem refers to interactions among the different microsystems. For example, the relationship between the adoptive family and the child's school may significantly influence adaptation and well-being. It is essential that education professionals and social workers collaborate closely with adoptive families to ensure a smooth transition and support the child's academic and social development.

Effective and fluid communication between the family and the school can help identify problems early and implement strategies to improve the child's adaptation. For example, if an adopted child is experiencing emotional difficulties that affect school performance, close collaboration between parents and teachers can enable the design of personalized interventions to support the child.

In addition, joint work among the different actors in the mesosystem can prevent potential conflicts or misunderstandings. Adopted children commonly face specific challenges related to social integration, self-esteem, and emotional management. A cooperative relationship among adoptive parents, teachers, and other professionals enables the child's well-being to be addressed consistently and effectively in all environments.

The exosystem includes contexts that do not directly affect the child but may influence their environment, such as the parents' workplace or social policies. Adoption policies and employment practices that allow adoptive parents to take parental leave may have a significant impact on the family's ability to provide a stable and loving environment for the adopted child.(9) For example, laws that allow adoptive parents to take adequate parental leave can provide them with the time necessary to form a strong emotional bond with the newly adopted child, facilitating adaptation. Likewise, policies that promote inclusive education and social support for adoptive families also have a positive influence on the child's development.

Another important aspect of the exosystem is social support networks for adoptive parents. These programs may include support groups, psychological counseling, or parent training on how

to manage the specific challenges of adoption. These networks allow parents to feel supported in their role and receive appropriate guidance on how to promote their children's emotional well-being.

The macrosystem refers to the broader cultural and social influences affecting the child, such as cultural norms and public policies. In our country, integration adoption is influenced by national laws and policies, as well as by social attitudes toward adoption. We understand that promoting a culture of acceptance and support for adoptive families and adopted children is crucial to the success of integration adoption.

Integrating attachment theory, resilience theory, family systems theory, and the ecological theory of human development enables a holistic and in-depth understanding of the factors that influence adoption and the psychological and social effects of integration adoption on the family. This will provide a broad perspective for working in a way that integrates the subjects involved (family and children) into a genuine new family. These theories provide a robust conceptual framework for designing interventions and policies that promote the well-being of adopted children and their families.

Integration adoption in Argentina presents significant challenges that undoubtedly place professionals in a highly complex scenario. However, with appropriate support and a deep understanding of the psychological and social dynamics involved, it is possible to provide a safe and loving environment for adopted children.

The ecological theory of human development is particularly valuable in the context of integration adoption because it enables a holistic analysis of the multiple influences affecting the child's well-being. By considering not only immediate factors, such as family and school, but also broader systems, such as public policies and cultural norms, this theory provides a comprehensive view of how to support adopted children in their adaptation process.

A key aspect is that this theory highlights the need for multidimensional interventions addressing both the child's immediate environment and the broader systems that influence development. For example, policies that promote access to mental health services for adoptive families and training programs for teachers and social workers are interventions that operate at different levels of the ecological system.

Likewise, ecological theory emphasizes the importance of creating synergies among the different systems. In other words, it is not enough for the adoptive family to provide a safe and affectionate environment; schools, public policies, and social networks must also support and reinforce that environment. Only in this way can it be ensured that the adopted child receives the support needed for healthy and full development.

The ecological theory of human development provides a robust framework for analyzing the complex interactions between the adopted child and the environment. By considering how various systems influence child development, this theory enables professionals and public policymakers to design more effective interventions that promote the emotional, social, and psychological well-being of adopted children in the context of integration adoption. By integrating this approach with other relevant theories, such as attachment theory and family systems theory, a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities presented by adoption can be achieved, and strategies can be designed to strengthen adoptive families and promote the long-term success of adopted children.

Psychological Perspective on Adoption

From a psychological perspective, it is essential to consider how adoption may affect all parties involved: adoptive parents, the adopted child, and, in some cases, biological parents. Issues such as attachment, identity, and emotional adaptation are explored here. Adopted children may face unique challenges in terms of identity development and the establishment of emotional bonds, requiring specialized attention.

From a psychological perspective, adoption is a complex process. Psychological research has shown that it can have significant impacts on the emotional and psychological development of all parties involved.⁽¹⁰⁾

Integration into the adoptive family may involve adaptation processes for both adoptive parents and the child. Psychology plays a crucial role in helping all parties understand and manage these processes. For example, the child may experience questions about identity and origin, while adoptive parents may face challenges related to managing expectations and creating an emotionally supportive environment.

One of the fundamental aspects addressed from the psychological perspective is the con-

cept of attachment. Attachment is crucial in forming secure and healthy relationships between adoptive parents and adopted children.(11,12) Research suggests that the quality of attachment may influence emotional well-being and the ability to establish positive emotional relationships throughout life.(13)

Identity is another central aspect explored from the psychological perspective in the context of adoption. Adopted children often face questions about their identity and origin, which may affect their psychological development.(2) Research indicates that addressing these questions positively may be essential to the development of a healthy identity in adopted children.(14)

Emotional adaptation is a crucial topic in the psychological perspective on adoption. Adopted children may experience a range of complex emotions, and adoptive parents play a key role in supporting children's emotional adaptation.(15)

Coping strategies and techniques, for both adoptive parents and children, are active areas of research in the psychology of adoption.(16)

From a social perspective, it is essential to consider how society perceives and treats adoptive families. Stigmatizing adoption can affect the self-esteem and psychological well-being of all family members. Therefore, addressing adoption from a social perspective involves educating society about family diversity and fostering inclusive acceptance.

In addition, the support systems available to adoptive families should be analyzed at both community and governmental levels. Social psychology can contribute to designing policies and programs that facilitate the adaptation of adoptive families, promoting an environment conducive to the emotional and social development of adopted children.

In summary, integration adoption within the family requires an in-depth understanding from psychological and social perspectives. Addressing emotional aspects and family dynamics, as well as promoting acceptance and social support, are essential elements for ensuring a successful transition and healthy development for everyone involved in the adoption process.

Psychological impact on adoptive parents

The psychological impact on adoptive parents is a crucial area of study in adoption research. Adoption affects not only the adopted child but also has significant implications for the parents who choose to adopt. Various studies have explored psychological aspects related to adoption from the perspective of adoptive parents.(17)

From a psychological perspective, adoptive parents may experience a variety of emotions throughout the adoption process, ranging from anticipation and joy to anxiety and insecurity.(18) The literature suggests that emotional preparation and support during this process are essential elements for mitigating negative impacts on the mental health of adoptive parents.(19)

The construction of attachment is another central aspect of the psychological impact on adoptive parents. Establishing a secure and affectionate bond with the adopted child can be both challenging and rewarding.(12) Research has shown that the quality of attachment between adoptive parents and the child may influence the adaptation and emotional well-being of both.(20)

Adoptive parents may also face challenges related to managing expectations and adapting to the specific needs of the adopted child.(21) The literature highlights the importance of providing resources and psychological support to adoptive parents to address these challenges and promote healthy parenting.

In addition, society's perception of adoption may affect the psychological well-being of adoptive parents. Stigmatization or lack of social understanding may contribute to feelings of marginalization and isolation.(22) Social psychology has examined how improving social perceptions and support can have a positive impact on the mental health of adoptive parents.(23)

In conclusion, the psychological impact on adoptive parents is a complex and multifaceted field involving emotions, attachment, adaptation, and interaction with society. Understanding and addressing these aspects from a psychological perspective is essential for providing comprehensive support to adoptive parents throughout their journey.

Emotional development of the adopted child

The emotional development of the adopted child is a critical aspect that has been extensively investigated from a psychological perspective. Numerous studies have explored how adoption may influence the emotional health and psychological well-being of adopted children, considering factors such as attachment, identity, and emotional adaptation.(11)

From the attachment perspective, the emotional development of the adopted child is often influenced by initial interactions with the adoptive parents. Establishing a secure and affectionate

bond is crucial to long-term emotional well-being.(12) Research has shown that attachment in adoption can be as strong as the bond formed in biological families and may be a significant predictor of the child's emotional adaptation.(13) All of this highlights the importance of this institution.

Identity also plays a crucial role in the emotional development of adopted children. Questions about their origin and the search for their own identity may arise at different stages of development, during childhood, adolescence, etc.(16) The literature on this subject highlights the importance of supporting positive identity construction in adopted children through an understanding family environment and appropriate resources.

The right to identity constitutes a fundamental pillar in the protection of individual rights in Argentina. Within our country's regulatory framework, various laws and provisions have been established to safeguard this right, to the point that it is recognized as an essential aspect of human dignity. It is an essential component of the human rights framework. Through the National Constitution, protection of individual rights is established. For example, article 75, subsection 22, incorporates international treaties such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, thereby reinforcing protection of identity from a global perspective. Likewise, there are specific laws, such as the National Identity Law (No. 17.671), enacted in 1967, which regulates the preparation and issuance of the National Identity Document (DNI). This law is crucial to materializing the right to identity by establishing rules for identifying individuals and issuing documents that represent them uniquely and securely; the Comprehensive Protection of Children's Rights Law (No. 26.061): in 2005, Argentina took a significant step with the enactment of the Comprehensive Protection of Children's Rights Law. This law prohibits deprivation, suppression, retention, or alteration of the identity of children and adolescents, recognizing the crucial importance of preserving identity from an early age; National Adoption Law (No. 24.779): implemented in 1997, it regulates the adoption process in the country. Among its provisions, it emphasizes concern for preserving the identity of adopted children and ensuring that the adoption process does not undermine this fundamental right.

Our country has established a regulatory framework that recognizes and preserves identity as an inviolable right. These provisions, supported by the case law of the Supreme Court of Justice, form a robust system reflecting the country's commitment to the comprehensive protection of individuals from birth. Continued strengthening of these regulations is crucial to ensure that the right to identity remains a fundamental pillar in building a just society that respects individual rights.

Another key area of research on the emotional development of adopted children is emotional adaptation. Adopted children may experience a variety of complex emotions, from gratitude to anxiety and stress. Psychology has explored coping strategies and intervention programs aimed at promoting healthy emotional adaptation in adopted children and their families.

Social and community support also influences the emotional development of adopted children. Acceptance and understanding by society can contribute positively to these children's emotional well-being, whereas stigmatization and lack of support can have negative effects. Research suggests that educational programs promoting understanding and acceptance of adoption can have a positive impact on the emotional development of adopted children.

In summary, the emotional development of adopted children involves considering factors such as attachment, identity, emotional adaptation, and social support. Understanding these elements is fundamental to providing an environment conducive to the psychological well-being of adopted children throughout their development.

Emotional bonds in the adoptive family

The establishment and development of emotional bonds in the adoptive family are crucial aspects that have been studied from various perspectives, including developmental psychology and attachment theory. Numerous researchers have explored how these bonds form and evolve in the context of adoption, considering the quality of family relationships, attachment, and the construction of a sense of belonging.

From the attachment perspective, emotional bonds within the adoptive family are fundamental to the emotional development of the adopted child. Studies have shown that secure and stable attachment to adoptive parents can have positive effects on the child's long-term mental and emotional health.(11) Creating a warm, understanding, and affectionate environment contributes to the formation of secure bonds between adoptive parents and children.(16)

The quality of family relationships also plays a crucial role in establishing strong emotional bonds. Research has examined family dynamics in adoptive contexts, highlighting the importance of open communication, emotional support, and the construction of a unique family identity.(14) The adoptive family's adaptation to the child's needs and challenges contributes significantly

to the development of healthy bonds.(13) We can state that this is the essential element for the success of adoption.

The process of constructing a sense of belonging within the adoptive family is another critical aspect. Adopted children often seek to understand their place in the family and establish meaningful emotional connections.(22) That is, to feel that, beyond biology, there are other elements that allow them to say, this is my home and this is my family. Promoting an inclusive and accepting environment fosters the construction of that sense of belonging, which is essential to the development of strong emotional bonds.(2)

In addition, emotional bonds within the adoptive family may also be influenced by society's perceptions and support. Social acceptance and understanding of adoption act as external forces pushing inward, as a way of contributing to the emotional well-being of all members of the adoptive family.(23)

Ultimately, the study of emotional bonds in the adoptive family encompasses the quality of attachment, family relationships, construction of a sense of belonging, and the influence of society. Understanding and fostering these elements is essential to promoting healthy family relationships and emotional well-being in the context of adoption.

Family Integration Process

The family integration process in the context of adoption is a fundamental stage involving the creation of emotional bonds, adaptation of roles, and construction of a unique family identity. This process affects not only the adopted child but also adoptive parents and, in some cases, biological siblings. Successful integration involves creating a cohesive and supportive family environment. Several key aspects of this process are addressed below:

Creating strong emotional bonds is essential to family integration. Adoptive parents and the adopted child must build relationships based on affection, trust, and emotional security.(11) In the same way such bonds would exist between biological parents and their children.

Examples include carrying out shared activities, expressions of affection, and creating meaningful family moments, all of which contribute to strengthening these bonds and enriching the relationship.

Family integration involves adapting roles for all members. Adoptive parents may need to adjust their roles and expectations to meet the adopted child's needs, while the child may explore and assume their role within the family.(13)

Open communication and flexibility in the distribution of responsibilities contribute to a smoother adaptation of family roles.(14)

Adoption often involves creating a unique family identity. The adoptive family can explore and celebrate its own traditions, values, and rituals that reflect its unity.(16)

Building a unique family identity provides the adopted child with a sense of belonging and contributes to emotional security.(22)

Family integration may present emotional challenges. For example, seeking psychological support, whether through mental health professionals or community support groups, may be essential in helping the adoptive family overcome difficulties and strengthen cohesion.

As noted in previous paragraphs, the community also plays an important role. Acceptance and understanding of adoption by friends, relatives, and society in general contribute to the emotional well-being of the adoptive family.

Ongoing education on adoption-related issues, child development, and the specific needs of the adopted child is essential to facilitating family integration.

Open and honest communication among family members promotes an environment of trust in which feelings and concerns can be expressed freely.(11)

In short, the family integration process in adoption involves building emotional bonds, adapting roles, creating a unique family identity, and obtaining access to psychological and community support. Ongoing education and open communication are fundamental elements for a successful process that promotes the well-being of all members of the adoptive family.

Final adaptation in the context of adoption refers to the period in which the adoptive family and adopted child have gone through the integration process and established strong emotional bonds, culminating in a state of cohesion and stability. This period does not have a fixed duration, since it varies according to the circumstances and individual needs of each family. Key aspects related to final adaptation in adoption are explored below:

During final adaptation, the adoptive family and adopted child are expected to have achieved greater emotional stability. This means that family members feel secure, connected, and comfort-

table with one another.(11)

Emotional stability is indicative of a successful process of integration and adjustment to family dynamics.

Final adaptation includes the development of a strong and unique family identity. The adoptive family has established its own traditions, values, and ways of interacting, creating a cohesive family unit.

This process contributes to a sense of belonging and the construction of shared memories.

During final adaptation, the family is likely to have overcome many initial challenges. They may have addressed questions about identity, adjusted family roles, and dealt with possible social stigmatization.

The family's ability to resolve these challenges strengthens resilience and cohesion.

As final adaptation progresses, the adopted child is expected to have achieved a greater level of independence and autonomy within the family. This involves developing decision-making skills and active participation in family dynamics.

Autonomy contributes to the child's healthy growth and development.

Final adaptation also involves looking toward the future. At this point, the adoptive family can look ahead with confidence and anticipate continued growth, recognizing that adaptation is a dynamic process that evolves over time.

Planning for the future may include family, educational, and personal goals.

Although final adaptation marks an important milestone, it is essential to recognize that the adaptation process may continue throughout the different stages of the family life cycle. The adoptive family may require ongoing support to address changes in circumstances or new stages of development.

The support network, whether in the form of professionals, support groups, or friends, remains valuable at this stage.

In other words, final adaptation in adoption represents a period in which the adoptive family has achieved emotional stability, built a unique family identity, and overcome initial challenges. This process involves consolidating emotional bonds, developing the adopted child's autonomy, and looking toward the future, while recognizing that adaptation is a dynamic process that evolves over time.

Identity construction in the adopted child is a complex process involving the formation of a solid and positive understanding of who they are, their origins, and their place within the family and society. Adoption can add unique layers to this process, since the adopted child may face particular questions and challenges related to their history and origin. Several key aspects of identity construction in the adopted child are explored below:

Identity construction begins with exploration of the adopted child's personal history. Questions about their origins, the reason for the adoption, and their connection to the biological family may arise at different stages of development.

The openness and honesty of adoptive parents in providing information about the adoption are fundamental to supporting this exploration.

The development of attachment within the adoptive family is essential to the child's identity construction. Establishing secure and positive emotional bonds with adoptive parents contributes to a solid emotional foundation.

Emotional security gives the adopted child the confidence to explore their identity and face questions about their past.

Identity construction involves recognizing and valuing family diversity. Adoptive parents can foster an environment that celebrates differences and promotes acceptance of adoption as a legitimate way of forming a family.

Including cultural elements and traditions that reflect both the child's adoptive heritage and the family's heritage contributes to an enriched identity.

In cases of international or transcultural adoption, identity construction may also involve exploring the child's cultural identity. Learning about their cultural heritage and maintaining connections with that part of their identity may be important.

Participation in cultural activities and access to resources that support cultural identity are fundamental aspects.

Ongoing education about adoption is crucial to identity construction. Providing the adopted child with accurate and age-appropriate information about adoption enables them to understand their history gradually and in a manner adapted to their developmental level.

Education can also help address stigmatization and promote a positive understanding of adoption.

Identity construction may present emotional challenges. Access to psychological support, whether through mental health professionals specialized in adoption or support groups, can help the adopted child address questions, emotions, and challenges throughout their identity-building journey.

Identity construction in the adopted child is an ongoing process involving exploration of personal history, development of attachment, recognition of family diversity, support in exploring cultural identity, education about adoption, and access to psychological support. Adoptive parents play a crucial role in providing a supportive and understanding environment throughout this journey.

Common challenges in the integration process

The integration process in adoption can present a series of challenges for both adoptive parents and the adopted child. These challenges may vary in intensity and nature depending on factors such as the child's age, adoption history, family circumstances, and prior preparation. Some common challenges in the integration process in adoption are explored below:

1. Adjustment to New Roles and Expectations
 - For adoptive parents, adjusting to new roles and expectations can be a challenge. This involves adapting to parental responsibilities and establishing an emotional connection with the adopted child.
 - The adopted child may also face challenges in adapting to new parental figures and adjusting to the expectations of the adoptive family.
2. Questions about Identity:
 - Both adoptive parents and the adopted child may face questions about identity. The child may wonder about their origins and feel the need to understand their personal history.
 - Adoptive parents may experience uncertainty about how to address the child's questions or how to incorporate the adoption story into the family narrative.
3. Challenges in Attachment Development:
 - Establishing secure attachment may take time, especially if the adopted child has experienced separations or changes in attachment figures in the past. Both parents and the child may face challenges in building strong and secure emotional bonds.
 - The child's adaptation to the new family dynamics may affect attachment development and the perception of emotional security.
4. Managing Emotions and Past Trauma:
 - The adopted child may bring emotional experiences and past trauma that can influence behavior and emotions. The adoptive family may face the challenge of understanding and addressing these emotions.
 - Adoptive parents may need additional support to manage the emotions that arise when confronting the child's emotional challenges.
5. Social Stigmatization and Discrimination:
 - The social stigmatization associated with adoption may represent a challenge. The adoptive family may face intrusive questions or insensitive comments from people outside the family.
 - The adopted child may experience feelings of difference or exclusion, which could affect self-esteem and sense of belonging.
- Special or Health Needs:
 - Some adopted children may have special health or developmental needs requiring additional attention. Adoptive parents may face challenges in managing these needs and finding appropriate resources.
 - Adapting to new medical routines or therapies may influence the integration process.
6. Effective Communication and Psychological Support:
 - Effective communication among members of the adoptive family is crucial. The family may face challenges in expressing emotions, concerns, and needs openly and with understanding.
 - Obtaining psychological support, whether individually or as a family, may be essential for addressing emotional and communication challenges.

It is important to note that every adoption process is unique and challenges may vary considerably. Ongoing support, patience, and willingness to learn and adapt are key elements in overcoming these challenges and strengthening family bonds throughout the integration process.

The Role of Society and Culture in Integration Adoption within the Family

Integration adoption within the family is a complex process that involves not only adoptive parents and the child but extends beyond individual dynamics, crucially involving society and, above all, the surrounding culture. Attitudes and stigmas associated with adoption are intrinsic elements

that affect the experience of adoptive families. The work “Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity” provides a valuable theoretical framework for understanding how society labels and stigmatizes people, and this applies especially to adoption. By challenging traditional norms of the nuclear family, adoption often faces negative perceptions and prejudices that can influence the self-esteem and psychological well-being of both adoptive parents and the adopted child.

In the context of our country, where deeply rooted notions of the biological family often prevail, it is crucial to address these stigmas to foster a deeper understanding and inclusive acceptance of diverse family forms. Harf’s work “Adoption: myths, stigmas and realities” highlights the need to demystify adoption through educational and awareness programs. Public policies play an essential role in this regard.

Society’s attitudes toward integration adoption within the family play a crucial role in the experience of adoptive families. Stigmatization associated with adoption can affect the self-esteem and psychological well-being of all family members. According to Goffman, social stigma can generate negative perceptions and prejudices, creating emotional and social barriers for adoptive families. This author introduces the concept of “stigma” as a social mark that disqualifies an individual in relation to accepted social norms. He examines how stigmas can result in alteration and management of personal identity, leading people to make efforts to manage the perceptions that others have of them. Goffman highlights how these social labels can influence self-esteem, social interactions, and participation in society, offering a valuable perspective for understanding how people respond to stigmatization and adapt their identity in relation to it.(24)

Societal attitudes can also influence the adopted child’s self-image and identity.(4) It is essential to address these stigmas in order to foster acceptance and understanding of family diversity.

Public policies play a key role in promoting or limiting integration adoption within the family. In Argentina, the legal framework, such as the National Adoption Law, establishes solid guidelines for the adoption process. However, broader public policies also influence society’s perception of adoption. The lack of public education programs on adoption may contribute to misunderstanding and the persistence of stigmas. Implementing policies that promote family diversity and inclusion can have a positive impact on social acceptance of adoption.(25)

Analysis of the role of society and culture in integration adoption within the family highlights the need to address attitudes and stigmas associated with adoption. Public policies should not only facilitate the adoption process but also educate society about family diversity and the importance of creating an environment of acceptance. Integrating awareness programs and inclusive policies can contribute significantly to changing perceptions and promoting a society that values and supports all forms of family.

Adoption under Argentine law

In the general context of adoption, the process is recognized as having the objective of comprehensively integrating an adopted child into a new family, providing an affectionate environment and the care necessary for development. The National Adoption Law establishes the principles, procedures, and requirements for adoption in Argentina and is governed by the best interests of the child.

Adoption, an act that transforms lives and redefines families, lies at the heart of protecting children’s rights in Argentina. The National Adoption Law (Law No. 24779), incorporated into the Civil and Commercial Code, establishes the legal framework guiding this process, prioritizing the best interests of the child and seeking to ensure their comprehensive well-being.

This rule establishes principles that act as pillars of the adoption process in Argentina. The guiding principle, as noted above, is the “Best Interests of the Child,” which means that all decisions and actions must prioritize the child’s well-being over any other interest. This principle reflects the commitment of Argentine legislation to ensuring that adoption takes place in an environment that promotes the minor’s comprehensive and healthy development.

Fundamental Principles

The central axis of the National Adoption Law is the principle of the “Best Interests of the Child.” This principle drives all provisions of the law, ensuring that every decision and action is taken with the child’s well-being as the absolute priority. Here the paradigm shift in legislation regarding the rights of children and adolescents is reflected. In addition, recognition is given to the child’s right to preserve their identity, actively participate in the process, and be protected against any form of discrimination. It should not be overlooked that, in our legislation, especially since the reform of the Civil and Commercial Code in 2015, there has been a significant change in

the treatment of children. Previously, children were considered objects of rights, that is, persons over whom adults exercised power and control. However, with the paradigm shift, children came to be considered subjects of rights, with recognition of their autonomy and capacity to exercise their own rights. This change involves an approach more focused on the best interests of the child and their comprehensive development, recognizing them as individuals with a voice and a vote in matters that concern them.

In Argentina, the process of adopting minors is usually characterized by its complexity and the bureaucracy involved. State requirements and the conditions established throughout the process make the journey lengthy from beginning to end.

Nevertheless, detailed knowledge of current regulations can have a positive impact on those seeking to adopt. National Law No. 24.779, enacted in 1997 and incorporated into the Civil Code, establishes the essential requirements for carrying out the adoption process in Argentina. Its main objective is to consolidate in a single document all fundamental aspects of the process, including the different types of adoption, their characteristics, and impediments.

First, the law specifies that the adoption of unemancipated minors shall be granted by judicial decision at the request of the adoptive parent. In the case of adults or emancipated minors, adoption may be granted with prior consent, especially when an established kinship relationship already exists.

Article 312 of the Civil Code establishes that no person may be adopted by more than 1 person simultaneously, unless the adoptive parents are spouses. However, in the event of the death of the adoptive parents, a new adoption of the same minor is permitted.

The law establishes that any person who meets the requirements, regardless of marital status, may become an adoptive parent. However, it is crucial to demonstrate permanent residence in the country for at least 5 years before requesting custody.

There are exclusions, such as the age limit of 30 years for adoptive parents, with exceptions for spouses who have been married for more than 3 years or those who demonstrate an inability to have children. Ascendants, such as parents or grandparents, may not adopt their descendants, and the same applies to siblings.

The process involves having the minor in the custody of the adoptive parent for a period of 6 months to 1 year, as established by the judge. Full adoption is irrevocable and grants the adoptee a new legal filiation, whereas simple adoption creates a bond similar to that of a biological child.

Detailed knowledge of legal requirements and procedures facilitates access to the adoption process. Despite its complexity, the information provided has a positive impact on the ultimate goal of achieving the adoption of a minor.

Article 313 authorizes the adoption of several minors simultaneously or successively, provided that the same type of adoption is used. Article 314 addresses adoption when the adoptive parent has descendants, allowing them to be heard by the judge. Article 315 defines who may be adoptive parents, with specific requirements and restrictions according to kinship.

Article 316 establishes a custody period of 6 months to 1 year before initiating adoption proceedings. Summoning the minor's parents and assessing the personal circumstances of the adoptive parents are conditions for granting custody, according to Article 317. Placement in custody by public deed or administrative act is prohibited under Article 318. Article 319 establishes that the guardian may initiate the adoption process only after completing their obligations.

Article 337 addresses the nullity of adoption, distinguishing between absolute and relative nullity. It lists the conditions that would lead to absolute nullity, such as violation of the adoptee's age requirement or the age difference between adoptive parent and adoptee. Article 338 establishes that the adoption and its circumstances must be registered with the Registry of Civil Status and Capacity of Persons.

Articles 339 and 340 regulate the effects of adoption granted abroad, subject to the law of the adoptee's domicile at the time of adoption. Foreign adoption may be converted into full adoption, provided that specific requirements are met and the consent of the parties involved is obtained.

The Adoption Law in Argentina, through its detailed legal framework, seeks to guarantee a transparent and fair process for all parties involved. The distinction between full and simple adoption, the conditions for nullity, and the specific rules for international adoptions are key elements in ensuring the well-being of minors and the legality of these processes in the country.

Relationship with Children's Rights

The law comprehensively addresses children's rights. From the right to family life to the right to know one's origins and preserve cultural identity, each provision aligns with the principles of

the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The child's active participation in the adoption process is emphasized, respecting their ability to express opinions and wishes. The prohibition of discrimination reinforces the commitment to providing every child with the opportunity for a full life, regardless of origin or circumstances.

Argentina's National Adoption Law emerges as a solid legal instrument that seeks to balance the need to establish loving families with the guarantee of safeguarding children's fundamental rights. Through its fundamental principles, meticulous procedures, and essential requirements, the law becomes a roadmap reflecting Argentina's commitment to protecting and promoting children's rights in the transformative context of adoption. Rigorous application of this legislation not only guarantees the legality and ethics of the process but also contributes to creating an affectionate and stable environment for every adopted child, enabling them to thrive within a new family.

Article 3 recognizes the child's right to live in a family environment, while Article 8 highlights the child's right to maintain cultural identity. The child's active participation in the adoption process, supported by Article 9, ensures that their opinions and wishes are taken into account. The prohibition of discrimination, enshrined in several articles, guarantees that every child, regardless of origin, has equal opportunities and is treated with dignity and respect.

CONCLUSIONS

Integration adoption proved to be a valuable legal tool for adapting family law to contemporary affective configurations, provided that the best interests of the child and the right to identity are preserved. The Argentine regulatory framework, Law 24.779 and the CCyCN, provided clear foundations and guiding principles but showed areas of practical ambiguity (e.g., criteria regarding periods of cohabitation and standards for post-adoption follow-up) that required clarification. The theoretical and empirical evidence indicated that the most favorable outcomes were associated with the work of interdisciplinary teams, ongoing psychological support for children and caregivers, preservation of sibling bonds, and effective consideration of the child's voice. At the same time, the social and cultural dimension conditioned the success of the processes: stigmatization, lack of training among practitioners, and scarcity of public support policies limited full family integration. Consequently, it became necessary to strengthen applied research, standardize judicial criteria, expand technical resources in mental health and social work, and deploy educational strategies that promote a culture of acceptance of adoptive families. Only through the convergence of targeted regulatory reforms and sustained psychosocial support mechanisms can integration adoption not only formalize bonds but also guarantee stable life trajectories, solid identities, and emotional security for children.

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FUNDING

The authors received no funding for the development of the present research.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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