Experiences and outcomes of young people transitioning from residential group home care in Indonesia: Policy and practice reforms

Presenter: Rangga Radityaputra – Doctoral Researcher, Monash University

Doctoral Supervisors:

Professor Philip Mendes, Associate Professor Susan Baidawi

AIFS26

9 – 11 September 2026

Acknowledgement Of Country

As an Indonesian, I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we gather today, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation. I recognize their deep and enduring connection to the land, waters, and community across the Melbourne city (Naarm) region and Monash University campuses where I lived, learn, and work. I pay my respects to their Elders past, present, and emerging and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues joining us today.

lpdp
lembaga pengelola dana pendidikan

MONASH University

INTRODUCTION

- Indonesia established the National Standards of Care for Child Welfare Institutions in 2011 (Indonesian Ministry of Social Affairs, 2011). However, there has been no documented research and evaluation focusing on the experiences of young people transitioning from these alternative care settings, or globally known as care leavers (Radityaputra et al., 2025).
- The first primary study exploring the lived experiences and outcomes of care leavers in Indonesia.
- The study aims to capture the chronological experiences of care leavers from pre-care, in-care, and post-care, influencing their life outcomes.
- The study promotes care leavers' perspectives into actionable policy and practice reforms in Indonesia and lesson learned for the Global South.

Alternative Care/ Out-Of-Home Care Context Comparison

Global North countries	Indonesia – Global South
Entry into care: state-mandate interventions due to neglect and abuse	**Entry into care**: Voluntary placement by parents, primarily driven by severe socioeconomic hardships and the pursuit of education (social mobility). Limited gatekeeping and deinstitutionalization measures.
Care providers: State-run or regulated foster care networks	**Care providers**: Dominance of large-size institutions, driven by non-government and faith–based organisations
Leaving care policies: Precise age cut-offs with legally defined aftercare policies.	**Leaving care policies**: Absence of national leaving-care legislation; support remains discretionary and dependent on individual child welfare institutions

lpdp
lembaga pengelola dana pendidikan

MONASH University

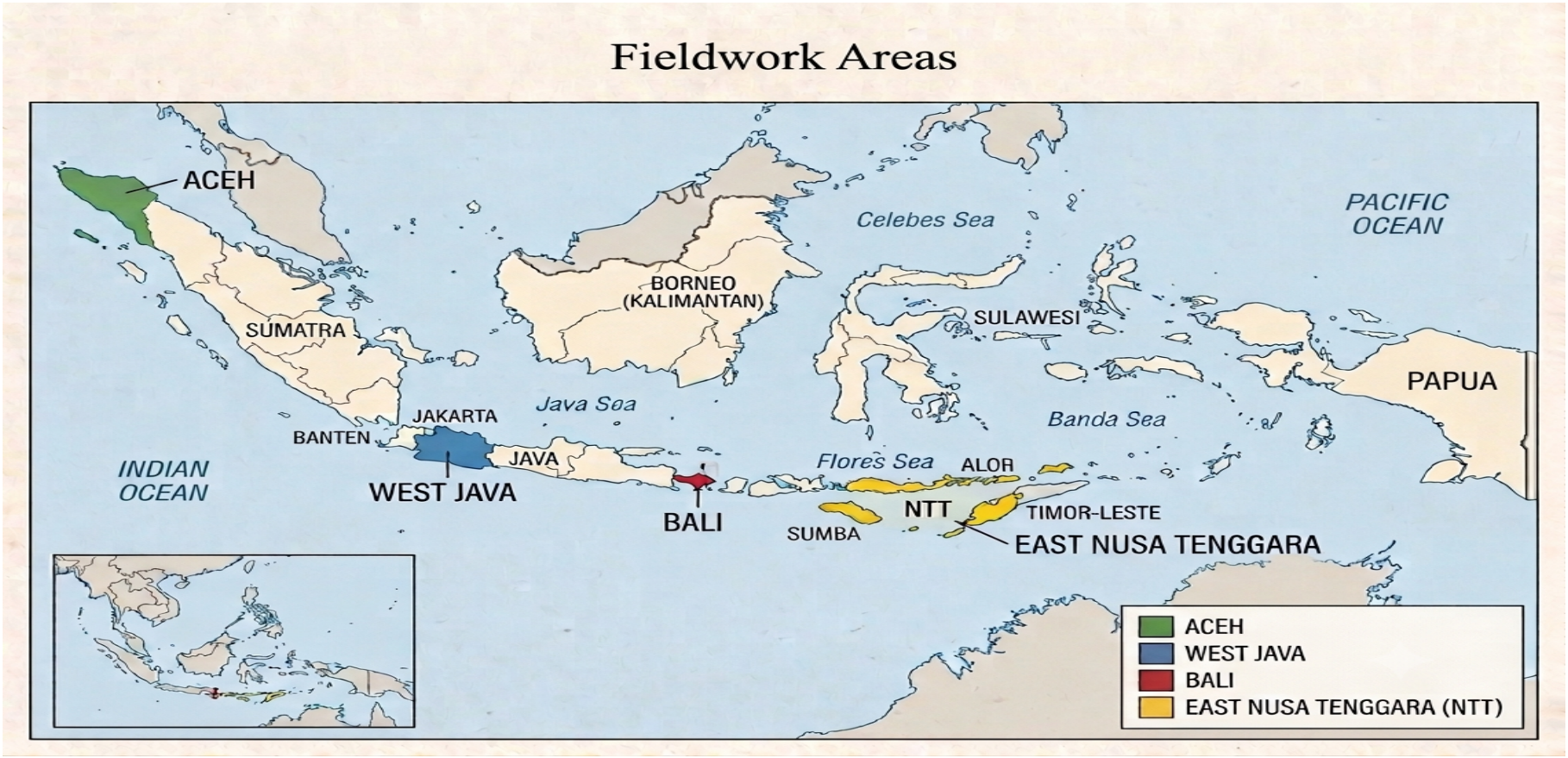
METHODOLOGY

- Pragmatism as the research paradigm
- Sampling: Maximum variation sampling (Aceh, West Java, Bali, & East Nusa Tenggara)
- Methods: Semi-structured Interviews
- Data analysis: Reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Braun & Clarke, 2022)
- Participants/ Informants: 57 Care leavers/ Young people with residential group homes experience

lembaga pengelola dana pendidikan

MONASH University

FIELDWORK AREAS



lpdp
lembaga pengelola dana pendidikan

MONASH University

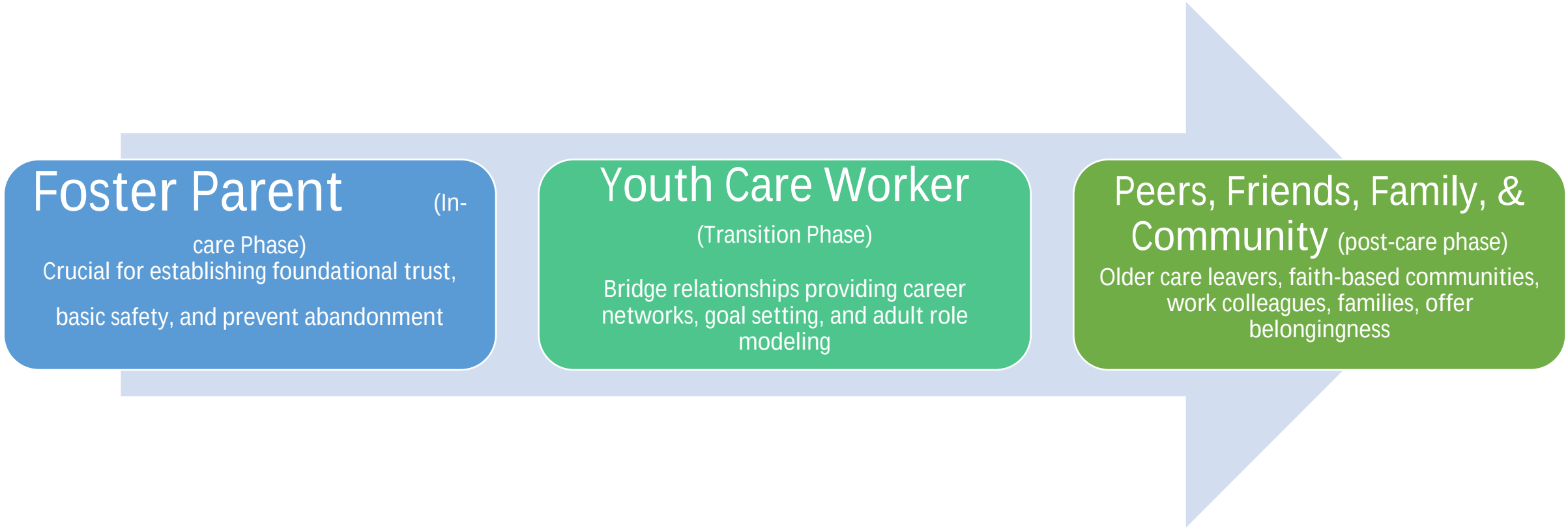
CARE LEAVER INFORMANTS' DEMOGRAPHICS (AND OUTCOMES)

Characteristic	Category	N	%
Gender (Sex-at-birth)	Female	23	40.4
	Male	34	59.6
Age group (at interview)	16 – 18 years	21	36.8
	19 – 21 years	22	38.6
	22 – 25 years	14	24.6
Religious Identity	Islam	19	33.3
	Catholic	19	33.3
	Protestant	5	8.8
	Hindu	14	24.6
Employment or Activities	High school & post-secondary student	40	70.2
	Formal employment	11	19.3
	Informal employment*	6	10.5
Placement location (Province)	West Java	14	24.6
	Aceh	15	26.3
	Bali	17	29.8
	East Nusa Tenggara	11	19.3
Length of care or support	More than 10 years	28	49.1
	10 years and under	29	50.9
Current status	Fully independent	13	22.8
	Extended care – supported independent living	9	15.8
	Extended care – small group homes	29	50.9
	Group home care	6	10.5

*informal employment includes informal workers, vocational trainees, and one temporarily unemployed participant.

lpdp
lembaga pengelola dana pendidikan
MONASH University

Theme 1: *The significance of relationship-based support across in-care, transition, and post-care stages for residential care leavers*



“Initially, I was trying to do both, looking for a job while managing college matters… Eventually, after receiving much advice and support from my foster mother, and care workers telling me I had to choose one, I made a decision. My motivation was that I wanted to make foster mother proud; I didn’t want to disappoint her. So, I finally decided to focus on continuing my college studies”

Participant 5 (Male, Age 20, Undergraduate student)

“[We] exchange ideas about parenting, actually. Sometimes when a young person has a problem, Mr. [Youth Care Worker] and I go out, just the two of us, to grab a coffee…So, more than a father figure. Because my biological father and I rarely talk. There was violence too…So that father figure now revolves around Mr. [Youth Care Worker] instead.”

Participant 15 (Male, Age 21, Undergraduate student)

Theme 2: *The importance of planning, preparing, and practical support for young people with care experience during their transition into adulthood*

Individual development planning

- **Early intervention before starting high school**
  - With young people, create individual and study plans that reduce anxiety of leaving care and establish clear vocational and educational goals

Integrating educational support

- **Navigating national bureaucracy**
  - Registering care leavers into the Integrated Social Welfare Data (DTKS) (*now called DTSEN*) to secure access to higher education scheme, combined institutional financial allowance.

Gradual housing transitions

- **Shifting from 'family' group homes to extended care settings** (i.e., group homes or supported independent living)
  - Allowing young people to practice independent living skills (i.e., cooking, financial management) within a supported safety net before totally independent.

“[one province] is synonymous with tourism. Many of our ‘younger siblings’ are not very open-minded. They immediately run toward tourism. Actually, I am in tourism too, but I work in the back office…our younger siblings just to think about working quickly to make money. But they should actually think that there are ‘rare’ job opportunities out there that can generate a lot of money.”

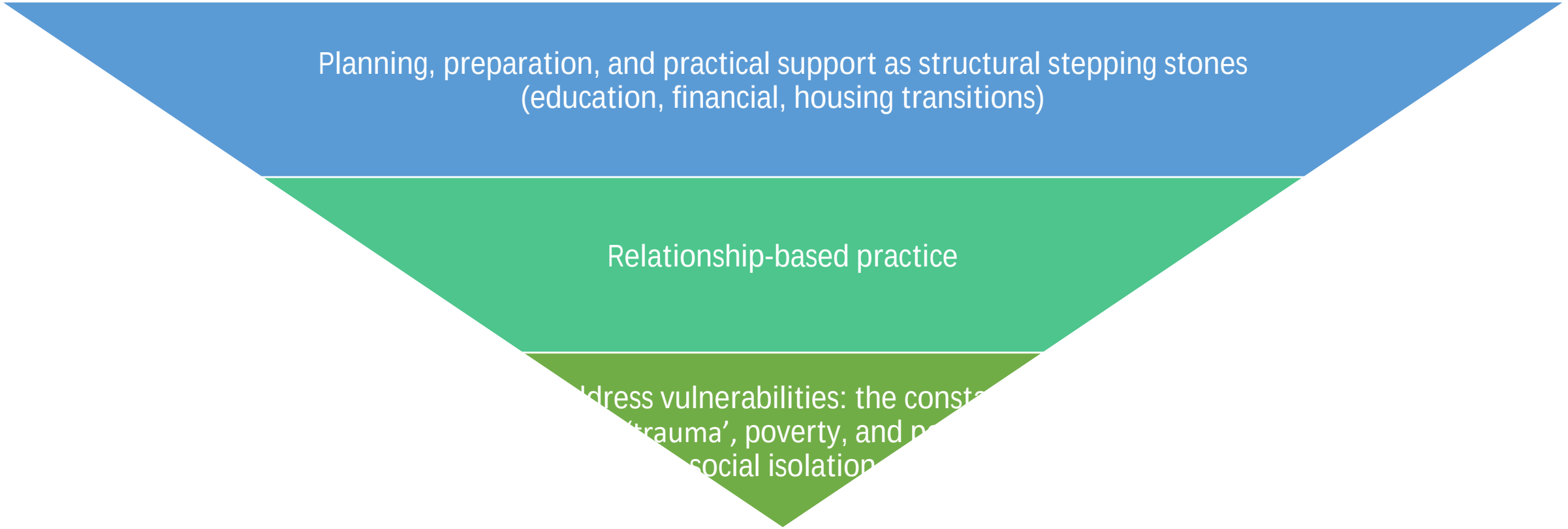
Participant 33 (Female, Age 24, Undergraduate student & Part-time worker)

Theme 3: *Vulnerabilities experienced by residential care leavers when transitioning into, during, and exiting care*

Pre-care (High risk)	In-care (Moderate risk)	Post-care (High risk)
• Socioeconomic hardship driving voluntary placement	• Exposure to corporal punishment or favoritism by ill-equipped staff.	• Abrupt exit for non-compliant behavior, potentially leading to immediate social isolation
• Pre-existing 'trauma' from parental mortality, neglect, and abuse (higher risk)	• Peer bullying and stigma of coming from an 'orphanage' or from different ethnicities/ region	• Unaddressed psychosocial/ psychological adversities leading to mental health struggles, unintended pregnancies, and risky behaviors in early adulthood.

lpdp
lembaga pengelola dana pendidikan
MONASH University

POTENTIAL LEAVING-CARE PATHWAY FRAMEWORK



POTENTIAL POLICIES AND PRACTICE IMPLICATIONS

Limited resources

- Under-resourced child welfare institutions, limited de-institutionalization
- No mandated timelines
- Lack of aftercare state funding

Social capital as the only means

- Rely heavily on care leavers' 'social capital' (informal networks)
- Less integrated social policy measures

Paradigm shift

- Providing a 'family', not only a 'temporary shelter'
- Co-building networks to promote belongingness beyond the formal involvement

lpdp
lembaga pengelola dana pendidikan
MONASH University

POTENTIAL ROADMAP FOR POLICY REFORM

Revise the National Standards of Care	Mandate early planning	Establish formal leaving care policies	Implement trauma-informed continuums	Advance co-research with care leavers and others
• Mandate relationship-based practice and aftercare focus	• Collaborative development plan before the transitional age, including the transition framework	• Create national frameworks for gradual, flexible extended care measures, specifically targeting youth with fractured family ties and not engaging in ongoing education	• Shift from not just punitive compliance model into non-punitive, but also into trauma-informed care that recognizes behavioural difficulties as trauma responses	• Expand data collection to faith-based and state organisations • Collaborating and co-design research directly with care leavers

“Redefining Independence into Interdependence”

(Mendes & Moslehuddin, 2006)

Acknowledgement

The presenter would like to express sincere gratitude to the young people with care experience who participated in this study and generously shared their insights and experiences. Appreciation is also extended to the LPDP Scholarship for supporting and funding this research. The author(s) further acknowledges [Care Organization], including its leadership and staff, for their valuable assistance and support throughout the research process. [List of care staff involved]

Personal contact details

Name : Rangga Radityaputra

Position : Doctoral Researcher/ PhD Candidate

University : Monash University, Australia

Email : rangga.radityaputra@monash.edu / ranggaradityaputra@gmail.com

Relevant publications :

Radityaputra, R., Mendes, P., and Baidawi, S. (2026). Examining policies and practices to support young people transitioning from out-of-home care (OOHC) in Asia: What do we know from existing grey literature?. *Child & Family Social Work,* 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1111/cfs.70199.

Radityaputra, R., Baidawi, S., & Mendes, P. (2026). A scoping review of policies and practices to support young people transitioning from out-of-home care in Asia. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 108777. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2026.108777

Radityaputra, R., Mendes, P., & Baidawi, S. (2025). What is Known About the Numbers, Experiences and Outcomes of Young People Transitioning from Out-of-home Care in Indonesia? *Institutionalised Children Explorations and Beyond*, *12*(1), 130-149. https://doi.org/10.1177/23493003241286390

lpdp lembaga pengelola dana pendidikan

MONASH University