

## ABSTRACT

**Title:** “A study on reintegration of girls moving out of care homes into society, in Mumbai”

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**Rationale:** In India, the Ministry of Women and Child Development has estimated that there are over 10 million children in residential care. Of these annually, over a million young people leave care every year in India. Data is scarce on the challenges encountered and support services available for youngsters transitioning out of care homes. They are longing to leave the care home and yet the sudden transition poses huge challenges especially for girls. Leaving the secure and protected environment of the care home where everything was done for them and they experienced relatively little independence to a place where they have to do everything for themselves and they are not sure what to do, make them insecure. This paper looks into the adjustment and reintegration of these girls into mainstream society. The major challenges faced by the current generation in transitioning are examined. It emphasizes on the role played by various support systems like family, friend, care home, other organisations and government agencies in their lives after leaving care.

**Objectives:**

- 1) To study the socio-economic status of the respondents.
- 2) To determine the challenges faced by them in the process of re-integration into society.
- 3) To understand the support mechanisms that have helped them cope with the challenges faced after moving out of the care homes.
- 4) To study their aspirations.
- 5) To study the respondents’ expectations from government and NGOs regarding support services.

**Method:** Girls leaving around seven care homes in Mumbai in the past 15 years were interviewed. This study also attempts to identify the psychological challenges and coping of the girls leaving residential care using Self Determination theory. When the girls experience loss of the security they had in residential care and face independent living, how they perceive their feelings autonomy, competence and relatedness, influences their overall perception of reintegration into society and their life satisfaction.

**Findings:** The study describes how current support that is provided to the girls in the care homes is mostly in traditional areas (except for basic computer training) while entry level jobs that the girls got into were different and their aspirations were still more different. There was also an emergent need among respondents for more confidence building and longer preparation to face the challenges of the current world.

**Conclusion:** The study brings to the fore how modern-day social work interventions in care and after care need to match with current trends. Using the study to find out what the girls go through after leaving care, what they need to make things better for them and formulating the right interventions to achieve this could give such young girls a better chance of succeeding as productive independent citizens able to raise and educating families of their own.