

**Pag-aalaga ng Taga-alaga:
Lived Experiences of Care among
Live-in Internal Migrant Domestic Workers**

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ABSTRACT

Internal migration among domestic workers have become increasingly common among the Filipino population. Understanding their lived experiences allows for a *richer understanding of how they navigate their roles in providing care for both their charge(s) and their own spatially-distant children*. This study aimed to contribute to the existing literature by utilizing a hermeneutic phenomenological lens to explore the lived experiences of care among Filipino *yayas*. Data were gathered from six respondents using semi-structured interviews. A significant finding revealed that the *yayas*' experience of care are intertwined with maintaining relationships with key individuals in their care work. These include their charge(s), the charge(s)' parents, their children, and their children's guardians. Trust is crucial in sustaining these relationships and creating a nurturing environment for care recipients. Being employed as caregivers towards children not their own, the *yayas* provided professional childcare. They employ strategic approaches in professional care such as establishing strong emotional bonds, spending quality time one-on-one, and using negotiation tactics to gain the charges' trust. For their own children, they fostered independence and maintained constant communication despite physical separation. Care experiences highlighted the intricacies of paid domestic work, transcending commodification narratives through emotional attachments formed with the charge(s) that they care for. The study also sheds light on the complexities of care work and advocates for better employment policies that support internal migrant domestic workers. Specifically, this can lead to more targeted interventions to address the unique challenges the *yayas* face in their caregiving roles.