Abstract

Caregiving is widely practiced in the Philippines. Filipinos are known to be hospitable, family-oriented and are born with the skills of a caregiver. The present study is entitled Lived Experiences of Filipino Formal Caregivers in Handling Persons with Disabilities, in which formal caregiver is defined as individual who had undergo training in providing care and applies such care as an occupation. This gap was addressed since only few researches have been directed to the formal caregivers, let alone among Filipinos. The study utilized an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) which is qualitative research design. Thematic analysis was employed as a form of data analysis. A homogeneous purposive sampling was used for the participants of the study. Results have been analyzed and clustered into eight superordinate themes to represent the lived experiences and meaning system of the seven Filipino formal caregivers in Virlanie Foundation (Jade Home), namely (1) motives for engaging into caregiving and for remaining as a formal caregiver in Virlanie Foundation – Jade Home; (2) types of support provided to persons with disabilities by formal caregivers; (3) established deep emotional intimacy of formal caregivers with persons with disabilities and co-workers; (4) challenges encountered by formal caregivers at their work in Virlanie Foundation – Jade Home and their adapted coping mechanism in dealing with work-related stressors; (5) most significant experience as a formal caregiver in Virlanie Foundation – Jade Home; (6) the need to use the term "houseparents" and importance of addressing the formal caregivers as "Mama" and "Papa" by the persons with disabilities in Virlanie Foundation – Jade Home; (7) view of caregivers towards persons with disabilities in Virlanie Foundation – Jade Home and towards the foundation itself; and (8) positive implications of caregiving to formal caregivers' personal life.

Keywords: caregiving, formal caregiver, houseparents, persons with disabilities, Virlanie Foundation - Jade Home