Reviewer’s report

Title: A feminist phenomenology on the emotional labor and morality of live-in migrant care workers caring for older people in the community

Version: 0 Date: 22 May 2019

Reviewer: Inger K. Holmström

Reviewer's report:

This study sets out to investigate the embodied experiences of migrant live-in care workers (MCWs) in Hong Kong in their delivery of emotional labour. This is an important and topical issue for both researchers and clinicians, and the findings are interesting. The manuscript is easy to read and follow. It also fits well into the aims and scope of BGTC. However, I have some comments and questions, please see below.

1. For readers like me, from a country were MCWs do not exist, more knowledge to contextualize this phenomenon is needed. I would for instance like to know more about the working conditions of the MCWs. How many hours per week do they work? Do they work on a 24/7 base? How many weeks of annual vacation do they have? Etc
2. On p.4 it is stated that MCWs are consistently responsible for 9% of abuse of older persons. This is important given the focus on emotional labor and moral work in the present manuscript. Therefore, I wonder if you can elaborate this some more?
3. Please be careful which concepts you use. For instance you most often use "older persons", but sometimes "the aged". The latter implies a more objectifying view on the older persons, which might not be what you intended? You also use the concept "older people".
4. The theoretical frames are relevant and interesting, and adds to the value of the manuscript.
5. Regarding data collection, I get a bit confused. You state that findings "were drawn from an analysis of secondary data". What does this actually mean? What do the secondary data consist of? Is the study in fact a secondary analysis of the data collected for reference 30? Or are these incidental findings from that study?
6. What was the purpose of the follow-up interviews? Was the same interview guide used for both the first and the second interview? This is not clear at all.
7. I wonder if social desirability bias played a role in the interview situation? That is, did you capture negative experiences or feelings for the older persons, or did any of the informants talk about the abuse mentioned in the introduction?
8. The analysis section needs more information to meet quality criteria applicable for qualitative approaches. There are many types of thematic analysis, please provide a reference and explain in more detail how you proceeded. The steps in the analysis could be displayed in a table or figure.
9. In the result section on p. 10, lines 29 ff, it is described how the MCWs are employed by the families and get kick-out of the country if they do not get a new job within two weeks. This is important information which preferably should be described in the background section.
10. The themes are interesting and relevant quotes are provided. Theme one is about moral habitus
in the relation, the second is about caregiving regulated by emotions in relation to the oppressive relationship, the third is about how work is motivated by genuine feelings for the older person, and the last about expressing either genuine or fake emotions to promote a good stewardship. Each theme is broad, and I get very curious and would have wanted to know much more, although I know that the limited space in scientific journals restricts how much information one can provide.

11. The discussion is relevant and interesting, and framed by the theoretical approaches used.

12. There is however a lack of discussion about the study's strengths and limitations. Both need to be addressed, preferably in relation to quality criteria appropriate for qualitative research. Often used are the ones proposed by Lincoln & Guba.

13. I find the very last sentence about enactment of goodness a bit "indigestible". In my view, this need to be balanced in relation to how dependent the MCWs seems to be, stuck in an oppressive relationship and lack of power or rights.

**Are the methods appropriate and well described?**
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Does the work include the necessary controls?**
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?**
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

Not relevant to this manuscript

**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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