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PAGISTORYA HAN MGA TAGASAYSAY
**A NARRATIVE INQUIRY ON HOW FIVE SUPER TYPHOON YOLANDA SURVIVORS
CONFRONTED EMOTIONAL TRAUMA THROUGH FILMMAKING**

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1 JULY 2022

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PAGISTORYA HAN MGA TAGASAYSAY A NARRATIVE INQUIRY ON HOW FIVE SUPERTYPHOON YOLANDA SURVIVORS CONFRONTED EMOTIONAL TRAUMA THROUGH FILMMAKING

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ACCEPTANCE PAGE

This paper prepared by **KERCHLYNN C. TAN** with the title: ***“PAGISTORYA HAN MGA TAGASAYSAY A NARRATIVE INQUIRY ON HOW FIVE SUPERTYPHOON YOLANDA SURVIVORS CONFRONTED EMOTIONAL TRAUMA THROUGH FILMMAKING”*** is hereby accepted by the Faculty of Information and Communication Studies, U.P. Open University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Program.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Kerchlynn Tan finished her undergraduate studies in Film and Audio-Visual Communication at the University of the Philippines Diliman in 2008. Since graduation, she has been working with ABS-CBN News as a Remote Broadcast Producer. Her primary role is to lead the technical broadcast team during the coverage of live events. She is usually assigned to cover typhoons, earthquakes, wars, and legislative hearings at the Senate and House of Representatives.

Her background and film, coupled with her disaster coverage experience, got her interested in writing this topic. She hopes that this manuscript can somehow contribute to the filmmaking fabric of her hometown.

She was born in September 1986, in Tacloban City Leyte. She currently resides in Quezon City, Metro Manila.

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Sinirangan nga Kabisay-an

ABSTRACT

Theoretically guided by Bruner's Narrative Construction of Reality and the Expressive Arts framework, this paper gathered the narratives of five Leyte filmmakers to better understand filmmaking's role as a medium for emotional recovery in the aftermath of Supertyphoon Yolanda.

Emotional healing through the arts is not something new. However, studies on the role of arts, particularly filmmaking in disaster mental health in the Philippines, remain limited. More glaringly, articles about the cinematic products from Leyte and the rest of the Eastern Visayas region have been limited to the festival awards it has reaped. There is a gap in the availability of scholarly materials that demonstrate how films from this region can be used as an effective medium for self-expression, empowerment, emotional healing, and resiliency-building, leading to positive social development.

Hence, this academic undertaking has positioned filmmaking as a catalyst for emotional wellness after a disaster and underscored its contribution to holistic disaster management plans.

Keywords: Supertyphoon Yolanda, Emotional Healing, Filmmaking, Disaster Mental Health, Narrative Inquiry, Interpretive Worldview

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

One of the most powerful typhoons ever recorded made landfall in the Philippines on 08 November 2013. Supertyphoon Yolanda left 6,300 people dead and 1,062 missing across Eastern Visayas (Agence France-Presse, 2018). Tacloban City on the island of Leyte was widely considered to be the typhoon's ground zero as it was 90 percent wiped down (Enano, 2019).

Seven years later, the tales of Yolanda are far from over. As a Waray (an Eastern Visayas native), the researcher has observed the rise of local-based filmmakers who have produced films that tell very personal stories and experiences, especially after the onslaught of Supertyphoon Yolanda in 2013, such as "Balud" (Water Snake), a short experimental film by Panx Solajes, presents a creative reflection on the chaos and fear felt by the storm surge casualties (WorldBank.org, 2014).

The researcher has also noticed an emergence of film festivals and film workshops, which served as spaces for people to build connections and share their

personal stories and experiences. For instance, the short film festival “*Lamrag*” (light or shine) brought together Leyte filmmakers who shared their stories of loss, lessons, and hope. “*Mga Larog*” (sediments of the local drink tuba), an intimate multimedia storytelling session held every 08 November, gathers survivors and storytellers who want to open up their narratives for the first time. The film camps “*CineWaray*” (cinema of the Warays), “*CineBaro*” (learning about cinema), and “*SineSurat*” (scriptwriting for film), graced by multi-awarded filmmakers in the country, were organized to develop more community-based filmmakers in the Eastern Visayas Region. Lastly, the organization “*SINErangan*,” was founded in 2016 with the mission of gathering regional filmmakers and film enthusiasts from Eastern Visayas(Sinerangan Youtube Page).

Beyond the physical destruction, Yolanda’s aftermath included the assault on the people’s psyche that left enduring scars (Enano, 2019). As words cannot always adequately express emotions, the arts provided a healing space for the community to explore their emotions and feelings. Film as a purveyor of culture not only describes an individual’s experience but also attempts to provide us with a sneak peek into the soul, emotion, and perspective through the storyteller’s eyes (Wattenbarger, 2018).

In Leyte, filmmaking has become a crucial coping device as it allowed people to recover from the devastation emotionally. Filmmaking created a space for the local community to share their stories in their own words and in their language of choice for their own development. While stories about Yolanda have been told aplenty by journalists

and other visitors, it is just recently that the people from the community are now the ones telling the stories themselves. Cinematic expressions have helped these locals process the past, share the stories with others in the present, and work towards a collective future (Wattenbarger, 2018).

B. Statement of the Problem

The government promised to “*build back better*” after Super Typhoon Yolanda shattered more than a million homes and displaced over 600,000 people (Doyle, 2016). Its strategy included rebuilding resettlement areas for residents living near the coastal areas that are sure to be hit when another typhoon strikes (Ong *et al.*, 2016).

The National Economic Development Authority’s Yolanda Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Recovery Plan (2014) reveals that psychosocial support was provided by the Department of Health to merely 582 patients for the year 2014 to 2015. The government’s recovery efforts are mainly focused on restoring infrastructure, agriculture, and livelihood (Ong *et al.*, 2016). Moreover, a Harvard Humanitarian Initiative study on the Perceptions of Disaster Resilience in the Philippines (2018) reports low mental health support in the aftermath of a disaster in the country. Eighteen percent of the respondents report experiencing depression or trauma linked to disasters, yet less than one percent of the population received treatment or therapy. (Bollettino *et al.*, 2018). As such, there

remains to be a void in our holistic disaster recovery process by giving less priority to psychosocial recovery (Kargillis *et al.*, 2014).

On top of this, the entire Philippines is currently under a “State of Calamity” due to its current battle with the COVID-19 outbreak. This pushes the mental health of Filipinos farther back on the list of priorities, with all resources geared towards saving lives and socio-economic recovery (Malindog-Uy, 2020).

This researcher believes that the Leytenos of the Eastern Visayas region have rich stories to tell, especially after going through the suffering and distress brought about by Supertyphoon Yolanda and even with the rise of COVID-19 cases in the region. Yet, the visual narratives from Eastern Visayas have received little attention and remain to be scholarly undocumented despite the growing number of local-based visual storytellers in the said region. This creates a research gap on how films from the Eastern Visayas region can be an effective medium for self-expression, empowerment, emotional healing, and resiliency-building, leading to positive social development.

As such, there is a need to study how personal and locally produced films can respond to the emotional stress and trauma experienced by a community in a post-disaster setting. There is a further need to explore filmmaking as a tool to process, heal,

connect, and educate. These play a vital role in individual and community rehabilitation in relation to disasters.

C. Objectives of the Study

By delving into the experiences and the subjective perspectives of Eastern Visayan filmmakers, this paper aims to:

1. Explore how filmmaking aided in the healing from emotional trauma in the aftermath of Supertyphoon Yolanda
2. Determine the filmmaking processes that allow the construction of expressive narratives for emotional healing.
3. Establish the role of filmmaking as a medium for building disaster resilience, sharing of social awareness, and local knowledge in the Eastern Visayas region

D. Research Questions

This research was guided by the central question: *how did filmmaking help Supertyphoon Yolanda survivors heal from the emotional trauma caused by the disaster?*

To further expand on the primary question, the following sub-questions were asked:

1. In what way does filmmaking differ from other forms of self-expression and communication?
2. What aspect of the filmmaking process is the most meaningful?
3. What film genres can be best used to access memories and disaster-related trauma?
4. What can be done for the long-term development of filmmaking as an intervention for disaster mental health programs?

E. Significance of the Study

The aftermath of natural disasters is commonly determined by the number of casualties and injuries, the figures on infrastructural damage, and the amount needed to repair and rebuild. More often than not, the emotional wounds a disaster brings upon the survivors are often discounted. To this day, Super typhoon Yolanda survivors who lost their loved ones continue to experience grief and guilt for not being able to save the lives of their family and friends during the storm surge. Many still carry on tremendous amounts of shock, fear, anxiety, stress, and emptiness.

This research recognizes that emotional healing through the arts is not something new. However, the researcher observed that studies on filmmaking's contribution to disaster mental health remain limited. More glaringly, articles about the cinematic products from Eastern Visayas have been defined merely by the festival awards reaped. As such, there is a gap in the availability of scholarly materials that talk about how local films can be a platform for the community to share their stories in their own words and their language of choice for their development.

Additionally, revisiting this subject has regained its importance due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (2020) acknowledge that the COVID-19 outbreak, along with the effects of isolation, lockdown, financial crisis, and inadequate health services, has caused immense stress and undermined psychological well-being to a significant number of our population. Despite this, Mahoney (2020) recognizes that storytelling can be a form of self-care during a pandemic. Misra (2020) adds that while the novel coronavirus outbreak is mentally and emotionally debilitating, artists will be able to help us make sense of this collective traumatic experience through storytelling.

Hence, there is a need for this academic undertaking so that the role of storytelling through filmmaking as a catalyst for psychosocial wellness after a disaster or a pandemic may be underscored in creating a holistic disaster management plan.

F. Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study is not a discussion on clinical psychology and does not evaluate the effectiveness of art therapy. Instead, its goal is purely to gain an insight into how filmmaking can help as an emotional recovery tool for disaster survivors. Moreover, the study is limited to the cinematic medium. It will only delve into the subjective perspectives of Leyteno filmmakers who produced films from 2014 to 2020 or after Supertyphoon Yolanda hit the Eastern Visayas Region.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The survivor did not only need to survive so that they could tell their stories; they also needed to tell their stories to survive. There is, in each survivor, an imperative need to tell and thus to come to know one's story, unimpeded by a ghost from the past against which one has to protect oneself. One has to know one's buried truth to be able to live one's life.

– Quoted from Felman & Laub (p.78)

The nature of this exploratory research encompasses three main themes – disasters, mental health, and filmmaking. Hence, this review of the literature will be divided into these three topics as well.

A. Eastern Visayas: A Hotspot for Natural Disasters

Eastern Visayas or Region 8 is composed of two main islands, Leyte and Samar. It consists of six provinces: Biliran, Eastern Samar, Leyte, Northern Samar, Samar, and Southern Leyte. Data from the Philippine Statistics Authority show that the region's 2018 poverty incidence has significantly improved from 41% to 38% in three years. Despite this improvement, the region remains to be one of the poorest in the country. Eastern Visayas ranked as the third poorest nationwide after ARMM and Region 9 (NEDA.gov.ph). The

Philippine Statistics Authority says four in every ten persons in Eastern Visayas are poor (2018).

Moreover, the region has also been identified as one of the most calamity-prone areas in the country due to its geographic location, which faces the Pacific Ocean and is within the Pacific Ring of Fire (Meniano, 2017; Gavilan, 2017; Bollettino, 2018; Meniano, 2018). The region is susceptible to typhoons, storm surges, flooding, droughts, landslides, and volcanic eruptions (Bollettino, 2018; Esguerra, 2018). Fernandez (2013) opines that Leyte's island has become the disaster capital of the Philippines, citing separate studies from the Visayas State University, Eastern Visayas State University, and the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization-Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture to support his claim.

The earliest account of a disaster hitting the region was in October 1897, when a strong typhoon followed by a storm surge reaching up to 7 meters left 1,299 casualties (Lotilla, 2014). In November 1991, Typhoon Uring hit Ormoc City, which is considered the second deadliest typhoon in Philippine history, having killed 4,000 and left 2,500 missing (Gavilan, 2017). A massive landslide took place in Barangay Guinsaugon, St. Bernard, Southern Leyte, in December 2006, where more than 1,000 people perished (Fernandez, 2013). Then, the world's strongest typhoon, Yolanda barreled through the Eastern Visayas in November 2013, claiming 6,200 lives, injuring 28,000, and displacing more than 600,000 people (Agence France-Presse, 2018). More recently, Typhoon Urduja hit

the region in December 2017, causing several landslides and entombing 52 people, several of them children (Gabieta, 2017).

Apart from the typhoons and landslides, a magnitude 6.5 earthquake struck the Leyte province in 2017, leaving two people dead and a hundred injured. The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology records a Philippine Fault segment, which traverses the province referred to as the “Central Leyte Fault.” The agency also states that Leyte has 18 volcanoes, although only one is considered active – the Cancajanag Volcano (Gavilan, 2017).

Fernandez (2013) cites the Center for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters in Belgium, saying that the Philippines suffered the worst combination of earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and floods from 1901 to 2000. Tacloban City is said to have exemplified the Philippine disaster scenario.

B. Disasters and Mental Health

Many scholars have expressed diverse views on what exactly constitutes a disaster. Some define disaster as the number of people killed and injured. Others judge an event as a disaster if a specific predefined trigger to a certain contingency measure is reached. Some others define disasters based on the monetary value of the losses (Raphael & Maguire, 2009 p.7-28; USAID, 2011).

Many research papers have contributed to the understanding of mental health in disasters. Two of the most exhaustive works are the collective volumes edited by Lopez-Ibor in 2005 and Neria, Galea, and Norris in 2009. According to the collection of essays from the book “Disasters and Mental Health” (2005) by Lopez-Ibor and “Mental Health and Disasters” (2009) by Neria, Galea, and Norris, defining disasters in terms of human losses, injuries, material, and economic losses are not enough parameters. Both of these comprehensive literature cites Carr as one of the first to look at disasters from a social perspective, saying that disaster is the *“collapse of the cultural protections of society and that social disruptions create more difficulties than the physical consequences.”* They further cite Quarantelli, who first examined disasters from the subjective perspective (Lopez-Ibor, 2005, p. 3; Neria, Galea and Norris, p. 7). According to Quarantelli, as cited by Lopez-Ibor and Neria *et al.*, a disaster can be compared to a magnifying glass wherein the affected community may see the event as a lack of social justice and equity since it affects a person intimately as their foundations are stirred up (p.3). These scholars conclude that the impact of a disaster can be cushioned not only by the physical and economic structures but also by the ability of those affected to adapt psychologically (p.5).

Since then, various organizations have adapted Quarantelli’s perspective. The International Federation of the Red Cross defines a disaster as occurring whenever a hazard impacts vulnerable people. The World Health Organization states that *“it is the people who matter most, without the people, we have no disaster.”* Some manuals have

been developed to provide appropriate disaster mental health responses, such as the “Emergency and Disaster Management: A Mental Health Sourcebook” and the “Handbook of Mental Healthcare for Disaster Victims.” These materials were enormously influential in communicating the recognition of the importance of disaster mental health (Raphael and Maguire, 2009, p.9).

Several other studies affirm that whenever a disaster strikes, the poor are the hardest hit (Neria, Galea, and Norris, 2009). The more significant number of disaster victims are always those already socially disadvantaged, those in poor socio-economic conditions, and those who have limited access to health care facilities (Ronquillo, 1999; Reijneveld, 2005; McFarlane, 2012; Lowrey, 2019).

Relief operations which include distribution of food supplies, livelihood support, and housing relocation plans, are prompted in the aftermath of a disaster. However, the mental health of disaster-afflicted individuals is often overlooked (Wahl-Alexander, 2017; Makwana, 2019). Numerous authors posit that disasters may easily be measured by the cost of social and economic damage. Still, there is no comparison to the emotional sufferings a person undergoes post-disaster. According to Schulz (2013), most persons exposed to disasters can quickly pull through from distress reactions such as anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and substance abuse; however, those who lost loved ones are more likely to struggle with grief and guilt. Later on, these personal struggles become social problems because stressful experiences, more often

than not, lead to long-term psychological consequences such as depression and physical health complications such as hypertension and coronary heart disease due to increased alcohol and cigarette use (Shinfuku, 2005). Therefore, addressing disaster mental health mandates great attention because it is a social issue (Ronquillo, 1999; Lowrey, 2019) and a matter of public health concern (Ronquillo, 1999; Reijneveld, 2005; McFarlane, 2012).

Extensive studies have been done to prove that people exposed to the trauma of disasters are at increased risk for depression, anxiety disorders, panic attacks, and increased substance abuse (International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies, Stith, *et al.*, 2003; Amstadter *et al.*, 2009, Fullerton & Ursano, 2007; Rhodes *et al.*, 2010; Makwana, 2019). Low-income women, children, adolescents, and the elderly population have been identified as the most vulnerable population who are at higher risk of mental health problems and are more susceptible to psychosocial difficulties, thereupon needing more timely mental health interventions (Rhodes *et al.*, 2010; Makwana, 2019).

In the Philippines, Ignacio and Perlas (2015) have observed that there has been a gradual change in the perception of disaster in the last decade wherein the emphasis has shifted to a more man-centered approach, rather than just on the structural and economic losses. This shift has allowed attention to be paid to the psychosocial aspects of coping with disasters. Psychosocial interventions are aimed at facilitating a victim's ability to gain a sense of empowerment so they can be transformed from being a victim to being a survivor (Ronquillo, 1999). Without this, a victim remains in a passive and dependent

state and cannot effectively utilize available resources to rebuild their lives and communities. It then becomes clear that the psychosocial effects of a disaster on an individual and the community at large must be the main focus of any disaster risk reduction management and resiliency program (Ronquillo, 1999; Ignacio & Perlas, 2015).

However, there is a noticeable vacancy in scholarly studies relating disasters to mental well-being through non-verbal and artistic expressions in the Philippine setting. The closest literature available is Parr's (2015) paper titled "The Use of Expressive Arts in Making Sense of Traumatic Experiences," where she utilized the Play and Mindfulness-Based Expressive Arts Therapy with Cognitive Reframing (PMBEAT) method on 39 survivors of Typhoon Yolanda in Leyte. Her baseline data revealed fear, anxiety, isolation, grief, and guilt among her participants. However, through the PMBEAT intervention, the participants could *"express their feelings about their experience through narratives, visual arts, and music in an environment where they were listened to and were accepted completely and mindfully."* The process resulted in the respondents' positive feelings on having a new beginning and being able to surpass future challenges with the help of family and the community. One could reconstruct the social fabric that Yolanda destroyed through the expressive arts, says Parr (2015). The study recommends that more studies be done on other expressive arts modalities such as dance, music, or drama to help communicate traumatic experiences brought about by disasters in the Philippines.

A 2018 Harvard Humanitarian Initiative study on Disaster Preparedness and Resilience in the Philippines records low mental health support in the aftermath of a disaster across the country. The World Health Organization defines mental health as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes their potential, can cope with the everyday stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and can contribute to their community. Eighteen percent of the country-wide respondents reported experiencing depression and trauma from disasters. Yet, less than 1 percent admitted receiving any form of treatment or therapy. Bermejo (2017) and Baisaz and Yang (2018) report that people still feel afraid when it rains hard even after four years. Children affected by Yolanda refused to return to school, *“became passive and withdrawn, and grew assaultive and aggressive.”* Bollettino (2018) also writes that disaster-impacted individuals felt discouraged in life because disasters prevent them from achieving their goals. Filipinos living in areas of the country frequently hit by disasters, such as the Eastern Visayas region, mention that they experience challenges in recovering emotionally. The study recommended more targeted research on the link between disasters, level of aid, and levels of trauma and depression.

Enano (2019) tells that beyond the physical destruction, what was unraveled in Yolanda’s aftermath was the weak system that the government put on the mental health of disaster survivors. In Eastern Visayas, many of the Warays were left with enduring mental scars. Psychology professor Pierce Docena in his interview with Enano, states that:

Years after Yolanda, there are still too many narratives of fear and trauma in the communities. Until today, citizens still get too anxious whenever they hear news reports on weather disturbances hitting the region. There are still children who cry their eyes out whenever it rains. Stress and anxiety are common psychological reactions to adverse events like typhoons. Depression and post-traumatic stress disorder can appear months, even years, after the event itself.

Moreover, Docena states that the region may experience stronger typhoons in the future due to climate change. Because of this, the survivors may be in a “*general state of anxiety*” and may constantly be battered by the traumatic experience from Yolanda (Enano, 2019).

More recently, the Philippines has been under a “State of Calamity” since March 2020 due to its battle against the spread of the novel-coronavirus or COVID-19. The regional lockdowns, loss of jobs, and lack of health care facilities have caused Filipinos considerable feelings of loneliness and anxiety (Malindog-Uy, 2020). Buenaventura, Ho, and Lapid (2020) also write about the effects of the pandemic among older adults in the Philippines. They found that older Filipinos experienced heightened stress, pessimism, and sleep disruption due to lack of social connectedness, prolonged isolation, decreased physical activity, and fear of dying alone if they contracted the COVID-19 disease.

Another interesting observation is how older Filipinos felt sadness and yearning because of being detached from their spiritual leaders and church peers. Their study concludes that older Filipinos suffer not only socially but also spiritually, mentally, and emotionally.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the World Health Organization already reported that the Philippines had one of the highest rates of depression in Southeast Asia, affecting more than three million Filipinos in 2010 (Malindog-Uy, 2020). Thus, the occurrence of the pandemic adds perspective to the extent of the mental health problem in the country.

C. Filmmaking as an Emotional Recovery Tool

It is an intrinsic human characteristic to tell stories. Stories originated from the cave drawings in Lascaux, France, and then were passed down through oral narratives. Over time, stories were delivered in written and typed formats. With technological advancements, humans were able to tell their stories through photography, motion picture, and social media platforms. (Mendoza, 2015; Delcambre, 2019; National Geographic Encyclopedia, 2022)

Numerous studies have also suggested that storytelling is one of the most effective and influential tools in knowledge-building knowledge-sharing, and passing of norms, values, and visions (Denning, 2005, Lambert, 2013, Nairi, 2017).

In his observation of business organizations and his work at the World Bank, Denning (2005) proved that storytelling through photos and videos has a remarkable effect in pushing for action as opposed to prose and dry charts. He puts emphasis on “simple, minimalistic and true-to-life stories” saying that “short narratives are catalysts for change because it shakes up mindsets and sparks action more effectively” (p.212). In the book “Storytelling in Organizations” by Denning, Seely, Goth, and Prusak (2005), Denning further explains:

With a story, listeners get inside the idea. They live the idea. They feel the idea. They experience the story as if they had lived it themselves. In the process, the story, and the idea that resides inside it, can become theirs. It's quite unlike experiencing an abstract explanation of a complex concept. It's different from experiencing it as an external observer, standing back like a scientist in a white coat and appraising the experience, or like some kind of voyeur or as a critic, but rather as a participant, someone who is actually living and experiencing and feeling the story (p. 111)

Since the 1900s, filmmaking has become a major force in the formation of our culture and society (O'conner, 1988). The link between filmmaking and society stems from the fact that motion pictures exhibit such an amazing similarity to the social world

(Gaines, 2008, p. 363). Today, the original medium of celluloid has now been relegated by the digital technologies we know of. Digital media has opened up the floodgates for a new generation of filmmakers who would want to participate in the storytelling sphere through the moving-image medium yet have never been able to afford the film stock. Nowadays, even ordinary citizens can make their own films. Luc De Heusch (1988) noted the advantage of films as a communication medium for social development saying that it can be "read" by illiterate informants (p.20). He argues that from the point of view of the social sciences, films are not only research instruments. He explains:

The cinema is a privileged instrument of sociological communication that gives body and soul to the abstract language of scientific sociology; on this level, the cinema is both an illustration and a corrective—even an antidote. The cinema is, therefore, essentially a particular technique for the expression and conveyance of the results of research. But it is also a part of that research: films are made during investigations and retain the freshness of the dialogue. They firmly establish the sense of reality; they establish direct contact between a community and all those outside it—the vast international movie-going public.

One may ask, what makes filmmaking therapeutic? Cohen, Johnson & Orr (2015) write that cinema has been used as a healing tool since its inception “because creating and watching a film often can speak directly to the human soul” (p.2). Through filmmaking, one can “*write, direct, and edit*” their fears and fantasies in ways that allow them to make meaning of their lives (p.40). Their book “Video and Filmmaking as Psychotherapy: Research and Practice” (2015) is a collection of essays wherein several academics

provide some answers – O’Rourke (2001) was quoted as saying the creative process of video creation encourages creative personal expression (p. 5). Furman (1990) said that the participant has control over the script, camera, and playback in video-making, providing greater feedback clarity and enhanced nonverbal responses. Malchoidi (2015) notes that films and videos, whether viewed, discussed, or created, capture the truth of many experiences and the day-to-day aspects of the human condition. They also touch on a wide range of sensory experiences through dialogue, lighting, special effects, cinematography, and music. Films reflect not only life’s joyful, celebratory, or momentous events. They also mirror the array of experiences that bring clients to treatment – drug addiction and alcoholism, trauma and post-traumatic stress, grief and loss, violence, natural and man-made disaster, divorce and infidelity, phobias, and depression, among others (p. xv).

Moreover, Cohen and Orr postulate that the editing process in filmmaking is a powerful therapeutic tool. The method of putting footage together is akin to “putting the pieces of their lives together” (p.31). The editor’s control in manipulating sound, light, effects, and pacing can be compared to the user having control and clarity over their emotion, perspective, and thought (p. 40).

Wahl-Alexander (2017) believes that arts-based therapy can be immensely beneficial to those who struggle to express their emotions verbally. As such, a diverse range of studies has been done to establish the vital role of film and video as a tool for

trauma healing in recent years. Flores (2004) shares about the indigenous video development and collaborative experience of filmmaking in post-war Guatemala. Mhando & Tomaselli (2009) relates filmmaking to the collective trauma recovery from colonialism in South Africa. Ehinger (2015) discusses how green screen technology assists in psychotherapy. Nairi (2017) talks about the cinematographic expression of the colonization trauma in North Africa, and Tuva, I-Mashiach et al. (2018) approaches filmmaking as therapy for veteran war soldiers.

According to Otanez and Lakota (2015), who created the digital video project “Betsy Bug,” digital video storytelling is the process for individuals to narrate their experiences through video editing software and share it through social media platforms. They were drawn to video storytelling because the process “provides a fresh outlet for sharing an old memory.” Speaking of memory, Nairi (2017) claims that the more painful an event is, the harder it gets to be forgotten and the more solid it exists in our being. Therefore, it is more capable of facing the passing of time and getting recreated in all the expressive forms. She declares that visual storytelling, be it fiction or documentary, plays a role in constructing social awareness and collective understanding. This function of cinematic expression has a role in constructing collective traumatic memory and in building the image of the past by the imagination of the present generation, which may contribute to shaping future social understanding and national history. Llewellyn-Beardsley *et al.* (2019), in their systematic review of 121 published articles on mental health recovery narratives, expressed their concern that the *“emancipatory role of storytelling within the mental health movement is at risk of being lost due to the focus on*

individual factors alone.” They emphasized that when the stories of individual survivors are heard collectively, it builds solidarity and inspires hope in the face of harrowing events such as natural disasters.

Fullerton and Ursano (2005) believe that while commemorating disasters stimulate renewed grief, revisiting traumatic events may also have beneficial effects by providing a sense of purpose and opportunities for positive growth experiences (p. 13). To support his claim, he talks about the survivors of the 1974 Ohio Tornado and the US Air Force Prisoners of War. They reported positive outcomes from their distress following proper psychological support. They reported learning how to handle crises better effectively and developing a reprioritization of life goals placing renewed importance on family and country (p. 29, 30). Woodward (2015) also admits that expressing traumatic incidents such as the Holocaust and the 9/11 bombing can be a daunting task. Yet, she acknowledges that public representations such as films can serve a therapeutic role in concretizing experience into images (p. 117).

Hirschberger (2018) also believes trauma storytelling contributes to the creation of a national narrative through the construction of meaning and social identity such as purpose, values, efficacy, and collective worth. Tracing back to Freud’s seminal work on Trauma and Hysteria (1962), he emphasizes the importance of giving a voice to those in the margins as the key element in the healing process for those who experienced trauma, repression, and social exclusion. Freud argues that resolution is only possible if the

trauma is revisited or expressed. Catharsis is achievable if one is given a voice to address repressed thoughts through art, drama, or filmmaking. Wahl-Alexander (2017) believes that employing arts-based emotional recovery techniques not only aid in short-term betterment but can also lead to a *“higher quality of emotional well-being throughout an individual’s lifetime.”* While embodying collective memories through the visual arts is not new, storytelling has consistently been recognized as a primary social knowledge transfer and sharing channel. The film’s ability to use the image makes visual storytelling one of the most successful cultural production tools for expressing trauma and memory. As such, it is a vital element in the social and cultural production of the national narrative (Nairi, 2017).

D. Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher presents how disasters such as typhoons, earthquakes, and pandemics affect an individual’s emotional and mental health. Emotional reactions such as shock, denial, guilt, depression, and anxiety commonly manifest in low-income women, children, and the elderly for months and years after the occurrence of a disaster. The chapter also introduces an understanding of how the process of filmmaking – from scriptwriting, lighting, camera movement, and editing – can provide an opportunity for healing from repression and emotional wounds caused by these events. Through cinematic expressions, individuals and the community can revisit, make sense of their experiences, and have a voice to express their thoughts,

consequently leading to emotional recovery and catharsis. As a cultural production tool for expressing collective trauma and memory, filmmaking becomes a vital element in the social and cultural production of the national narrative.

CHAPTER III: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Two theories guide this study. First, Jerome Bruner's Narrative Construction of Reality which holds that a person's experience influences their storytelling. Second, the Expressive Arts and Therapeutic Filmmaking framework. Together, these foundational references help the researcher dissect how the cinematic medium can be an effective tool for the storytelling and emotional healing of traumatic experiences in a post-disaster setting.

A. Narrative Construction of Reality

Since this study involves understanding a person's life story, the researcher uses the narrative theory as a ground for understanding experience and memory. In Jerome Bruner's writings "Actual Minds, Possible Worlds (1986) and Acts of Meaning (1990), The Narrative Construction of Reality (1991), he revisits the earlier studies on Narrative Paradigm and brings into it the sphere of literature, the social sciences and cultural psychology (González-Monteaudo, 2011).

Bruner is interested in how humans construct stories to deal with everyday experiences. His approach to the narrative states that individuals construct and make sense of reality through their storytelling. More particularly, random and chaotic events

are turned into coherent stories when narrated by the individual and shared with others (Bruner, 1991; Tuval-Mishiach *et al.*, 2018).

For Bruner:

“stories are about problems, dilemmas, contradictions, and imbalances. They connect the past, the present, and the future, linking past experiences with what may be yet to come. This capacity of narratives for imagining and constructing other worlds, and for trying to make them a reality, is an essential feature of the human capacity to transform ourselves as well as our social contexts” (González-Monteagudo, 2011).

He further asserts that there are two forms of thinking: the paradigmatic and the narrative. According to him, paradigmatic thinking is based on rational arguments, scientific methods, and empirical findings. On the other hand, the narrative is based on shared knowledge, stories, and organized everyday interpretations of the world in storied formats (González-Monteagudo, 2011; Murray, 2015). He adds that when these narratives are accrued or cobbled up together into a whole, it eventually creates “culture, history or more loosely tradition” (Bruner, 1990).

Relating to the subject of this study, it is said that disasters disrupt the flow of daily life and the traumatic experience shatters a person’s sense of continuity. Yet, filmmaking,

much like the narrative process, becomes a tool for therapeutic change. It becomes a medium for the construction of coherent life stories (Tuval-Mashiach *et al.*, 2018). Also, telling a story about one's experience during a crisis is almost always subjective, not rational. To this effect, Bruner's Narrative Construction of Reality can be a useful ground in understanding the personal experiences of the Eastern Visayan filmmaker-survivors and how the crisis can be related to their self-expression, psychosocial recovery, and social development as a whole.

B. Expressive Arts & Therapeutic Filmmaking

The theory and practice of the expressive arts build the bridge between the mental health field and social work (Malchoidi, 2007). Expressive arts have been established to help overcome emotional distress, resolve inner conflicts, achieve insights, and increase a sense of well-being. It is considered to be a form of non-verbal communication of feelings, thoughts, and worldviews which provides an opportunity to express strengths, weaknesses, and possibilities for change (American Art Therapy Association; McNiff, 1998; Vick, 2003; Malchoidi, 2003, 2007).

Shaun McNiff proposes that art itself is medicine. He suggests that all artistic media are a means to express and heal (Richardson, 2016, p.5). McNiff (2016) says the creative atmosphere, albeit challenging, painful, and disruptive, is an agent of transformation. He says:

The experience of making art consistently suggests that what disturbs us the most may also have the most to offer. In medicine, the toxin can become an anti-toxin. Similarly, engaging and knowing the power and the pain of rage, fear, and ecstasy, allows us to harness their energy in our lives. Over and over again, I have found that the images and expressions we create never come to harm us. Indeed, even when full of pain, they instruct and strengthen us. (p.497)

Cathy Malchoidi (1998, 2003, 2007) has written extensively about expressive arts therapy. She states that the expressive arts are highly referent to Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung. Freud's psychoanalysis used fantasies and dreams as the basis for rational analysis. At the same time, Jung believed that by studying a person's "active imagination" and expressive faculties, one could access the person's inner insights (p. xiii).

More specifically, therapeutic filmmaking lays the foundation for how films can be used as a psychosocial recovery tool in a post-disaster setting. After a disaster, vulnerable individuals may experience psychosocial challenges. One way to make sense of the world and regain control is through art creation (Malchoidi, 2003; Sanders, 2015). Filmmakers have managed to depict trauma through documentary, fiction, and experimental cinematic techniques. J. Lauren Johnson theorized that film and video with their capacity for storytelling could be instrumental for psychotherapy. She developed the approach "therapeutic filmmaking," which she defined as an arts-based therapy that

involves making short films about one's personal experience. Her exploratory studies revealed that when an individual can express themselves through filmmaking, they gain a sense of self-mastery, has lowered feelings of depression, and attains feelings of encouragement in the discussion of difficult topics (Johnson & Alderson, 2008; Johnson, 2015).

Johnson enumerates the 5-step process that sets filmmaking apart from other arts-based therapy, namely (2015, p.58):

1. Story development (writing the story that the filmmaker wants to tell)
2. Pre-Production (preparing to shoot the story; this stage involves storyboarding, and creating shot lists)
3. Production (the process of filming)
4. Post-Production (picture and sound editing, adding digital effect)
5. Exhibition/Distribution (making copies of the finished film and exhibiting and/or distributing it to others).

Johnson contends that the entire five-stage process of filmmaking provides the context in which the therapeutic process unfolds. Through the "*writing, re-writing, visual exploration, visual and aural storytelling, and continual processing and analysis of the film*" an individual can process their thoughts and regain personal mastery (p.59). She further claims that film can be a distinctively timeless medium because it can be viewed

repeatedly, in various contexts, and at various points in time. According to Johnson, these particular characteristics of filmmaking have made it incredibly therapeutic.

The findings and analysis from her pilot study involving Canadian aboriginal people who experienced traumatic colonialist practices laid the foundation for therapeutic filmmaking in theory and practice. It showed that those who had involvement in therapeutic filmmaking “sensed” the following:

1. *Positive Experiences*: Participants reported an overall positive experience with filmmaking activities.
2. *Feelings of Mastery*: Participants reported gaining a sense of accomplishment and mastery of a new skill through the task of learning how to make films.
3. *Observations on Perception*: Participants reported that they “*shed new light on themselves and their situations.*”

According to Johnson, the shift in perception was afforded through the “*addition of an objective camera’s lens to the filmmaker’s subjective perspective.*”

4. *Changed Perspective of Self*: Participants reported that they learned more about themselves after the filmmaking activities.
5. *Changed Perspective on Interactions*: Participants reported that the filmmaking activities “*shed new light on their interactions with others*”.
6. *Humor as Healing*: Johnson observed that by representing themselves in a more humorous light, participants could externalize and find the lighter side of the traumatic situations, thereby decreasing the impact of the trauma.

She resolves that audio-visual representations aid communication where language barriers exist and when clients cannot release emotional tension through verbal expressions. Individuals and groups who engage in film or video-based storytelling as part of their psychosocial recovery represent a “*modern interpretation of traditional methods of communication and healing*” (p.62). Moreover, clients such as indigenous peoples may benefit from filmmaking as a recovery approach because it can bring together elements of traditional arts and stories so that essential cultural elements remain to be honored and preserved (p.64).

In conclusion, Luzzatto and Gabriel (1998) have delivered an apt summary on the effects of expressive arts as the “6 Cs”: Catharsis by externalizing repressed emotions; Creativity by promoting self-expressing through artistic media; Communication by

expressing for others what one feels and how one perceives reality; Containment by providing legitimacy to emotions that are otherwise difficult to acknowledge; Connections by bridging the forces within one's self and outside one's self; Change by the transformation of meanings in images (Kreitler et al., 2012).

C. Operational Definition of Terms

1. Art Therapy – a mental health profession wherein a therapist uses visual art (drawing, painting, sculpture, and film/video) to explore feelings, reconcile emotional conflicts, foster self-awareness, manage behavior and addictions, develop social skills, improve reality orientation, reduce anxiety, and increase self-esteem (American Art Therapy Association)
2. Catharsis – the discharge of strong emotions for relief (Malchoidi, 2005)
3. Collective Trauma – refers to the psychological reactions to a traumatic event that affect an entire community or society (Hirschberger, 2018)
4. Development – in this study, this term is used to refer to a people-centered type of social change (Quebral, 2012)
5. Disaster – a severe psychological and psychosocial disruption that largely exceeds the affected community's ability to cope (World Health Organization)

6. Emotional trauma - damage or injury to a person's psyche after living through a highly frightening or stressful event that may result in feelings of anxiety, fear, and guilt. This may manifest in nightmares, intrusive memories, and flashbacks (Harvard Health Publishing)

7. Healing – refers to the process of transcending from suffering or mitigating symptoms from a traumatic experience (Egnew, 2005)

8. Recovery – in this study, this refers to a deeply personal and unique process of change wherein a person becomes hopeful in life despite the limitations caused by disasters; this also refers to the development of new meaning or purpose in one's life (Llewelyn-Bearsley et al., 2019)

9. Regional Films – audio-video communication medium with strong historical, cultural, and visual roots in various regions in the country; made by a filmmaker who is a native resident of that region; a body of work produced by filmmakers out of the capital or center of the film industry (Gancio, 2015)

10. Social change – includes personal well-being and cultural, economic, social, and environmental dimensions of transformation (Kotler & Zaltman, 1971)

11. Story – refers to the tale a person tells. In this study, it is interchangeably used with “narrative.”

12. Trauma – an emotional response to a terrible event such as a natural disaster. (American Psychological Association)

13. Traumatic Experience – any event that may cause actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual violence to an individual, a close family member, or a close friend. (American Psychological Association)

14. Psychosocial – about the influence of social factors on an individual’s mind or behavior, and the interrelation of behavioral and social factors; describing the intersection and interaction of social, cultural, and environmental influences on the mind and behavior (Vizzotto et al., 1970)

15. Visual story/narrative – a type of story told through visual media such as a photo or video. It can be enhanced or combined with graphics, music, voice, and other types of audio material.

CHAPTER IV: METHODOLOGY

A. Research Approach

This qualitative study adopted the narrative tradition of inquiry. Narrative studies ask individuals to provide stories about their lives, contributing to a broader cultural narrative (Bruner, 1991; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The Narrative Inquiry methodology is necessary for data-gathering as it provides an avenue for understanding, acknowledging, and studying other people's experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Creswell describes the narrative inquiry as a qualitative research design. The *"narrative is understood as a spoken or written text given an account of an event or action or series of events and activities."* Because of its capacity to access the respondent's life experiences and engage in the process of storytelling, the narrative inquiry methodology has been increasingly employed in understanding trauma and psychosocial recovery (Leavy, 2015, p. 48). Bruner (1991) writes that narratives help individuals make sense of their lives, particularly when they undergo chaotic events. He further explains that narrative accruals come from interpretations of events and the personal telling of a story which eventually creates history, culture, and tradition. Narrative inquiry is centered on *"human stories of experience, it provides researchers with a rich framework through which they can investigate the ways humans experience the world depicted through their stories"* (Webster and Mertova, 2008, p.1). Aside from personal stories, the narrative

inquiry also uses field notes, journals, observations, and other artifacts such as photos and videos in its data gathering and analysis procedure (Cresswell & Cresswell, 2018).

The Narrative method also emerged under the field of Knowledge Management – the process of creating, sharing, using, and managing knowledge and information (Velasco et al., 2005; Girard & Girard, 2015). Webster and Mertova (2008) believe that narratives are tools for knowledge transfer that helps us understand and communicate new ideas (p. 22). According to Machlup (1981), Knowledge Management also includes unquantifiable elements of knowledge such as experience, making the narrative methodology amenable to the idea that knowledge is present in personal stories and can be relayed, stored, and retrieved. This also implies that knowledge and experience may be considered valuable and noteworthy even when known and experienced by only one person (Machlup, 1981).

Woodward (2015) believes that personal stories and the collection of these narratives are essential sources for enhancing our understanding of social processes and phenomena (p.39). Moreover, she notes that film has the power to make sense of the unconscious by exploring its manifestations and representations in the social world (p. 47).

This narrative research is situated within the interpretive paradigm wherein subjective realities, human interpretations, values, and experiences are placed at the center of analysis. The outcomes of this research primarily relied on the participant's views of the situation being studied, and the interpretivist approach allowed the participants to freely describe their experiences and explain the subjective reasons and meanings that inspired them to do their actions. The researcher's role was to carefully listen to their views and interpret the findings based on their stories and experiences (Cresswell, 2007).

The researcher believed that even if each filmmaker holds a different experience, memory, and perspective on Super typhoon Yolanda, their collective encounter resulted in the emergence of filmmakers from Eastern Visayas. Having said this, the Narrative Inquiry approach, using the interpretivist lens, enabled the researcher to extract deep information and preserve the context from the accounts of the Waray filmmakers who were directly involved in the production of these local films.

B. Research Instruments

Several data gathering methods were used in the course of this data. Aside from personal stories, this study also used online texts, private messages, and artifacts such as photos and videos in its data gathering and analysis procedure.

Semi-structured interviews were the primary data source for this research. According to Gil *et al.* (2008), semi-structured interviews consist of key questions that define the areas to be explored and allow the interviewer to pursue an idea or response in more detail. In contrast to structured interviews, the flexibility of this approach also allows for the discovery or elaboration of information that is important to participants but may not have previously been thought of as pertinent by the researcher. Semi-structured interviews helped the researcher understand the filmmakers' views, experiences, beliefs, and motivations in producing their films. As part of this study's design, an interview guide was developed (see Annex I) to ensure that the research questions were answered and maintain the interview process's structure and consistency.

As a concrete record of the respondent's inner experiences, the respondent's film project was also an essential component of this study. The film projects catalyzed the interview discussion as they provided introspection and a mindful framework that helped the researcher gain greater insight into the filmmaker's thoughts. Since these film projects have already been completed, this remained as unfiltered data that the researcher cannot change. In turn, this helped reduce the researcher's bias as a tangible piece of evidence for reflection and review is incorporated.

According to Cresswell (2007), triangulation of multiple sources is required to make the data collection rigorous. Triangulation uses various source materials to study the same topic to better understand the phenomenon (p.46). As such, this study also gathered data from digital text messages, online articles, and personal email correspondences with the respondents.

C. Participants and Setting

This study used the purposeful sampling methodology to identify and select information-rich cases. This non-probability method involves selecting specific individuals or "sites of study" that are exceptionally knowledgeable and experienced on one particular phenomenon of interest (Cresswell, 2007). Simply put, purposive sampling is exemplified through key informant interviews that can answer the research questions (Suri, 2011). Suri defines key informants as "reflective members of the community who know much about the culture and are able and willing to share their knowledge."

However, purposeful sampling is also known to be judgmental, selective, and subjective (Suri, 2011; Palinkas et al., 2016). This technique may be prone to bias along this line since it relies heavily on the researcher's judgment in choosing the respondents for the study. To reduce researcher bias, the following criteria were developed to be met by the key informants:

1. He/she must be born and raised in the Eastern Visayas region
2. He/she experienced emotional trauma or psychosocial distress due to Supertyphoon Yolanda
3. He/she produced, directed, or participated in a film project related to Supertyphoon Yolanda, which he/she believes has helped him/her heal from the emotional trauma brought about by the disaster.

According to Seidler (1974), Tongco (2006), and Cresswell (2007, 2013), at least five purposefully selected informants are needed for data to be reliable.

The researcher initially ran several internet searches to find possible participants. The keywords used were “Leyte Filmmakers,” “Emotional Trauma,” “Haiyan film,” and “Yolanda film.” The researcher also sent a request letter to the film organization SINErangan to ask for their help in finding participants from the region. Jerx Aliposa, the co-founder of Eastern Visayas’s SINErangan Film Organization, put forward the following key informants for this study:

1. Derek Delgado
2. Gianfranco Morciano
3. Mikone Joshua Calungsod
4. Chloe Anne Veloso
5. Trox Salazar

The researcher then recruited the participants through email and Facebook mobile messaging applications. A sample of these correspondences is attached on Annex II and Annex III.

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, traveling to Tacloban City and conducting face-to-face meetings was not feasible. Consequently, the interviews were done via the video-conferencing platforms Zoom and Google Meet. The researcher sought the respondents' consent for the audio-video recording of the discussions to aid in the transcribing and coding process.

The interviews were mainly done in Waray, the primary language of the Eastern Visayas region. This was done to exude a feeling of familiarity between the researcher and the respondent. It was mixed with Bisaya, English, and Tagalog language at

certain times. Nevertheless, the researcher is a native of the region and is well-versed in Waray; thus, the translations did not become a problem.

D. Ethical Considerations

The telling of personal and emotional stories could pose some ethical risks. Thus, the key informants were notified in advance about the sensitive nature of the study. The researcher explained the topic thoroughly and furnished the participants with an informed consent form that states they are willing to participate in the study, agree to have the interviews recorded, and are free to take a break, stop or withdraw from the interview at any time.

E. Data Analysis Procedure

This study used the deductive coding method to analyze the data. This top-down approach is based on the premise that filmmaking is an effective therapeutic tool for trauma survivors, as evidenced by previous research findings and existing research frameworks primarily by Cohen, Johnson, Orr (2015) and Tuval-Mashiach, Patton, and Drebing (2018).

Aside from these previous research papers, a list of predetermined codes was initially identified and was based on the research questions. These are

1. the filmmakers Yolanda experience
2. how filmmaking helped them cope and heal from Yolanda's trauma
3. the film genre that helped them cope and heal from Yolanda's trauma
4. the filmmaking process that helped them cope and heal from Yolanda's trauma
5. filmmaking's accessibility for disaster survivors
6. filmmaking as a tool for self-expression, resilience-building, community engagement, and spreading knowledge

The researcher then sifted through the raw data and searched for the excerpts that fit the codes.

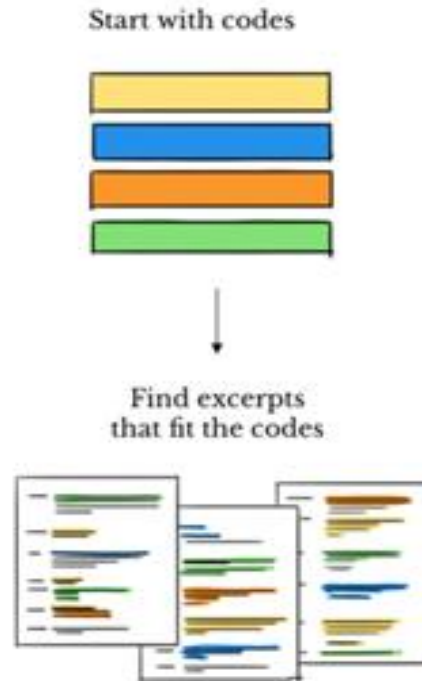


Figure 1: Deductive Coding Process: Delve CAQDAS Tool by Ho and Limpaecher

Taken from: <https://delvetool.com/guide>

More specifically, this study followed the coding procedure provided by Moustakas (1994, p. 20), Creswell (1998, p. 152 & 176), O'conner and Gibson (2003):

Step 1: Horizontalization of data – this process involves going back to the interview guide and transcribing the interviews for more convenient viewing and reading of the

entire data set. The researcher should treat all interviews and statements as having equal worth.

Step 2: Finding concepts – this process involves identifying salient themes and recurring language and ideas. Here, the researcher should ensure that certain local expressions and slang are entirely understood to be true to the original thoughts and meaning (p.68).

Step 3: Building the over-arching theme – this process involves collapsing different concepts into the central theme (p.71).

Step 4: Ensuring the reliability and validity of data – this process involves going back to the study participants and obtaining their feedback on the research findings. O’conner and Gibson quote Denzin saying, “*local informants can act as judges, evaluating the major findings of a study*” (p. 72).

Step 5: Finding explanations of the findings – this process involves going back to the literature to compare results and find plausible explanations. This also entails that the researcher needs to go back to the key informants of the study to communicate the

findings back to the context of the cultural experience within the respective community (p.76).

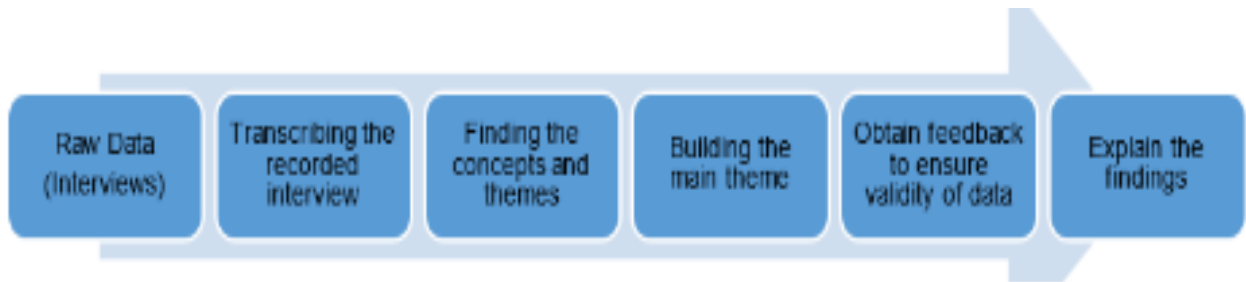


Figure 2: Coding Process by Moustakas and Cresswell

V. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis revealed six overarching themes presented separately below.

A. The Emotional Trauma of Yolanda

It was 5 a.m. on a Friday of November 8, 2013, when then-12-year-old Mikone Calungsod, from Baybay Leyte, was delighted with the announcement that classes were canceled due to the typhoon. He was enjoying his time playing in the rain, thinking it was just another typical stormy day. An hour later, he saw his neighbors' roofs flying across him and trees getting uprooted. He saw several people running around in panic. Luckily, none of his family members died from the typhoon, yet he still experienced fear and trauma from the severe storm. He narrated:

"It was shocking! It was shocking talaga! I was just playing. I was thinking I had no class. Yung mga nakasanayang bagyo was mahina lang po, kaya naman po, but that experience hit differently. I was seeing people running around na natatakot. I was scared what would happen next. I was afraid to go out and see kung ano na nangyari sa mga kapitbahay namin"

"It was shocking! It was very shocking! I was just playing and thinking I had no classes that day. The storms we experienced in the past were just weak, but the experience I had with Supertyphoon Yolanda hit me differently. I was seeing people

running around in terror. I was afraid of what would happen next. I was afraid to go out and see what happened to our neighbors."

For Calungsod, life became more brutal months after the storm due to limited food supplies and the 3-month prolonged blackout. Until 2017, he suffered from what he called "negativity" due to the terrifying sights of the people running around in panic during the typhoon's onslaught.

"When I was in Manila 2016 or 2017 na vacation. Yung rush hour. Yung maraming tao. It was like uh uh... it was like uh... it was bringing sights or thoughts na parang yung mga taong nagtatakbuhan. Bigla nalang bumabalik lahat ng takot whenever there are some triggers na ganyan"

"When I was in Manila for a vacation in 2016 or 2017, I felt uncomfortable during the rush hour; I didn't like seeing too many people. It was like uh uh... it was like uh... it was bringing thoughts of my neighbors running during the typhoon. The fears come back whenever there are some triggers like that."

Gianfranco Morciano, 35 years old, was in Tolosa Leyte when Yolanda struck. Strong winds and heavy rains ripped off their roof. He had no idea yet about the full extent of the damage since all communication lines were cut off. It was during his drive to Tacloban that the situation slowly sank into him. He intended to shoot a documentary but

could not bring his camera up when he saw the number of dead bodies lying on the streets.

“On the way, habang nagtitikaharani ako ha Tacloban, nagtitikaduroy la, nagtitika grabe, nagsisink in na gud nga shet. Pagsulod ko ha Tacloban, pag abot ko ha may Astrodome ng area, shit, iba gud it baho. Tapos makita ka na may mga nagpakalatag nga patay. Before han typhoon, ready ako han ak camera. Narising ako, igdodocument ko gud ini kay ambot sano utro or diri na utro magkakamayda hin sugad hini kakusog nga bagyo didi... Han time nga nakasulod ako ha Tacloban, kapot ko an camera, nakakashoot ako guti pero iba gud akon feeling. Affected ka gihap. Victim ka gihap. May guts pa ba ako magdocument hini. An akon mga plano nga magdoky, naruba ito tanan. An akon plano unta, very organic gud nga shots, nga as in makita ka mayda gud mga patay pa ha kalsada, mga bloated. An akon plan hours after the typhoon, makadto gud dayon ha Tacloban pero damo nasiring ayaw la anay pagkadto kay bangin delikado. Eventually, pagakadi ko ha Tacloban, pagkirigta ko han akon mga sangkay, dramatic, nagtinuok kami, mga buhi pa kami”

"As I was approaching Tacloban, I felt that the situation was dire. It was slowly sinking into my thought, 'shit, this is really bad. As I was nearing the Tacloban Astrodome area, I thought, 'shit, it smells different here'. Then you see dead, bloated bodies scattered on the roadside. Actually, before the typhoon, I was ready with my camera. I was ready to document the storm, thinking it must be a historical event. I was able to shoot a little, but I could not continue. My plans to do a documentary fell apart. I felt that I am also a victim. I was questioning if I had the guts to document all of

these. I planned to go to Tacloban immediately after the storm, but everyone said it could be dangerous. Eventually, I reached Tacloban and met some of my friends. We cried. We were very dramatic, I think. We were thankful that we were still alive."

Two years after Yolanda, Morciano still felt misery and yearning for the "Old Tacloban." He narrated that he always felt unexplainable longing and feelings of gloom. He says the "aura" of the city was not the same anymore, even after people started rebuilding houses, fiesta celebrations, and drinking sessions with his buddies.

"I don't know kun trauma ba ini nga matatawag. Pero diri gud ako naayon han aura han environment. The downtown was not the same anymore. Iton ba, bisan nagpatron, nagkamayda hin mga banda banda pero there is something missing gud talaga hini. Oo nakabangon na kita pero baga gud hin mayda kulang. I refer to it nga baga talaga hin aura, diri ko maexplain in words pero its a feeling nga iba na gud talaga. For example, ha amon magsarangkay, solid man la gihap kami pero it was never the same na. Baga hin nag-aalang ka na, nagiging sensitive ka na. Lately ko la narealize nga siguro ito nga "aura" thing nga nafifeel ko siguro I can consider it to a trauma nga diri la hiya halata nga na-trauma ngayan ako hadto ... Weird man tak feeling. Nag-iirignom kita pero baga may kulang man. May iba nasiring oo bangin tungod kay brownout la kay December pa man la adto. Nasiring ayaw la ito, makakabangon gihap kita hini. Pero yakan ko, ambot la, baga iba gud. After 1 year, 2 years, pirmi ko man la gihap nasisiring nga iba gud talaga. May kulang gud. Diri na pareho han dati"

"I don't know if it can be called trauma. But I didn't like the aura of the environment. The downtown area wasn't the same anymore. I can't explain it in words; I just refer to that feeling as an 'aura'. Even when live bands played in fiesta celebrations, I still felt that something was missing in it. I thought, 'yes, we might have moved on, but I feel that something is lacking'. Whenever I am out drinking with my friends, I often tell them that 'something is missing'. They would reply with a joke saying, 'yes, it's the electricity that's missing because it's still blackout!' Then they would tell me, 'don't worry, we will be okay". In my mind, I think, 'I am not so sure'. I have become too sensitive, a bit fragile. I had this weird feeling of longing for about one or two years. Something was missing. Tacloban, for me, was not the same anymore."

Morciano even revealed that this is the first time he is seriously opening up about his emotional state in the calamity aftermath. He was usually dismissed as being "overly dramatic" whenever he tried to talk about his feelings.

"Naiistorya ko gad ini pero diri sugad ka-deep kay tendency is akon iba nga friend nasiring 'Gian ayaw pagsiniring hito kay diri ka naangay, you're a funny person, don't be dramatic. Paglinurong la dida ayaw pag inistoryahon hin mga seryoso' especially kun naghaharampang. Unlike now I am getting into a serious conversation. Actually yana ko la gihap ini naiisip. Actually, I didn't plan to say this didi. Gumawas nala spontaneously"

“I have tried talking about this before but not on this kind of reflective level. My friends tend to dismiss me, saying, ‘Gian, don’t say that; it doesn’t fit your personality. You are a funny person, so don’t be so dramatic. Just make jokes and stop being too serious’. Now, I get to think about this on a deeper level as I get into a more serious conversation. I actually didn’t plan to tell you this. It just happened spontaneously.

As desperation gripped through the Leyte province, most especially in Tacloban City, Trox Salazar, 45 years old, and Derek Delgado, 42 years old, both described people as like “zombies” who were wandering aimlessly to look for food and water. It was like a scene from an apocalypse film where everything was flattened, and people were helpless, they said. Both Salazar and Delgado witnessed panicking survivors looting due to food, water, and medicine shortage. They feared that these incidents would lead to a robbery in houses and riots around the city. Interestingly, Salazar looked at the looting incidents as a way for Taclobanons to cope.

“Baga nanlulooting ini hira kay para baga mayda la nira makaptan la ba bisan guti nga butang ba. Bisán naruba akon balay, ini at least may kinakaptan ako nga things pa ba. Like for example, refrigerator, aanhon mo man it ref diba, waray man ito gamit kay, nga yawa, brown out diba. But by looking at these people dragging those refs, those aircons, baga hin ‘nga yatik, bisan ako narubaan hin balay at least mayda ko kinaptan nga bag-o. Ref, aircon, TV, bisan an mga bra tikang ha Natasha”.

"They seem to be looting as a way for them to cope because they wanted to hold on to something despite all their losses. They were probably thinking, 'even if my house was destroyed, I still have these things in my possession at least'. I wondered what the heck are they going to do with a refrigerator, an air conditioner, a television set, when the whole province is on blackout. I even saw people looting undergarments from the Natasha store".

Delgado recounted that their house was shaking like an earthquake when Yolanda's winds were pounding. Their entire home became flooded because only a fourth of their roof remained intact. When the roads were cleared, he went around the city and learned that some of his closest friends didn't survive. Seven years later, he said that he has somehow moved on already, yet every time Yolanda is brought into conversations, the mourning feelings come back again.

"Right now baga naka move on naman kita. Yana makikita mo it Tacloban maupay na liwat, pero sugad ngani hini nag iistorya parte Yolanda, bagat nabalik gihapon pati an feelings ba. Kun igkakadto mo ako balik hito nga moment, pagkita ko gud, waray na an Tacloban. Totally destroyed. Baga hin waray nangadtuan. Duro gud karuba. Damo an patay"

"Right now, it seems that we have moved on. You come to Tacloban and feel comforted by the sights of a city that has been rebuilt already. But when conversations about Yolanda arise, the feelings

during that time come back as well. If you take me back to that moment, I would say Tacloban is gone. Totally destroyed. Too many people died."

Even if she was not physically in Leyte during the onslaught of Yolanda, Chloe Veloso, 34 years old, narrated experiencing extreme stress because she could not contact her relatives in Tacloban. It did not help that she was living alone in her Cebu apartment and her immediate family was in Manila during that time. She has been Cebu-based since college, but she grew up right at the center of the downtown area. She was worried that the storm surge heavily damaged her childhood home. She recalled:

"I was alone in my apartment here in Cebu kay we just treated it as a normal bagyo. Little did we know what was happening gud in Tacloban. So I think it was more like the day after, tumawag akon mother nga diri daw hira makakontak ha Tacloban and that was like... black out diba. That whole week nga waray signal, we had no idea what happened to our relatives. That was very stressful for me even for my parents who were in Manila. An akon Uncle diri nakokontak, an landline diri nakokontak, so waray gud kami idea what was happening there. And it was really stressing me out gud kay I was alone. My family, my parents and my brother, at least they had each other, nag urupod hira ha Manila. Ako kay ako la usa so I kept on calling my parents from time to time ano na mayda na ba update, nakokontak na ba hira Uncle or were you able to call Lola. Waray man gud talaga. So amo gud, stressful hin duro"

"I was alone in my apartment here in Cebu. We thought it was just an ordinary typhoon. Little did we

know what was happening in Tacloban. The day after the storm, my mother called and told me that all of our relatives in Tacloban could not be contacted. My Uncle's cell phone and my Grandmother's landline were all out of reach. Then the situation dragged on for a week without any word from any of our relatives. That whole week was very stressful for me! My parents were in Manila, and they didn't also know what was happening. It was stressing me out mainly because I was alone. My family – my parents and my brother – were all in Manila; at least they had each other. But I was alone. We were just calling and updating each other if they received news already, but there was nothing. That whole week was too stressful for me!

When she was able to contact her relatives, Veloso found out that some of her family members sustained physical injuries, such as big gashes on the leg. Unfortunately, her aunt and other cousins remain missing until this point.

B. Self-expression and Collaboration Makes Filmmaking Therapeutic

All five respondents reported that telling their stories through the collaborative filmmaking process was emotionally beneficial in the post-Yolanda setting.

Trox Salazar confessed that he harbored feelings of guilt after leaving Tacloban three days after the storm. He felt he was betraying his hometown, his family, and friends by escaping to safety. Aside from this, Salazar shared that he experienced nightmares about the storm. He said he was almost always unreasonably paranoid that another storm or earthquake could happen anytime. He was always anxious about keeping his family safe from these disasters. Little noises caused him to panic and suspect that danger was around the corner. He didn't show this to anyone, but his wife noticed these occurrences.

"Siring pa man, lalaki man gud, you tend not to show it pero nakaturug ka ngani, diri mo na natatago, nightmares. I didn't show it to anyone, masiring nga okay la ako kay baga man ako hin okay la on the gawas ba. Tapos lalaki pa gud, you tend to not show these things ba. Pero everytime I sleep, nasiring an akon asawa nga, kalasan na ako ba. Baga guti la nga sounds dida gusto ko na dumalagan pahirayo ba. Nga yatik! Kalalabad! Feeling ko pirimi may peligro. Bagat sugad. Permanente ako baga hin watchful hin duro ba. Kinakalasan most of the time"

"They say because you are a male, you should not show your weak side. But when you are asleep, your emotions become unguarded; you can't hide it anymore, you have nightmares and flashbacks. I didn't show this emotion to anyone. When you see me, you can say that I'm okay because I'm okay on the outside. But every time I sleep, my wife says I am having nightmares. I feel jumpy and nervous. If I hear rustling sounds, I feel like I want to run away. Damn! I always feel like there is danger lurking nearby. It's like I am always watchful or nervous most of the time."

Thus, in December 2013, he wrote and directed the music video "Bangon Tacloban." He hoped to inspire and uplift the spirits of the survivors through this music video. Salazar said, "this music video seems like a time machine which brings us back to that painful period of our town; it recognizes the heartbreak of the whole community, yet encourages Taclobanons to rise again. He described his work as:

"iton nga Bangon Tacloban actually baga ito hiya wolf in a sheep's skin ba. It tinuod hito, it is the documentary that I wanted to shoot. It showed the harrowing effects of Yolanda pero baga disguised in this heart-warming song. It was a documentary by heart, just in a music video form, but it showed the whole thing that was happening, the devastation, the people suffering. Ada ito tanan dida"

"I made this music video titled "Bangon Tacloban" as a wolf in a sheep's skin. It is the documentary that I wanted to shoot. It showed the harsh effects of Yolanda, yet it seemed disguised in this heart-warming song. It was a documentary by heart, just in a music video format, but it still showed the whole thing that was happening, the devastation, the people suffering. It's all there."

Salazar believed that filmmaking has been therapeutic for him because working collaboratively with his friends made him feel at ease. He thought that doing something for the community would release him from his guilt and jitters. Seeing the positive reaction of his audience added to this positive feeling. He said: "Relief goods are temporary and consumable, but messages through art forms like this can last a lifetime."

"If there is somebody suffering from emotional pains, paupdon ta usa nga film activity, mangangalimot ito hiya kadali, maiinspire ito hiya, bisan diri maging filmmaker instantly. Pero the thought of filmmaking is collaboration kasi. Diri ka la hito usa ka tawo. So that thing nga may mga kaupod ka nga iba nga tawo, that can help you heal. Working with others, you build camaraderie. Then it success hit film, imo gihap ito success. Bisan pa daw ito assistant ka la dida. You can have that as a parayaw, imo ownership ba. Makakasiring ka gihap nga 'ako ito baya nagkinapot-kapot hito nga mga suga diba'. Baga imo gihap ito success. Those little things can make a difference in a person's emotional and mental well-being."

"If I knew somebody was suffering from emotional pains, I would invite him to a film activity. I believe it can help him drop his feelings of leeriness even for a moment; it can relieve him somehow – even if he doesn't become a filmmaker instantly. For me it was the collaboration that healed me. In filmmaking, you're not the only one making a movie; you work with others, you build camaraderie. Then the film's success becomes your success as well. Even if you're just an assistant in that project, you can be proud of that; you have ownership there. You can say, 'I held those lights there in that scene'. You also gain that feeling of being successful. Those little things can make a difference in a person's emotional and mental well-being."

In 2014, Derek Delgado directed the film "Pito ka Adlaw" (Seven Days), which he publicly released in 2020 to commemorate the seventh year of Super typhoon Yolanda. He described his film as a narrative dedicated to "the thousands we lost, and the thousands who came to our aid." Delgado was a musician, but he felt that filmmaking was the "complete medium" for expressing himself.

"Ha film, gin-seset mo na it mood, ha sound or music, then butangan pa visuals, madadara mo na talaga it iya mood. Diba tapos butangan mo pa maupay nga images nga ma complement imo music, all in all, complete na hiya nga art form"

"Filmmaking gives me the agency to intercede and set the mood. Using the combination of sound, music, and visuals, I can gain control and decide on the atmosphere I want to set for the audience. For me, when there are compelling images that complement my original music, all in all, that is the complete artform."

A film buff since childhood, Chloe Anne Veloso directed the film "Dag-um" (Dark Skies) in 2014. "Dag-um" is a horror film inspired by her cousin, a Super typhoon Yolanda survivor who lost all of his family to the storm surge. While mainly in the Cebuano language, Veloso's film is full of Waray representations. As a horror film, she made sure that she represented the "ghosts of Yolanda" correctly. Voices screaming in the Waray language "buligi kami (help us)" can be heard in the film, representing the cries for help of those drowning in the flood. She also made sure that her prosthetics team accurately portrayed the skin and bodies of those who died in the flood. And when her protagonist

threw up brown puke, Veloso said it symbolized and emulated the storm surge's murky waters. This horror-driven narrative represents those still haunted and tormented by Yolanda's ravage and how family and faith can restore oneself. Veloso said filmmaking offered some emotional relief from all the stress and anxiety she had. She said, "filmmaking is cathartic."

"Artists ginagamit ira pain, ginpapagawas ira pain thru painting or writing. Catharsis. Ako, filmmaking. For example, Dag-Um, I just went through something mentally and emotionally draining a few months back, it actually helped me cope. Because in a way, I get to tell the story of Yolanda, in a different approach"

"Artists release their pain and liberate themselves through art forms like painting or writing. That's called catharsis. For me, it is through filmmaking. For example, with my film Dag-Um, I just went through something mentally and emotionally draining a few months back, and filmmaking helped me cope. Because in a way, I get to tell the story of Yolanda, in my own different approach."

On the other hand, Gianfranco Morciano was a Practical Nursing student at the outset. He started to tinker with filmmaking when they were tasked to shoot a film for their school's final project. He didn't take filmmaking seriously during that time. He said he began to make films after Super typhoon Yolanda passionately. He added, "Yolanda was my turning point. Making films after Yolanda was my healing point". Morciano directed and edited the documentary "Tagpuro" (Pure), which showcases how Tacloban seafront

villagers constructed their community study center through a participatory design process. This project was in cooperation with Streetlight Foundation and the community-based architecture film Workshop Architecture. He shared:

"An nakabulig talaga ha akon is han time nga I get to know people from INGOs nga maghimo kami mga dokyu. Before Yolanda I didn't have experience ha mga dokyu films. Amo ada naka-help nga makabulag ako from the longing thing of whatever it is. Siguro kasi I get to deal with stories of other people... Actually baga amo gud ini an turning point, an healing point. Nakita ko kasi how a community works together"

"What helped me was the time when I got to know people from International NGOs who introduced me to documentaries. Before Yolanda, I didn't have experience in documentary filmmaking. And I felt that filming helped separate me from the longing or whatever it was I was feeling that time. I think it was because I get to collaborate with the community in this project; I get to deal with other people and hear their stories... Maybe this is the turning point, the healing point. It was when I truly realized that I am not alone and I saw how the community came together to achieve a common goal."

Mikone Joshua Calungsod, a young director from Baybay Leyte's shores, found his passion for filmmaking when he was 12 years old. He depicted the hardships he experienced as a young boy in the aftermath of Yolanda. As a Grade 8 student at that time, the three-month-long blackout put a lot of physical, mental, and emotional pressure

on him. This has become the subject matter of his short film "KNDL" which he shot using an old smartphone.

"Lumang phone lang ginamit ko pag shoot so it was not low-light efficient. Hindi maganda kuha. Ang gusto ko sana ipakita dun yung black-out , mahirap. As a Grade 8 student, noon iniisip ko hindi sya maganda tingnan, pero ngayon parang maganda pala sya. Hindi sa quality pero sa story. It was a story about two children. Mga bata. Yung mga actors ko mga bata, mga kaklase ko, siblings sila, they were studying pero mahirap kalagayan kasi walang kuryente... It was depicting na it was difficult for young students na walang kuryente for 2-3 months. Wala po may kayang bumili ng generator dito sa amin kaya we were all just using candles"

"I only used an old phone to shoot. It was very inefficient in low-light. I wanted to show the blackout and how difficult it was for a Grade 8 student then. It was a story about two children. My actors were my classmates; they are siblings. The story revolved around their situation while studying without electricity. It was depicting the difficulty for young students without electricity for 2 to 3 months. No one could afford to buy a generator here with us, so we were all just using candles."

As a young child, he harbored "negative feelings" due to the disruption of his "normal life." He also mentioned that watching and hearing about the news triggered "flashbacks, bad dreams, and imaginations" due to the chaos he witnessed while Yolanda wreaked havoc in his hometown. For Calungsod, shooting short films was a respite for him. It led him to confront and let out those unfavorable emotions. He said that the goal

was never to be an "artist" at first but just to keep his mind busy to avoid being consumed by anxiety and negativity. Aside from KNDL, he also directed two other personal films which he described as "experimental shorts about his past tragedies." These are "Liwanag sa Dilim", a light-play inside their electricity-deprived house and "PCTR PRFCT" which is about a person who took his last photo during the strongest storm in the world. He explained why he came up with this films:

"Filmmaking helped me cope because meron akong kinikimkim na damdamin, i was not letting it out, letting it go, until when filmmaking came into my life. When filmmaking came, I had the chance to release those by turning them into stories... In filmmaking I have to look on light, sound, frame, visual effects, cinematography and script... May acting, writing, sound... So parang nadidistract ako, in a good way naman. Filmmaking is a big help for recovering in these difficult in these mental health issues. It is a medium for parang transfer. I believe. Transfer of negative emotions, parang maipalabas mo mga mga hinaing mo, mga kinikimkim mong damdamin, mga hindi mo masabi... It is parang a gateway... or an escape on that negative barrier kung saan ka nakakulong ngayon"

"Filmmaking helped me cope. There are some emotions that I cannot put into words but by expressing it through film, I was able to let go of negativity. When filmmaking came, I had the chance to release those negative emotions by turning them into stories... In filmmaking, I have to look at the light, sound, frame, visual effects, cinematography, and script... There is also acting... It distracted me from the negativity in a good way. Filmmaking is a big help for recovering

from these difficult mental health issues. Through self-expression, I can let go of the negative emotions because I can express my grievances. Filmmaking has become my gateway or escape from the negative feelings that I harbored, which I cannot say verbally."

C. Various Filmmaking Processes Supports Emotional Healing

Two out of five respondents mentioned scriptwriting as the most therapeutic filmmaking process. The pre-production stage, editing, and exhibition were also identified to be emotionally restorative for the filmmaker.

Both Derek Delgado and Chloe Veloso said scriptwriting was the filmmaking process that helped them cope and heal from calamity's emotional baggage. For them, scriptwriting is the most personal aspect of the filmmaking process. Delgado said:

"Ha cinematography or editing, para ha akon mga technical la ito. Pero it writing, amo gud ito it pinakapersonal. Imo ito personal things it imo gin shashare. Baga nabubuhos mo imo emotions ha scriptwriting. Ha amon class hadto, confident ako nga ako la it mayda hito nga storya. The documentaries man gud nga gumawas kay baga puro ba widescale. So ako gusto ko mag zoom in ha experience hin usa ka tawo. In fact pag defend ko han akon thesis after han pag show, nag siring hira nga baga yana la hira kumita hin story nga nakafocus ha usa ka tawo, baga personal gud nga story... even if it is fictional, the emotions are there.

The real stories are there... amo gihap it maupay kun it local mismo it nahimo ira own stories... kun local kay even the language nakacapture ito"

"Cinematography or editing, for me, are just technical stuff. But with scriptwriting, I think this is the most personal aspect of filmmaking. It is through script writing that you think about your personal experiences and stories. It is in scriptwriting that you can pour out your emotions and thoughts... In our class back then, I was confident that I was the only one with this story. I think the documentaries that came out were quite wide-scale in scope. So I wanted to zoom in on someone's experience. When I defended my thesis, my classmates said that it was the first time seeing a film that focused on one person, maybe a very personal story... Even if it is fictional, the emotions are there. The real stories are there... it's also perfect if the locals themselves tell their own stories... it's because they can capture the nuances of their dialect."

Veloso added:

"I like to give a little bit of myself to those characters. Or a little bit of my experience, or the experiences of my family and friends into my characters, into my story. One way or another, my main characters are based on either myself or someone I know, someone close to me, or someone I love. So scriptwriting is the most therapeutic for me. Ginbubuhos ko it akon self into the story hito dida (This is me pouring myself into the story)."

Mikone Calungsod was able to cope with Yolanda's trauma through the pre-production meetings he had with his crew. The collaborative process of filmmaking and camaraderie forged during the pre-production discussions made him lose his feelings of alienation. These meetings became a catalyst for him to open up his thoughts and share ideas with people who share the same interest as him. This led him to feel more understood and to have decreased feelings of loneliness.

"Filmmaking creates camaraderie with my friends and with other people. Mostly I am the director of my films, i would call on my friends to shoot. Gusto ko yung time we spend together talking about the story, what to shoot. I can talk about something I love and eventually they love it as well kasi naeenganyo sila na uy okay pala ito. Masaya pala ito. Nainspire ako. Noong una nga, mag isa lang ako. Then yung bestfriend ko then yung girlfriend ko, then other friends came in. Nagsasabi sila na shoot tayo shoot tayo. That's the thing that I love about filmmaking"

"Filmmaking creates camaraderie. Mostly I am the director of my films. But I would usually call on my friends to shoot. I love the time we spend together talking about the story and how to shoot it. I can talk about something I love, and eventually, they fell in love with filmmaking as well. Our shoots usually turn out fun, and that's what inspired them to tell their own stories too. Later, it is them that would invite me to shoot. That's the thing that I love about filmmaking – it brings people together."

On the other hand, editing is the most therapeutic film process for Gianfranco Morciano. He said that he feels empowered with editing because it gives a person the capacity to shape and manipulate a story in any way they want.

"I like editing, post-production, kay dida na hito nga part imo kontrol, dida na nagawas an beauty han imo story. Kun baga kun ano lapses or problema ha shoot, naayad ha editing. Ikaw na it mayda control kun ano man it output"

"I like editing, the post-production process because I think that's where the beauty of the story comes out. If there are any lapses or problems with the shoot, the editor has the power to fix the mess. I like to have that kind of control and influence on the final output."

Lastly, Trox Salazar felt that the audience's reaction to his film made him heal from his trauma.

"The thing that helped me heal is when I see people get inspired by my work, that they like the song. Baga they get the feeling na kaya ta ini. Which is the meaning of the song talaga nga amon gusto igyakan".

"What really helped me heal is when I saw people getting inspired by my work. It seemingly gave inspiration to the people saying 'we can get through this!'. This is exactly the message that I wanted to convey to them"

D. Narrative Drama as a Curative Genre

The narrative drama emerged as the most therapeutic genre for expressing oneself in a post-disaster setting for Super typhoon Yolanda filmmaker-survivors, chosen by 4 out of 5 respondents.

Derek Delgado said that the narrative is an effective way of telling personal stories. He said that one could start with "found stories," wherein the filmmaker gathers real-life stories and then fictionalizes them. This way, one feels empowered as they gain control over the narrative structure.

Chloe Veloso said that this genre brings out the humanity in the stories, which never fails to touch the audience. She thought about Steven Spielberg films when she said:

"One of my favorite directors is Steven Spielberg, and whatever genre you give him, may it be sci-fi or action, he always has this way of putting the humanity into the characters. The emotions. Like you get emotionally invested into the characters whatever genre he is using. Especially his drama, like Schindler's List. So I kinda like his style, he puts humanity in all of his films and makes his characters endearing to his audience. Especially if it's a drama. Maybe that's why I also like drama. I can do any genre, I have comedy, I have horror, but

my strongest suit is probably drama. In terms of touching the audience, it is the drama genre"

Gianfranco Morciano also believed that the narrative structure could help the filmmaker tell other people's stories. It lessened the feelings of detachment. It eased his feelings of loneliness and enhanced his sense of being "one with the community." He said that the narrative genre also helped him convey human emotions easily.

"Ha narrative ginpapaintindi mo gud kun ano imo pinagdaanan. Mapapakita gihap nga diri ka la nag-uusahan. Ginpapakita mo nga mayda talaga nahitabo nga sugad hito. It can be safe in a way nga madali gihap intindihon and madali maka-relate it audience. Baga hiya hin two-way understanding, nakakabulig ako tak sarili tapos nakakabulig gihap ha iba nga mas maintindihan ako"

"The narrative genre can help you explain what you went through. It can also remind you that you are not alone in this ordeal. It can be a safe way of telling a relatable story to all kinds of audiences. It is like a two-way understanding – I can benefit by letting out my story, then it can also help others to understand me better."

Trox Salazar also believed that narrative drama is the most compelling genre for emotional recovery after experiencing a disaster. For him:

"It pinaka universal language is human emotions. Everybody can be happy, sad. Everybody

undergoes these feelings. When you show things about human struggle, naapektaran ka gihapon. You also try to think oo gud man ano. Asya ito it mga disaster movie and calamity movies, it high light hito real life drama"

"The universal language is human emotions. Everybody feels either happiness or sadness. Everybody feels these emotions. When you see stories about human struggles, you become affected too. You sympathize with the people. That's probably why in disaster and calamity movies, the highlight is real-life drama "

On the other hand, Mikone Calungsod chose the experimental genre as the most compelling genre for self-expression. He said that he preferred the "free-flowing and symbolic" kind of storytelling. According to him, the narrative structure – having a beginning, middle, and end – is quite tedious for him. He doesn't want his films to be creatively restricted and just wanted to have anything and everything possible.

"Shooting it in a creative storytelling way. Walang finafollow na techniques or guidelines. Free flowing kind. More on experimental and symbolic... Marami naman po talagang ways pero for me the genre that's most effective for this I think would be drama or experimental free flowing lang. Hindi literal kasi baka medyo mahirap for victims pa... experimental kasi challenging sya, shooting alone and creating a personal story."

"I like telling my stories in a creative way, where no techniques or guidelines are being strictly followed, just the free-flowing kind. More on symbolic

imagery. There are many ways to tell a story, but for me, the genre that's most effective for post-disaster emotional recovery would be drama or the experimental genre because you cannot express yourself literally sometimes especially after going through something traumatic... I also like experimental filmmaking because I like shooting alone and creating a personal story sometimes"

E. Community Narratives for Climate and Disaster Awareness

It can be surmised that most people have already moved on seven years after Super typhoon Yolanda's assault. Yet, all five filmmakers articulated that Yolanda-related films will remain relevant after all of these years.

Trox Salazar said that the "Yolanda experience is now part of the Leyteno's culture and history. The local stories, including the folkloric ones, will never end, and the films produced about that experience are now part of the region's culture". These films are like a time machine that could bring us to personal and even collective memory as a region. These serve as a reminder of the emotions we felt at that time, he told. He stated that these films' more significant role now is to become a learning experience for everyone.

"We always have names for storms like, for example, Yolanda. But these disasters are actually universal. Disaster victims experience the same things. Nagkamatay, nagkaruruba nga mga kuan. It doesn't matter how many years after. The feeling is the same. The experience is the same. Human emotions are the same. Whatever year it is,

whatever name of storm it is, people who watch these films would always get affected by it”

“We always have names for storms just like Yolanda. But these disasters are universal. Disaster victims experience the same things – death and destruction. It doesn’t matter how many years after. The feelings and experiences are the same for all people. Human emotions are the same. Whatever year it is, whatever name of the storm it is, people who watch these films would always get affected by it.”

Derek Delgado observed that Taclobanons do not think about Yolanda anymore since the city has been rebuilt again. But films can serve as a constant reminder to the past, present, and future generations that it could happen again if we do not care for our environment. And we do not need to sound too preachy about it because we don't have to express our thoughts over and over again verbally. Delgado thought about the December 2020 flooding in Luzon due to Typhoon Ulysses saying:

"Kun may mga films like this, it can remind people nga it could happen again, it can happen anytime, somewhere else. Diri la didi ha aton, bangin mas grabe pa. So I hope films about climate change, climate justice can be screened more because the role of films is to be an eye opener"

"If we bring films like these into light, it can remind people that it could happen again, it can happen anytime, somewhere else. And it could even be worse. So these films can serve as a reminder for us to take care of our environment. I hope films

about climate change and climate justice can be screened more because the role of films is really to be an eye-opener."

Gianfranco Morciano also said that not only can films help in coping with emotional trauma, but they can also be an effective tool for communicating about disaster preparedness and awareness.

"Maupay unta kun magpadayon pag create hin films about disasters. About climate change. Especially for Eastern Visayas nga baragyuhan. Effective it filmmaking kay when you see a photo, yes, it speaks a thousand words pero para ha akon, mas powerful kun mayda nakikita, nababati-an... Images padis hin audio, makakaag-hat ka gud hin tawo. Nakakayakan ako hini kay we have been part of Greenpeace. Nakita namon nga through films, film workshops, we can spread awareness about climate justice especially after Yolanda and Tacloban baga maupay nga example hini diba."

"It would be nice if we continued to create films about disasters and disaster recovery. About climate change especially for Eastern Visayas which is prone to natural disasters. Yes, photos are also good; as they say, pictures speak a thousand words. But for me, filmmaking is much more powerful. Just imagine how many tens of thousand words a moving image can speak. I am saying this because I have been part of the Greenpeace organization, and I saw how films could educate people and impact the viewers. I saw how movies could help spread awareness about climate justice, especially after Yolanda. The people from Tacloban are the best advocates for this. "

Chloe Salazar said she would always turn to film, not only to raise awareness about the environment but also to shed light on her other advocacies:

"Film is the most powerful gyud, if you want to inspire people, if you want to make people aware, if you want to wake them up from whatever, filmmaking is the best medium gyud. Ako most of my films have advocacies gyud, like women's rights, LGBT rights or human rights. As I said, values. Which I always impart to my students. When you make a film, you have to have a form of value in your film, something that the audience can learn from and then you have something to stand for. What's your paninindigan in your film? You make a film, make a story that can inspire people, awaken people, even provoke people. Even provoke people so they could at least wake up from whatever dream they have, whatever illusion they have, go ahead make a film".

"Film is the most powerful communication medium if you want to inspire people, if you want to inform people, if you want to wake them up from whatever illusions they have. My films always stand for my advocacies, like women's, LGBT, and human rights. I always tell my students, if you make a film, there has to be something that the audience can learn from, your films have to represent your values, and your stance on issues. Make a film and make a story that provokes and inspires the audience."

Mikone Calungsod, an Environmental Science student, aspired to advocate science and environmental communication through his 2020 film "Verdant". This is a short

science-fiction movie that portrays a future scenario shaken by climate change. He wanted to call for direct social action and spark awareness about the catastrophes that we may face due to the climate crisis through his film. He said:

“My lead character was talking about a storm, the end of the Philippines, sinulat ko sa script that the Philippines will be wiped out by a big storm. That was based on Yolanda. Di ko lang minention yung Yolanda mismo. Pero I was basing it on that. Yolanda will be the basis of the stronger storms in the future, 50 to 70 years from now, that's why it's in 2090. Given na yung facts na nangyayari ngayon about sa climate change, I want to give a shot at making a story na looking ahead sa future. So yung kinalalagyan ng Verdant year 2090. 70 years from now, it's safe to say na if we're not going to act, if we're not going to take actions about what is happening right now. We are going there po pala. It will lead to the destruction of our planet.”

“My lead character talked about a big storm that would wipe out the entire Philippines. That was based on Supertyphoon Yolanda. I didn't just mention Yolanda itself. But Yolanda is already a sample of the kind of strong storms that we will experience in the future – 50 to 70 years from now. That is why my film Verdant was set in the future. Given the scientific facts about climate change, it will definitely lead to the destruction of our planet if we will not take action today. That is the message my film”

However, he lamented the lack of opportunities for the youth to know about filmmaking itself.

"Here in the school, there are few persons who know the world of filmmaking. I am hoping to have a film subject here. Even not as a major subject... even if hindi naman sila magiging professional filmmakers... Basta yung idea na having knowledge or an idea about filmmaking, na pwede palang ganyan, pwede pala tayo gumawa ng films gamit lang ang phones natin, kahit wala tayo mamahalin na cameras kasi it is very effective for community engagement especially that it brings people together"

"There are few people who know the world of filmmaking in our school. I hope we'll have a film subject here. Even just as a major subject and not a full-blown film program. I hope that people here would have the idea to make films even with our phones, not just with expensive DSLR or video cameras. I hope they realize that films can be very effective for engaging people, especially the youth, especially because films bring the community together."

Morciano, Salazar, and Delgado also said that we need more workshops and venues to showcase these stories to reach more people. We need to open more public spaces to discuss the lessons learned after the tragedy. "We should open public parks for outdoor film viewing so that even the poorest of the poor can witness it, we should let the local community define what resilience means for them, and we should find out what the elements for overall healing are to them," added Veloso. Additionally, Salazar further stressed that Yolanda would forever be in the memory of Leytenos and the films that make up the social and cultural fabric of the community.

Veloso closed her sharing with an Abhijit Naskar quote that says, "filmmaking has the power to fortify the feeble, unify the divided, raise the abandoned and inspire the ignorant. Make movies, my friend – make nice, inspiring, and bold movies that will penetrate the darkest corners of the human mind and illuminate the soul.

F. Cellphones for Filmmaking

Cellphones have become cheaper and easy to use in today's contemporary culture. It has turned into an ever-present tool of communication familiar to most people, especially the youth. Thus, filmmaking has evolved into an accessible activity wherein one can become their director of films that express their own life stories and experiences.

Even without a formal film education, Mikone Calungsod testified that filmmaking helped him in recovering emotionally. He described filmmaking as an "escape from negativity" and said that films had empowered him to tell his experiences without expressing his thoughts verbally. He learned how to make films by watching Youtube videos. He added, "cellphones, even the older and cheaper models, all have a video recording capability. You can use that to shoot. You can even edit on it. And since it is a small device, you can shoot on your own without a crew. You can tell your very personal stories through it".

Chloe Veloso, a filmmaker, and a communication lecturer, also noted that communication today has widely become video-oriented already. According to her, "films can manipulate the audience in any way you want to manipulate them. By itself, radio is only an aural medium, while photos and painting are only visual media. However, films and videos are combinations of all forms of media, especially if it is coupled with dialogue, texts, and music, it becomes a compelling medium of communication." She shared that in the past, it was challenging to shoot and edit films. She had to borrow cameras from her school and rent out editing bays. Still, she believes that "today filmmaking is very doable in whatever situation, with whatever gadgets you have, or lack." Veloso explained:

"In the workshops I do for students, I don't teach or expect Hollywood-level cinematography and editing... Zero budget filmmaking. You can just use your cellphone. Download apps on your phone for editing... What is important is your story and the values you put on it. The app Tiktok is a rising platform. I have seen Tiktok videos that are filmic, there are memorable stories there. You can share your personal stories through these phone apps. 30-second short films with a message. It can be done. I have tried it. I have done it".

Commercial director Trox Salazar interestingly noted that difficult situations, such as disasters push people to turn to the arts. He adds, "I do not know why it is, but the way I see it is when a person is pushed to a challenging and painful circumstance, they tend to 'create' something. When you are taken away from your comfort zone, you then

find ways to express your situation, your plight, and your emotions." Because of this, he said he believes that the people who survived Super typhoon Yolanda can produce great films anchored on their experience. However, he pronounced that there is a need to "break down a certain wall":

"The title itself nga 'filmmakers' baga hiya hin exclusive elite group, for people nga can afford. So we have to break that wall. We have to break that down and just encourage people to tell your story through this audio visual medium... Han una makuri ito without a computer, but now we can do it on our phones. If we can get survivors, especially the kids, to shoot using phones, it can help in coping talaga. Kay nag shushoot ka ngani baga ka hin nalilipat ba. Baga ba hin najumpstart it imo emotions. If you shoot something about resilience, these survivors will probably portray something that will show their resilience. It nakakaupay hito ha ira kay nagi-os ka, nagagamit imo utok creatively"

"The title itself 'filmmakers' seems like it is reserved for this exclusive elite group, for people who can afford. So we have to break that wall. We have to break that down and just encourage people to tell your story through this audio-visual medium... It used to be difficult without a computer, but now we can do it on our phones. If we can get survivors, especially the kids, to shoot using phones, it can help in coping. Because when you shoot a movie, it's like you're immersing yourself into the story and not dwell in your situation now. Your emotions seem to jumpstart. If you shoot something about resilience, these survivors will probably portray something that will show their resilience. What heals there is the sense of moving forward. You get to work with others and think creatively."

He remembered one of the first lessons he learned from film school:

"As human beings, our nature is to tell stories, and everyone can tell their stories through film because technology is widely available now. Almost everybody has cell phones now. It doesn't matter what camera you use, Hollywood-style filmmaking should not be the goal, but it's how a person can emancipate himself and inspire others through films. As they say, the story is not in the bow, but the archer."

Derek Delgado and Gianfranco Morciano also forenamed cellphones as the most accessible medium of communication and self-expression, even for disaster survivors. Delgado admitted that "professional level" films can indeed be costly due to cinematography, production design, and payments for crews, actors, locations, and even music. However, he stressed that short personal films that are shot on cell phones are gaining popularity nowadays. You see this through vlogs, selfies, and video platforms such as Youtube and Tiktok.

Similarly, Morciano underscored mobile phone technology's availability for sharing personal stories saying that one does not need a "big-time production unit" to share their thoughts and emotions. He encouraged people to share their stories using their cellphones to shoot and edit. He also pointed out that if a person is still too shy or too

anxious to be with other people, they can shoot alone using their mobile phone, giving them time to process their thoughts and emotions. Furthermore, since his friends always teased him whenever he talked about his feelings verbally, creating films was a way to express his feelings without explaining his thoughts verbally.

H. Summary

In this section, the researcher presented the narrative vignettes of five key informants. In line with Cohen, Johnson, and Orr's (2015) and Tuval-Mashiach's (2018) studies, filmmaking enabled people to think about their experiences and reconstruct the stories according to their wishes. After experiencing shock and anxiety due to the assault of Super typhoon Yolanda in their region, the respondents found respite through the process of filmmaking. They discussed how the process of filmmaking provided them with empowering experiences of self-expression, communication through non-verbal means, community solidarity, integration, and the formation of advocacies. Various filmmaking mechanisms that promoted emotional healing were mentioned: scriptwriting, editing, pre-production, and exhibition. All respondents favored the narrative as the genre that can mirror reality or transform their experience into more symbolic imagery. They also highlighted how everyone who owns a cellphone could share their stories, create films and share them on social media. With cellphones and the rising social media application Tiktok, anyone can become their own director, camera operator, and editor to express their own life story. Filmmaking, by any means, has great potential in alleviating the emotional trauma brought about by shock, trauma, loss, and anxiety.

I. Conclusion

“A picture is worth a thousand words” – the age-old adage says.

A drawing or a photograph can often establish an idea with just one look, in a quicker way than how plain text can explain things. Images have the power to evoke emotion without words being written or spoken. We have used images to convey our stories, from the early cave painting to today’s social media posts. Throughout our history, stories helped us preserve our cultures and traditions and helped us make sense of the world in which we live in. Human beings are said to be an intrinsically storytelling species. Thus, when storytelling is done with the combination of images and sound, it becomes one of the most powerful communication tools available. The Russian revolutionary, Vladimir Lenin once famously remarked, *“of all the arts, the most important for us is the cinema”* as he was fascinated with the power of film as a *“propaganda, agitation and educational tool”* (Green, 2017). Today, the digital revolution is continually shaping the way we tell our stories.

However, disaster survivors feel that words are insufficient to express their emotions and tell their stories. Filmmaking then becomes an effective communication medium for people who cannot express their thoughts in writing or talking. It gives the

director a venue to process his/her thoughts and emotions and gives him/her the power to envision his/her future.

In my own journey as a Super typhoon Yolanda survivor, a filmmaker, a journalist, and a development communication practitioner, I understand that filmmaking is not only a leisurely activity but an effective avenue for consciousness-raising and a great opportunity for reflection on societal issues. For disaster survivors, it is through filmmaking that one can emerge as a hero who is larger than life, who defeats villains, and who gains the agency to conquer their internal demons.

In this regard, the study concludes that filmmaking provides an outlet to speak about one's challenges and struggles. This then can lead to self-empowerment and self-development as the storyteller immerses him/herself in the process of creating and showcasing his/her own story before an audience. As Nora Quebral puts it, development communication is mainly concerned with the people in developing societies, especially those who live in the countryside. She believes that one cannot rightfully talk about national development unless human development is part of the conversation (Quebral, 2012, p.5). Locally-produced personal films fulfill the goals of Development Communication by providing the person with a framework in which his/her stories are recognized. It transforms the person from being a victim and mere passive spectator to becoming an active participant in positive social change. Similarly, the audience is brought to a dynamic and participative process of communication that involves dialogue and feedback.

Consequently, these interactions within the community can intensify awareness, engagement, and development (Quebral, 2012; Gancio, 2015; Littlejohn & Foss, 2009, p. 542).

Particularly, mobile/cell phone filmmaking has the potential to become an effective emotional recovery tool in post-disaster settings. The omnipresence of mobile phones in today's digital age makes filmmaking accessible to almost everybody. Its portability, ease of usage, and image quality make the video production process simpler and accessible even to disaster survivors. This gives individuals the agency to capture their feelings and experiences, offering disaster survivors a sense of empowerment and ownership. It can similarly be a valuable communication medium in building community engagement and spreading knowledge mainly for environment-related issues, awareness, and resilience, being that the Eastern Visayas is the most disaster-prone region in the country.

It is my hope that local governments realize that films do more than just amuse and entertain, rather, it serves as a concrete exemplification of how the arts can help in psychosocial recovery for disasters. Undoubtedly, the tales of Yolanda will continue to persevere. It will continue to evolve from being a coping device that allowed the people to emotionally recover from the devastation to becoming a crucial part in the process of moving forward and learning from the past, as seen through the films tackling issues such climate change and climate justice.

J. Limitations of the Study

The findings of this study have several limitations. As stated in Chapter 1, this study's purpose is to gain an insight into how filmmaking can help in emotional recovery in a post-disaster setting through the stories of five Eastern Visayan filmmakers. Because of this, it would be challenging to generalize these findings to a broader population. Additionally, the selection of participants was made through purposeful sampling, which relies heavily on the researcher's judgment in choosing the respondents for the study. Also, the data collection was primarily done through video-conferencing applications. As a result, the researcher did not have the option to select a more diverse sample from the Eastern Visayas region (e.g., to include filmmakers from Samar and Biliran), and the time spent between the researcher and participant was limited.

K. Audio-Visual Presentation

This study comes with a film presentation aimed to provide a thicker description by conveying visuals to the manuscript. It includes the respondents' soundbytes and showcased the films that were discussed during the interviews. Likewise, the presentation aimed to accord a face to Waray filmmakers as this study is about them. Total running time of the AVP is 4 minutes and 30 seconds. It can be found on this Youtube link: <https://youtu.be/iH4BzOwrkFw> .

VI. IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Quarantelli, Rodriguez, and Dynes (2007) state that disasters such as earthquakes, typhoons, and storm surges are merely hazards or sources of damage. The actual disaster is the impact on an individual and their coping patterns. Whenever a disaster strikes, the most impoverished communities are the ones who are the worst hit. While most individuals can quickly recover, some cannot come promptly through the distress and continue to struggle with grief and anxiety disorders. Mental health interventions should be an integral part of disaster preparedness and management so that individuals can gain a sense of empowerment to be “transformed from being a victim to being a survivor” (Ronquillo, 1999). Thus, addressing disaster mental health mandates great attention because it is a social issue (Ronquillo, 1999; Lowrey, 2019) and a public health concern (Reijneveld, 2005; McFarlane, 2012).

Recent disasters such as Super typhoons Rolly (international name: Goni) and Ulysses (international name: Vamco) in November 2020, the Taal Volcano unrest in early 2021, the Mount Bulusan eruption in June 2022, and even the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic remind us of the importance of disaster mental health. Unfortunately, many Filipinos still do not easily recognize the need for mental health aid and may even reject all forms of intervention due to several barriers, such as financial constraints, inaccessibility of services, concern for the loss of face, and a sense of shame (Martinez

et al, 2020). Because of this, there might be a need to set aside traditional mental health approaches to intervene successfully (Disaster Mental Health Intervention Field Guide).

While this research is not intended to produce generalizable results, this study's findings can still serve as a starting point for conversations on the role of filmmaking and video production in our disaster response as part of the survivors' emotional recovery. Embodying traumatic memories through filmmaking is not a new idea; however, storytelling has consistently been recognized as a primary channel of knowledge transfer and experience sharing. It then becomes a vital element in fostering positive social change and the national narrative's cultural production. (Lambert, 2013; Nairi, 2017)

The research opportunities on the impacts and interventions for disaster mental health in the Philippines are enormous. Further studies may be done by working in other parts of the Eastern Visayas Region, such as Samar and Biliran. With the fast-paced technological revolution of social media and phone applications and a younger generation that is digitally oriented, future researchers may explore how Tiktok – a social media powerhouse launched in 2016, primarily consisting of audio-video materials that are short and digestible at 3-to-60-seconds running time – can amplify disaster, health, and risk communications.

The effects of climate change can be one of the priority fields in disaster mental health studies. The Climate Change Commission (CCC) admits that there is still no direct linkage between climate change and mental health. While qualitative studies on this subject have been done in other countries, there is still a lack of local studies adequately showing the connection between the two, thus further hindering the inclusion of mental health programs in the government's climate action plans.

Future researchers can also look into mobile film productions as an alternative source of stories, experiences, and perspectives on the isolation and quarantine experiences amid the COVID-19 pandemic, which is considered to be to be the most extensive health and humanitarian disaster in the 21st century.

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ANNEX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Personal experience

1. Can you describe your experience during the onslaught of Super Typhoon Yolanda?
2. How did it affect you emotionally, mentally, and socially?
3. What led you to create the film or participate in a film anchored on the "Yolanda" experience?
4. Can you share the process of creating this film – from conceptualization, scriptwriting, production, post-production, and exhibition?
5. Why did you choose film as your medium of communication?
6. What did you want to tell your viewers?
7. What was the audiences' reaction to your film?

Why Filmmaking

1. How does filmmaking differ from other arts as a form of expression?
2. Does the process of making a film help the filmmaker in coping/healing from the trauma?
3. What do you think is the most compelling film genre for psychosocial recovery after experiencing a disaster?

4. What aspect of the filmmaking process do you find most meaningful and affects you the most?
5. Do you think filmmaking has a place in psychosocial recovery activities, just like painting or play therapy? Please explain your answer.

Mental Health, Disasters and Filmmaking

1. Do you feel that the survivors' mental health is often overlooked in our country's disaster recovery program?
2. What makes film therapeutic?
3. As a viewer, what role does film play in coping with trauma?
4. As the director/producer/cinematographer, what role does film play in coping with trauma?

Filmmaking and the Community

1. Are Yolanda-related films still relevant?
2. Does the language used in a film matter?
3. What difference does it make if the "local" tells the story him/herself, in contrast to the narratives told by a journalist or a visitor?
4. How can you make filmmaking more accessible to the masses?

5. How do you think we can improve filmmaking as a tool for community engagement and spreading knowledge on other social issues?

ANNEX 2: CONSENT FORM

Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to take part in the study. This research is being conducted by Kerchlynn Tan, a Development Communication master's candidate at the University of the Philippines Open University.

What this study is about:

The purpose of this study is to learn about how filmmaking can be a tool for emotional and social recovery after natural disasters such as the Super Typhoon Yolanda.

What will you be asked to do?

If you agree to be in this study, the researcher will conduct an interview with you about your personal experience during the onslaught of Super Typhoon Yolanda and your professional experience as a filmmaker who produced films inspired by the disaster.

The interview is projected to take up to 1 hour to complete. With your permission, I would like to audio/video-record the interview to help in the transcribing.

In addition to the interview, I would like your permission to take photos of you and to take screenshots of the film/s discussed for the study. These photos will be included in the presentation of this study.

Benefits and Compensation

There are no direct benefits to you. Your participation in this study will help increase awareness on how filmmaking can be a tool for the psychosocial healing of an individual and the community at large in a post-disaster setting, and how arts-based expression through films can help in a holistic disaster recovery approach and resilience building.

As an appreciation for your time and contribution, you will be given a Php500 GCash or Grab Food voucher after this study.

If you have questions:

You may directly contact the researcher by email at kctan2@up.edu.ph or by phone at

If you have more questions or concerns regarding this study, you may also contact my adviser, Dr. Grace Javier Alfonso through grace.alfonso@upou.edu.ph

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent

I have read the above information and consent to the following:

- To take part in the study.
- To have the interview recorded.
- To have my photograph taken.
- To have screenshots of my film/s taken.
- To have my full name appear on the thesis manuscript.

Your Signature: _____

Your Name: _____

Date: _____

(Taken from Sanders, 2015)

ANNEX 3: SIGNED CONSENT FORMS

Statement of Consent

I have read the above information and consent to the following:

- To take part in the study.
- To have the interview tape-recorded.
- To have my photograph taken.
- To have screenshots of my film/s taken.
- To have my full name appear on the thesis manuscript.

Your Signature:

Your Name: GIANFRANCO C. MORCIANO

Date: January 15, 2021

Statement of Consent

I have read the above information and consent to the following:

- To take part in the study.
- To have the interview tape-recorded.
- To have my photograph taken.
- To have screenshots of my film/s taken.
- To have my full name appear on the thesis manuscript.

Your Signature: _____

Your Name: CALUNGSOD, MIKONE JOSHUA

Date: JANUARY 19, 2021

Statement of Consent

I have read the above information and consent to the following:

- To take part in the study.
- To have the interview recorded.
- To have my photograph taken.
- To have screenshots of my film/s taken.
- To have my full name appear on the thesis manuscript.

Your Signature:

Your Name: Chloe Anne A. Veloso

Date: January 21, 2021

Statement of Consent

I have read the above information and consent to the following:

- To take part in the study.
- To have the interview tape-recorded.
- To have my photograph taken.
- To have screenshots of my film/s taken.
- To have my full name appear on the thesis manuscript.

Statement of Consent

I have read the above information and consent to the following:

- To take part in the study.
- To have the interview recorded.
- To have my photograph taken.
- To have screenshots of my film/s taken.
- To have my full name appear on the thesis manuscript.

Your Signature:

Your Name: DEREK DELGADO

Date: JANUARY 30 2021

ANNEX 4: LETTER TO REGIONAL FILM ORGANIZATION “SINErangan”

18 November 2020

Dear SINErangan,

Maupay nga adlaw! I hope you are all well and safe.

I am Kerchlynn Tan, a Masters in Development Communication student from the UP Open University.

I am currently working on my thesis titled “*How Waray Filmmakers Confronted Supertyphoon Yolanda’s Emotional Trauma through Filmmaking*”. In summary, my study focuses on the role of arts, particularly filmmaking, as a catalyst for psychosocial wellness after a disaster. This research explores how filmmaking can be a tool to process, heal, connect, and educate an individual or the community in relation to disaster preparedness and rehabilitation.

On a more personal background, I finished my undergraduate studies in Film and Audio-Visual Communication at the UPFI in 2008 and I also hail from Tacloban.

It is my understanding that your organization is the first and only regional collective of filmmakers from Eastern Visayas. With this, I am asking for your organization’s assistance in looking for and connecting with the respondents who fit for my research.

The criteria needed for my study are as follows:

1. He/she experienced emotional trauma or psychosocial distress due to the typhoon.
2. He/she produced/directed/ took part in a film related to Supertyphoon Yolanda which he/she believes have helped him/her in the healing from the emotional trauma brought about by the disaster.
3. He/she is from the Eastern Visayas Region

Your assistance will greatly help me in completing my thesis and could lead to a greater public understanding of the role of filmmaking in the field of disaster mental health.

Damo nga salamat!

Sincerely,

Kerchlynn Tan

ANNEX 5: LETTERS TO RESPONDENTS

16 January 2021

MR. / MS. NAME OF RESPONDENT

Filmmaker

Dear NAME OF RESPONDENT,

Maupay nga adlaw! I hope you are well and safe.

I am Kerchlynn Tan, a Master's in Development Communication student from the UP Open University.

I am currently working on my thesis titled *“How Waray Filmmakers Confronted Supertyphoon Yolanda’s Emotional Trauma through Filmmaking.”* This study focuses on the role of film as a catalyst for psychosocial wellness after a disaster.

My research objectives are as follows:

1. Explore how filmmaking aided in the healing from emotional trauma in the aftermath of Supertyphoon Yolanda
2. Determine the aspects of the filmmaking process that allows the construction of expressive narratives for emotional healing.
3. Establish the role of filmmaking as a medium for building disaster resilience, sharing of social awareness and local knowledge in the Eastern Visayas region

I would like to reference your films in my research paper and I would also like to request an hour of your time to interview you about this topic via Zoom or Skype.

The following questions are guiding my research:

1. How did filmmaking help Supertyphoon Yolanda survivors heal from the emotional trauma caused by the disaster?
2. In what way does filmmaking differ from other forms of visual art expressions?
3. What aspect of the filmmaking process is the most meaningful for you?
4. What film genres can be best used to access memories and disaster-related trauma?
5. What can be done for the long-term development of filmmaking as an intervention for disaster mental health programs?

I understand that talking about trauma can be quite sensitive; thus, I am also attaching the interview guide, which may help you decide whether or not you would be willing to participate in the interview.

Thank you for taking the time to read my invitation. Please let me know if I can provide any further information as you consider my request.

Damo nga salamat!

Sincerely,

Kerchlynn Tan

ANNEX 6: REQUEST FOR COPYRIGHT PERMISSION

NAME
Filmmaker

Dear **FILMMAKER**,

I would like to thank you for being one of my thesis respondents. Your insights have greatly contributed to the completion of my manuscript.

I am now nearing my thesis defense and my adviser asked me to present a 3-minute opening video during my presentation, showcasing all the films discussed in my paper.

I am writing to request permission for the use of your film **TITLE** to be included in my audio-visual presentation. My video output is purely an academic undertaking and will not be screened for commercial purposes. However, the material would be included in our university repository where students, faculty, and other researchers may be able to watch it.

I hope you would allow me to use a maximum of 60 seconds from your film. If you would be willing to grant me permission, please let me know how you like the video to be credited.

I would greatly appreciate your consent to my request. Thank you for your time and consideration!

Sincerely,

Kerchlynn C. Tan