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Article

# Beyond Survival: Lived Memory and Digital Ethnography of Typhoon *Basyang's* Aftermath

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## Abstract

Disasters in the Philippines are recurrent and deeply disruptive, yet their lessons often fade from collective consciousness once immediate recovery ends. Existing research has tended to emphasize logistical response and physical survival, leaving gaps in understanding how disaster experiences are remembered, narrated, and mediated as cultural and governance resources. This study addresses that gap by taking Typhoon Basyang in Iligan City as a critical case to examine how survival is framed through memory, solidarity, and digital mediation, and why these processes matter for resilience and policy. Guided by phenomenology, collective memory, and digital ethnography, the research employed a qualitative case study design integrating interviews, focus groups, GIS mapping, AI-assisted coding, and digital ethnographic analysis. Twenty purposively selected participants (S1–S20) provided narratives that anchored the inquiry in lived experience, substantiating theoretical insights with concrete accounts of trauma, solidarity, and resilience, while data saturation confirmed analytical robustness. Findings reveal that survival extended beyond physical endurance to processes of remembering, narrating, and embedding experiences into collective identity, highlighting the importance of memory as both archive and resource for preparedness. While the scope was limited to a single locality and one institutional actor, SMCII, this constraint provided depth of contextual analysis. In addressing the gap between logistical accounts and cultural memory, the study demonstrates how resilience is sustained through narrative, digital mediation, and institutional presence, and although grounded in Iligan City, its insights extend beyond local boundaries, reframing survival as lived memory and digitally mediated resilience in ways that contribute to global disaster scholarship and offering lessons on how communities worldwide can sustain vigilance and identity long after the recovery phase has ended.

**Keywords:** collective memory; digital ethnography; disaster resilience; lived memory; typhoon basyang

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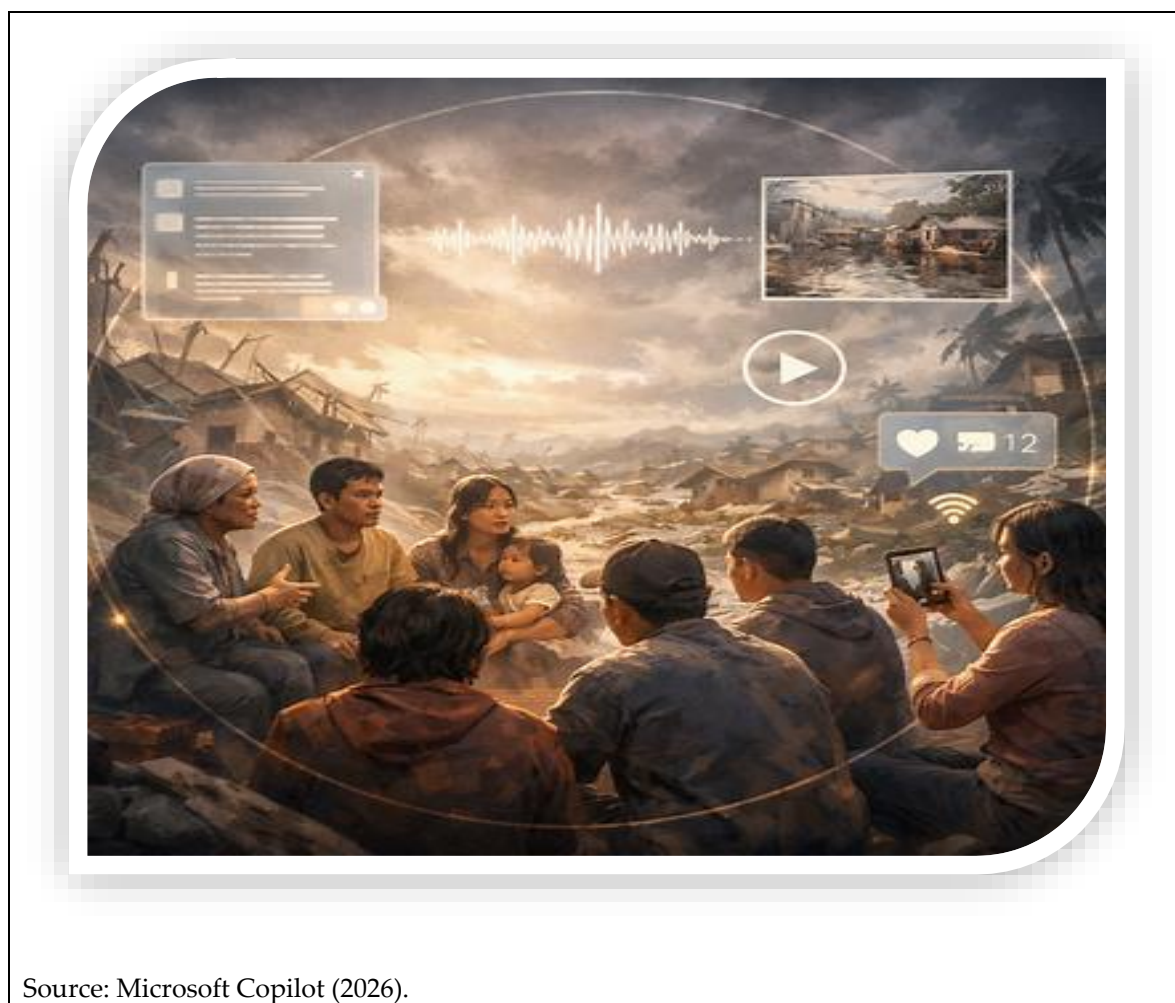
## I. Introduction

Typhoon Basyang struck Iligan City on February 5 to 7, 2026, leaving behind not just statistics but lived stories of disruption and resilience. Floodwaters displaced 1,258 families—nearly 4,700 individuals—from 21 barangays, forcing them into 23 evacuation centers. Among the hardest hit were Tubod, Tambacan, Saray, Abuno, Mahayahay, and Ubaldo Laya, where residents endured waist-deep waters, fallen trees, and debris that closed vital roads and bridges. These conditions claimed lives and deepened community frustration, prompting the city government to declare a state of calamity as relief operations mobilized (SunStar Cagayan de Oro, 2026; Antonio, 2026; Umel, 2026).

At the same time, institutions moved swiftly, turning meteorological warnings into decisive actions that reshaped daily routines.

On said date, Typhoon Basyang struck Iligan City and surrounding areas in Northern Mindanao. The Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (RDRRMC) raised its alert status to blue and activated the Emergency Operations Center on February 5 at 6:00 p.m., anticipating the storm's possible effects (Iligan City DRRMO, 2026). In response, the city government issued Executive Order No. 9, suspending classes in all levels, public and private, on February 5 and

6 (Iligan City Government, 2026). As a whole, these actions illustrate how institutions translate meteorological warnings into immediate measures that reshape daily life.



Source: Microsoft Copilot (2026).

Beyond these institutional responses, survival itself must be understood not only as endurance against physical forces but as lived memory. Each recurrence of *Basyang* carries recollections of earlier storms like typhoon *Sendong*, shaping how communities interpret warnings, prepare for hazards, and rebuild after disruption. In Iligan City, survival is remembered through stories of adaptation and relief, making disaster experience both a technical and cultural phenomenon.

To appreciate this cultural dimension, one must first situate Iligan City within its identity as the “City of Majestic Waterfalls.” As one of Northern Mindanao’s most prominent urban centers, its reputation rests not only on its industrial base and natural landmarks but also on its tri-people composition: Christians, Maranaos, and Lumads (Rodel, 1997). This identity has shaped the city’s traditions, culture, and heritage, producing a society that is both diverse and resilient. The Maranao are renowned for their artistry in weaving, brasswork, and the torogan house, a symbol of nobility and cultural pride. The Lumad, particularly the Higaonon, preserve oral traditions, rituals tied to the land, and farming practices that sustain upland communities. The Christian population, largely Cebuano speaking, has contributed to Iligan’s growth through commerce, education, and industry (City Government of Iligan, 2021). Together, these groups form a cultural montage celebrated in local festivals, underscoring how resilience in Iligan is not only about surviving storms but also about sustaining cultural identity in the face of adversity.

Within this context of resilience, St. Michael’s College of Iligan (SMCII) stands as a vital institution. Founded in 1915 under the stewardship of the Religious of the Virgin Mary (RVM) sisters, it has grown from humble beginnings into a recognized academic institution of distinction (St. Michael’s College of Iligan, Inc., (n.d.)). Over the decades, it has been accorded significant

recognitions, accredited by the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges, and Universities (PAASCU), and most recently recertified under ISO standards. Its curriculum continues to embody the RVM's vision of Quality Transformative Ignacian Marian Education (QTIME), while being significantly enriched through adherence to UNESCO's Sustainable Development Goals and international certification benchmarks. This enduring commitment reflects both fidelity to its founding mission and responsiveness to contemporary global educational standards.

Disaster narratives in Iligan City, therefore, unfold across multiple layers of human experience, digital mediation, and institutional relief. Survivors recount their ordeals through memory and testimony, while digital platforms capture and circulate these accounts in real time. Social media has become a vital tool in this process, serving as a channel for warnings, coordination, and collective storytelling (Houston et al., 2015). At the same time, government agencies and local institutions formalize responses through alerts, executive orders, and relief operations. These overlapping narratives reveal that disaster experience is not confined to physical events but extends into cultural memory and mediated communication. As Porio (2024) notes, governing climate resilience in Philippine cities requires navigating institutional challenges while recognizing the role of communities in shaping adaptive responses.

Indeed, the lived experiences of deluge victims demonstrate that survival is a dynamic process rather than a static condition. Families displaced by rising waters rely on kinship networks, improvised shelters, and community aid. Religious practices provide comfort, while traditions reinforce solidarity. Survival mechanisms include evacuation, resource sharing, and cultural resilience expressed in stories, rituals, and collective remembrance. These practices illustrate how disaster experience in Iligan City is shaped by the interplay of environment, culture, and institutional response. To decode these adversities is to recognize that survival is not merely endurance against physical forces but a lived memory that informs how communities prepare, adapt, and rebuild. As Tierney (2019) emphasizes, disasters must be understood sociologically, as events that expose vulnerabilities but also reveal the strength of social ties. In the Philippine context, proactive resilience—seen in communities like Catanduanes preparing for super typhoons—offers lessons for how Iligan's tri-people can continue to face recurring storms with foresight and solidarity (Sarmiento, Jordan, Vital, & Cariaso, 2023).

With this in mind, this study argues that disaster memory in Iligan City after Typhoon *Basyang* is constructed through the interplay of survivors' lived experiences, digitally mediated narratives, and institutional relief operations, with technology serving as both recorder and shaper of collective meaning. Memory here is not static; it is collective, layered, and continually reconstructed, echoing Halbwachs' (1992) insight that recollections are socially framed and sustained through group belonging. In Iligan, the tri-people identity provides the cultural scaffolding for this collective memory, while digital platforms extend its reach and institutions anchor it in formal responses.

The objectives of this research are threefold. First, to examine how survivors narrate their experiences and embed them in collective memory, drawing on phenomenology to capture lived realities. Second, to analyze the role of digital mediation—particularly social media and online communication—in shaping disaster narratives, building on frameworks of virtual ethnography (Hine, 2000) and functional uses of social media in disaster contexts (Houston et al., 2015). Third, to assess how institutional relief operations, such as those initiated by SMCII, interact with lived memory and digital mediation to produce a layered understanding of resilience, resonating with Porio's (2014, 2024) work on governance and community responses to climate risks.

Building on these objectives, the study puts in place six research questions that guide the inquiry:

1. How do survivors of Typhoon *Basyang* in Iligan City recall and narrate their experiences of disaster?
2. In what ways do digital platforms record, circulate, and reshape these narratives?
3. How do institutional responses, particularly those of SMCII, contribute to the construction of disaster memory?

4. What survival mechanisms emerge from the interplay of cultural traditions, kinship networks, and institutional relief?
5. How does the recurrence of the name *Basyang* influence collective perceptions of risk and resilience in Iligan City?
6. What strategic program can be crafted to address the recurring advent of flood, based on the findings of the study?

From these guiding questions emerges the broader focus of the study: integrating lived memory, digital mediation, and institutional relief into a single analytical frame. Its distinctiveness lies in bridging phenomenology, collective memory theory, digital ethnography, and institutional analysis in a Philippine case study. The contribution is threefold: methodological innovation by combining phenomenology, digital ethnography, and GIS/AI; theoretical depth through a multi-layered concept of disaster memory; and contextual enrichment by grounding the study in Philippine realities. Practical implications include informing policy and resilience strategies that recognize the cultural and mediated dimensions of disaster response (Cruz & Francisco, 2013; CHED, 2017; UNESCO, 2017).

With this, local institutions such as *St. Michael's College of Iligan, Inc.* (SMCII) responded in their own humble ways to the distress call of survivors in Iligan City. Relief drives, including the immediate initiative "*Call for Solidarity: Bagyong Basyang Relief Drive*", mobilized resources and volunteers, rippling outward to engage not only members of the institution but also communities beyond. These actions illustrate how institutional relief is not confined to formal structures but extends into networks of solidarity, reinforcing the collective effort to endure and recover. As Tierney (2019) emphasizes, disasters expose vulnerabilities but also reveal the strength of social ties, and in the Philippine context, proactive resilience has been observed in communities that prepare for recurring storms with foresight and solidarity (Sarmiento, Jordan, Vital, & Cariaso, 2023).

All premises considered, these important points highlight the significance of the study: advancing disaster scholarship by bridging human, digital, and institutional dimensions. By situating Iligan City's experience within broader debates on climate resilience, collective memory, and education for sustainable development, the research further aims to contribute to understanding how disasters are remembered, mediated, and institutionalized. It offers insights not only for academic discourse but also for practical governance, where resilience must be understood as both a technical and cultural process.

## II. Review of Related Literature

Having established the study's objectives and significance, it is necessary to situate the inquiry within existing scholarship. The literature provides theoretical and methodological anchors that illuminate how disaster memory can be understood through lived experience, mediated narratives, and institutional response.

To begin, phenomenology and interpretivism have long offered disaster researchers a way to capture the depth of human experience. By focusing on how survivors perceive, interpret, and narrate their encounters with calamity, phenomenology foregrounds the subjective dimension of resilience. Van Manen (2016) emphasizes that phenomenology of practice is about meaning-giving methods, where lived experience becomes the foundation for understanding. In the Philippine context, Eslit (2023) demonstrates how decoding disaster adversities—deluge, pain, agony, and survival—requires attention to the voices of survivors themselves, whose narratives reveal both vulnerability and strength. Interpretivist approaches thus remind us that disasters are not only physical events but also social phenomena shaped by cultural frames and lived realities. This perspective is crucial for Iligan City, where the tri-people identity informs how communities recall and reconstruct their experiences of *Basyang*.

Extending from this, collective memory provides another lens for understanding resilience in disaster aftermaths. Halbwachs (1992) reminds us that memory is socially framed, sustained by groups, and continually reconstructed. In disaster contexts, collective memory becomes a repository of survival strategies, cultural practices, and institutional responses. Bankoff and Hilhorst (2025)

argue that in the Philippines, disaster memory is deeply intertwined with resilience, as communities and institutions negotiate how past experiences shape present preparedness. Stephenson, Finlayson, and Morel (2018) add a practical dimension, showing how shelter resilience after floods and typhoons depends not only on physical structures but also on the social memory of risk and adaptation strategies. In Iligan, the recurrence of the name *Basyang* exemplifies how memory is layered—each storm bearing the name evokes past experiences and shapes present perceptions of vulnerability and resilience.

Building on these insights, digital ethnography offers a contemporary method for tracing how disaster narratives are mediated through social media and online platforms. Hine (2000) emphasizes that virtual ethnography allows researchers to study meaning-making in digital spaces, where survivors' testimonies, institutional updates, and community appeals circulate rapidly. Houston et al. (2015) further argue that social media functions as both a tool for coordination and a space for collective storytelling during disasters. In the Philippine context, mediated narratives extend the reach of memory, allowing local experiences to ripple outward into national and even global awareness. For Iligan City, digital mediation is not merely a record but a shaper of collective meaning, reinforcing how technology intertwines with lived memory and institutional relief.

Moreover, the integration of GIS and AI into disaster research has opened new possibilities for qualitative analysis. Goodchild and Li (2021) argue that GIScience contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals by linking local vulnerability mapping to global resilience frameworks. When paired with phenomenological accounts, these tools allow researchers to visualize how lived memory intersects with spatial risk zones, thereby enriching qualitative inquiry with spatial precision. This methodological convergence is particularly relevant for Iligan City, where floods and typhoons leave both physical traces and cultural imprints that demand multi-layered analysis.

At the same time, institutional relief operations remain a decisive factor in shaping disaster experiences. Bankoff (2003) describes the Philippines as a society with “cultures of disaster,” where institutions and communities normalize hazard and embed resilience into everyday life. Porio (2014, 2024) underscores the governance challenges of balancing limited resources with community expectations, while Bankoff and Hilhorst (2025) highlight how institutional responses themselves become part of collective memory. Relief initiatives such as those of SMCII illustrate this dynamic: they are not only logistical interventions but also symbolic acts that reinforce solidarity and resilience. Stephenson, Finlayson, and Morel (2018) add that shelter resilience depends on both technical design and social adaptation, showing how institutional action must align with community practices.

Nevertheless, despite these advances, critical gaps remain. Eyerman (2011) demonstrates that collective memory of trauma can serve as a cultural resource for resilience, but without integration into institutional practice, its potential is underutilized. Pink et al. (2016) argue that digital ethnography must be understood as both methodological and cultural practice, yet its insights are often disconnected from governance frameworks. Tierney (2019) insists that disasters must be approached sociologically, exposing vulnerabilities while revealing the strength of social ties, but this sociological depth is seldom combined with technological innovation. Eslit (2023) calls for decoding disaster adversities in ways that recognize the interplay of pain, survival, and institutional support. Similarly, Cruz and Francisco (2013) emphasize embedding climate change adaptation within disaster risk management, while CHED (2017) and UNESCO (2017) advocate for education that bridges technical preparedness with cultural resilience. Taken together, these works reveal a fragmented landscape: lived memory, digital mediation, and institutional relief are often studied in isolation. This study addresses that gap by proposing an integrated framework that situates Iligan City's disaster experience within a multi-layered analysis of memory, mediation, and institutional response (See Appendix A and B).

### III. Theoretical Framework

Having reviewed the related literature and conceptual framework, it is now essential to anchor the study in its theoretical foundations. These theories provide the lens through which lived memory,

digital mediation, and institutional relief can be analyzed as intersecting dimensions of disaster experience.

To begin, Phenomenology of Lived Experience, as articulated by Edmund Husserl (1913; 1982), emphasizes the primacy of subjective consciousness and the ways individuals give meaning to their experiences. Husserl's *Ideas* (1982) highlight how phenomena must be understood as they appear to consciousness, grounding analysis in lived memory rather than abstract generalizations. Van Manen (2016) extends this by framing phenomenology of practice as a method of meaning-giving, where the researcher attends to the depth of human experience. In disaster contexts, this perspective allows scholars to capture survivors' narratives as they are lived, perceived, and reconstructed. For Iligan City, phenomenology illuminates how survivors of Typhoon *Basyang* recall their encounters with deluge and displacement, embedding meaning in memory and testimony.

Extending from this, Collective Memory Theory, developed by Maurice Halbwachs (1925; 1992), situates memory within social frameworks. Halbwachs argues that recollections are not purely individual but are shaped by community, institutions, and cultural traditions. Eyerman (2011) adds that collective memory of trauma can become a cultural resource for resilience, enabling communities to transform suffering into solidarity. Bankoff (2003) contextualizes this in the Philippines, describing "cultures of disaster" where hazard and resilience are normalized and embedded in everyday life. For Iligan City, collective memory explains how the recurrence of the name *Basyang* evokes past experiences and shapes present perceptions of vulnerability and preparedness, reinforcing resilience through shared remembrance.

Building on these insights, Digital Ethnography / Virtual Ethnography, as advanced by Christine Hine (2000), provides a framework for analyzing how technology mediates narratives. Hine's work emphasizes that online spaces are not merely channels but cultural contexts where meaning is produced. Pink et al. (2016) further argue that digital ethnography is both methodological and cultural practice, requiring researchers to attend to how narratives circulate and transform in mediated environments. Houston et al. (2015) highlight how social media functions both as a coordination tool and a site of collective storytelling during disasters. In Iligan City, digital mediation extends memory beyond local boundaries, allowing survivor testimonies, institutional updates, and community appeals to ripple outward into national and global awareness.

Collectively, these three theories namely phenomenology of lived experience (Husserl, 1913; 1982; Van Manen, 2016), collective memory theory (Halbwachs, 1925; 1992; Eyerman, 2011; Bankoff, 2003), and digital ethnography (Hine, 2000; Pink et al., 2016) provide the conceptual lens for this study. They enable an integrated analysis of how human, digital, and institutional dimensions intersect in disaster memory. By grounding the research article in these frameworks, the study advances a multi layered approach that situates Iligan City's experience within broader debates on resilience, governance, and sustainable development.

#### IV. Research Methodology

Guided by the theoretical foundations of phenomenology, collective memory, and digital ethnography, this study employs a *qualitative case study* of Iligan City in the immediate aftermath of Typhoon *Basyang*. A phenomenological orientation privileges lived memory and interpretivist grounding, ensuring that survivor narratives and institutional testimonies are understood as deeply human accounts of pain, resilience, and adaptation rather than abstract data (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Flick, 2018). Yin (2018) underscores that case studies are particularly suited to disasters, where human, institutional, and technological dimensions converge in real-life contexts.

Data collection combined human-centered methods—semi-structured interviews with survivors, relief workers, officials, and SMCII representatives purposively selected; focus groups; and field observations—with digital ethnography, analyzing social media posts, hashtags, and forums related to Typhoon *Basyang* and SMCII relief. As Hine (2000) and Pink et al. (2016) emphasize, digital ethnography is both methodological and cultural practice, enabling researchers to trace how narratives circulate and transform online. To complement these accounts, GIS mapping visualized

damage and relief distribution, situating lived memory within geographic risk zones (Goodchild & Li, 2021). AI-assisted thematic coding further allowed large-scale qualitative data to be interpreted with both depth and breadth.

Participants were purposively selected in accordance with explicit inclusion criteria. These comprised survivors directly affected by Typhoon *Basyang*, including students and personnel of SMCII, relief workers and local officials, institutional representatives from SMCII, and social media content tagged to Iligan City between February 5 and 7, 2026. Priority was accorded to individuals residing in the City proper and in the barangays of Tubod, Mahayahay, Tambacan, Tambo, Hinaplanaon, Acmac, and Abuno, which sustained the most severe damage to property and infrastructures. To ensure depth and clarity of information, data collection was conducted from February 9 to 28, 2026. For ethical compliance and privacy protection, twenty participants, comprising those most heavily affected and others who voluntarily joined interviews in the hardest-hit areas, were anonymized and systematically coded from “S1” to “S20.”

Credibility was strengthened through triangulation across interviews, focus groups, observations, documents, and digital sources, and through member-checking, which allowed participants to validate interpretations (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Flick, 2018). Data saturation was reached when no new themes emerged, confirming the strength and rigor of the findings.

Finally, ethical safeguards guided the research process. Trauma sensitivity shaped interactions, informed consent was secured, and confidentiality was maintained throughout, ensuring that the study respected the dignity and well-being of those whose experiences form its core.

## VII. Findings and Discussion

Building on the methodological foundations, the findings illuminate how lived memory, digital mediation, and institutional response converge in Iligan City’s experience of Typhoon *Basyang*. What emerges is not a simple catalog of answers but a layered narrative in which survivor voices, mediated accounts, and relief operations intertwine to construct collective disaster memory. Each research question is addressed through close analysis, with implications drawn for resilience and governance, and participant testimonies (S-1 to S-20) woven in to ground the discussion in human experience.

### A. Summarized Answers to Research Questions

RQ1: How do survivors of Typhoon *Basyang* in Iligan City recall and narrate their experiences of disaster? Survivors narrated their experiences with vivid detail, often emphasizing both trauma and resilience. The phenomenological accounts revealed that memory was not simply descriptive but interpretive, shaped by fear, kinship, and communal solidarity. As one participant recalled:

*“I thought the flood would take everything, but what I remember most is how neighbors carried each other to safety” (S7).*

This testimony illustrates phenomenology’s emphasis on lived experience (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Flick, 2018). The memory is not a neutral record but an interpretive act, foregrounding solidarity as the essence of survival.

Another survivor emphasized the temporal layering of memory:

*“Even now, when it rains, I feel the same fear. But I also remember how we rebuilt together after Basyang” (S12).*

Here, collective memory theory (Halbwachs, 1992) is evident: individual recall is embedded in communal practices of rebuilding, transforming trauma into a shared cultural resource. The narrative shows how disaster memory reinforces preparedness and identity, extending beyond the immediate event into future vigilance.

Digital ethnography further complements these accounts. One participant noted:

*“I posted about our situation on Facebook, and relatives from abroad sent help. That memory is online now, not just in my mind” (S15).*

This reflects Hine's (2000) and Pink et al.'s (2016) insight that digital ethnography is both methodological and cultural practice. Memory circulates and transforms in mediated spaces, becoming part of Iligan City's digital archive of resilience.

By situating these narratives within Iligan City's institutional and geographic context, the case study orientation (Yin, 2018) underscores how human, institutional, and technological dimensions converge in real life. Survivor accounts are not isolated recollections but part of a broader system of meaning-making that links lived experience, communal identity, and mediated circulation.

**RQ2:** In what ways do digital platforms record, circulate, and reshape these narratives? Social media played a crucial role in amplifying survivor voices and institutional updates, creating a shared narrative that extended beyond Iligan City. Digital ethnography revealed that hashtags and posts functioned as both coordination tools and collective storytelling devices.

One survivor emphasized the empowering immediacy of digital platforms:

*"I posted about our situation, and within minutes, relatives outside Iligan and even abroad were messaging us with help" (S12).*

This reflects Hine's (2000) view that digital ethnography captures the circulation of narratives in real time. Here, memory is reshaped into a networked phenomenon, where lived experience becomes mediated action.

Yet another participant expressed skepticism about digital mediation:

*"I shared my story online, but after a few days, people stopped reacting. It felt like our suffering was just another post that got buried" (S8).*

This tension highlights the limits of mediated memory — while platforms amplify voices, they also risk trivializing or fragmenting disaster narratives. As Pink et al. (2016) argue, digital ethnography must account for both the visibility and the ephemerality of online accounts.

A relief worker offered a unifying perspective, showing how digital platforms bridge personal and institutional response:

*"We used Facebook groups to coordinate who needed food and where to send supplies. Without that, we would have been slower" (S14).*

This quotation demonstrates how collective memory and institutional response converge in mediated spaces. Digital platforms are not only archives of suffering but also tools of coordination, embedding disaster memory into practices of resilience and governance.

**RQ3:** How do institutional responses, particularly those of SMCII, contribute to the construction of disaster memory? Institutional relief operations were remembered not only for logistical support but also for symbolic acts of solidarity. Analysis showed that institutional responses became embedded in collective memory, reinforcing trust and resilience.

One participant emphasized the positive symbolic impact of institutional presence:

*"When SMC came with food packs, it wasn't just supplies—it felt like someone remembered us" (S3).*

This reflects collective memory theory (Halbwachs, 1992), where institutional actions are remembered as cultural gestures of solidarity. Within the lens of QTIME, such acts embody Ignacian values of *cura personalis* (care for the whole person) and Marian compassion, transforming relief into a formative experience that strengthens both identity and resilience.

Yet another participant expressed frustration with institutional limitations:

*"The help came, but it was late. By the time we received food, we had already gone hungry for 2 days na\*" (S10).*

This highlights the phenomenological dimension (Creswell & Poth, 2018), where lived memory interprets institutional response through suffering and delay. From a QTIME perspective, this

critique underscores the need for institutions to embody *magis* — striving for excellence and responsiveness — so that relief is not only symbolic but timely and effective.

A relief worker offered a unifying perspective, bridging symbolic and logistical dimensions:

*"We knew we couldn't reach everyone at once, but we tried to show up where we were needed most.*

*People remembered that effort, even if it wasn't perfect"* (S14).

This aligns with Yin's (2018) case study orientation, showing how institutional responses converge in real contexts where human, logistical, and symbolic dimensions interact. Through QTIME, such imperfect but sincere efforts are reframed as transformative acts of service, embedding disaster memory within a pedagogy of compassion, solidarity, and resilience.

**RQ4:** What survival mechanisms emerge from the interplay of cultural traditions, kinship networks, and institutional relief? Survivors relied heavily on kinship ties, cultural practices of *bayanihan* (communal unity), and institutional support. The interplay of traditions and relief created adaptive mechanisms that strengthened resilience.

One participant emphasized the strength of kinship and cultural practices:

*"We stayed together in one house, sharing food and stories until help arrived"* (S9).

This reflects the phenomenological grounding of lived memory (Creswell & Poth, 2018), where survival is interpreted through embodied practices of solidarity. It also resonates with collective memory theory (Halbwachs, 1992), as *bayanihan* becomes a cultural resource that sustains identity and resilience.

Another participant expressed dependence on institutional relief over kinship ties:

*"Without the food packs from SMCII, we could not have lasted. Family helped biya pod\*, but it was the direct help from that institution that kept us nourished and alive"* (S11).

This highlights the institutional dimension of survival, where relief operations are remembered as decisive interventions. From a QTIME perspective, such institutional presence embodies Ignacian values of *cura personalis* (care for the whole person) and Marian compassion, transforming logistical aid into formative acts of solidarity.

A third participant offered a contrasting critique of institutional limitations:

*"The help was there, but it was uneven. Some families got more, others waited longer. It made us rely more on each other than on the support huhuhu..."* (S18).

This underscores the phenomenological tension between expectation and lived experience. Institutional relief is remembered not only for its presence but also for its gaps, which reinforce the importance of kinship and cultural practices as fallback mechanisms.

Finally, a unifying perspective emerged:

*"We survived because we had each other, and because people from SMCII helped us. Family/Kinship and institutions worked together"* (S15).

This bridges the tension between cultural traditions and institutional relief, showing that survival mechanisms are hybrid and interdependent. Digital ethnography complements this by tracing how such narratives circulated online, reinforcing the idea that survival is both materially supported and culturally sustained.

**RQ5:** How does the recurrence of the name Basyang influence collective perceptions of risk and resilience in Iligan City? The repeated use of the name Basyang triggered memories of past disasters, intensifying vigilance and shaping preparedness behaviors. Collective memory framed the recurrence as both warning and reminder, embedding risk perception into cultural consciousness.

One survivor emphasized the heightened vigilance created by recurrence:

*"When we heard Basyang again, we knew it was serious — we remembered the last time"* (S18).

This reflects Halbwachs' (1992) collective memory theory, where naming conventions act as cultural markers embedding risk perception into shared consciousness. The recurrence of *Basyang* functions as a mnemonic device, transforming past trauma into preparedness.

Another participant expressed fatigue and skepticism about recurring names:

*"They keep reusing names, but for us it feels confusing. Sometimes it's not as strong, but the name makes us panic anyway" (S6).*

This highlights the phenomenological tension (Creswell & Poth, 2018), where lived experience interprets recurrence differently: for some, names trigger vigilance; for others, they generate anxiety or desensitization. Naming conventions thus carry both protective and destabilizing effects.

Another participant offered a unifying perspective:

*"Whether strong or weak, the name reminds us to prepare. It's part of our culture now, Basyang means we must be ready together" (S20).*

This bridges the tension between vigilance and fatigue, showing how recurrence ultimately reinforces communal resilience.

Importantly, these recollections are layered with the memory of Typhoon Sendong (2011), which devastated Iligan City and remains a formative disaster experience. Survivors often recall Sendong as the benchmark of catastrophe:

*"When Sendong came, we lost everything. Every storm after that, we remember Sendong first" (Sendong Survivor, oral history, 2011).*

Thus, the recurrence of *Basyang* does not exist in isolation; it is filtered through the collective trauma of Sendong. Hearing the name *Basyang* revives not only the immediate past but also the deeper memory of Sendong, embedding vigilance into Iligan City's cultural consciousness across generations.

By juxtaposing survivor vigilance (S18), survivor skepticism (S6), and communal preparedness (S20), and then situating these within the Sendong recollections of 2011, the analysis demonstrates that naming conventions are not neutral labels but cultural triggers of layered disaster memory. The recurrence of *Basyang* intensifies risk perception precisely because Sendong remains the city's formative disaster memory. Together, these events embed preparedness into Iligan City's collective identity, shaping how communities anticipate and respond to future storms.

**RQ6:** What strategic program can be crafted to address the recurring advent of flood, based on the findings of the study? Survivors and officials emphasized the need for integrated programs combining education, digital awareness, and institutional preparedness. Thematic synthesis revealed that resilience requires bridging lived memory, digital mediation, and institutional response. This implies that a strategic program should embed disaster memory into governance, education, and community practice. As one participant urged, *"We need more than relief—we need training, awareness, and systems that remember with us" (S-16)*. Such insights point toward a program that is both preventive and memory-based, ensuring that past experiences inform future resilience (see appendixes A and B).

### B. Thematic Analysis

Building on the summarized answers to the research questions, the thematic analysis reveals how disaster memory in Iligan City is constructed through overlapping human, digital, and institutional dimensions. Ten salient themes emerged from the data, each supported by survivor testimonies, social media traces, GIS visualizations, and AI-assisted coding outputs (refer to Appendix C).

1. Resilience as Memory. Survivors framed resilience not only as survival but as recollection. Memory itself became a resource for preparedness. *"We don't forget Basyang. Every time the rains come, we prepare differently now" (S20)*. AI coding highlighted "memory" and "preparedness" as recurring motifs across interviews. Resilience here was not simply about enduring the storm but about

transforming recollection into vigilance. Memory operated as a cultural reservoir, collapsing past and present, where remembering became a communal safeguard that sustained preparedness long after the waters receded.

2. Trauma and Solidarity. Narratives revealed trauma intertwined with solidarity. Survivors recalled fear but emphasized communal unity. GIS maps of evacuation sites overlapped with kinship networks, showing how solidarity was spatially organized. *“I thought the flood would take everything, but neighbors carried each other to safety”* (S7). Trauma here was not remembered in isolation but as a catalyst for collective action. Fear was reframed through *bayanihan*, where kinship and proximity transformed vulnerability into protection. Solidarity became resilience, showing that survival was sustained not only by individual endurance but by relational bonds that turned spaces of danger into networks of care.

3. Digital Mediation of Survival. Social media posts documented survival strategies and circulated them widely. Hashtags like #BasyangRelief, #Iliganflood, #PrayforIligan, etc. clustered around urgent needs and institutional updates. *“I posted about our situation, and within minutes, relatives abroad were messaging us with help”* (S12). Digital mediation here was not simply about communication but about transforming isolation into connection. Platforms collapsed distance, turning private vulnerability into public visibility, where aid could be mobilized across kinship and institutional networks. Survival was reframed as digitally mediated solidarity, showing that resilience extended beyond physical spaces into virtual ones, where memory, urgency, and accountability converged in real time.

4. Institutional Relief as Collective Narrative. SMCII’s relief operations were remembered as both logistical and symbolic. AI thematic coding linked “relief” with “trust” and “solidarity.” *“When SMCII came with water and food packs, it wasn’t just supplies—it felt like someone remembered us”* (S3). Relief here was not only material aid but a cultural gesture of recognition, where institutional presence carried emotional weight. Survivors interpreted bottled water and food packs as signs of being seen and valued, collapsing logistics into solidarity. This theme shows resilience as relational: institutions were remembered less for efficiency than for their symbolic role in affirming community worth, embedding trust and critique simultaneously into the collective narrative of survival.

5. Kinship and Bayanihan. Cultural traditions of *bayanihan* shaped survival mechanisms. Focus group transcripts emphasized shared food and shelter. *“We stayed together in one house, sharing food and stories until help arrived”* (S9). Kinship here was not only practical but symbolic, transforming scarcity into solidarity. *Bayanihan* reframed vulnerability as collective strength, where survival was sustained through relational bonds rather than individual endurance. This theme shows resilience as culturally embedded: unity and reciprocity turned disaster spaces into networks of care, making communal solidarity itself a survival resource.

6. Naming as Cultural Risk Marker. The recurrence of the name *Basyang* intensified vigilance. Social media analysis showed spikes in posts whenever the name reappeared. *“When we heard Basyang again, we knew it was serious—we remembered the last time”* (S18). Naming here was not a neutral act but a cultural trigger, collapsing past and present into layered disaster memory. Each repetition of *Basyang* re-activated collective trauma, embedding vigilance into Iligan’s consciousness. Names became mnemonic devices that transformed headlines into warnings, showing resilience as anticipatory memory where language itself carried risk and shaped communal preparedness.

7. Spatial Memory of Disaster. GIS mapping revealed how survivors associated specific places with danger and resilience. Flood-prone zones overlapped with narratives of evacuation and relief. This spatial dimension anchored memory in geography, showing that resilience was not only temporal but territorial. Survivors remembered disasters through landscapes, where rivers, bridges, and evacuation sites became mnemonic markers of both vulnerability and protection. Spatial memory transformed geography into a living archive, embedding disaster experience into the city’s terrain. In this way, resilience was mapped onto place, turning Iligan’s geography into a cultural safeguard that continually shapes preparedness.

8. Digital Amplification of Institutional Presence. SMCII's updates were reposted and reshaped online, extending institutional presence into digital memory. AI thematic coding showed "SMCII" frequently co-occurring with "help" and "hope." Digital amplification here was not simply about information flow but about transforming institutional action into symbolic reassurance. Online reposts collapsed distance and delay, allowing relief operations to circulate as narratives of care and accountability. In this way, institutional presence was remembered less as a one-time intervention and more as a sustained digital imprint, embedding trust and solidarity into the collective memory of survival.

9. Adaptive Practices Rooted in Tradition. Survivors adapted cultural practices to modern contexts—communal cooking, shared shelter, and digital coordination. This hybrid resilience was evident in both interviews and social media threads. Tradition here was not static but dynamic, reshaped to meet contemporary needs. *Bayanihan* extended into digital spaces, where coordination through posts and messages complemented shared food and shelter. Survival was sustained by this fusion: cultural reciprocity anchored resilience, while modern tools amplified its reach. The theme shows resilience as adaptive continuity, where tradition and technology interlocked to transform vulnerability into collective strength.

10. Memory as Governance Resource. Disaster memory informed governance and policy. Officials and survivors alike emphasized embedding memory into preparedness programs. "*We need more than relief—we need training, awareness, and systems that remember with us*" (S20). Memory here was not only personal recollection but institutionalized knowledge, reframed as a governance tool. By carrying past trauma into policy, communities and officials transformed remembrance into structured preparedness, where systems themselves were expected to "remember." This theme shows resilience as institutionalized memory: governance became accountable not just for logistics but for sustaining vigilance, embedding collective experience into future planning.

### C. Integrative Discussion

Following the findings and thematic analysis, the integrative discussion brings together the human, digital, and institutional dimensions of disaster memory to highlight how they converge in Iligan City's experience of Typhoon Basyang. Survivor testimonies, mediated narratives, and institutional relief are not separate strands but interwoven threads that collectively shape how the city remembers, adapts, and prepares. This synthesis underscores that resilience is both cultural and technological, rooted in lived memory yet extended through digital platforms and institutional presence.

When compared with existing literature, the findings reinforce and extend prior scholarship. Creswell and Poth (2018) and Flick (2018) emphasize the importance of participant voice in qualitative inquiry, while Yin (2018) situates case studies as powerful tools for contextual depth. Pink et al. (2016) highlight digital ethnography as a cultural practice, and Goodchild and Li (2021) demonstrate how GIS situates local experiences within global resilience frameworks. The Iligan case aligns with these insights but adds distinctiveness by showing how memory, digital mediation, and institutional relief intersect in a Philippine urban context marked by cultural traditions of *bayanihan* and the recurring symbolism of disaster naming.

This distinctiveness reinforces the niche of the study: disaster memory is not only a scholarly construct but a lived, mediated, and institutionalized phenomenon. By triangulating survivor voices, social media data, GIS maps, and institutional narratives, the research demonstrates how Iligan City's experience contributes to broader debates on resilience and governance while remaining context specific.

Finally, the discussion turns to what might be called the "*real satire of times*." In Iligan, a deluge headline meant to shock often reads less like breaking news and more like a reminder of what communities already carry in memory. The recurrence of the name *Basyang* exemplifies this irony: each announcement is both a warning and a recollection, collapsing sensationalism into lived experience. Media commentary sharpened this paradox. CPRM Radyo's admonition to "*stop blaming*

*the rain*” underscored that flooding is not a natural inevitability but a failure of governance, accountability, and infrastructure. Resolution 26-101, declaring Iligan under a state of calamity after Typhoon Basyang, formalized the crisis but also echoed a familiar refrain: every storm exposes the same systemic weaknesses. Community voices expressed the same frustration — the budget was present, yet it failed to reach drainage systems, riverbanks, early warning tools, or the families most in need of protection before the waters rose.

This cyclical anticipation—waiting, bracing, and remembering—captures the paradox of disaster memory in the digital age. Headlines may fade quickly, but memory persists, shaping vigilance and resilience long after the waters recede. The irony deepens when viewed against the backdrop of *Typhoon Sendong in 2011*, remembered as one of the deadliest storms in Philippine history. For Iliganons, Sendong remains the benchmark of catastrophe, and every new storm name is filtered through its trauma. Thus, the recurrence of *Basyang* is not merely meteorological; it is a cultural marker that collapses past and present, reminding communities that resilience is born from memory as much as from response, and that accountability must accompany vigilance if disasters are not to become routine.

## VIII. Conclusion and Recommendations

Drawing together the integrative discussion, this research article demonstrates that survival in Iligan City during Typhoon Basyang was not only about enduring physical danger but also about remembering, narrating, and embedding those experiences into collective identity. Guided by the interpretive lens of phenomenology, collective memory, and digital ethnography, the inquiry deepened understanding of how disaster memory is constructed, while the qualitative case study design operationalized these foundations through interviews, focus groups, GIS mapping, AI-assisted coding, and digital ethnographic analysis, ensuring that both human voices and mediated accounts were systematically examined. The achievement of data saturation confirmed the robustness of the findings, as no new themes emerged across diverse sources of data, and the narratives of the 20 participants (S1 to S20) anchored the analysis in lived experience, substantiating theoretical insights with concrete accounts of trauma, solidarity, and resilience. Together, these elements enabled the completion of the research article with methodological rigor and contextual depth, showing that while disaster headlines may fade, memory persists, shaping vigilance and resilience long after the waters recede, and reminding Iligan City to prepare, endure, and adapt until similar scenarios happen again. Although this study is grounded in Iligan City and Typhoon Basyang, its insights extend beyond local boundaries, reframing survival as lived memory and digitally mediated resilience in ways that contribute to global disaster scholarship and offering lessons on how communities worldwide can sustain vigilance and identity beyond immediate recovery.

Extending the conclusion into applied directions, several recommendations emerge. Disaster research and response should embed technology such as GIS, AI, and digital ethnography to capture, analyze, and visualize memory and survival strategies in ways that inform preparedness and policy. Institutional collaboration must be strengthened, with organizations working closely with local government units and community networks to ensure that relief operations are not only logistical but also culturally resonant and sustainable. Digital narratives should be preserved as part of collective memory, recognizing that social media posts, online testimonies, and mediated accounts constitute vital archives of resilience and solidarity. Future studies should expand to multiple sites and agencies to generate comparative insights, thereby addressing the limitations of this research which focused on a single locality and one institutional actor. By broadening scope and triangulating across diverse contexts, subsequent scholarship can deepen theoretical contributions, validate methodological innovations, and refine practical implications for disaster governance and resilience. Although these recommendations are rooted in Iligan City’s experience of Typhoon Basyang, they carry broader significance, demonstrating that resilience lies beyond survival and that lived memory

and digital ethnography can inform disaster preparedness and governance in communities worldwide.

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