

**THROUGH THEIR EYES: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF MOTHERS' LIVED EXPERIENCES IN FLOOD-PRONE AREAS OF DAVAO CITY****Aguirre-Tuburan, Marilou<sup>1</sup>****Bonzo-Casilao, Lucelle<sup>2</sup>****Campaña, Cherrelyn<sup>3</sup>****Dela Cerna, Kimberly<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>1, 2, 4</sup> College of Development Management Graduate Program, University of Southeastern Philippines, Mintal Campus, Davao City

<sup>3</sup> Doctor of Philosophy in Education major in Applied Linguistics

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**ABSTRACT**

In November 2023, the southern parts of Davao City was hit by an unprecedented flood which caused forced evacuation and heavy losses to both private and public structures. As the lived experiences of mothers with respect to this type of disaster is less explored in the academic literature, the researchers conducted this phenomenological study. The aim is to understand how mothers survived and recovered from flooding with the many roles they play within their families. The researchers collected qualitative data from 10 participants who were asked about their experiences with respect to preparedness, evacuation, and recovery. They held field visits, noted observations, conducted in-depth interviews, and did desk research. From the analysis of data, four themes were uncovered: (1) accustomed to flooding, (2) challenges faced, (3) coping mechanisms, and (4) resilience and adaptation. The findings of the study underscore the need for comprehensive support systems, improved disaster management procedures, and targeted assistance for mothers facing such crises.

**Keywords:**

Mothers, Flood, Lived Experiences, Phenomenology, Disaster, Davao City, Philippines

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**INTRODUCTION****Background of the Study**

Just south of the Equator, the Philippines is well-known to be abundant in natural resources, being located in the Ring of Fire. However, this also makes the country prone to recurring hazards such as typhoons, storm surges, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, floods, and landslides (Nivera et. al., 2017)

Flooding is one of the common problems that often occurs in urban areas (Sariffuddin and Rizsa PD 2015). Women are particularly vulnerable to natural disasters compared to men because of their involvement in household tasks, such as collecting water and fuel wood, cooking, managing food, and providing child care. In all of these daily activities, women are in close contact with the environment (Nasreen 1995, 2009).

Flash floods are considered to be one of the worst kinds of hazards. They are characterized by their suddenness, rarity, small scale, heavy rain, and peak discharge, and unpredictable, fast, and violent movement that can cause significant damage to infrastructure and loss of life. Mothers, as primary caregivers in many households, often find themselves at the forefront of managing the crisis, ensuring the safety of their children, and dealing with the aftermath of the disaster. The combination of maternal responsibilities and the traumatic nature of flash floods creates a complex situation that requires further investigation. (Ali et al., 2017).

On the evening of November 9, 2023, Davao City experienced a weather disturbance that was caused by the easterlies and localized thunderstorms. After three to four hours of heavy downpours, the water level of the Lipadas River along the Barangay Crossing Bayabas channel in the Toril district increased (DCDRRMO, 2023). It spawned floods in the districts of Talomo and Tugbok.

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The floods affected over a hundred families, and several of them were forced to seek safety on their rooftops or the upper floors of their homes. In Talomo, the villages that were severely hit were Bago Gallera, Bago Aplaya, Talomo Proper, Matina Aplaya, Ma-a, and Baliok, and in Tugbok, the village of Sto. Niño (Lacorte, 2023).

Natural disasters can have a profound and lasting impact on the millions of people and families affected each year (Sharrieff, 2023). While extensive research has been conducted on the broader psychological and emotional consequences of such events, there remains a significant gap in the literature concerning the specific lived experiences of mothers who have endured flash floods. This study seeks to address this gap by employing a phenomenological approach to understand the nuanced and subjective aspects of the lived experiences of mothers who have survived flash floods.

Understanding the lived experiences of mothers in the aftermath of flash floods is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, mothers play a central role in family dynamics, and their experiences can significantly impact the overall family resilience and recovery. Secondly, by delving into the subjective aspects of their experiences, we can identify unique coping mechanisms, challenges, and sources of strength that may not be apparent through quantitative measures alone. Lastly, the findings of this study can inform targeted interventions and support systems tailored to the specific needs of mothers who have undergone the trauma of flash floods.

### Statement of the Problem

The study aims to know and understand the “Mothers' Lived Experiences in Flood Prone Areas of Davao City”. To guide this phenomenological inquiry, the following questions will be addressed:

1. What are the lived experiences of mothers in the midst of a flood in Davao City?
2. What are the challenges encountered by mothers in the midst of a flood in Davao City?
3. What are the coping strategies of mothers to mitigate the impacts of floods in Davao City?
4. What are the insights of a mother affected by the flood?
5. What did the City Government of Davao do to help the affected families in the area?

### Significance of the Study

The study will assess the effects of floods on mothers in Davao City. It will also establish the causes of vulnerability of these mothers and help us understand the impact of this calamity on their lives and the environment. This paper can be used to develop effective strategies to mitigate the effects of flash floods and reduce the risk of future disasters. Further, the output of this study can provide health workers and policymakers with information and necessary knowledge to appropriately respond to floods as well as help the local government and its Disaster Risk Reduction Management unit in their preparedness plans and post-disaster responses concerning associated risks on mothers and other vulnerable groups.

### Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to mothers under the age of 20-62 years old who resided in the first and third districts of Davao City and experienced a recent flash flood. The limitation restricts the generalizability of the study's findings to other populations and regions. The results of this study may not apply to other groups of people who have experienced flash floods in different locations or to people who have not experienced flash floods at all. Additionally, the study's sample size is limited to mothers, which may not be representative of the entire population affected by the flash flood. Therefore, the results of this study should be interpreted with caution and cannot be generalized to other populations without further research.

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### Philippines, a disaster-prone country.

The Philippines is prone to several natural catastrophes, including typhoons, earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions, landslides, and fires, due to its location on the "Pacific Ring of Fire" and along the Pacific typhoon belt.

Filipinos are already dealing with the effects of climate change, which include rising sea levels, more frequent extreme weather events, rising temperatures, and heavy rains.

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Typhoons and floods have enormous effects on the economy and society, making them terrible natural disasters. Ninety-two percent of the economic loss, 80% of disaster-related deaths, and 90% of impacted individuals can be attributed to these catastrophes (Philippine Disaster Management Reference Handbook, 2021). Floods can cause significant damage to low-lying, less developed areas during monsoon rainfall.

### **Davao's streets flood due to clogged drainage (Alivio, 2022)**

On April 10, 2021 a strong downpour in the evening nearly completely submerged streets in the Poblacion sections of Davao City, as well as in several locations to the north and south of the city. Mayor Sara Duterte-Carpio insisted that despite drainage improvements and interventions being done to solve this flooding, it continues to occur in other regions. Davao City officials had attributed the street flooding to the congested drainage system (Sunstar Davao, 2021).

### **Locals in Bunawan attribute the knee-deep flood to a blocked water flow (Alivio, 2022)**

Residents of the northern section of the city also encountered floods, which made news in Sunstar Davao. For a day, several puroks in Bunawan were under knee-deep flooding as a result of the heavy rain on April 26, 2021. As a result, some locals were even forced to leave to safer regions, but the water quickly receded and they were able to return home.

### **Waist-high flood in Davao, with no reported fatalities (Alivio, 2022)**

On October 25, 2021, there was another flooding in Davao City, which affected about 400 families while hundreds of commuters and drivers became stranded on the city's streets. Around 967 families in Davao were affected by the flood, and 9,000 families in Davao City evacuated (Alivio, 2022)

Emergency power outages were seen in several downtown areas due to the intense rainfall and heavy rains, which were identified as being produced by the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone. The flood impacted 967 families. The city government evacuated 9,000 families as a result.

A little less than 10,000 families were evacuated following another flooding disaster that occurred a month before December. It affected several families.

The "tail-end of the frontal system," or the line separating the northeast monsoon from the easterlies, or Hanging Amihan, is responsible for the significant rainfall that resulted in floods on November 9, 2021, according to the Davao City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office.

According to Lawyer Marlisa Gallo, head of Davao City's Social Welfare and Development Office, as of 6 p.m. of November 10, 13 barangays were impacted with a number of families affected. These were Barangays 2-A with 894 affected families, Barangays 5-A with 1,325, 8-A with 1,300, 9-A with 918, 10-A with 679, 19-B with 449, Maa with 959, Matina Crossing with 1,403, Tigatto with 1,490, Waan with 457, Bantol with five, Buda with 48, and Tamugan with 40 affected families.

### **Women as vulnerable sector**

The social and economic discourse that illustrates gender roles in a particular domain serves as the foundation for the gender role stereotypes that are spread throughout a community. (Banford & Froude, 2015; Akerkar & Fordham, 2017). In traditional culture, women would take on household responsibilities while men would mostly control social building. Reyes and Lu (2015) found that very few individuals connected to political parties and non-governmental organizations are aware of women's and human rights issues, as well as gender equality. According to Becker (2011), Hemachandra et al. (2018), and Pathranarakul (2019), a major reason why women and children belong to vulnerable populations is that they do not have access to opportunities that are based on their culture, social status, and place in the society.

Given that the majority of the poorest and most disadvantaged segments in society are made up of women, women were more susceptible to disaster than men (Delton, 2002; Neumayer & Plümper, 2007; Arora-Jonsson, 2011; Reyes & Lu, 2016). Women's vulnerability to the effects of climate events has drawn attention to the relationship between women and climate change events in recent years (Alston, 2013; Michaelsen et al., 2020; Cianconi et al., 2022).

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Men should be seen as more manly than women by society. In addition, they believe that men should be in charge of protecting women, and that women, because of their femininity, belong to a marginalized group that plays little to no part in averting disasters (Reyes & Lu, 2015).

According to gender studies, women, especially those from lower socioeconomic classes, have disadvantages in the social, economic, and political spheres in patriarchal societies (Yumarni, Amaratunga, & Haigh, 2014).

Despite the perception that women are exceptionally strong in the face of calamities, there are a number of gender-related vulnerabilities that affect them. Reyes et al. noted that during disasters, women are more responsible than their partners for locating and preparing food, keeping the family's spirits up, tending to sick or injured family members, and other duties. Before, during, and after catastrophes, more roles are filled by women. This frequently means that their bodily and emotional well-being suffer as a result.

Women are particularly vulnerable to floods since they are confined to their conjugal houses to care for the sick and elderly, obtain fuel, produce food for the family, and rely on the men for financial assistance (Reyes and Lu, 2016).

Karbhari and Sathia suggested that women's responsibility to take care of their families and run households often restricts their mobility and makes them more susceptible to natural calamities. This could potentially explain their inclination towards self-deprecation. Before, during, and after disasters, women take on increased duties and obligations, as noted by Reyes et al.

As caregivers for the elderly and children, women typically play this function in families. The extra fabric makes their lives easier. They could not escape because of their children and felt unhappy in times of a disaster (Chew & Ramdas, 2005). Expecting mothers had greater issues following a disaster than other women as they are confronted with the lack of a safe place to give birth and sanitation putting them at risk of infection and death as noted by Van den Ford, van Roosmalen, Mwagomba, de Vroome, and Akker (2011).

### Disaster's Impact to Mental Health

Research has shown that exposure to traumatic experiences may increase an individual's risk for both acute and chronic mental health issues (Bell & Folkerth, 2016; Gillies et al., 2016; Guliver et al., 2021; Norris et al., 2002; Zhang et al., 2022). Various natural disasters, accidents, public health incidents, and social security events can all result in traumatic occurrences (Cushing & Braun, 2018).

Women's mental health has been shown to be affected by natural disasters and their correlation with gender-based violence, specifically domestic abuse (Caridade et al. 2022). Bell and Folkerth (2016) found that women and other minorities, such as the elderly, the poor, and primary caregivers for children, were the most likely to experience post-disaster PTSD, depression, and other serious mental health issues. Memon (2020), Molyneaux et al. (2020), Rahman (2013), and Whittenbury (2013), among other writers, have corroborated that women encounter more disparities in every climate-stressed scenario and respond differently, leading to a higher incidence of post traumatic stress disorder and other mental health disorders."

Flood stress comes in two primary forms (Moss,2021). When something bad happens to you—your home floods, your belongings are destroyed or stolen, you have to flee, or you or a loved one is hurt or in danger—you experience objective stress. Your emotional response, such as shock, discomfort, rage, worry, or depression, is known as subjective stress.

In the study of Moss (2021), mothers who experienced more objective stress reported more immediate subjective stress, which led to longer-term depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress.

Children were also impacted by this prenatal stress. Mothers who were under stress were more likely to have temperamental difficulties and poorer social and problem-solving abilities in their offspring. They were more likely to have less developed motor abilities as toddlers, including both gross (like crawling) and fine (like drawing) skills. In addition, they were more likely to experience behavioral, sleep, and interpersonal issues.

They were at a higher risk of experiencing signs of anxiety and having less developed motor skills as toddlers.

Stress sentiments are fueled by stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline, which may seem odd given that a pregnant woman's emotions could have an impact on her unborn child. The manner that the placenta functions can be altered by these hormones.

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### Resilience and Adaptive Capacity

The gender viewpoint is essential in today's catastrophe management to building a more resilient society. Understanding disaster risk and how to handle it is significantly influenced by gender. Thus, it is imperative that gender-related effects and actions be taken into account while reducing the risk of disaster (A.A. Khan, I.A. Rana, A. Nawaz, 2020).

To reduce damage and increase adaptive ability, disaster management must be approached via a gender lens (J.-C. Gaillard et al., 2017).

Disasters are used to show how much more vulnerable women are (N.F. Moyo, 2019) and experiencing more severe repercussions in the event of a calamity (K. Hemachandra, et al, 2020). But concentrating only on vulnerabilities can obscure women's contributions and abilities to disaster response, preparation, recovery, and rehabilitation (E. Enarson, A. Fothergill, L. Peek, 2018). Gender lens study on disasters necessitates simultaneously identifying the circumstances that lead to women's heightened vulnerabilities and acknowledging their critical roles in resilience and adaptive capacity (H. Venganai et al., 2023) and understanding that at different stages of the disaster cycle, different genders have distinct vulnerabilities (V.M. Cvetković, 2021).

Recognizing women as change agents and leaders rather than essentialist victims, this dual approach forms the basis of the Sendai approach for Disaster Risk Reduction (L.R. Kimber et al, 2021). The framework is an extension of a body of previous research (UN Women, 2013) that highlighted the need of mainstreaming gender throughout community development.

Gender roles and behaviors are frequently shaped by customs that emphasize the dominance of male village leaders and chiefs, or chiefs (L.S. Arvind, 2021). Yet women are a great source of knowledge about a wide range of subjects linked to the management of natural resources, such as water and land, because of their experience in a variety of domestic and communal activities and the time they spend in the village (E. Mcleod, et al,2018).

Furthermore, women have broad perspectives on their surroundings and have expertise conserving natural resources for home and communal consumption (B.P. Resurreccion, 2012). Women possess unique and significant insights for judgments on a variety of disaster-related issues due to their long experience in sustainable resource management (N. Chauhan, V.K. Hm, 2016). Though generally speaking, women are considered to be the ones who suffer the most from catastrophes, they are also the ones that work hardest to build adaptive capacity for disaster response and recovery (S. Bradshaw et al., 2015)

Krishnan (2022) observed these front-line positions in terms of their varied active roles in restoring their houses, lives, and livelihood with little to no assistance from outside organizations in a research on flood reconstruction in Assam, India. Additional research has shown how women's expertise in food preservation and the application of medicinal herbs to specific ailments helps communities become more resilient (L. Fernandez, M. Das, J. Andharia, 2020). P. Singh et. al. (2022) contend that women make a substantial contribution to community resilience in each of the four areas: social, economic, ecological, and ecological. Therefore, as L. Dilling et al., (2022) argues, disaster-prone communities can "pursue a range of resilient futures" by enhancing the capacities of women as individuals and their position in institutions.

### Theory Base

**Resilience Theory:** According to Masten (2001), resilience is the innate capacity to overcome difficulties and hazards in order to achieve goals and get favorable results. The essential ideas of adversity and constructive adaptation are intrinsically related to resilience (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013). In the context of this study, it would explore how mothers adapt and maintain functionality in the face of the crisis brought about by floods.

**Ecological Systems Theory:** Urie Bronfenbrenner, a psychologist, created the Ecological Systems Theory as a framework for comprehending the intricate relationships that exist between people and their surroundings. It acknowledges that many environmental systems have an impact on human development and that these systems interact in a variety of ways. It can help understand how different systems like the family, community, and the society interact and affect the experiences of mothers during and after floods.

**Attachment Theory:** The dynamics of long-term human relationships are described by the psychological model

known as attachment theory. The fundamental principle of it is that for typical social and emotional development, young children must form a bond with at least one major caregiver. Psychoanalyst and psychiatrist John Bowlby developed the hypothesis, which psychologist Mary Ainsworth further developed. This can be insightful in exploring how maternal roles and responsibilities are impacted and managed during floods.

**Social support Theory:** The core idea of social support theory is the importance of interpersonal relationships on a person's mental health, overall wellbeing, and capacity for coping, especially in stressful or difficult situations. It can be used to understand how mothers leverage their social networks such as family, friends, community, and institutions for emotional and practical support during floods.

Over the years, numerous researchers and academics have examined and refined the Social Support Theory. It is not the work of a single person. Contributions from a variety of disciplines, including public health, psychology, and sociology, have allowed it to develop.

**Trauma Theory:** Trauma theory is a framework for understanding and explaining the consequences of traumatic experiences on individuals that is mostly employed in psychology and sociology. This theory explores the profound ways in which traumatic experiences can transform an individual's emotional and psychological state. It can provide insights into the emotional and psychological challenges faced by mothers and the long-term effects of such experiences.

Many academics, psychologists, psychiatrists, sociologists, and researchers have contributed to the development of trauma theory over time, making it a vast and multidisciplinary field. It includes the psychological, sociological, and cultural facets of trauma as well as other ideas and viewpoints on the subject. "Trauma theory" has no one developer, unlike several other well-defined theories in psychology or sociology, which may have one.

**Feminist Theory:** Women's rights, interests, and issues are often the focus of feminist theory, along with the analysis of gender inequality. The experiences of women, in this case mothers, during and after floods can be examined through the lens of this theoretical perspective in relation to gender roles and expectations.

Over time, numerous academics and activists have produced the rich and multifaceted subject of feminist philosophy. Its growth has gone through several cycles and viewpoints within the feminist movement, and it is not credited to a single person.

**Coping Theory:** In psychology, a concept known as "coping theory" describes how people handle stressful situations and learn to cope with their emotions. The idea of coping refers to the mental and physical actions taken to deal with demands that are perceived as being too much for an individual to handle, whether they be internal or external. Many psychologists have developed and expanded upon this hypothesis; two of the most well-known are Richard Lazarus and Susan Folkman. Understanding the coping mechanisms specific to mothers in flood situations can be a key aspect of your research.

**Disaster and Emergency Management Theories:** The many ideas and frameworks that support comprehension, planning, reaction, recovery, and mitigation activities in the face of emergencies and disasters are together referred to as disaster and emergency management theories. These theories are multidisciplinary, incorporating ideas from public administration, psychology, sociology, and environmental science, among other disciplines. They seek to offer a methodical comprehension of the causes, effects, and optimal approaches to disaster management. They can provide the framework for understanding the broader context in which individual experiences of mothers occur.

Disaster management theory, sometimes referred to as emergency management or disaster management, is a multidisciplinary discipline that has been created over time by a large number of practitioners, academics, and specialists. It entails the investigation and implementation of plans, guidelines, and procedures for averting, preparing for, handling, and recovering from emergencies and catastrophes. There is no one person who formulated "disaster management theory."

**Role Theory.** A conceptual framework that defines how individuals behave in social situations and how these

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behaviors are perceived by external observers (Brookes K et. al, 2007). It refers to the cultural norms regarding psychological and interactional aspects of members of society, such as mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, and grandparents (Encyclopedia of Applied Psychology, 2004). Society has certain expectations on the roles of mothers. This framework can help understand how the role of mothers are learned or perceived during calamities like flooding.

### Conceptual Framework

The purpose of the study is to investigate and comprehend the experiences of women who have been affected by flooding. This conceptual framework provides a foundation for investigating the ways in which different circumstances impact these experiences and the effects that follow.

### Key Influencing Factors

1. Nature of the flooding. Examining the details of the flood, such as its intensity, duration, and extent, and how these factors affected the mothers' experiences.
2. Socioeconomic status. Recognizing the ways in which the mothers' families' social and economic circumstances affected their capacity to anticipate, respond to, and recover from the flooding.
3. Support systems. Analyzing the mothers' access to institutional, social, and community assistance and how it affected their resilience and coping mechanisms
4. Community context. Examining how the mothers' reactions to and adaptation to the flooding were influenced by their cultural background and the dynamics of their society.

### Key Outcome Themes

1. Mother's Experiences. Exploring individual accounts and perspectives of the floods to document the variety of feelings and experiences.
2. Coping Strategies. Recognizing and comprehending the strategies—both problem- and emotion-focused—that mothers employed to cope with the aftermath of the flooding.
3. Emotional and Psychological Well-being. Evaluating the effects of flooding, including stress, trauma, and resilience, on the mothers' emotional and mental health.
4. Changes in roles and responsibilities. Investigating whether the floods may have caused changes in the roles and duties mothers have within their homes and communities.
5. Resilience and Adaptation. Looking into the resilience techniques that mothers used after the flooding and their capacity to adjust to the new situation.

As per the framework, the end themes are shaped by the overall interaction of the primary influencing elements. One possible example of a factor-effect relationship might be the degree of flooding and the mothers' psychological health (an outcome theme). This framework provides an in-depth framework for delving into and investigating the complex experiences of mothers who have been affected by flooding.

### Research Assumptions

In this study, we work from the premise that flooding is a dual experience for women, involving both chances for resilience building and possible psychological distress. Although such situations might be extremely difficult, this viewpoint also recognizes that they can act as springboards for showcasing one's own resilience and strength. The underlying premise of our research is that social support networks—which include friends, family, community groups, and government assistance—are essential to the coping and healing techniques of these mothers. In influencing their experiences, the type and availability of this support are thought to be crucial. We also expect that the experience of flooding has a substantial effect on family relations, particularly on the roles and duties of moms. Caregiving, housekeeping, and family decision-making are all affected by these changes.

The study makes the assumption that the identities of mothers have an impact on the perceptions of and reactions to the flooding of the participants. This assumption recognizes that a person's identity is greatly shaped by their motherhood, which also affects how they aim to live their lives and respond to tragedies. In this study, it is expected that the experiences of mothers and their coping mechanisms following floods will evolve over time. This

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acknowledges the dynamic nature of coping and adaptation following a traumatic event

### METHODOLOGY

#### Study Design

This research employed a phenomenological design to delve into the lived experiences of mothers who exhibited resilience in the aftermath of flash floods. The qualitative nature of phenomenology allowed for an in-depth understanding of the subjective experiences and perceptions of these mothers.

#### Participants

Participants were purposively selected based on their firsthand experience of surviving flash floods. Inclusion criteria focused on mothers with children who had directly faced the impact of flash flood events. Diversity was ensured in terms of geographical location, socio-economic background, and cultural context.

#### Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to capture participants' experiences, emotions, and perceptions related to flash floods. The open-ended nature of the questions allowed for a comprehensive exploration of the participants' lived reality. Audio recordings of interviews were transcribed verbatim for subsequent analysis.

#### Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was employed to identify patterns, themes, and commonalities in the collected data. The iterative process involved coding and categorizing data to develop overarching themes that encapsulated the essence of the mothers' experiences. Rigorous validation procedures, including peer debriefing and member checking, were implemented to ensure the credibility of the findings.

#### Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to ethical guidelines, ensuring participant confidentiality, privacy, and the right to withdraw. Informed consent was obtained from the participants.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the gathered data and further reflections of the researchers, different themes were identified which make up the journey of mothers who are flood survivors. The themes are (1) accustomed to flooding (2) challenges faced (3) coping mechanisms, and (4) resilience and adaptation.

#### Theme 1: Accustomed to flooding

During the interviews, participants expressed they are already accustomed to flooding in their area. Participant 7 shared, "*Always, taga-ulan kadto lang gyud ulahi na pinakataas. Baha-baha man gud pirmi, pinakaubos man gud na siya.* (We always experience flooding here. But the last time [on Nov. 8] was the highest level. It often floods here because our area has the lowest elevation]".

Another interviewee, Participant 9, confirmed this by saying, "*O, nagabaha na sya diri pero dili kaayo nga kuan, kanang dako. Kani nga baha karon, mao ni ikaduha nga dako, dako gyud kaayo* (Yes, it floods here but the waters are not really high. The recent flood is the second time when the waters are very high)". She is already in her 60s and has been living in the area since the late 1990s.

Participants who have lived in their area for decades like Participant 8 said, "*Sus og beses, beses lang, maam, dili gyud na sya maihap kay 25 years na ming nagpuyo diri. Pero kaduha mi gibaha og katong ingon ato gyud kataas. 2000. Year 2000, February 12. Dili gyud ko malimot ana. Three months pa mi diri ato, diri taman sa bintana, After 23 years pa sya nibalik, pero ¾ na sya sa bintana. So almost kisame na* (We already lost count how many times we've experienced flooding during our 25-year stay here. But we only experienced that kind of flooding twice. 2000. It was the year 2000, on February 12. I will never forget that. We have just moved here for three months when the flood



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water level reached the base of our windows. After 23 years, the floodwaters rose to three quarters of the same windows, almost reaching the ceiling”.

While the participants are accustomed to flooding, there are many aspects that accompany it. In the course of the study, sub-themes were identified: trauma, acceptance of circumstance, positivity, and faith.

### Trauma.

Flooding has caused emotional and psychological trauma on mothers, regardless if they are accustomed to this type of calamity or have experienced it for the first time. “*Maka trauma gyud siya labaw na atong una gyud nahitabo ang baha sa amoa kay daghan mi ug mga gamit nga na damage* (It is really traumatic especially when it happened to us for the first time. Many of our properties were damaged)”, said Participant 2.

Participant 8 also shared her experience, “*Sa una, katong bag-o pa mi diri, every time magbaha mohilak gyud ko oy. Mohilak ko kay maghuna huna nakog abroad, ingon ana, daghan na tag kuan ba nga, pero kay ang nagagunit sa ako, kay dili man gud ko, attached kaayo ko sa akong mga anak ba, dili gyud nako kaya, mabuang ko siguro 'g mahiwalay ko sa akong mga anak* (Before, when we're still new in this place, I cry every time it floods. I cry and think of going abroad. I entertained a lot of thoughts. But my children are holding me back. I'm so attached to them. I can't leave them, I will go crazy)”.

### Acceptance of circumstance.

Participants have either learned or compelled to accept their situation given the circumstances that led them to stay in their current abode. “*Gipili jud namo nga diri mamuyo kay mao na man ni among puy-anan sukad sa bata pami* (We chose to stay here because this is where we grow up)”, said Participant 2.

Participant 6 chose to stay because the rent is relatively affordable and it is closer to her mother, “*Pagbalhin nako June, na-timing lang kay naay bakante tapos duol lang kay Mama kay barato ra pud siya kay gihangyo ra pud,ang rent; grab na nako which is mura kay sa uban man gud mag-rent mahal. Grab nako ang 3,000* (When I moved here last June, it was an opportune time because there was a vacant space and it was also closer to my mother. The rent is affordable compared to other house-for-rent though I haggled to make it lower. I grabbed the 3,000 rent fee)”.

Meanwhile, Participant 10 said, “*No choice, wala man mi kabalhinan gyud kay nag renta ra man mi. Tyaga na lang mi diri kay bisan asa nga lugar, baha man pud* (We have no choice because we are only renting here. We'll just endure because anywhere you go, there'll be flood)”.

There are also participants who stay free of charge like Participant 7 who said, “*Wala naman mi renta. Kami lang mgbayad sa bills* (We're not required to pay our rent. But we have to pay our bills)”.

Participant 8, said if she has the money, she will not buy a property in the area, but “*25 years na mi nagpuyo wala mi gihunahuna nga renta, di ba? Samtang kung mag arkila mi pero magproblema mi sa finances. Akoa lang kung unsay naa, pasalamatan. Kana ra gyud ang akoa. Kung ako mismo bibili ng bahay, diri diay ko mopalit? Dili oi. Pero kay gihatag man ni ni Lord, kay Lord man gyud ni nga gitagaan mi dirig libre ug in love gud ko kaayo sa among area bisan bahaon ni sya. Peaceful man gud mi diri* (We've been residing here for 25 years free-of-charge. If we rent, we'll be bothered with finances. I am just thankful for what we have. If I had the money, would I buy it here? Of course not. But the Lord gave this to us, the Lord gave us this place for free. I am also in love with this area even though it is flood prone. We are peaceful here)”.

### Positivity.

Participants showed that despite the numerous incidents of flooding, they try to be positive. “*Sultihan taka maam, wala ko nagkuan, grace of God man gyud ning na ingon ani ko ka,*

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*cheerful gihapon ko despite taga hawak na [ang baha]. Ingon ani mi dinhi, kanang akong atbang [nga silingan]. Mag-videoke kami bisag baha (Let me tell you, ma'am, it is a grace of God that I remain cheerful despite the waist-deep flood. We are like that here, with my neighbors across the street. We do videoke even when it's flooding),"* said Participant 8.

### **Faith.**

Participants also demonstrated that despite the difficulties, they try to be strong and hold on to their faith, not only for themselves but for their family, especially their children.

*"Mao bitaw ning purpose aning akong payag payag, kay katong working pa ko sa una, nagpahimo gyud ko kay kapoyan na mi kada baha, mogawas mi. So nagpahimo ko, diha lang mi mag-evacuate. Naabtan man na sya, katong last. Murag isa ka dangaw lang gud sya. Pero didto na ko nag breakdown. "Hala, mopatay naman gyud ning bahaa ni, dili man ni kayag kanta kanta". Kanta-kantahan ko ra nang baha. Kanang mopatay na gyud, didto na gyud, ingon ko, "Lord". Giingnan nako akong mga anak nga "dili ta mawili aning kalibotan, mamatay man gyud ta, ang importante malangit (This is the purpose of my makeshift cottage. When I was still working, I made sure to install it because we're already tired of vacating our house whenever it floods. But during the last flooding, the waters reached it, about a span of an open palm)",* said Participant 8.

### **Theme 2: Challenges faced**

This is the second theme that emerged during the interviews. It was found that mothers who are flood survivors have faced various challenges including financial incapacity, responsibility to parents, no conscious checking of weather forecast, received no prior warning from the local government or local weather station, unpreparedness, physical challenges, mental challenges, and social challenges.

#### **Financial incapacity.**

If only they had a choice, families living in flood-prone areas would not stay. However, their income will not permit them to move to safer areas.

Participant 9 said, *"Kung mag-renta siguro, ma'am, dili mi kakaya sa renta ba. Kay ang panginabuhian sa akong mister, mao ra man gyud na, katong drive sa taxi. Hindi man namo ni kaugalingon [ang yuta], ma'am (If we have to rent, I don't think we can afford it. My husband's income is only from driving a taxi. We don't own this land, ma'am)"*.

#### **Responsibility to parents.**

As children, these mothers also saw the need to be closer to their own parents. Despite having a family of her own, Participant 4 chose to live in the area, because it is *"Duol sa akong parents na senior (It is close to my parents who are senior citizens)"*.

Ehrenreich (1976) discussed about feminine responsibility during the time of flood and that makes them more vulnerable.

#### **No conscious checking of the weather forecast.**

Participants do not have the conscious effort to check on weather forecasts. Zein Mufarrih Muktaf et al. (2018) noted that in terms of media literacy about disasters, mothers are also not well literate.

*"Wala kay dili mana uso sa amoa sa una mag check og ingon ana unya mao nasad akong nakaandan [No, because we don't usually check that, and it has been my practice since]"*, said Participant 4.

Participant 8 even doubts the accuracy of these forecasts saying, *"Minsan man gud maam dili accurate ang forecast. Pareha aning mag forecast og ingon ani, naa man ko sa phone, ginakuan [check] man nako, mostly cloudy or rainy ana nga hours. Dili sya modumdum. So ingon ana na gyud ang climate change. Ang atong forecast, dili sya accurate"* [Ma'am, sometimes the forecast

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is not accurate. For example, I check (online), it will say mostly cloudy or rainy for hours. But it will not happen. That is climate change. Our forecast is not accurate]”.

Participants did not search for information about flood preparation optimally because they thought only small floods would come, not a big one (*Setyastuti, 2021*).

### Received no prior warning from the local government or local weather station.

Some participants claim they did not receive warning from the local government as noted by Participant 10,

“Ay wala. Wala (No, there was none)”. Participant 7 said, “Wala ko kabantay (I was not able to observe)”.

In cases like this, Nanditha and Mishra (2021) advised institutional support and involvement of different stakeholders like people, public, and private entities in the forecast dissemination to ensure the widespread public dissemination of flood warnings to the most vulnerable especially in remote areas.

### Unpreparedness.

The participants were surprised and put into disadvantage having no preparedness plan in place, including communication and evacuation.

“Wala gud, wala gyud mi nag-expect na kato na adlaw kato ang kuan [kataas] sa tubig, Kung moulán man galing, dili sa mi matulog, obserbahan sa, kung moundang or dili. Ultimo isa gani ka bag na gamit, wala kay wala nag-expect na mahitabo ang kana na kuan [baha] (No we don't have. We did not expect the floodwaters will be high that day. When it rains here, we observe first if it will stop or not before we go sleep. We didn't prepare even one bag because it was unexpected)”, said Participant 6.

Participant 5 was also caught unprepared. “Actually wala. Putting yourself in that situation, hindi mo din maisip, Yun yung mali nang Pinoy noh, kasi supposedly dapat meron ka talaga nyan kasi palagi naman ino-orient yan eh, wala (Actually none. Putting yourself in that situation, you can't think about it anymore. That's our mistake as Filipinos, because we're supposed to have it, we have received orientations about it, but we don't prepare for it)”.

Meanwhile, Participant 10 shared, “Wala. Tapot sa lawas mi. Gipahiram na lang mig sanina sa pikas [tapad nga tag-balay] (No, we're not able to salvage anything except what we wore that time. Our next door neighbors let us use their clothes)”.

This is true in an emergency situation, there is no choice but to run for your life; leave everything behind (Resabal, 2019).

### Physical challenges.

The participants, including their family members, had to hurdle physical challenges during the flooding and take the risks of hazards that come along with it.

“Niambak ko, lampas na tao, niadto ko sa akong mama. Ang akong mga anak, naa na sila sa taas, naa na sila sa atop (I jumped down the floodwaters, that's over five feet deep, to check on my mother. I left my kids atop the roof)”, said Participant 4.

Participant 10 had to climb up the roof with her grandchildren and transfer to the adjacent house with a high terrace. She shared, “Gi-off nako ang plangka, diha na sa may, diha ko sa may gate naghulat. Unya mingaw man kaayo, unya lalom na. pagkahuman, abot akong isa ka apo human sya nag rescue atong duha ka tigulang, nag adto mi diri [likod sa balay]. Unya pag abot namo dira, naa may terrace dira sa pikas [silingan], pasiga nako ang cellphone, nagsige kog kuan [senyas] nga moanha mi dinha. Mao to dinha mi nag-agi, nikamang mig atop (I turned off the main electrical switch. I waited by the gate, it was so silent and the waters were already deep. Then my grandchild came back after rescuing our two old neighbors. We headed here at the back. I used my cellphone's light to signal our adjacent neighbors who have a terrace. I asked that we transfer to their place. So

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we climbed from our roofs)".

A study by The International Federation of Gynaecologists and Obstetrics had recognized flooding as a widespread hazard that can have serious mental and physical effects on women's health owing to prolonged exposure to waterlogged and unsanitary environments, serious stress, anxiety, and depression, cultural norms that interfere with women's ability to survive floods, and food insecurity (Subramaniam, 2022).

### Mental challenges.

Confronted with the disaster, participants suffered from stress. Flooding can have profound effects on people's mental health and well-being, and this particular impact of flooding is difficult to recognize, may develop after the news reporting has finished and its cause could be missed when eventually a diagnosis is made (Kidney, 2016).

"Nag panic, alangan. Kuan, kami ra man ng duha diri [sa akong apo]. Ang akong isa ka anak, gi safety na ang iyang motor didto sa kuan, wala na pud sya kabalik kay lalom na man. Naglutaw na sya [ang apo] sa katre. (I panicked, of course. It was only I and my grandchild here that time. One of my children managed to safety his tricycle first. He was not able to come back because the floodwaters are already high. My grandchild is already floating on the bed)", shared Participant 10.

Participant 9 shared, "Mao to naratol ko. Ang akong apo nipatong na didto, "Lolo, malumos na ko diri, malumos na ko!". niana sya. Mao tong gi-adto didto sa likod kay naa man pud tong balay sa akong anak didto, didto sila gidala sa likod. Oo. Unya pagkakuan ato, ingon ko, "hala basin mahugmak ning riprap diri ron, manga-anod ta tanan!" Didto naman mi, dili naman mi kalabang diri. Unya akong apo, nag-ingon sya, "La, la, mogawas na ta, la. Mogawas na ta!" Unya nag-ingon akong bana, "asa man mo moadto nga dako na ang tubig? Dili na mo kalabang dira." Kay kusog naman kaayo ang tubig diri, ma'am. Mura nag sapa. Naa nay nanga-anod nga mga motor, basta daghang nanga-anod. Mga kuan, mga washing. (I panicked. My grandchild said "I'm going to drown here, I'm going to drown! She was immediately attended from the house of one of my children at the back. We all went to the back of our house for safety. And then I said, "oh no, the riprap might collapse, we're all going to be swept by the floodwaters! We can no longer cross from there. One of my grandkids said, "La, we have to get out. We have to get out! And my husband replied, "Where do you think you are going? The water is already high. You cannot cross there". The floodwaters that time are raging, it's almost like a river. I saw motorcycles being swept away, washing machine. A lot of things were swept.)"

The process of clean-up, recovery, and rebuilding can be a source of stress (Bracher, 2022) with participants worrying about their damaged clothes and properties.

"Nangabasa ang mga gamit ug ubang appliances tapos naa pud nangaanod nga mga gamit (Our clothes and other appliances were wet. Other materials were swept away)", said Participant 1.

Participant 3 shared, "Nagsulod jud sa apartment ang tubig ug lapok ug daghan mi mga gamit nga nabasa ug nahugaw (The floodwaters and mud entered our house, a lot of our theirs got wet and dirty)".

### Social challenges.

Participants and their families are also confronted with the call for help from neighbors. While this may pose a challenge, Borah et al (2023) noted that the shared helplessness among the flood-stricken in the hour of distress causes camaraderie to develop.

"Ang isa nako ka apo, didto man sa pikas nagpuyo, gitabangan niya kay hapit naman to ma trap, na trap na gyud tong mga tiguwang diha sa kuan, unahan. Gibyaan sa ko niya, kato sa ang giuna niya kay nangayo mag tabang (One of my grandchildren tried to help our neighbors who were trapped inside their house. He left me temporarily to help those neighbors," Participant 10 said.

**Theme 3: Coping Mechanisms**

Based on the data gathered, one of the emerging themes found in the study concerning the experiences of mothers amidst the flash flood is their coping mechanisms. Their stories underscore the adaptive power of faith, the strength found in human connections, and the transformative impact of a supportive community in the aftermath of flash floods.

**Faith.** In examining the coping mechanisms employed by participants in this study, a recurring theme prominently featured was the utilization of faith as a resilient strategy, providing solace and hope amid adversity.

Participant 7: *“Realize nako na ang ginoo ra gyud, naa gyud syay message nganong giabot ta ingon ani. Silutan ta ba kay nalimtan na man gyud siya no, panahon naay katalagman manawag ta sa iyaha, panahon nga naay linog, manawag ta sa iya pero pag abot sa simba dili ta kaadto. Dapat gyud diay sa panahon na wala pay kuan, manawag ta sa iyaha, mao ra gyud na akoo. Dli na mao nga ang tulay wla gayos sa gobyerno, dili dili na mao. Naa gyuy message ang ginoo sa atoa. Dili ta masuko kay naa gyud toy rason, dili gyud nato ikasakit kay naa gyud toy rason”* (I realized that God has a message for us. We are being punished because when there is a disaster, we call him. When there is earthquake, we call him. But we don’t even go to church to worship. Hence, even when there is no disaster, we should call for him. The flood did not happen because the government did not repair a bridge, but because God has a message for us and we should not be angry”

Participant 8: *“Ningsamot kog ka grateful kay Lord. Abi nimo, kani ganing calamities, dili man gyud ni kang Lord noh, pero sa insurances is acts of God. Pero di man na binuhatan sa Ginoo, atoa man n. Mas na-realize nako ang kaayo sa Ginoo. Mao gani gusto pud nako, “Lord, mas mo-radiate pa unta ko to others”. Positive person man gyud ko since, kanang akong personality, gina try nako bisan sa darkness, Makita tag gamay nga light. So bisag unsa kalisud, makakita tag positive. Ingon ana gani. Dili kaayo ko psychologically, pero spiritually, lig-on lig-on ko. Ang pangusog gikan kay lord ha, dili atoa. (I have become more grateful to the Lord. You know, these calamities are not Lord’s, but the insurances are the act of God. These [floods] are the result of our doings. I realized more the goodness of the Lord that is why I want to radiate to others more. I have been a positive person ever since, even in darkness, I see light. So however hard [the situation], we will see the positive. Things like that. Psychologically, I am not that strong, but spiritually I am very much. The strength is from the Lord, not from us.)*

The narratives shared by participants in this study echoed the sentiments articulated by Claire (2023), emphasizing the transformative role of faith as a beacon of hope. Participants revealed that faith, beyond being a coping mechanism, served as a guiding light that inspired them to believe in themselves and their capacity to overcome the challenges presented by life’s adversities, particularly the aftermath of flash floods. The insights of Claire (2023) align seamlessly with the experiences recounted by the mothers in this study, portraying faith not only as a set of beliefs but as a dynamic force that imbued them with resilience. The narratives revealed that faith provided a profound sense of purpose and direction, encouraging mothers to persevere in the face of uncertainty. The lived experiences of these mothers, depicted faith as a source of inner strength and motivation, ultimately guiding them through the turbulent waters of post-flood recovery.

**Emotional and Social Support.** When asked if there was a support system, the participants responded that;

Participant 1: *“Naa mi nadawat nga mga tambal para iwas leptospirosis ug kanang mga words of encouragement ug moral support.”* (We received medicines for prevention of leptospirosis and words of encouragement and moral support.)

Participant 4: *“Ang Ist kay akong family, pinsan nya na attorney nga naa sa wla sila naapil sa baha, so, nianhi dri nagdala og pagkaon. Ang akong kuan batch, batchmate nko, pinakauna*

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*nianhi dri nagdala og pagkaon,lugaw.nagluto sila”* (We received from a relative who was an Attorney and was not affected by the flood, they arrived and brought food. My batchmate, the first to arrive brought food, congee, and they cooked.)

Participant 5: *“friends and family talaga”* ([Received support from] Friends and family”

Participant 6: *“Oo,gikan baha,pagkaugma ana katong paryente sa side sa ako partner.kuan,naa dayoy mga palugaw dnha sa court,naay mga naghatg og mineral tubig.Dli ingon na agrabyado kayo ka kay,naa man dayon to the rescue,walay problema sa kaon kay ultimo tung nabahaan,share2 sa pagkaon”* (Yes, the day after the flood, a relative of my partner served congee and water. Someone was there to rescue, so no need to worry about food because even those who were affected by the flood shared their foods too.)

Participants recounted how their families, through words of encouragement and tangible support like donated food, became steadfast pillars during the aftermath of flash floods. Cherry (2023) asserts that being surrounded by caring and supportive individuals enhances one's perception of their capability to navigate life's stresses. The participants' experiences vividly illustrate this concept, as the emotional and social support they received bolstered their resilience and fortified their belief in their ability to confront and overcome the challenges posed by the floods. The profound influence of familial encouragement and tangible assistance as catalysts for empowering individuals to navigate the complexities of post-disaster recovery was observed. The participants, enveloped in a network of care and support, not only found solace in their relationships but also emerged with a heightened sense of self-efficacy, better equipped to confront the tribulations that life, in the wake of a natural disaster, brings forth.

#### Theme 4: Resilience and Adaptation

Mothers who had experienced flooding were examined in this qualitative study, with an emphasis on their adaptability and resilience. The accounts of these mothers demonstrate the intricate relationship between individual resilience, social support, and the difficulties they encountered both during and following the flooding incidents.

The research indicates that mothers had exceptional strength when confronted with hardship. This study's findings indicate that resilience is a process that developed as a result of handling the flood disaster rather than merely a personal attribute. When things got dire, mothers showed resourcefulness by putting their kids' safety and wellbeing first. Using limited resources, improvising, and taking a practical approach to problem-solving were all examples of this resourcefulness.

Consistent with the research by O. Oni (2015), the researchers observed that the resilience of mothers were manifested through a blend of emotional fortitude and practical resourcefulness, a response pattern also noted in Ashley Pike et. al. on disaster impacts (2022).

Participant 6 said, *“As a mother na kuan nko na bisan pa nagkabuang na ka, wala na ka nakahuna-huna unsa imong buhaton,mas priority gyud nimo imong mga anak. Bahala na na'ng mga gamit, kay makita ra man na, pero ang safety sa imong mga anak, mao gyud mas importante* (As a mother even if you are irrational, do not know what to do, your children is your number one priority. Material things do not matter anymore; the safety of your children is the most important).

She ensured that her children, aged 3 and 5, were evacuated, wet clothes changed and had food as they reached the subdivision's gym. Performing this duty is part of the triple roles a woman has to fulfill: reproductive, productive, and community roles as stated by Moser (1993).

Participants share a common task during the flood, they traditionally serve as primary caregivers. During and after disasters, they continue to fulfill this role by taking care of children, the elderly, and the sick. This includes providing emotional support, food, shelter, and healthcare. This role has been discussed in various studies on gender and disaster resilience, such as those by Enarson and Morrow (1998) and Fordham (2003).

The emotional fortitude demonstrated by mothers was one noteworthy characteristic of resilience. Numerous individuals retained their hope and tenacity in the face of daunting circumstances. They seemed to have developed this emotional resilience as a result of their duty to their families, especially their children, which emphasizes the importance of maternal identity in building resilience.

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Participant 1 pointed out the necessity of preparation to avoid the difficulties if ever another disaster may hit them: “*Dapat gyud prepared jud sa any calamities na posibleng ma-experience. Tapos, plan everything daan para dili na malisdan if ever mahitabo og usab* (We should be prepared for any calamities that we may experience. Then we should plan everything to avoid difficulties if ever it will happen again)”.

One of the main themes that surfaced in the responses of mothers to the aftermath of flooding was adaptation. Adaptation required making both psychological and practical changes. From a practical standpoint, women acquired new abilities to navigate aid systems, fix homes, and handle finances when faced with loss. In terms of psychology, mothers talked of gaining a fresh outlook on life and a deeper respect for family, community, and inner power.

Participant 4 explained, “*Kana lang, ang material kung unsa lang naa, makuntento na ta ana dapat, dili na ta magsige og palit* (We should be contented with whatever material things we have, we should not buy every time)”.

She added, “*Ang amo lang siguro dungagan, tama to akong bana, kami na lang gyud magbuhat kay sa pagkakaroon among sapa, wala pa man gyud na kasulbaran, kanang kami na lang gyud magbuhat og dapat kanang makasagang-sagang gamay, mao na nagbutang siya og kanang ali dinha unya nagplano, kung kaloy-an, magbutang og kanang dugang na taas na* (On our part, my husband is right, we will just fix it ourselves since the problem with the creek has not been solved yet. We’ll just create some temporary structures like a block, if opportunity comes, we’ll build another high level)”.

For resilience and adaptability, the involvement of the community and social support was crucial. In their road towards recovery, mothers often mentioned the importance of having support from family, friends, and local organizations. This help was provided in a number of ways, including emotional support through shared experiences and practical aid in the reconstruction of dwellings. Communities' solidarity promoted a sense of belonging and group strength in addition to offering useful assistance.

Most of the participants have generated material and financial help from family and friends. When asked for a support system, Participant 8 said, “*Gikan sa friends, ana. Unya naay mga sanina. Tingali na lang ka. Kana ganing, dili man gyud ta pasagdan sa Ginoo no, grabe’g mga angels nga gipadala ang Ginoo. Kami diri kay mag-ambit ambit ra man gud mig pagkaon. So ako murag, I feel sorry for those, kato ganing dili gani ka involved sa community? Wala puy makadumdom nimo. Kanang sa trying times nimo. Kana gyud akong na prove* (From friends. Then there were clothes. God will not forsake us, a lot of angels were sent by God. We shared all our food together. So for me, I feel sorry for those not involved in a community. No one can remember you in trying times. I have just proven it)”.

“*Karon kay ako, involved man gud ko diri sa GKK, bisag asa. Ultimo ang akong mga Zumba family, kay naga Zumba man gud ko, naghatod og something nga pagkain, trapo.* (Now, I am involved in the GKK, everywhere, even my Zumba family, because I am into Zumba, who brought me food and rags),” she added.

Mothers faced many difficulties in addition to their evident resourcefulness and determination. An ongoing topic was the emotional toll that the flooding had taken, including trauma and worry. Recovery was also hampered by systemic problems like socioeconomic limitations and insufficient disaster assistance. These difficulties underline the necessity of more extensive support networks to assist moms in emergency scenarios.

Participant 9 said that, “*Mga tabang siguro, ma’am. Tabang. Sama sa mga kuan, kinahanglan sa matag adlaw. Ana. Kanang pagkinahanglan* (Maybe assistance, ma’am. Help. Like the daily needs. The necessity)”.

Disaster management procedures and regulations can benefit from the knowledge gathered from the experiences of these mothers. Targeted help that recognizes the unique difficulties faced by mothers is obviously needed. Strengthening the following areas can help: making mental health resources more accessible, making child-friendly relief spaces, and making sure aid is distributed fairly.

### CONCLUSION

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In conclusion, the narratives of mothers who are flood survivors reveal a complex journey encompassing themes of familiarity with flooding, the challenges they face, coping mechanisms employed, and their resilience and adaptation. The first theme illustrates how these mothers, despite being accustomed to flooding in their areas, experience trauma, acceptance of circumstances, maintain positivity, and hold on to faith. The second theme delves into the challenges faced, including financial incapacity, responsibility to parents, lack of weather forecast checking, unpreparedness, and various physical, mental, and social challenges. The coping mechanisms, as highlighted in the third theme, underscore the vital role of faith, emotional and social support, and the interconnectedness within their communities. Lastly, the fourth theme emphasizes the resilience and adaptability displayed by these mothers, who, amidst adversity, prioritize the safety and well-being of their families. Their resourcefulness, emotional fortitude, and newfound perspectives on life serve as powerful indicators of their ability to overcome challenges. The study underscores the need for comprehensive support systems, improved disaster management procedures, and targeted assistance for mothers facing such crises. Ultimately, the stories of these flood survivor mothers illuminate the intricate interplay between individual resilience, social support, and the dynamic responses required to navigate the complexities of post-disaster recovery.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Mothers who have experienced the terrifying aftermath of natural catastrophes need a diverse network of support to help them get through the difficult stages of rehabilitation such as the following:

#### **Psychological support.**

The most important kind of help is psychological, providing access to groups, therapy, or counseling to deal with the emotional trauma that frequently persists for a long time after the accident.

#### **Social Support.**

Giving mothers the tools they need to create and strengthen their social support systems can be incredibly helpful both practically and emotionally. Their obligations can be greatly reduced by offering support with childcare, helping families find safe housing, and simplifying access to healthcare services.

#### **Financial assistance.**

Emergency loans, cash assistance, and access to money for disaster relief, for example, can assist them in regaining their means.

#### **Skills Development and Legal Assistance.**

For long-term rehabilitation, it is essential to support retraining and skill development in addition to legal assistance with property and health matters. Mothers' readiness and resilience are further enhanced by information sharing, involvement in decision-making, and disaster resilience education.

#### **Policy Change and/or Development.**

In order to assist mothers in reconstructing their lives and emerging stronger after calamities, it is also critical to advocate for policies that suit their particular needs and to promote self-care and mindfulness practices.

#### **Disaster Risk Reduction Management.**

To mitigate the impacts of flooding especially in low-lying areas and near bodies of water, the government is suggested to install an early warning system such as sirens in the locality.

By implementing these recommendations, local governments and disaster management offices can better support mothers during the challenging circumstances of a flood, ensuring their safety and well-being.

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