

LIVED EXPERIENCES OF KABUHIAN, KIMAYA, JASAAN, MISAMIS ORIENTAL, NORTHERN MINDANAO PHILIPPINES

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Abstract

This study explores the lived experiences of residents in Kabuhian, Barangay Kimaya, Jasaan, Misamis Oriental, Northern Mindanao, Philippines. This study examines the lived experiences of residents in Kabuhian using a qualitative phenomenological design; ten participants shared encounters with hazards such as landslides, soil erosion, and road blockages. Findings revealed that livelihood dependence, bayanihan (communal cooperation), and faith-based endurance are central to survival. Despite poor road access and limited institutional support, residents sustain farming and small-scale trading, drawing strength from ancestral ties and solidarity. Kabuhian exemplifies resilience as a continuous, lived process rooted in identity, cooperation, and resourcefulness.

Keywords: *Lived experiences_livelihood*

Introduction

Exploring the lived experiences of Kabuhian, Kimaya, Jasaan, Misamis Oriental, Northern Mindanao, Philippines which embodies a paradox of vulnerability and resilience. On one hand, residents are deeply dependent on natural resources for survival; on the other, they are disproportionately exposed to environmental hazards such as landslides, flooding, and soil erosion (Alcántara-Ayala, 2025). Kabuhian, is located in Barangay Kimaya, Jasaan, exemplifies this paradox. The name Kabuhian, derived from "kabuhayan" (livelihood), reflects the centrality of survival, work, and economic activity in shaping community life (Berkes, 2024). Despite recurring hazards, families remain rooted in the land they have cultivated for generations, underscoring the complex interplay between identity, resilience, and risk (Folke, 2025).

The persistence of settlement in hazard-prone areas such as Kabuhian cannot be explained solely by economic necessity. Emotional and ancestral ties to land, cultural traditions, and communal solidarity strongly influence decisions to remain despite environmental threats (Gomez et al., 2025). For many residents, the land is more than a source of livelihood; it is a living record of family history and identity (Adger, 2024). This attachment shapes their willingness to endure risks, as leaving would mean severing ties with heritage and community (Oliver-Smith, 2024). Resilience here is not only technical but also culturallly, embedded in everyday practices and

values (Sillitoe, 2024). It is expressed in the way families rebuild after disasters, continue farming despite soil erosion, and rely on collective strength to face uncertainty (Bankoff, 2024).

Kabuhian's lived realities resonate with broader rural challenges in the Philippines. Small holder farmers and fisher folk remain highly vulnerable to climate change, unpredictable weather, and unstable market prices (Gaillard & Navarro, 2024). These challenges are compounded by limited access to infrastructure and institutional support, making adaptation a daily struggle (Chambers et al, 2025). Yet, adaptation is not limited to economic diversification; it also involves strengthening social networks and cultural practices that sustain hope and cooperation (Walker & Salt, 2024). In Kabuhian, the Filipino tradition of "bayanihan" communal cooperation remains a vital coping mechanism (Alcantara, 2025). During crises such as the 2022 Typhoon Agaton landslide or the 2025 hilltop road blockage, residents mobilized collectively to clear debris, restore access, and rebuild livelihoods. These practices exemplify community-based disaster risk management, where local participation and solidarity become the foundation of resilience (Mercer et al., 2024).

At the same time, Kabuhian's experience reflects structural challenges that compound vulnerability. Poor road access, unstable income, and limited institutional support hinder recovery and development, leaving residents to rely heavily on their own ingenuity and cooperation. These realities highlight the need for integrated disaster management strategies that move beyond technical interventions to include local wisdom, cultural values, and community agency (Oliver-Smith, 2025). Capturing these lived experiences through a phenomenological lens provides a deeper understanding of resilience as a continuous, evolving process (Gomez et al., 2025). It reveals how individuals interpret and give meaning to daily encounters with risk, and how resilience is sustained through identity, faith, and solidarity (Folke, 2025).

Ultimately, Kabuhian's paradox of vulnerability and resilience underscores the importance of documenting lived experiences in hazard-prone communities (Alcántara-Ayala, 2025). By situating resilience within cultural identity, communal solidarity, and everyday practices, this study contributes to broader discussions on rural livelihoods and disaster preparedness in the Philippines (Berkas, 2025). It emphasizes that resilience is not merely about coping with hazards but about sustaining life, heritage, and hope in the face of uncertainty (Walker & Salt, 2024). In doing so, it highlights the need for policies and programs that integrate local voices, cultural traditions, and community agency into disaster risk reduction strategies (UNDRR, 2023). Such integration ensures that resilience is not only sustainable but also inclusive, reflecting the lived realities of communities like Kabuhian (Chambers & Conway, 2024).

Thus, the researcher was pushed to uncover the Kabuhian lived experiences to understand "how" and "why" they have made it? What made them vulnerable and resilient in their day to day undertaking? Is there a reason that this small village can integrate their culture in the mainstream of the globalizing world? What is/are their coping mechanism in their vulnerability and resiliency?

Methods

A qualitative phenomenological approach was employed to explore the lived experiences of residents in Kabuhian, Barangay Kimaya, Jasaan, Misamis Oriental, particularly their motivations for staying, their awareness of landslide-related risks, and the strategies they use to cope and survive in a hazard-prone environment, following the methodological principles of Gomez et al (2025). Purposive sampling was used to select ten (10) residents, composed of

farmers, mothers, youth, and long-term community members who had direct experiences with landslides or road blockages.

Results and Discussions

The results and discussions arrived from the phenomenological, anecdotal and ethnological investigation revealed that Zone Kabuhian, Barangay Kimaya, Jasaan, Misamis Oriental Northern Mindanao Philippines influenced by the following: 1) geographic factors, 2) community cooperation, 3) indigenous way of living, 4) live with the behavior of environment, 5) have faith to God, and 6) follow your ancestor way of living. Thus, the detailed are the following:

Influence of Geographic factor on Livelihood Practices (Nabahiran sa palibut nga panginabuhi'ng naandan). The elevated terrain of Kabuhian sustains coconut farming, small-scale agriculture, and fishing, yet exposes residents to frequent landslides and soil erosion. Farming requires labor-intensive practices such as clearing debris, maintaining soil fertility, and adjusting



planting schedules to unpredictable rainfall. Despite these risks, residents remain attached to the land, reflecting ancestral ties and cultural identity. This finding supports Alcántara-Ayala (2025), who emphasizes that hazards are embedded in community identity rather than external disruptions.

Community Cooperation in the spirit of bayanihan (kumunidad nga pagtutambayayungay). Geography alone does not determine outcomes; human adaptation is central. Residents rely on bayanihan, or communal cooperation, to overcome environmental challenges. Shared tasks during hazard responses such as clearing blocked roads after the 2022 Typhoon Agaton landslide reduce individual strain and strengthen social bonds. These cooperative efforts also preserve cultural traditions and create a support system that enables the community to withstand crises, consistent with the *Sendai Framework's* emphasis on local participation. As the team engaging this topic around 5 weeks for its maturation, the theme developed on its central piece “bayanihan.” And listening from the participants they said:

Kami dinhi sa among dapit day, wala gyud mi kabalaka kay ang mga tawo o pumuyu dinhi mga matinabangon. Ug mga nagkaila ug may kadugu ra. Kung adunay mga panghitabu susama sa baha, linug ug bagyu wala may lain nga maka tabang kanamo kami ra gyud dinhi.

[here in our place miss, we don't have to worry because people [residents] here are very helpful. And, we know its other and majority of here are having their genealogical

lineage. If there are calamities such that of flood, earthquake, typhoon nobody can help us here except ourselves]

Indigenous way of living (*lumadnung pagpuyu*). Practical coping mechanisms include small-scale trading, coconut processing, and charcoal production, which diversify income sources. Organized collective labor and resource sharing reduce vulnerability and improve recovery. By participating in local market networks, residents transform environmental constraints into opportunities for economic stability. This resonates with APN Science Bulletin (2025), which highlights diversified livelihoods as key to rural adaptation. Listening from them during the FGDs they said:

Wala gyud tay mahimo, kay mao raman gyud na ang atung mabuhay sa atong dapit. Ug mao ra man gyud na ang gi hatag sa kahitas-an. Busa maningkamut kita nga mabuhay aron nga mag padayon ang atung kinabuhi.

[we cannot do otherwise, that is the only way we can do in our place. And, the only way given by God to us. Which is why, we need to exert our effort in order for us to survive and continue to our living]

Listening from the sharing during the FGDs of the participant the emotional ups-and-down with the spiritual shipwreck of the participant is very observable. It is within the context of their experience that the identity of the place shapes their behavior, character and attitude of living. It is the stalemate on inhabitant action of the area that the movement are confined within the available remedy. The place and its environment dictate Kabuhian.

Lived with the behavior of the Environment (*pagpuyu kung unsay naandan*). The interplay between geography, livelihood, and social cooperation underscores the holistic nature of rural survival. The terrain dictates what crops can be cultivated and how labor must be organized, while communal solidarity ensures that environmental limitations do not hinder productivity. Although, Faith and attachment to land further reinforce resilience, as residents view hazards as part of life rather than deterrents. This supports Cordero et al. (2025), who argue that survival in hazard-prone communities is inseparable from cultural attachment and collective agency.

Have faith to God and follow your ancestor way of living (*Too sa Diyos ug sunda and gi ingon*



sa imong mga katigulangan). The faith of God and the tradition handed down from the great-great grandparents ruled over Kabuhian. It is understood because the community has an old age profile on the average of fifty-two (52) years old population. During the FGDs the participants responded the dialogue during the conversation and said:

“dinhi sa Kabuhian kami naanad na kung unsay naa mao ra gyud na nga dawaton ug paiguan sa mga inadlaw-adlaw

nga mga panginahanglanun. Too lang gyud sa Diyos dili ka lagi niya biyaan. Ang among mga katigulangan gani mo abut man sila sa tag-as nga mga katuigan nga wala man gani silay bahandi sa pagpuyu.”

[here in Kabuhian we're contented what we have and we used that in our everyday needs. Believed and have faith in God you'll not be forsaken. Our great grandparents were able to reach the highest old-age even they don't have the wealth to live]

Contentment of living is no issues here. The living here is no competitiveness. Live what you've and enjoy life as it was. Faith and belief is very strong here. The submission of what is being told and nurture by their parents is very likely and favorable. Kabuhian is for now attached by the environment (nature). No outside world had detached it. Their culture surrounds the place of their birth. Nature is a blessing that supports life. Their great-great grandparent is a typical example for their living.

Overall, the lived experiences of Kabuhian residents revealed resilience is not episodic but a continuous process. Their ability to adapt, cooperate, and draw strength from cultural traditions demonstrates how communities transform environmental risks into opportunities for survival, sustaining both livelihood and identity in rural Northern Mindanao.

EXHAUSTIVE DISCUSSIONS

Their persistence reflects deep ancestral ties and cultural attachment to land, where livelihood is inseparable from the identity of the place. Adaptation is rooted in *bayanihan*, as collective action during crises such as clearing debris after landslides reduces individual strain and strengthens social bonds. These practices highlight community-based resilience consistent with disaster risk reduction frameworks. Although poor road access, unstable income, and limited institutional aid compound vulnerability, residents draw strength from faith and solidarity. Kabuhian exemplifies endurance, resourcefulness, and resilience as a way of life.

Conclusions

The persistence of residents in hazard-prone areas reflects a complex trade-off between physical safety and economic survival. Their resilience is constructed through everyday practices, *bayanihan*, and trust in local governance. Disaster risk reduction in this context is not merely technical but deeply social and cultural. Ultimately, Kabuhian is socially constructed through everyday life experiences.

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