WOMEN'S AGENCY IN DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES: A CASE STUDY OF SUPER TYPHOON HAIYAN'S IMPACT IN BARANGAY BOTONGON, ESTANCIA, ILOILO

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ABSTRACT

This study chronicled the experiences of women during the onslaught of Super Typhoon Haiyan in Barangay Botongon, Estancia, Iloilo. It determined how women were able to demonstrate their agency in terms of goal-setting and actuations during and after the disaster they experienced. Moreover, the factors that promoted and hindered women's agency were identified. Lastly, the impact of institutional responses to women's agency was also examined. The study employed triangulation of methods, using focus group interviews, key informant interviews, and 63-item survey questionnaire on self-regulation. The results indicated that women's traumatic experiences during the disaster enabled them to manifest their agency through engaging in various productive work such as small-scale businesses and housekeeping services and joining women's groups which raised their awareness on VAWC and women's rights. A correlation of the Self-Regulation Questionnaire scores and socio-demographic factors like age, educational attainment, civil status, and monthly household income showed that there is a weak relationship among these variables, implying that these socio-demographic factors have minimal effect on the participants' self-regulation. Furthermore, women's multiple burden after the super typhoon and their dependence on aid hindered their agency while membership to women's organizations and participation in productive work enabled them to have increased participation in household decision-making.