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FRAMING DISASTER AMONG THE LOCALS IN URBAN COASTAL COMMUNITIES ALONG MANILA BAY

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ABSTRACT – This research illustrates how disturbances on the lives of the locals along the coastal communities are constructed as “disasters” as these economically disrupts their daily fishing activities. The locals who work side by side with water are considered as *vulnerable sector* since they are dependent on what the sea can offer. They are most vulnerable as they face the unpredictable water currents and storm surges in the open sea lane, as their communities experience tidal changes and flood without rain. Defining *disaster* is a complex task, trying to fit in an array of factors from social, economic, cultural, mathematical or descriptive concepts. It is characterized with the capacity to harm both people and communities. The case study method was used to critically examine how the locals make sense of social phenomena that disrupts their livelihood. The respondents are locals from the informal settlements of Barangay BASECO, Manila who are struggling to catch fish individually and those from the island of Pamarawan off the coast of Malolos, Bulacan. For the locals, disaster is a disturbance that limits their economic activities. As fishing is a nature dependent job, the locals have to abide by the rules of nature. They prefer to fish during night time, needs the calmness of the sea, and sensitive to sea water quality; or the wind direction and the Manila Bay as an overall employer of the locals dictating where to fish. Local government and institutions look at disaster on a larger scale; they failed to realize that garbage, water hyacinth, dumping of used oil could hamper the daily fishing of the locals. These occurrences as already considered disasters by the locals as they are deprived of their daily catch. This can be a factor on the vulnerability of the fisher folks in urban slums.

Keywords: Coastal Communities, Disaster, Framing, Manila Bay



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