
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Handumanan sang Ulian (Memories of Ulian): The River Residents' Sense of Place

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| ABSTRACT

This interpretivist-symbolic interactionism study aimed to document the sense-of-place memories among the residents living near or alongside the Ulian River in the Municipality of Lambunao, Province of Iloilo, Philippines. It was grounded on the assumptions surrounding the epistemology of constructionism and the theoretical research perspective of interpretivism-symbolic interactionism. Specific theories pertaining to Sense of Place and Memory were also anchored by this study. Fifteen participants from seven barangays in the Municipality of Lambunao, where the Ulian River flows or passes, took part in this study. They were determined through purposive sampling. Narrative inquiry was used as the methodology of the study, and thematic analysis was applied as a method of analyzing the narratives. After all needed information was gathered through interviews, the data were transcribed, coded, and then analyzed, thus resulting in the formulation of fifteen narratives capturing the sense-of-place memories of Ulian River residents. It was found out that based on the gathered, analyzed data, there were five themes pertaining to the sense-of-place memories of the Ulian River residents. These themes are the river as a food source, the river as a venue for livelihood activities, the river as a place for recreation and extension of household chores, the river as a passageway, and the memories of the river in the context of change.

| KEYWORDS

Geography and environment, Sense-of-place theory, narrative inquiry, Ulian River

| ARTICLE DOI: [10.32996/jhsss.2022.4.2.18](https://doi.org/10.32996/jhsss.2022.4.2.18)

1. Introduction

“Handumanan” is a Hiligaynon term for memory or memories (in plural form), which is associated with what and how people remember about a certain person, place, or event that gives them valuable lessons in life. Depending on the one who reminisces those things, at the end of a certain day, one can use those as parts of his/her everyday living, and sometimes, these can be used as the basis for whatever destiny awaits them. Cherishing memories (Marcus, 1992) is considered a norm in a human's mortal side, for one has the capability of reminiscing every single moment that he or she may not tend to forget, whether these memories are pleasant or horrifying. At par with the idea of Marcus, it is further contended that the essence of memories is to give everyone a lesson in order for an individual to have an idea of what to do in the coming days, retain and enhance what is said to be pleasing, eradicate those that are horrifying, and most of all, correct whatever mistakes were committed in the past. In every place a man has been, whether a rural area or an urban area, a natural wonder or a man-made wonder, he or she may not forget to organize archives of memories and consider these as tools in developing knowledge, creating stories, putting up activities that will aid in its further development and most of all, creating its essence to mankind.

Determining the significance or the sense of place of a certain geographical feature is already given essence since time has passed due to the fact that the townsfolk utilize these in their everyday lives. These geographical features possess attributes that, in one way or another, may contribute to the transformation of the lives of the people residing there. Various resources ranging from the living to the non-living may become beneficial, and so they may be able to appreciate their usefulness or, at times, its sense to the citizens.

Sense of place, according to Shamai (1991; in Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001), has been referred to as the over-arching concept, which includes other concepts that can tell relationships between human beings and the physical environment, which, in general, is attached to a spatial setting by a person or group. Tuan (1975) has provided the most commonly mentioned definition, which tells that a place is a center of meaning or field of care that stresses out human emotions and relationships.

Ryden (1993) added that it is much more likely than a point in space but takes into the meaning wherein people may be designated to a particular area by simply living in it. Accordingly, the sense of place is concentrated not only in the physical setting alone; it also includes human interpretations of that particular area.

Everything on this Earth has an essence to individuals, whether young or old, wealthy or impoverished, man, woman, or third sex, depending on how it's valued or taken care of. Memories are crafted each time a man is exploring a place while creating a sense of its existence which leads to the attainment of the good life a man desire. In the case of the Ulian River, several stories within the river have emerged which are yet to be unveiled, and their significance is sometimes understated due to the fact that the place may not be as famous as other places in the municipality or even in the province or maybe whatever others perceived may be contradictory or even more significant to people residing there. Therefore, a study on the memories and sense of place of Ulian River, which flows within the Municipality of Lambunao, was conducted to describe how the residents living along the banks of this river give sense to this geographical wonder that brings essence to their everyday lives.

In every qualitative research, there are several perspectives and knowledge that can be connected and utilized in order to make the creation of thoughts a remarkable one. In this study, the epistemology was anchored on constructionism which was connected to the theoretical perspective of interpretivism, specifically symbolic interactionism. Grounded on the assumptions surrounding the epistemology of constructionism and the theoretical research perspective of interpretivism-symbolic interactionism (Crotty, 2003), this study was specifically framed around conceptual ideas surrounding the sense of place and memory (Table 1).

Epistemology	Theoretical Perspective	Specific Theories
Constructionism (Crotty, 1998)	Interpretivism (Given, 2008)	Sense of Place (Tuan, 1975)
	Symbolic Interactionism (Given, 2008)	Memory (Hume, 1739;1896)

Table 1. Overview of the Epistemology, Theoretical Perspective, and Specific Theories of the study.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

The purpose of the study was to document the sense-of-place memories among residents living near or alongside the Ulian River in Lambunao, Iloilo, Philippines. Specifically, this study sought answers to the following question:

What do the memories of Ulian River reveal about the sense of place among residents living near or along its banks?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Memories of the River

Rivers are large natural streams of flowing water. They are found on every continent and can be short or long. Rivers are very important. They carry large amounts of water from land to sea. We know that in the early times, people settled along the river banks because from the rivers, they found fish and other things to eat. They used water from the rivers for bathing, cooking, washing their clothes, and other purposes. Rivers also provide ways of transportation. It is even used as a source of power to operate machines. A river usually comes from a source, like a lake or a spring, or from melting ice or glacier. As the river flows, its main channel is fed by other streams. These streams are called tributaries. Rivers and their tributaries combine together to form a river system. The end of a river is called a mouth. The mouth of a river opens into another body of water. It may be a larger river, a lake, a sea, or the ocean itself (Occeña-Guttierez et al., 1998).

Rivers, according to Staveley (2012), are the essential lifeblood of all communities. They are embedded with narratives, encounters, and ideas that have made up, for example, Canadian imagination, identity, and agency. To the researcher in social science, a river is an archive of mnemonic devices, an artifact of human movement, and a reflection of environmental manipulation. A river and its surrounding landscape provide the human imagination with a place where memories are sustained, stories are told, and lessons are learned. Rivers in the Liard watershed have been mapped, named, and colonized through economic trade, abandoned through transport efficiencies, and cultured through their affiliation with environmental governance and traditions of heritage.

Rivers have been staked for hydroelectric potential and are sites of protest. The surrounding landscape has been contested over ownership and has been the backdrop of artists' renditions. The region has been claimed for gold and reclaimed for other precious metals and, more recently, for natural and methane gas, while also being a place that continues to entice the canoeing and kayaking recreationists. In addressing human-environment relations, environmental anthropologists and historians identify that there is a prevailing Western discourse of protection or development. In the context of human-river relations, this debate positions rivers as being either a resource to be exploited for societal good or as requiring preservation against the degradation of industrialization. Scholars further suggest that the protect or develop discourse is two sides of the same coin and ignores other theoretical perspectives that have the potential to illuminate alternative consequences and opportunities in water and watershed management (Neufeld, 2011; Sandlos, 2011; Staveley, 2012).

The memories of the river were elaborated by Stewart (2004) in his study wherein Australians experience a place like the Murray River, which has been extensively developed by their colonial heritage. Colonial beliefs about how the river behaves and is being used have contributed to the physical, ecological, and cultural transformation of the river. Colonization has also marked an intellectual legacy on how Australians conceive nature. Practically speaking, the outdoor education experiences of the Murray, which do not refer to the particulars of the place like the current declining ecological health of it, might well be interpreted as an act of colonization. One way of decolonizing encounters with the place is that outdoor education pedagogy develops experiences that are specific and responsive to the place itself. In this critical reflection on practice, student encounters with the Murray River must be highlighted, especially the ways of putting personal experiential learning into a wide cultural context to avoid counter-colonial understandings of nature. It must foster a deeper awareness of the relationships with the river as well as with the land. One way of giving the river a voice in order to hear its story is using these experiences of some residents, such as camping beside the river, waking to the sounds of sulphur-crested cockatoos screeching excitedly, drifting downstream, observing changes to the riverbanks, reading about the lives of others and contemplating the connection between the community, culture, society, the river, and one's experiences. To put into deeper understanding, the river is not just only referring to the experiences of some people but also to the cultural meanings that will take with everyone, especially about how one might relate to places or landforms.

The study conducted by Ahrens (2017) centered on the notion of landscape as a construct of marginal and multiple dialogues. It is a project that originates from a rediscovered family album of photographs of Latin American landscapes at the turn of the 20th century. In particular, those that center on the Paraná River in Argentina, a place where myth, the recent history of the "Desaparecidos" or those who "disappeared" by the military junta 1976-1983 and memory collide. These early analogue photographs of the river have sparked a series of creative interventions that explore the interstices between photography and printmaking, fragmenting the initial image in order to create a new hybrid of photographic prints using photo-etching and photo-transfer processes. The return of the material to the flat surface of the digital is of critical concern, as the uncanny surface is turned into a haptic object more in keeping with printmaking practices and early pictorial photographs. This leads to questions about their affective resonance, as touch and noise return to the surface of the print as resistance and response to discourses of acceleration and forgetting. The contested terrain of the Paraná, though a known place, was represented in such a way that it displaces the boundaries of the place with those of a surreal place that was placeless. In the meta-modern sense of the word, the installation alludes to territory without boundaries, a position without parameters, a looking at and looking through at the same time (Velmeulen & van den Akker, 2010; in Ahrens, 2017). This encounter then lies in-between the two: looking at the landscape in its microscopic and forensic representation while at the same time looking through the material landscape of multiple narratives at once. As Miwon Kwon (2004, in Ahrens, 2017) suggests that site specific art can bring some revelations about repressed histories, help give greater clarity to marginalized groups and issues, and most of all, start the recovery/rediscovery of those minor places that were, so far, ignored by the dominant culture. This, therefore, oscillates between the site specificity of the making and the reterritorialization of the work in the gallery, which both resist dominant readings. This is not to say that it is emancipatory, however, but a means of reassigning value to the material and narrative as a critical force (for reflection).

Stubbs (2014), in her study pertaining to one of the greatest floods ever recorded in the history of the United States of America, says that, after years of drought, the arrival of rain at the end of May 1935 came as a blessing to the residents of the Republican River Valley, victims of the Dust Bowl. Wreaking havoc on the landscape, the disaster dried out the land and destroyed vegetation. From Nebraska all the way south into Texas, thousands felt the effects of the Dust Bowl. Years of drought and poor farming methods created a variety of problems for the residents of the Plains, including massive dust storms that ripped through the terrain. While the Republican Valley did not go through the Dust Bowl with the severity in other areas witnessed, farmers along the river nonetheless spent effort with the drought-ridden land. Rain meant revitalization for the valley, and the return of precipitation came as good news for the region. The return of water to the Republican River represented the end of a very dry era in Plains history. Once again, the river filled to the banks, an event that in previous years occurred every spring. As a result, the McNeice family, residents of a farm south of Culbertson, Nebraska, did not think anything of the rising water at first, other than gratitude for its return to the valley. The family went about their daily business.

2.1 Sense of Place

According to Jorgensen and Stedman (2001), a sense of place is an interrelated concept that includes other concepts that tell something about the relationships between human beings and their spatial settings (Shamai, 1991). In general, it is the meaning attached to the physical environment that is occupied by a person or group. Tuan (1979) has provided the most common definition, which states that a place is a center of meaning or field of care that stresses out human emotions and relationships. Ryden (1993) added that a place is more than just a point in space that takes in the meanings which people assign to that landscape through simply living in it. Accordingly, this concept does penetrate not only the physical setting itself but also confines the human interpretations of the setting. There are excessive concepts that would tell the relationship between people and spatial settings, but the sense of place is perhaps the most general. It is beneficial to consider the sense of place as an attitude towards a physical environment, especially since the constructs mentioned present strong similarities to the affective, cognitive, as well as conative components of attitude, respectively. An attitude approach offers a place a number of benefits: (1) organization of rather disorganized constructs, (2) linkage to established literature, and (3) established research methods.

On the other hand, Reynar (2008) presented that sense of place, as a topic of both academic and public discourse, has relatively new origins. Only in the last couple of decades has there been an expansion of literature dealing with the sense of place. Although the place was a defining element in the psychosocial make-up of human beings from the very beginning, which is shown in human art, artifacts, song, speech, and the written word, its presence as a discursive element has grown while its decline in importance within modern life continues. Notably, the writing of Thoreau (1985), Stegner (1980), and Leopold (1970) provide three prominent examples of authors who, in and through their writing, provided detailed descriptions of their own journeys and struggles with allowing the place to become intimately intertwined in the shaping of their personal beings. Additionally, the vivid descriptions and reflections provided by these three authors of the dynamic human-place interplay are reminiscent of most, if not all, current discussions and inquiries surrounding the sense of place. Within this universalizing milieu, place as an essential topic of social thought which has undergone assault has been often deemed irrelevant or irretrievably subjective. If, however, the place remains a critical condition of human experience (Entrikin, 1991), then the consequences of disregarding place would appear to be significant. This is particularly the case as it relates to rural educational strategies. In other words, if place remains an important element in the construction of rural people's individual and collective identities, and if the future of rural communities is dependent on the construction of these identities, then education must acknowledge and support the development of this person sense.

The concept of a sense of place, according to Lobo (2004), found a new dimension in a transient modern Western society. Even though the neighborhood was highly dissatisfied because of the factors such as lack of basic amenities, one's personal experiences in the neighborhood were very evident in the low-income neighborhoods, which made them have a more experiential sense of place. For the middle-income neighborhoods, sense of place has something to do with their emotional, deep involvement in the community, while for the higher-income group residents, they see the sense of place as the neighborhood's image and aesthetic appeal. This further revealed that the open spaces had something to do with the landscaped parks/yards/streets, which were preferred by the neighbors across all socio-economic backgrounds for a sense of place in the neighborhoods. Sense of place was actually a part of their reality of everyday life which was taken for granted. This was measured using the meanings the lake held for them. They have seen the reciprocal relationship between the lake and its neighbors, with GSL as an agent player in their social life, which affected the nearby residents with its ever-changing elevations. Various effects arose, like the weather, the salt accumulation, the smell, the beauty, and the habitat for the diverse populations of birds and other wildlife. The social life of the residents in the lake area, as well as the Wasatch Front, would affect the lake and its ecosystem in staggeringly substantial ways. It was essential to both awareness of the philosophy of work between them. It was important that in any examination of social constructions of reality, one must consider the difference in weight and legitimacy which was carried by various constructions as well as the people invested in them. In considering the politics of place that involved competing definitions of the situation or meanings, it was important to consider those involved in uplifting the different definitions and also the power they have on how they present their own definitions of the place (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Greider and Garkovich 1994; Stokowski 2002; in Trentelman, 2009).

Sauerwein (2017) stressed that the precise meaning of sense of place varies in the literature. In the study he conducted, he described the sense of place as awareness and ability to negotiate, participate, and appreciate the environment of a geographic location, including the buildings and the natural environmental space or context. The choices made by the researcher are supported in the literature, though not all of the choices align with any one source in the literature. Some background is required on the discussion or, more accurately, the series of monologues and discussions that appear in the literature on the sense of place. There are no definitions for the sense of place that come from or are applied to higher education particularly. As to going along with the other social science concepts, it has usually fallen to the author to be clear on how she applies the concept (Farnum et al., 2005).

Derr (2001) documented that the sense of place for the children in three communities of northern New Mexico, namely: Mora, Dixon, and Santa Fe, represented a gradient from rural to urban and revolved around their cultural, ecological, and individual

experiences. In fact, the themes where children's individual preferences and developmental needs figure highly were the four wheelers, ramps, rites of passage, and the fort-makers. "Learning Care" and "The Web" were also themes in which their experience is influenced greatly by the guidance of the family, as well as the adults, community, and culture. The experiences of children with nature, culture, and family were considered as interwoven entities where indeed, the connections and attachments were strong and meaningful. If there is a strong sense of place, the grandparents and elders were of great significance, especially in the passing of their knowledge and sense of the world to their children. Thus, there is a great way of how they influenced the way children experienced and mediated place. In some cases, a sense of place, as illustrated, is not the same as a sense of nature because other children demonstrate a weaker or more distributed sense of place. This concept was usually not well-developed in children for one of two reasons. One was that social stability was not present in their home, neighborhood, or community that would enable a sense of place to develop or quality that weakened place connections and attachments.

In the research conducted by Franz (2011), the social construction of a particular category of space in which the space in question was the coastscape that consisted of shoreline land, the shoreline itself, and the adjacent tidal waters. The shoreline residents living in the rural areas of Dorchester County, Maryland, on the Eastern Shore of the Chesapeake Bay, became the subjects of the said study. How the residents saw themselves connected to the coastscape and how they knew and acted in it were given emphasis, and their sense of place was developed in two ways. At first, it was considered how these various structural factors had been associated with the residential place on the water like the land, house, shoreline, tidal waters, boat, and pier that shape perceptions about the place. Then, there was a review of what practices the shoreline residents practiced and how these shaped their perceptions about the place. The role of the state in the social construction of the coastscape was also reviewed because the legal and regulatory framework affected the shoreline residents in many ways. In addition, the said study looked over the role of transitional spaces, for example, the thresholds, edges in space, time, and being. Hybrid spaces also played in the social construction of the coastscape, which added to the theoretical element of the research. The methodology used was based on the open-ended conversations with shoreline residents, as well as participant observation of crabbing and farming activities and also, archival research.

Pierce (2017) concluded in his study that sense of place has played a significant role in outdoor and environmental education. The sense of place dates back to the Latin term "genius loci," and throughout time, the sense of place has changed and developed. However, as it developed, consensus and overall understanding of the phrase has been a challenge, which was the catalyst for the creation of the sense of place relationship map showing that place and people make up the sense of place. Other components can be added to the map to expand the concept and provide greater clarity. The objective was to establish a clear and consistent foundation for researchers and academics to utilize in future work. The research was designed to answer the question: What is the role of sense of place in outdoor and environmental education? Based on the literature and interviews, three points were discussed to help answer this question. The first is that it allows students to use their senses to create linkages between places and people. While students create these links, educators can navigate students' educational process by asking questions such as: What kind of place is this? What does this place mean to you? What does this place enable you to do? These questions help students begin to think about place and their role within a place. As students more deeply engage with these questions, they begin to establish feelings and a sense of belonging to or with a place.

3. Methodology

Narrative Inquiry. Narrative inquiry was the methodology used in this study which, according to Barkhuizen, Benson, and Chik (2014), presents storytelling and research in one, whether it is used in utilizing stories as research data or as an instrument of analyzing data or presenting findings. It is a fixed umbrella term for research that uses stories and is also the title of a major cross-disciplinary journal in the field. Narrative research and narrative study are sometimes used as alternative terms. However, two closely related terms, narrative analysis and analysis of narratives, are used to refer to a basic distinction within the narrative inquiry. Following Polkinghorne (2007), analysis of narratives has something to do with research that uses stories as data, while narrative analysis has something to do with research in which storytelling is utilized as a means of analyzing data and presenting findings.

In narrative analysis, researchers use narrative writing as a method of turning non-narrative data into stories in order to convey their understanding of the meaning of the data. A second basic distinction has something to do with the relationship between researchers and participants in narrative research in which the terms biographical and autobiographical are used. In biographical approaches, researchers analyze or tell participants' stories; in autobiographical research, they analyze or tell their own stories.

3.1 Participants.

The inclusion criteria in the selection of research participants were the following: (1) Participants expressed willingness to take part in the study, which was anchored on the Informed Consent Form. (2) They were residents who, living along or near the periphery of Ulian, expressed a deep sense of connectedness to the river based on preliminary interviews. (3) Residents living somewhat far

from the river might be considered provided an expressed that sense of connection to the river in the preliminary probing interviews. (4) Participants must not be minors. Preference would be given to older people who possessed valuable memories of Ulian.

The participants in the study were the fifteen residents in the Municipality of Lambunao, Province of Iloilo, Republic of the Philippines, who resided within the banks or adjacent to the banks of the Ulian River. Priority was given to those participants who were living directly alongside Ulian River and who expressed a deep sense of connectedness to the river based on preliminary visits and recommendations from the barangay captain or anyone from the researcher's acquaintances who resided in that particular place. The participants were determined through snowball sampling or through referral sampling.

As to statistics, the participants' age ranged from 45 to 95 years old at the time of the interview. There were seven (7) males and eight (8) females who participated in this study. As to their locality or where they stayed, there were two (2) participants from Barangay Bonbon, three (3) from Barangay Bontoc, two (2) from Barangay Maribong, three (3) from Barangay Misi, three (3) from the combined barangays of Panuran and Pughanan, and two (2) from Barangay Tampucao. The occupations of the participants were any of the following: members of the barangay council, farmers, and housekeepers.

3.2 Context and Setting of the Study.

The context of the study was the Ulian River, situated within the Municipality of Lambunao, Province of Iloilo, Republic of the Philippines. The Ulian River is part of the Ulian-Tagbakan sub-watershed under the management units of the Jalaur River Basin. It has a total land area of 27,469.43 hectares which covers the municipalities of Lambunao, Janiuay, and Dueñas.

Its highest elevation is 1,728 meters above sea level, while the lowest is 0 meters above sea level. Its length measures 61.5 kilometers and has an average width of 40 meters. The average depth of the river is 2 meters. The sub-watershed is bounded by the municipalities of Calinog, San Enrique, and Passi on the north; Banate, Anilao, and Barotac Nuevo on the east; Janiuay, Badiangan, and Mina on the south; and Janiuay and Valderrama, province of Antique on the west (Ulian watershed state of the watershed report (SoWR) (2015); Vulnerability Assessment of the Ulian-Tagbakan Sub-watershed, 2015; Watershed Classification Report for the Ulian-Tagbakan Watershed, 2015).

3.3 Procedures of the Study.

Procedures of the study revolved around the following phases:

Phase 1. Preliminary visits to the community. The research identified first the barangays in the Municipality of Lambunao, Province of Iloilo, where the Ulian River flows or passes. Then, purposive sampling was applied, specifically convenience sampling, to determine which barangay would be the source of participants. Of several barangays where the Ulian River flows or passes, only seven were picked by the researcher, and they were barangays Bonbon, Bontoc, Maribong, Misi, Panuran, Pughanan, and Tampucao.

As soon as the identity of the barangay was determined, the researcher visited the barangay chosen to be the source of informants for the study and made a courtesy call to the barangay captain or any other member of the barangay council or through a referral from an acquaintance such as a colleague, a relative, or a former student residing in that particular barangay; and then sought permission and by handing a letter of request to conduct the study. The researcher, together with the barangay captain or any other member of the council in the unavailability of the barangay captain or with prospective participants with a person who gave recommendations to the researcher in looking for participants, set the schedule of the data gathering in the barangay where the participants resided or in any other place the participants were most comfortable with.

Preliminary visits were conducted from October to December 2018; in some instances, the visits were repeated several times because of the unavailability of the barangay captain, who had the authority to give permission as well as recommendations and coordination with the researcher as to who would be the target participants as well as the schedule of the interview. Letters of permission to conduct the study were given to the captains of the barangays where the study would be conducted.

Phase 2. Recruitment of participants and discussion of the Informed Consent Form. After a series of preliminary visits to the barangay and in some instances, arrangements and conversations were made through Facebook messenger between the researcher and the acquaintances; the researcher made a courtesy call to the barangay captain or any other member of the barangay council and to the person who would help the researcher in identifying the target participants. Then, the researcher sought referrals for those individuals considered to be the participants and recommended taking part in the study. The participants in the study were chosen via snowball sampling or referral.

Phase 3. Data collection. During the data-gathering activity, the researcher interviewed the target participants in certain areas such as the Barangay Hall, in the house of the participant, or in other places such as "centers for bystanders" in order to have first-hand encounter with the place referred, or the school. The data gathered were processed using the methods mentioned. All the data gathered were dealt with with utmost confidentiality by the researcher.

The methods used in gathering data for the research were: interviews and restorying. Interviews were used to gather facts such as information about people's place of work, age, and others. On the other hand, some questions usually had no opening items before the main purpose of the interview (Hannah, 2007). Since the theoretical perspective of this study was connected to interpretivism, the data collection was anchored to the thoughts of Edwards and Holland (2013), which suggest a wide scope of various philosophical approaches such as constructivism, symbolic interactionism (to which the study was also anchored), ethnomethodology, and others that lead to the understanding of social phenomena from those who are involved. Thus, in this approach, knowledge took the form of explanations of how others explain and gave value to their daily life and interactions (Yanow & Schwartz-Shea, 2006).

Phase 4. Writing of Narratives. After the interviews conducted by the researcher, the data gathered were transcribed, coded, and analyzed using the methods mentioned earlier in this chapter. By narrative analysis, Polkinghorne (2007)[10] means an approach to analyzing varied data sources that are based on the construction of narratives. In the case of the thematic analysis of narratives, classifying and building theoretical relationships among conceptual categories were the analytical tools; in narrative analysis, they become an analytical instrument that is used as a guide through narrative writing.

According to Slabon, Richards, and Dennen (2014), restorying is a pedagogical approach that is anchored to social constructivism, which uses a series of retelling and rewriting as well as addressing personal, student-centered, domain-applicable stories that advocate conceptual application, critical thinking, and not properly structured problem-solving skills that employ the naturalistic, qualitative case study design. It tells and breaks down how this urged learning and shifting, for example, in a master's degree class of two sections in conflict management. When it comes to data sources, examples of which are course documents, course assignments, class observations, interviews, focus groups, and surveys and then, the inductive analytic approach with the utilization of the constant comparative methods is applied in examining the qualitative data while the course section assignment performance averages are deliberated in the case of analyzing quantitative data.

Restorying is an activity in which a researcher collects stories and examines them for important elements like time, place, or plot and restructures those stories to organize them in chronological order. It has four stages: (1) The researcher spearheads an interview, and then the data are transcribed, (2) The researcher re-transcribes the data gathered, which must be geared to the main elements that are determined in the story, and (3) The researcher structures the story chronologically, (4) The participant is asked to work with the researcher on the final restoried narrative, and (5) The major benefit is that the restoried stories or narratives would probably represent the individual's lived experiences (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009).

Phase 5. Narrative Analysis. This qualitative research used narrative analysis. As the name implies, the narrative analysis focuses on the scrutiny of stories or accounts that usually come from individuals as well as groups, societies, and cultures. Esterberg (2002)[19] states that a narrative is a kind of story told by someone, usually a narrator, with a beginning, middle, and end, and it has some kind of plot or action. Narrative analysis or narrative method is a result of the so-called the "narrative turn" in the case of social science research that has been pictured and examined as the answer to the insufficiency of those human stories in traditional social science, especially in the 1960s in which prior works told about historical foundations of narrative methods integrating works on life histories as well as oral narratives. Life stories portraying the experiences of an individual, for example, poverty, unfair treatment, sexism, and other socio-cultural experiences, are the primary targets of the said method (Chase, 2005)[20].

As stated by Esterberg (2002), qualitative data are typically full of narratives and stories. Sometimes, data collection efforts are explicitly aimed at gathering life stories, as when interviewers collect oral histories or conduct biographical interviews (Anderson, Armitage, Jack, & Wittner, 1990; Denzin, 1989; Smith, 1998). Other times, stories can be documented in ethnographic field notes or in the process of conducting semi-structured or unstructured interviews. Texts and documents, like diaries and first-person accounts, may contain stories. Stories have a kind of structure of logic to them. One of the most widely used models for understanding the structure of stories comes from the sociolinguist William Labov (1978, Coffey, & Atkinson, 1996, in Esterberg, 2002).

There are six basic elements to a story, which Labov (in Esterber, 2002)[19] says occur in sequence: abstract, orientation, complication, evaluation, results, and coda, but a story must at least have some action. The first element, the abstract, stipulates an introduction to the story, and it signals that the story is about to begin. The second element, orientation, provides basic information such as who is involved? What happened? When? Where? This gives adequate information for the listener to determine

the setting as well as the main actors in the story. Then comes complication. What happened next? How did the events become complicated? This is a necessary part of stories; without it, there is no way for the storylines to advance. The evaluation answers to "so what" questions, like, why is it important? It helps the listener establish why a person should hear the storyteller out. Perhaps, the story is a cautionary tale or a success story, or perhaps, it is a tale of conversion. The results tell what happened at the end--- the punch line. Usually, stories resolve in one way or another. A common element of stories is a surprise ending or a twist in the plot, but not all stories have this kind of resolution. Finally, the coda, or conclusion, wraps up and lets the listener or the reader know that the story has ended.

Thematic analysis was also applied in analyzing the narratives gathered for this study. According to Braun and Clark (2006), thematic analysis is systematically identifying, organizing, and offering insight into patterns of meaning across a data set, the purpose of which is to reveal patterns of meanings relevant to answering a research question. This is not wedded to any pre-existing theoretical framework and is compatible with both essentialist and constructionist paradigms.

Thematic analysis has six phases, namely: (1) Familiarizing oneself with the data, which has something to do with transcribing the data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, and noting down initial ideas. (2) Generating initial codes which have something to do with coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set and collating data relevant to each other. (3) Searching for themes that have something to do with the collating codes into potential themes; gathering all data relevant to each potential theme. (4) Reviewing themes that have something to do with the checking of themes that work in relation to the coded extracts and the entire data set, generating a thematic "map" of the analysis. (5) Defining and naming themes that have something to do with the ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme. And finally, (6) Producing the report which has something to do with the final opportunity for analysis, and selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

The data gathered were transcribed, coded, and analyzed in order to determine the themes or concepts that were dominant based on the sense-of-place memories of the participants who resided near and within the confines of Ulian River. Each of the transcribed and coded data were restoried following the pattern of Labov (in Esterber, 2002), who stated the six basic elements of a story. The restoried transcribed narratives of the participants were given each a title. The manner of identifying or giving titles to each story was through identifying a certain portion of the narrative of the participant that was distinctive and catchy, and only that particular participant elaborated or stated in his or her narrative what was absent in the other participants' narratives.

The narratives were coded and restoried in local/vernacular language as decided by the researcher and his adviser in order to retain their authenticity and the genuine essence of the stories as stated by the participants during the interviews. Those restoried narratives of the participants were translated to English after they were written in the local/vernacular dialect in order to give a better understanding of those restoried narratives of the participants, especially to readers or researchers who may not be able to understand the original language used in the narratives. Also, in solidarity with future users or readers of this paper, the restoried narratives in the local/vernacular dialect were placed first, and the English translation was placed after each narrative in order to show the appropriateness and proper order of placement of those.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

In every research, there are procedures that researchers must abide by, especially when it comes to the welfare of the respondents and even other people and places related to the respondents. The researcher ensured that the data given must be kept confidential and never to be used in any other means except for data retrieval and analysis. The respondents should be assured that the interviews and other research activities conducted must be in accordance with the norms and customs of the people living in the community in order to avoid conflicts. If refusal were met, the researcher would look for another respondent and would not force the current respondent to join in the research activities.

The procedures for data gathering or fieldwork must be organized and specific and must put into consideration the conditions of the respondents the moment questions and additional thoughts would be added or interrupted. Finally, in conducting research such as this, one must be firm yet compassionate to the respondents because the respondents and even the researcher might feel intimidated if they are not at ease with each other, for they might find it inappropriate or unethical in some cases that might lead to their withdrawal from participation as respondents. The researcher presented the objectives of the study, the data gathered, and the participants with the aid of the barangay captain, any other member of the barangay council, or the person who helped the researcher in scouting for participants to the respective target participants and a consent form was given. The consent form used in the study contained details that were agreeable to both parties and signed by the participant once he or she was willing to participate in the data-gathering activity. If the consent were not granted by a certain target participant, it would be replaced by the another who was interested in participating as long as he or she was qualified based on the criteria mentioned.

If the participant was elderly, the researcher would seek assistance from the barangay captain, any other member of the barangay council, or an immediate member of the family to ensure his/her safety, especially if the elder had to travel from one place to another. The researcher would set a certain schedule in order for the elderly not to exert too much effort and time in going to the target venue and schedule of the interview. The elderly and the helper would be given further explanations, and they must accompany each other. If the elderly could not give further information because of illness or refusal, the researcher would automatically stop the interview and allow them to rest. In this case, the researcher had to look for another alternative to materialize the data gathering activity by choosing another participant who could assume the role of being a participant in lieu of the one who refused to be interviewed. Then, the confidentiality of the data gathered would be emphasized in order to give proper respect and credibility to the participants giving the data. The original names of the participants were changed to pseudonyms in order to protect their identity and to keep the confidentiality of their personalities as well as the information they gave when the data gathering was in progress.

4. Results and Discussion

It was found out that, from the memories of the study participants regarding the Ulian River, the sense of place of the residents of Ulian River revolved around five concepts or themes, which included the following: (1) the river as a food source and home to various freshwater creatures, (2) the river as venue of livelihood activities, (3) the river as a place of recreation and extension of household chores, (4) the river as a passageway, and lastly, (5) memories of the river in the context of change.

The sense-of-place of the river among the residents was a food source because the Ulian River was blessed with various water animals that were used as their food for everyday living. The river was also gifted with creatures that were peculiar and could be found only in this body of water, some of which were edible and others were not. The water animals found in the river, as mentioned by the participants, were fishes like tilapia (St. Peter's fish), karpa (carp), pantat (catfish), "dado", "bagtis", "gusaw", "anga", "butod-butod", "daroy", "unag", "tarok" from the carp family, and other animals like "igi," "unog", and "agihis" which are shelled animals, "urang (a shrimp-like animal), tangkig (a snake-like animal), turtle snake, and sili (eel).

Plants like "cachichas", radishes (rabanos), tomatoes (kamatis), and maya-maya (a kind of fungus) were found along the riverbanks and were used as food. The indigenous techniques in catching fish and other water animals in order for them to have food were "pangpukot" and "panglaya," which involved the use of nets, traps like busog, and other techniques like "panarap", "pang-atas", and picking by using bare hands. These were elaborated by the participants to support their claim that Ulian River was used as a food source. In some cases, the participants were so proud to tell that these animals were abundant in the waters of Ulian, and they were very much secure in terms of food. Some of the animals mentioned were plentiful, while others were scarce in terms of number over the course of time.

The Ulian River was also beneficial to the residents and even outsiders because they could earn money from the things found in the river, such as water, sand, rocks, and soil. Aside from earning money, there were activities present near or within the banks of the Ulian River that would aid them in their everyday living to make their lives comfortable and, at the same time, develop things for the benefit of everyone. One of the livelihood activities evident in the Ulian River was farming which involved the cultivation of the riverbanks and turning them into plantations of corn, rice/palay, bananas and other fruit trees, and vegetables which were irrigated with the use of water from the river. When these plants or crops were harvested, they were sold to various buyers, and therefore, the residents earned money from it. Other activities were fishing and quarrying, which involved the excavation or extraction of sand, rocks, and other materials which were sold to various buyers, especially construction firms. The water in the Ulian River was useful because, aside from its being used in farming in the form of irrigation, the Lambunao Water District under the Local Water Utilities Administration (LWUA) obtains its supply of water from this river to be consumed by most residents of the Municipality of Lambunao.

Residents and even outsiders considered the Ulian River as a venue for various recreational activities and where they could relax and enjoy the view of the river as well as its waters. They bathed there, especially in summertime and Lenten season or even on ordinary days because of its clear and clean waters. In some cases, some residents, again, during summertime or Lenten season, would build huts or temporary dwelling places or even just settle in areas where there were big rocks so that they could stay and feel at ease or free themselves from stress as well as to be mesmerized by the cool and enticing ambiance of the Ulian River. When the water supply became scarce, the Ulian River was the answer to their problems because the residents and even outsiders washed their clothes in its clear and clean waters.

Long before the existence of major roads and bridges, people crossed the Ulian River for them to reach other places. According to the elders, there were rafts or balsas as well as small boats traveling the river and used as modes of transportation for the

residents to go to other places. This is the reason why some residents elaborated that the river was used as a passageway in going to other places.

In the course of time, due to natural factors such as extremely high temperature during daytime, typhoons, floods, and heavy rainfall as well as human interventions like quarrying activities, the use of chemicals in farming, cutting down of trees for charcoal making, conversion of places near or along the riverbanks into plantations or ricefields, and even overfishing, the Ulian River has been experienced changes which led the participants to be nostalgic for they would tend to compare the river at the time of their youth to the present time. Since the participants were the living witnesses in the river's evolution, they, the participants gave their sentiments about the river and the changes that it has gone through. The sentiments they shared would indicate how they were satisfied or disappointed with what was going on in the river. They could tell how those interventions contributed to the changes that really affected their lives as residents living near the river. Some of the changes they elaborated would tell that the residents benefited from those, while some did not benefit from it and experienced a miserable life. The participants tended to blame those human activities which led to the river's further destruction as well as Mother Nature's uncontrollable wrath.

The themes formulated as well as the portions of the narratives included in the discussions which were given by the participants at the time of the interviews were anchored to the studies of Dawson (1999); Mestl, Wickstrom, and Stone (2000); Derr (2001); Nascimento (2010); Franz (2011); Srinivas (2016); Sauerwein (2017); and Lucio-Villegas (2018).

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

Rivers have been a part of the lives of people since populations began to expand and civilizations were in their infancy. Regardless, the Ulian River brings a lot of impacts to the citizens, whether residents of Ulian River or any outsiders. To them, the river is a food source, the sense of place of the river to the residents because rivers, in general, are abundant with creatures, either plant or animal, which are beneficial to their well-being. Because human beings need food and the marketplace or the town center is far from their residence or community, the residents have relied on what the river and its surroundings provide, like fish, shellfish, and edible plants.

The Ulian River is a place where residents depend on their livelihood and a place conducive to relaxation, and where they perform some household chores like laundry work. This is in relation to the thought that they rely on their environment. For human beings to survive, they need not go far for their needs if their environment can provide. One must find means to survive, and that is to go along with the environment where he or she is situated. Likewise, outsiders seek refuge in the Ulian River because it can also provide what they need, which their own environment cannot. Their need is either economically in the form of water for nourishing the plants and the biological need of humans for water, or in the form of gravel extracted by quarry operators; social which people establish connections with others who also use the river in the washing of clothes; or physical in which they want to seek comfort and relaxation, especially on sunny days.

The Ulian River, like any other river, is used as a passageway, especially in old times, because roads and bridges were not yet prominent, and the residents found the river as an alternative to going to other places. Some civilized areas are located near the river, so it's convenient on the part of the residents to reach these places by riding on rafts or small boats. The Ulian River, like any other river, has experienced many modifications or changes in the course of time due to natural phenomenon as well as man-made activities. These lead the residents to create a sense of nostalgia, and a sense of longing, because they want to foresee what the river may be like in the future, and they don't want future generations to experience the catastrophes they encounter in the river.

The Ulian River residents have a sense of love and attachment to their homeland. They are unified as one and reach out to others, especially outsiders, and even make their own stand or sentiment on how to give proper care and attention to the river and its surroundings because of its significance and their need for a nice and conducive place to live in. The future of the Ulian River lies solely on the residents as well as those who continue to benefit from what the river can provide.

Based on the conclusions drawn from the study, the following recommendations are advanced:

1. The Municipality of Lambunao, where the Ulian River is located, must give profound concern about this river because it is considered as its own natural wonder that every citizen can be proud of.

2. Likewise, the citizens in the municipality must take initiatives in preserving such as well as the memories connected to it so that future generations will look forward to the possibility that the Ulian River will continue to serve the entire municipality as well as the neighboring municipalities where this river flows.

3. The Municipality of Lambunao, where the Ulian River is located, must give profound concern about this river because it is considered as its own natural wonder that every citizen can be proud of.

4. Likewise, the citizens in the municipality must take initiatives in preserving such as well as the memories connected to it so that future generations will look forward to the possibility that the Ulian River will continue to serve the entire municipality as well as the neighboring municipalities where this river flows.

5. The Municipality of Lambunao where the Ulian River is located, must give profound concern about this river because it is considered as its own natural wonder that every citizen can be proud of.

6. Likewise, the citizens in the municipality must take initiatives in preserving such as well as the memories connected to it so that future generations will look forward to the possibility that the Ulian River will continue to serve the entire municipality as well as the neighboring municipalities where this river flows.

7. Future researchers need to conduct similar studies on a wider scope using other barangays in the municipality of Lambunao or even other municipalities in the province where this river passes or flows, including its tributaries; or other rivers within the Province of Iloilo or other provinces in the Philippines to further validate the findings in this study.

Funding: This research received no external funding. All the expenses were shouldered by the researchers, including the permits and other documents secured from the West Visayas State University Main Campus as well as to the heads of the barangays (villages) where this study was conducted and to the participants who had been a part of this endeavor.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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