

# **Narrative Interpretation of the Origins of Names of Barangay Dumagmang, Barangay Exciban and Barangay Macogon in Labo, Camarines Norte**

Catherine B. Tesorero, MAEd  
Universidad de Sta. Isabel de Naga City  
[ctesorero@usi.edu.ph](mailto:ctesorero@usi.edu.ph)

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## **Abstract**

The study determined the origins of the names three selected barangays in the Municipality of Labo, Camarines Norte, this research will investigate and answer the following research questions, 1. What are the stories or reasons about the origin of the names of the three barangays? 2. What are the cultural and social significance of these names in the barangay communities? 3. What supplementary reference material maybe proposed based on the results of the study? The researcher used Historical research design to gather and collect the narratives of the origin of the names of selected Barangay in Labo,

Camarines Norte. this includes inquiry that aims to gather information and categorized it according to Religion, Tradition, people way of Living, and Customs. The researcher personally interviews, examine, analyzed, and explore the group of respondents.

Respondents of the study are constituents of the barangay aging from sixty-five (65) years old and older to gather the narratives of each barangay. The researcher interviewed 5 respondents that has the knowledge of their barangay name.

**Keywords:** *barangay names, toponymy, oral history, local cultural heritage, Camarines Norte*

## **INTRODUCTION**

A shared culture provides a sense identity and belonging. It connects individuals to their history, traditions, and values fostering a sense of continuity and stability. Keeping one culture allows the preservation of unique traditions, languages, and customs that might otherwise be lost. This helps maintain cultural diversity within the broader global context. Passing down of cultural knowledge and practices from one generation to the next, ensuring that the future generation retain a connection to their heritage.

Though the Philippines is considerably wealthy in literature, colonization and globalization took over the country which made the people forget the real Filipinism; thus, most of its people failed to keep their cultural identity. Lustig (2013) in Intercultural Competence Interpersonal Communication Across

Cultures defined cultural identity as a “person’s sense of belonging to a particular culture or group which involves learning about and accepting traditions, heritage, language, religion, ancestry, aesthetics, thinking patterns, and social structures of a culture”. Yet, this cultural identity has become a vague notion to most Filipinos, especially to those who live in areas that had strongly been taken over by colonizers and modernity. (Valdez and Monayo 2021).

The Department of Education has continuously developed its curriculum to cater the needs of every learner that will served as their vehicle in achieving success. Creation of localized and indigenized in Instructional materials were encouraged to enhanced the capabilities, knowledge, and skills of learners in all subjects including Araling Panlipunan. This aims to strengthen local foundation and knowledge of learners on their localities.

The Department of Education Region V-Bicol has also allowed and recognized the contextualization and localization of Instructional materials in support of RA 10533 which states that “Curriculum shall be contextualized and be flexible enough to enable and allow schools to localize and enhance the curriculum based on their respective educational and social contexts”. This serves as the motivation for the researcher to study the narratives of three (3) selected barangay of Labo, Camarines Norte.

Many of us has few knowledge of our local history because of unavailability of reading materials that has local stories, legends and narratives. Most of the books published were focused on the National context and perspectives that usually leave behind the local history.

Therefore, this research aims to gather and study the narratives of three selected barangay of Labo, Camarines Norte to further enhanced and enriched the local culture and history of Labo and Camarines Norte.

## **METHODS**

### ***Research Design***

The researcher used Historical Qualitative research design to gather and collect the narratives of the origin of the names of selected Barangay in Labo, Camarines Norte. this includes inquiry that aims to gather information and categorized it according to cultural and historical significance. The researcher personally interviews, examine, analyzed, and explore the group of respondents.

### ***Research Participants***

Participants of this study are from the three (3) selected barangay of Labo, Camarines Norte. The selected three barangays were Barangay Dumagmang, Barangay Exciban and Barangay Macogon. Two (2) out of the three selected barangay were categorized as the farthest and inaccessible by public vehicle and can only be reached through the use of Habal-Habal or a private motorcycle that rendered transport service for quite expensive amount, this is Barangay Dumagmang and Barangay Exciban. Barangay Macogon were from the South Road or this were the barangay that were located along the Maharlika Highway or commonly referred as Manila South Road or South Road.

The inclusion criteria for the age of respondents aged from 65 years old and/ or higher, male or female, unemployed or employed, with the knowledge how the barangay was named and has knowledge with the origin of their Barangay name. The researcher locates and interview the respondents as recommend

by the Punong-barangay. The researcher also includes the narratives of barangay officials and other individuals in the

### ***Data Collection Procedure***

Data for the study were primarily gathered through oral narratives provided by the elders of the barangay. The researcher also included accounts from barangay officials and other individuals who possessed knowledge of the barangay's history. Once the narratives were collected, the researcher synthesized the information to construct a cohesive account of the barangay's origin. This reconstructed narrative was then presented to the community, where it was validated by the elders and barangay officials. In an effort to further support the findings, the researcher attempted to locate supplementary materials such as essays, articles, published documents, and official resolutions from municipal and provincial archives. However, no such documents were found.

### ***Data Analysis***

The research relied primarily on qualitative, historical methods—specifically narrative inquiry and utilized direct interviews with community elders, barangay officials, and local residents recognized for their knowledge of barangay history.

The researcher focused on the narratives that can be found in the barangay of Labo, Camarines Norte specifically Barangay Dumagmang, Barangay Exciban and Barangay Macogon were the selected barangay of this study.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Stories or reasons about the origin of the names of the three Barangays**

#### **Barangay Dumagmang**

Barangay Dumagmang, located in the municipality of Labo, Camarines Norte, offers not only a name steeped in indigenous memory but also a dynamic profile of demographic growth, geographical character, and cultural resilience that reflect its evolving identity. Geographically, Dumagmang is situated at approximately 14.108° N latitude and 122.623° E longitude, with elevations ranging between 130 to 180 meters above sea level. It shares borders with Pag-asa, Mapulot, Malaya, Exciban, and Malatap, and includes the smaller sitio of Palali. The area is connected via a tertiary road to Tagkawayan, Quezon, further emphasizing its strategic position in the upland zones of Labo (PhilAtlas, 2023).

According to the elders, Barangay Dumagmang had a big river in its center and here the logs of Sta. Cecilia part of Tagkawayan, Quezon were piled up. The native Bihog or Katribo people who first settled and live in the area are called Dagmangan, which in the language of the Katribo people means dump of Timber.

#### **Barangay Exciban**

Geographically, Barangay Exciban is nestled among several barangays including Malaya, Dumagmang, and Malatap. It is surrounded by forested and semi-agricultural land, typical of interior barangays in Labo. Like other upland communities, its landscape has shaped both the livelihoods and the cultural practices of its people, many of whom still engage in farming and forest-based activities. The barangay is situated at approximately 14.1532, 122.6503, in the island of Luzon. Elevation at these coordinates is estimated at 104.6 meters or 343.2 feet above mean sea level.

In the past, according to the elders, the name Exciban came from the words of the Kabihug people and the Americans who were looking for gold mines in the mountains. According to the elders, the Americans passed by the Kabihug people who were gathering Ban-ban (a type of plant used for handicrafts) to make bubu (a type of fishing net for fish and shrimp). The Americans saw the Kabihug people and asked what they were doing. The Kabihug said that they were gathering Banban, the American asked again why the Kabihug threw away other Banban. The Kabihug replied "maiksi banban" but the American had difficulty pronouncing it and said "Maiksiban". From then on, whenever the American was asked where he was from, he would say "Maiksiban" which later became EXCIBAN.

### **Barangay Macogon**

Macogon is a barangay in the municipality of Labo, in the province of Camarines Norte. Its population as determined by the 2020 Census was 2,537. This represented 2.32% of the total population of Labo. Barangay Macogon is situated at approximately 14.1722, 122.6653, in the island of Luzon. Elevation at these coordinates is estimated at 32.9 meters or 107.9 feet above mean sea level. Located in the upland part of Labo, Macogon is characterized by rolling terrain and cogon-covered fields, further validating its oral etymology. The barangay's agricultural profile includes rice farming, root crops, and small-scale agroforestry, which continue to connect the community to the land that gave it its name.

Once upon a time, there was a group of people living here led by a polite, kind-hearted and brave leader named Mang Gongon. He was very hardworking. While he was leading, he would farm, plant plants, hunt and raise animals, and fish for their livelihood. Peace and tranquility reigned in this place, so they lived happily with their families.

One night, they were surprised by an unexpected attack by evil spirits. They were intimidated and their property was forcibly taken. Mang Gongon, because of his courage, fought back, as did the people living there, but unfortunately their leader was defeated and killed. That was all their sorrow for the loss of their leader. They buried him and because of their great sorrow, they did not pronounce the name of their beloved leader, Mang Gongon, but instead, it was "Mang Gogon".

Over time, when the inhabitants visited the place where Mang Gongon was buried, they saw a plant with thin and long leaves. This plant grew quickly and spread throughout the burial area. Soon, they called this plant "Gogon" after Mang Gongon.

When the Americans arrived in search of natural resources, they saw the inhabitants using its leaves on the roof of their houses. They learned that the name of this plant was "Gogon" which soon changed to "Cogon" in the American language, which became "Many cogon" due to the majority.

### **Cultural and Historical Significance of These Names in The Barangay Communities**

In the context of Filipino barangay communities, names often hold deep cultural, social, and familial significance. The barangay, which is the smallest administrative division in the Philippines, is a microcosm of the larger Filipino society, and the names within these communities reflect historical, geographical, and cultural factors.

### **Land and Ancestry as Identity Markers**

The first theme revealed from the key quotes reflects and describes a strong cultural attachment to land as both livelihood and lineage. Oral histories often reference how land was inherited, settled, or cultivated by ancestors, linking geography to identity.

These names honor the tribe's cultural heritage and identity. These barangays maintain a strong connection to the traditions, languages, and customs of the particular indigenous group. Their names also reflect the community's economic foundation and the significance of their livelihoods in daily life.

### **Resilience and Community Solidarity**

Stories from residents highlight how the barangays collectively faced natural challenges such as typhoons or isolation and built a culture of bayanihan (community cooperation) and survival. This theme reveals how shared hardship nurtured cultural practices of unity, mutual aid, and informal leadership, especially in Dumagmang and Macogon.

Ethnic and linguistic diversity has become part of the barangay's everyday life. The cultural practices of migrants are not rejected but gradually adopted or shared, forming blended traditions and social unity. Residents returned from urban areas bringing new behaviors and values. It illustrates how modern and rural cultures interact, and how the community adapts to these

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the study highlights that understanding the roots of a barangay name can offer valuable insights into the community's identity, heritage, and future generation. Tracing the name's origin helps preserve this cultural heritage, ensuring that future generations remain connected to their roots. It also reflects the barangay's indigenous tribe, and occupation that can instill pride. It becomes a symbol of local identity and reinforces a shared sense of belonging. By tracing the origin of a barangay name, we can see the continuity of culture through various periods. For instance, some names reflect the impact of Spanish colonization, while others might highlight pre-colonial traditions or indigenous ways of life. This historical context is essential for understanding the evolution of the community. This can also become a focal point for cultural tourism. By sharing the story behind the name, visitors may gain a deeper appreciation of the area's history, culture, and people. This can boost local pride and economic development through tourism. This can also offer educational opportunities for both locals and outsiders. Schools and local government units can use these histories to teach about the area's cultural heritage, history, and traditions, fostering greater respect for the community's roots.

### **Recommendation**

The study recommends that documenting and sharing the findings about the barangay name's origin helps preserve the knowledge and makes it accessible for future generations. It can also raise awareness among residents about their shared cultural heritage. The result of the study narrates the origin of the names of Barangay Dumagmang, Barangay Exciban and Barangay Macogon.

The barangay can also organize an or include the narratives during their annual festival or the barangay fiesta. This could involve cultural performances, exhibitions, storytelling sessions, or even a parade. They can also involve local schools and youth groups to create awareness and appreciation for the community's history.

Subject integration and localization of the lesson can also be done to instill pride and a sense of identity in young people. It encourages respect for cultural heritage and supports community-wide efforts to preserve it. Engage students in activities such as research projects or creative presentations that highlight the barangay's heritage.



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