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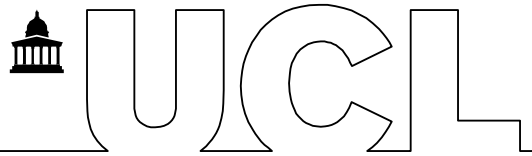
Colonial Legacies, Climate Change, and Food Insecurity:
Decolonizing Development in the Philippines

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Abstract:

The discourse surrounding climate change and food security in the Philippines, Southeast Asia's most food-insecure nation, is deeply entrenched in colonial narratives, perpetuating power imbalances and hindering effective responses to these issues. Vulnerable communities are disproportionately impacted by climate change and food insecurity and experience the ramifications of historical colonialism, which shapes the existing economic structures and marginalizes access to resources and decision-making processes. This dissertation aims to analyze how coloniality of power is continuously reproduced and perpetuates climate change and food security issues in the Philippines while also exploring decolonizing development approaches, such as food sovereignty, to disrupt neocolonial power relations, foster resilience, and address systemic inequalities. This dissertation will build on conflict and postcolonial theory, discourse analysis, and environmental justice concepts to investigate how colonialism has influenced contemporary discourse surrounding sustainability, climate change, and food security. These theories will contribute to understanding the intersections between power dynamics, colonial legacies, and environmental degradation. This dissertation will address these questions: (1) How do colonial narratives shape discourse surrounding climate change and food security in the Philippines, and what are the implications for vulnerable communities? (2) What mechanisms link colonialism to climate change and food insecurity, and how do neocolonial power relations perpetuate these challenges? (3) How can development be decolonized, and what role does food sovereignty play in challenging existing narratives to promote more equitable food systems? The methodology I will employ in this research is qualitative, focusing on discourse analysis to explore the linguistic, cultural, and socio-political dimensions within the Philippine agricultural history. This historical perspective is essential for tracing the processes that have led to contemporary structural inequalities. The study will then review relevant literature, engage with theoretical frameworks such as post-colonialism and political ecology, and analyze contemporary policy documents and political discourse to provide a comprehensive understanding of these issues.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

The Philippines, with its rich cultural history and diverse ecosystems, faces complex challenges related to climate change and food security, deeply intertwined with its colonial past. Since 1850, humanity has emitted approximately 2,558 billion tonnes of CO₂, raising global temperatures by 1.15°C above pre-industrial levels (Staff, 2023). However, the responsibility for this environmental degradation is unevenly distributed as wealthier nations, which historically exploited resources during the colonial era, have disproportionately contributed to this crisis, reflecting enduring patterns of global inequality (Beinart et al., 2009; Staff, 2023).

Colonial powers imposed agricultural practices designed to maximize economic returns, often at the expense of local communities and ecosystems. These practices prioritized monoculture and cash crop production, fundamentally altering indigenous food systems and contributing to widespread environmental degradation (Iyer, Maurer, and School, n.d.); Mahajani, 1974). Therefore, it can be argued that the nation's current vulnerability to climate change is not only a consequence of natural phenomena but also historical exploitation and the ongoing impacts of these colonial practices.

The modern/colonial food system, as articulated by Montalvo and Zandi (2019), exemplifies these historical processes by commodifying both land and bodies, treating them as mere objects for economic gain. This system has disrupted the intrinsic connection between people and their ancestral lands, leading to cultural alienation and environmental degradation. This commodification process, driven by the logic of capital accumulation, has displaced traditional foodways and imposed agricultural practices that are ecologically destructive and socially alienating. This disruption of the land-body relationship has exacerbated the vulnerabilities of marginalized communities to the impacts of climate change, underscoring the need for decolonizing approaches that restore these vital connections (Montalvo & Zandi, 2019).

In addition to environmental challenges, the Philippines also faces severe issues of poverty and food insecurity, as approximately 17 percent of Filipinos, or about 16.4 million people, do not meet their basic nutritional needs (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2012). Poverty affects a quarter of the population, with around 24.2 million people living below the poverty line (World Bank Group, 2012). These issues are most acute among indigenous peoples and small-scale farmers, who are disproportionately impacted by both poverty and food insecurity (International Fund for Agricultural Development, 2009). Factors contributing to this situation include ineffective land reform policies dating back to 1988, which have failed to dismantle the inequitable land holdings established during Spanish colonialism (Bello, 2001). Additionally, the expansion of industrial plantations by multinational agricultural companies—focused on crops like palm oil, banana, and pineapple—has exacerbated landlessness and poverty among smallholder farmers (Franco & Borras, 2007). Furthermore, large-scale mining operations have further compounded these issues by destroying landscapes and watersheds, undermining the livelihoods of local communities, while also contributing to the ongoing concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a few (Ballesteros & de la Cruz, 2006; Borras, 2007; CEC-Philippines, 2012).

The issue of food security in the Philippines must be viewed within the broader context of Asia, where varying levels of economic development and agricultural productivity exist. The region is characterized by diverse climates, cultures, and political systems, all of which influence food production and distribution. In the Philippines, as in other parts of Asia, food security is not merely a matter of food availability but also of access, utilization, and stability. Economic policies, government interventions, and the global food trade play crucial roles in shaping the country's food security landscape. The integration of the Philippines into the global market has increased its dependency on food imports, making it vulnerable to international price fluctuations and trade policies (Briones, Cajiuat, & Ramos, 1998).

Moreover, the historical context of land ownership in the Philippines, rooted in colonialism, has led to a highly inequitable distribution of land resources, with a few elite families controlling vast agricultural lands. This unequal land distribution has hindered the development of a more inclusive and sustainable agricultural sector, exacerbating poverty and food insecurity among rural populations. The persistence of feudal landholding patterns,

coupled with inadequate agrarian reforms, has prevented many small-scale farmers from gaining secure land tenure, limiting their ability to invest in and improve their agricultural practices (Briones, Cajiua, & Ramos, 1998).

In light of these challenges, various studies and reports have highlighted the need for agrarian systems that promote community empowerment, diversity, synergy, recycling, and integration to address inequalities, resource limitations, and ecological degradation while enhancing climate resilience (De Schutter, 2010; McIntyre et al., 2009; United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2013). Smallholder farmers, in particular, have been credited with enhancing resilience by adapting traditional techniques such as the use of local crop varieties, water harvesting, diversified agroforestry, soil conservation, and farmer-breeding practices (Altieri & Koohafkan, 2008; Bachmann, Cruzada, & Wright, 2009; Holt-Giménez, 2002). However, although these methods have promise, there is still a need for real-world evaluation and agreement on the best ways to successfully establish and evaluate the effectiveness of diverse, small-scale farming systems in securing food and sustainable livelihoods while addressing climate change through adaptation and mitigation strategies. (Altieri, Funes-Monzote, & Petersen, 2012; Lin et al., 2011).

Climate Change and Food Security Issues in the Philippines

The Philippines, situated in the Pacific Ring of Fire, is highly vulnerable to natural hazards such as typhoons, floods, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions. Climate change has exacerbated these risks, resulting in more frequent and severe weather events, including intensified typhoons, unpredictable rainfall, and rising sea levels. These environmental challenges pose significant threats to the nation's agricultural productivity, food security, and socio-economic stability (Holden, 2018; Heckelman & Wittman, 2015).

Agriculture remains a cornerstone of the Philippine economy, particularly in rural areas where a large portion of the population depends on crop production, fisheries, and livestock for their livelihoods. However, the sector is increasingly strained by climate change, leading to crop failures, reduced agricultural yields, and the degradation of natural resources. These

issues are further compounded by inadequate infrastructure, limited access to modern farming technologies, and insufficient support for smallholder farmers (Camba, 2018; Davidson, 2016). The nation's reliance on imported food products also heightens its vulnerability to global market fluctuations and trade disruptions, exacerbating food insecurity, especially among marginalized communities (Heckelman & Wittman, 2015; Smith, 2019).

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), food security is the state in which everyone has the physical, social, and economic means to access a sufficient, safe, and nutritious food supply that fulfills their dietary requirements for a healthy and active life. (FAO, 2006). Despite this, from 2020 to 2022, nearly 51 million Filipinos faced food insecurity—the highest in Southeast Asia—highlighting the severe impact of climate change on the country's agriculture and overall socio-economic environment (Mendoza, 2024).

Under the administration of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., the government pledged to implement transformative reforms to secure a stable food supply and maintain affordable prices. However, the reality has been starkly different. According to the FAO, the cost of maintaining a nutritious diet rose from P226.60 in 2017 to P242.53 in 2020, reflecting a troubling trend that challenges the administration's promises (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2020).

Government policies, such as the Rice Tariffication Law, initially aimed at boosting supply and controlling rising prices, have had adverse effects. These policies have weakened domestic rice production, with local farmers experiencing a 35% drop in income between 2018 and 2020, pushing many deeper into poverty (International Rice Research Institute, 2020). The government's reliance on imports has further exacerbated food insecurity, leaving the agricultural sector increasingly vulnerable to external economic pressures (Heckelman & Wittman, 2015; Mendoza, 2024).

Moreover, recent measures, such as the allocation of P1 billion for fuel subsidies and the introduction of rice price ceilings, have provided only temporary relief. These initiatives have often backfired, as price controls have forced farmers to sell crops at lower prices,

compromising quality and further straining their already precarious financial situation. The introduction of a food stamps program funded by the Asian Development Bank offers only short-term relief, underscoring the inadequacy of these responses to address the deeper, systemic issues at play (Asian Development Bank, 2023; Mendoza, 2024).

Thus, tackling the root causes of food insecurity in the Philippines requires a shift towards long-term strategies that prioritize self-sufficiency, enhance local agricultural production, and reduce dependence on imports. The current policies under Marcos's leadership have highlighted significant gaps in the support provided to the most vulnerable populations, necessitating a more comprehensive and sustainable approach to food security (Heckelman & Wittman, 2015; Mendoza, 2024).

Introduction to the Prevalence of Colonial Narratives in Shaping Discourse

The complexities of climate change and food security in the Philippines are deeply rooted in the country's colonial history, which has profoundly influenced its agricultural practices, land use, and socio-economic structures. Spanish colonization, beginning in the 16th century, introduced the *encomienda* system, which exploited indigenous labor for the benefit of the Spanish empire, leading to widespread land dispossession and the disruption of traditional food systems (Forster, 2024; Lockhart, 1969).

This colonial legacy was further entrenched during the American occupation in the early 20th century, which emphasized a market-driven agricultural economy focused on cash crops for export rather than local food needs. This shift established land ownership patterns that favored a few elite families while marginalizing smallholder farmers and indigenous communities—a structure that persists today (Mahajani, 1974; Camba, 2018).

In modern times, these colonial legacies continue to shape the discourse on climate change and food security. The globalized food system, driven by neoliberal economic policies, often perpetuates colonial narratives by prioritizing industrial agriculture and foreign investment over local, sustainable practices. This system commodifies land, food, and natural resources, viewing them as economic assets rather than integral parts of local livelihoods and cultural identities (Heckelman & Wittman, 2015; Ferrando et al., 2021).

As a result, the most vulnerable communities – those most affected by climate change and food insecurity are frequently excluded from decision-making processes, limiting their access to necessary resources for climate adaptation (Smith, 2019). These colonial narratives are reinforced through media and policy-making processes, which often favor Western technological solutions and market-based approaches while marginalizing indigenous knowledge and sustainable practices (Warren, 2020; Holden, 2018). This ongoing cycle of exploitation and marginalization ensures that the benefits of development remain unevenly distributed, with the most vulnerable populations continuing to bear the brunt of environmental and socio-economic challenges.

Research Objectives and Questions

The primary objective of this research is to explore the influence of colonial legacies on contemporary climate change and food security policies in the Philippines. This study will examine how these historical influences continue to shape policy frameworks, with a particular focus on marginalized communities. Additionally, the research will investigate the potential for decolonizing development strategies to address these challenges effectively. By conducting a critical analysis of policy documents, academic literature, and public discourse, this research will provide a comprehensive understanding of the power dynamics that underpin these issues.

The research will address the following questions:

- How do colonial narratives influence the discourse surrounding climate change and food security in the Philippines?
- What are the specific mechanisms by which colonialism and capitalist commodification of food and land perpetuate climate change and food insecurity?
- How can decolonizing approaches, like food sovereignty, be employed to challenge these power structures and promote more equitable and sustainable food systems?

Significance of the Study

This study is significant in its critical examination of the enduring legacies of colonialism and their ongoing impact on climate change and food security in the Philippines. By exploring the intersections of colonialism, capitalism, and environmental degradation, the research seeks to uncover the power structures that have perpetuated inequalities and vulnerabilities, particularly among marginalized communities.

Understanding the colonial origins of environmental and food insecurity is essential for developing more equitable and sustainable policies. The Philippines' colonial history has profoundly shaped its agricultural practices, land use policies, and socio-economic structures (Mahajani, 1974; Camba, 2018). The modern/colonial food system exemplifies how colonial exploitation has institutionalized the commodification of land and bodies, disrupting traditional foodways and degrading ecological systems (Montalvo & Zandi, 2019). This historical context is crucial for addressing the present-day challenges the Philippines faces in achieving food security and climate resilience.

The research further emphasizes the importance of decolonizing development approaches, particularly food sovereignty, which challenges the dominant neoliberal paradigms that prioritize industrial agriculture and foreign investment over local, sustainable practices (Heckelman & Wittman, 2015). By advocating for the integration of indigenous knowledge systems into climate adaptation strategies, the study highlights the potential for creating more inclusive and resilient food systems that prioritize the needs of vulnerable populations, including indigenous peoples and smallholder farmers (Ferrando et al., 2021; Smith, 2019).

The findings of this study are expected to provide valuable insights into how colonial narratives continue to influence policy-making and public discourse in the Philippines. As climate change impacts intensify, it becomes increasingly important to understand the colonial roots of the challenges faced by countries like the Philippines. By exposing these colonial underpinnings, this research aims to inform more just and effective policy interventions, contributing to a future where development strategies are inclusive, environmentally sound, and responsive to the needs of all communities, especially those most

vulnerable to climate change (Briones, Cajiuat & Ramos, 1998; Davila, 2018; Mahony & Endfield, 2018).

Literature Review

Understanding the Intersection of Colonial Legacies and Climate Change in the Philippines

To thoroughly understand the Philippines' challenges in adapting to climate change, it is essential to recognize the deep interconnections between climate change, colonial legacies, environmental vulnerabilities, and socio-economic disparities. Climate change is not merely an environmental issue but a profoundly political one, deeply embedded in the socio-historical context of the Philippines. The colonial history of the country, combined with its current environmental and economic vulnerabilities, shapes the complex landscape of food security and climate adaptation challenges it faces today (Wainwright & Mann, 2018; Malm, 2021; Saito, 2022). Recognizing the political nature of climate change allows for a more nuanced approach, one that addresses the root causes of these challenges and fosters more effective solutions.

Colonialism has left an indelible mark on the Philippines, influencing everything from agricultural practices to socio-economic structures. As noted by Wainwright and Mann (2018), the country's historical context is crucial for understanding its current environmental and socio-economic challenges. Colonial powers imposed agricultural systems designed for economic exploitation, which prioritized monoculture and cash crop production over traditional, sustainable practices (Iyer, Maurer and School, n.d.); Mahajani, 1974). This shift not only degraded the environment but also disrupted indigenous food systems, leading to long-term vulnerabilities.

Further expanding on these colonial impacts, Montalvo and Zandi (2019) in "The Modern/Colonial Food System in a Paradigm of War," describe how the modern/colonial food system commodified both land and human bodies, reducing them to mere economic assets. This system severed the deep connections between people and their ancestral lands, leading to cultural alienation and environmental degradation. The commodification process, driven by

the logic of capital accumulation, displaced traditional foodways and imposed agricultural practices that are ecologically destructive and socially alienating. As a result, the disruption of the land-body relationship has exacerbated the vulnerabilities of marginalized communities to the impacts of climate change, underscoring the need for decolonizing approaches that restore these vital connections (Montalvo & Zandi, 2019).

Colonial Narratives and Climate Change Discourse

The discourse surrounding climate change and food security in the Philippines is deeply entrenched in colonial narratives that perpetuate power imbalances and hinder effective responses to these pressing issues. The paper "Commons and Commoning for a Just Agroecological Transition" by Ferrando et al. (2021) emphasizes the importance of decolonizing and de-commodifying the food system to achieve a just agroecological transition. The authors highlight the need to challenge dominant narratives and reimagine alternative futures, focusing on how the urban food system's roots in colonialism and commodification have transformed food and nature into cheap commodities. Ferrando et al. argue that commons-based food systems, which prioritize collective governance, sustainable resource use, and equitable distribution, offer a viable alternative to the industrial and capitalist food system, which is characterized by resource accumulation and exploitation for profit.

The historical impact of colonialism on the discourse surrounding climate change and food security in the Philippines is further explored in Pascual's work *Hidden Voices: Re-examining the Conquest of the Philippines*, which discusses the Spanish conquest's profound impact on indigenous communities. Pascual (2023) highlights how colonial powers suppressed indigenous voices, limiting their participation in shaping environmental and agricultural practices. This historical marginalization continues to influence contemporary discourse, where indigenous knowledge systems are often overlooked or undervalued.

Similarly, Smith (2022) examines the enduring impact of colonial legacies on environmental vulnerabilities, particularly under the Duterte administration. Smith (2022) argues that climate change policies during this period have perpetuated historical injustices, subverted indigenous land rights, and fostered violence against activists. This analysis aligns with

Mahony and Endfield's (2018) work in "Climate and Colonialism," which explores the intersectionality of climate and colonialism and emphasizes how colonial exploitation of natural resources has led to environmental degradation and socio-economic disparities.

Human Ecology, Food Systems, and Environmental Justice

The concept of environmental justice is crucial to understanding the interplay between human societies and their ecological contexts. Davila (2018) provides valuable insights into the socio-economic, cultural, and environmental dimensions of food production, distribution, and consumption in the country. His work highlights the challenges faced by vulnerable communities in accessing nutritious food amidst socio-political unrest and environmental degradation. These challenges are exacerbated by neocolonial power relations that continue to perpetuate environmental injustices, as discussed in "Climates of Control" (2022).

The significance of integrating local knowledge systems into climate adaptation strategies is emphasized in the paper "From Absences to Emergences" (2023), which highlights traditional and indigenous climate change adaptation practices from the Philippines and other Southeast Asian countries. These practices, developed over centuries, offer valuable insights into sustainable and resilient agricultural methods often overlooked in favor of Western technological solutions.

Decolonizing Development and Promoting Food Sovereignty

In response to the ongoing influence of colonial legacies, there is a growing recognition of the need to decolonize development approaches in the Philippines. Food sovereignty has emerged as a critical framework in this context, offering an alternative pathway for promoting sustainable food security. Byaruhanga and Isgren (2023) advocate for food sovereignty as a decolonizing strategy that emphasizes community control over food systems, resilience in the face of environmental challenges, and the integration of indigenous knowledge into agricultural practices. This approach challenges the dominant neoliberal narratives that prioritize industrial agriculture and global market demands over the needs of local communities.

The concept of commoning, as discussed by Ferrando et al. (2021), further enhances the decolonizing development approach which is explained to involve the collective management of resources and emphasizes the social, cultural, and spiritual dimensions of food systems. It challenges the commodification of food and seeks to restore the communal bonds that have been eroded by colonial and capitalist forces. Ferrando et al. (2021) assert that "commoning is deeply intertwined with the decolonization of knowledge and practices," highlighting the importance of integrating indigenous knowledge systems into food security strategies.

The theoretical framework of Anibal Quijano's "Coloniality of Power" provides a valuable lens for analyzing the dynamics of climate change and food security in the Philippines. Quijano's concept of coloniality underscores how historical power structures continue to shape social relations, economic systems, and knowledge production. In the Philippine context, centuries of Spanish and American colonization have left a lasting imprint on the country's political economy, cultural identity, and ecological landscape (Quijano & Ennis, 2000). Applying this framework to the discourse surrounding climate change and food security reveals how colonial narratives perpetuate inequalities and inhibit effective responses to these pressing issues.

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis is an essential tool for examining how power dynamics are constructed, maintained, and challenged within the context of climate change and food security, particularly in the Philippines. The dominant discourse often reflects Western-centric, neoliberal ideologies that emphasize technological solutions and market-driven approaches, frequently sidelining indigenous knowledge systems and alternative paradigms that prioritize sustainability and equity. Norman Fairclough's seminal work, *"Analysing Discourse: Textual Analysis for Social Research"* (2003), underscores the role of language in shaping and reflecting power relations. In the context of the Philippines, this analysis reveals how policy documents and public discourse tend to reinforce colonial power structures by framing climate change and food security issues through a Western lens, thereby marginalizing the voices and knowledge of local communities (Fairclough, 2003; McDonald, 2013).

The historical roots of these discourses are further explored in "*Climate and Colonialism*" by Mahony and Endfield (2018), where the authors argue that exploiting natural resources during the colonial period continues to influence contemporary environmental policies. These policies often fail to address the underlying causes of ecological degradation and social inequality, instead perpetuating the power dynamics established during colonial rule. This critique is further echoed by Fleming et al. (2014) in their analysis of dominant climate change discourses, which tend to obscure the valuable contributions of indigenous practices to environmental sustainability. By marginalizing these practices, the prevailing narratives not only sustain colonial power dynamics but also inhibit the development of more comprehensive and effective responses to climate change and food insecurity.

Furthermore, discourse analysis offers a pathway for challenging these entrenched narratives. McDonald (2013), in "*Discourses of Climate Security*," emphasizes the importance of critically examining the language and assumptions embedded within climate change and food security discourse to expose their colonial underpinnings. This approach aligns with the broader goals of decolonization, which seek to dismantle the epistemological foundations of colonialism and promote alternative ways of knowing and governing (Quijano & Ennis, 2000). In the Philippine context, integrating indigenous knowledge into policy-making is crucial for developing strategies that are both equitable and resilient. Thus, discourse analysis not only facilitates a deeper understanding of the power dynamics at play but also provides the tools needed to transform these dynamics and create more just and sustainable food systems.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Frameworks and Colonial Legacies in the Philippines

In this chapter, I explore the theoretical foundations and key concepts that frame the analysis of climate change, food security, and colonial legacies in the Philippines. Conflict and postcolonial theories are introduced as the primary lenses through which the study analyzes power dynamics and systemic inequalities. The chapter also explains the rationale for employing discourse analysis as a key qualitative method and integrating historical perspectives to uncover how these colonial legacies continue to shape contemporary socio-political and environmental issues.

Theoretical Pinnings of Conflict and Postcolonial Theory

Conflict Theory

Conflict theory, rooted in the works of Karl Marx and later developed by sociologists like Max Weber and C. Wright Mills, posits that society is characterized by various forms of conflict between different groups competing for power and resources. This theory is based on the premise that social structures and institutions are often created and maintained to preserve the power of dominant groups, leading to systemic inequalities and social stratification (Marx, 1867; Mills, 1956). In the context of this dissertation, conflict theory provides a lens through which to examine the socio-political dynamics that shape climate change and food security in the Philippines, particularly how these issues are influenced by historical and ongoing power struggles rooted in colonialism.

The application of conflict theory in environmental studies is particularly relevant when exploring issues such as resource allocation, environmental degradation, and the marginalization of vulnerable communities. For instance, in the Philippine context, the historical control of land and resources by colonial powers has perpetuated socio-economic disparities that continue to impact the country's ability to address environmental challenges effectively. The concentration of land ownership among a few elite families—a legacy of

both Spanish and American colonialism—illustrates how conflict theory can be used to analyze the persistence of inequality and the unequal distribution of resources that exacerbate food insecurity and climate vulnerability (David, 2015).

Postcolonial Theory

Postcolonial theory, emerging from the works of scholars like Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, and Homi K. Bhabha, focuses on the enduring impact of colonialism on former colonies and their peoples. This theoretical framework critiques the cultural, political, and economic domination imposed by colonial powers and examines how these legacies continue to shape contemporary societies (Said, 1978; Spivak, 1988). Postcolonial theory is particularly concerned with the ways in which colonial narratives and ideologies persist in the postcolonial world, often manifesting in the form of neocolonialism, where former colonies remain economically and politically dependent on former colonizers (Quijano & Ennis, 2000).

In the Philippines, postcolonial theory provides a critical framework for analyzing the long-lasting effects of Spanish and American colonization on the country's social, economic, and environmental structures (Rafael, 2018; Mahajani, 1974). The theory helps to unpack how colonial ideologies continue to influence contemporary discourse on climate change and food security, particularly through the marginalization of indigenous knowledge and the prioritization of Western-centric development models (Varanasi, 2022; Briones et al., 1998). By applying postcolonial theory, this dissertation seeks to reveal how these colonial legacies contribute to ongoing power imbalances and hinder effective responses to environmental challenges (Brigg & Bleiker, 2017; Singh, 2023).

The deep-seated linkages between colonialism, capitalism, and environmental degradation are central to understanding the current challenges faced by postcolonial nations. As argued in 'The Nutmeg's Curse: Parables for a Planet in Crisis', climate change is not an isolated phenomenon but a facet of a broader planetary crisis (Ghosh, 2021). This crisis stems from historical processes of resource extraction, settler cultivation, and other forms of environmental manipulation that have drastically altered ecosystems to the detriment of global life. Ghosh (2021) emphasizes that colonialism did not just facilitate the expansion of

capitalism by opening new markets; rather, colonial extraction was and continues to be integral to capitalist expansion. The logic of colonialism, with its focus on resource exploitation and domination, drives the economic imperatives that have led to the catastrophic environmental changes we witness today (Ghosh, 2021).

Failing to recognize the patterns of political and economic development that have produced these global inequalities undermines our ability to develop effective and socially just solutions to the crises we face (Ghosh, 2021). In the Philippines, this historical perspective is crucial for understanding how colonial legacies have shaped not only the country's economic dependency but also its vulnerability to environmental disasters.

How These Theories Inform the Analysis of Power Dynamics and Colonial Legacies

Both conflict theory and postcolonial theory are instrumental in analyzing the power dynamics and colonial legacies that continue to shape the socio-political and environmental landscape of the Philippines. Conflict theory emphasizes the role of power struggles in maintaining systemic inequalities, while postcolonial theory critiques the lasting influence of colonialism on contemporary societies (Brigg & Bleiker, 2017; Moore et al., 1995). Together, these theories provide a robust framework for understanding how historical power dynamics are perpetuated in modern contexts, particularly in relation to climate change and food security (Holden, 2018; Singh, 2023).

In this dissertation, these theoretical frameworks will be used to explore how colonial power dynamics continue to influence the distribution of resources and the formulation of environmental policies in the Philippines. For example, the concentration of land ownership and the marginalization of indigenous communities can be analyzed through the lens of conflict theory, which highlights the ongoing struggles for control over valuable resources (Iyer, Maurer and School, n.d.); Trinidad, 2023). Meanwhile, postcolonial theory will be applied to critique the persistence of colonial narratives in shaping environmental discourse, revealing how these narratives perpetuate neocolonial power relations and inhibit the development of sustainable and equitable solutions to climate change and food insecurity (Heckelman & Wittman, 2015; Varanasi, 2022)

Discourse Analysis and Environmental Justice

Defining Discourse Analysis and Its Relevance to Understanding Linguistic and Socio-Political Dimensions

Discourse analysis is a qualitative research method that examines the ways in which language, both written and spoken, constructs and reflects social realities. This approach is rooted in the understanding that language is not merely a neutral conduit for conveying information but is instead a powerful tool that shapes and is shaped by social practices, ideologies, and power relations (Fairclough, 2003; Wodak & Meyer, 2009). Through this, researchers can uncover how particular narratives and representations influence public perception, policy-making, and societal structures, thereby playing a critical role in maintaining or challenging existing power dynamics.

In the context of climate change and food security in the Philippines, discourse analysis allows for a critical examination of how these issues are framed within policy documents, media reports, and public discourse. This is particularly important in a postcolonial context where the legacy of colonialism continues to influence contemporary socio-political and environmental issues as discourse analysis reveals how colonial ideologies are embedded in the language used to discuss climate change and food security, often prioritizing Western-centric solutions and marginalizing indigenous knowledge systems and alternative approaches that emphasize sustainability and equity (Escobar, 1995; McDonald, 2013).

For example, the discourse surrounding food security in the Philippines often aligns with neoliberal economic policies that prioritize export-oriented agricultural production and technological solutions to environmental challenges. This discourse tends to marginalize the food sovereignty movement, which advocates for local control over food systems and emphasizes the importance of traditional agricultural practices (Jarosz, 2014). By analyzing these competing discourses, researchers can better understand the socio-political dimensions of climate change and food security, as well as the power relations that shape policy-making and public perception.

Concepts and Their Application in Analyzing Systemic Inequalities

The interplay between discourse analysis and environmental justice is critical for understanding the systemic inequalities often perpetuated through language and communication. Environmental justice, a framework that emerged in response to the disproportionate environmental burdens faced by marginalized communities, focuses on the fair distribution of environmental benefits and harms, as well as the recognition of the rights and voices of all stakeholders in environmental decision-making (Bullard, 2000; Schlosberg, 2007). Discourse analysis, in turn, provides a methodological approach to understanding how these systemic inequalities are constructed and maintained through language and communication.

In the Philippines, discourse analysis can be applied to examine how colonial narratives and power dynamics influence the distribution of environmental risks and resources. For instance, the dominant discourse on climate change in the Philippines often emphasizes technological solutions, which are framed as the most "modern" or "rational" approaches to environmental challenges. However, this discourse frequently overlooks or dismisses indigenous knowledge systems and sustainable practices that have been developed over centuries (Escobar, 1995; Fairclough, 2003). This marginalization of alternative perspectives can be understood as a form of environmental injustice, where the voices and rights of indigenous communities are systematically excluded from decision-making processes.

Moreover, discourse analysis can demonstrate how language is used to reinforce existing power structures and maintain the status quo. The framing of climate change as primarily a technological or economic issue often serves to depoliticize the problem, obscuring the social and political factors that contribute to environmental degradation and food insecurity. This depoliticization is not merely an oversight but a strategic move that perpetuates systemic inequalities by deflecting attention from the need for structural change (Fairclough, 2003; McDonald, 2013).

Methodology

Qualitative Research Design

The decision to use a qualitative research design is rooted in the need to capture the complex, nuanced ways in which language shapes and reflects power dynamics within society. Unlike quantitative approaches, which emphasize numerical data and statistical analysis, qualitative methods allow for a more in-depth exploration of social phenomena, particularly the socio-political and cultural dimensions of discourse. In the context of this research, qualitative methods are crucial for understanding how these narratives perpetuate existing inequalities and hinder the development of more equitable solutions to these pressing issues (Fairclough, 2003; Alcock, 2008).

Given the vast amount of textual material produced within a nation-state, it was impractical to analyze all texts. Therefore, this study focuses on those texts that exert the most significant influence on public opinion and policy. These include documents produced by the media, academic institutions, government bodies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). These entities have substantial access to persuasive tools and play a critical role in shaping national identity and societal norms. As noted by Van Dijk (1993), individuals and groups with social power often have greater access to the means of persuasion, allowing them to shape public perception in ways that align with their interests. In the context of the Philippines, this includes analyzing texts from key civil society organizations, which are particularly influential due to the country's extensive experience with institutions of liberal democracy (Bankoff & Weekley, 2004).

Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model

The study employs Fairclough's three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as the primary framework for analyzing the selected texts. This model is particularly well-suited for examining the relationship between language use and societal practices, making it an ideal tool for exploring how colonial legacies are embedded in contemporary discourses. As articulated by Jørgensen and Phillips (2002), Fairclough's model is considered the most advanced framework for analyzing

the relationship between language use and societal practices. This model divides discourse analysis into three dimensions: texts, discursive practice, and social practice, which makes the analysis both comprehensive and manageable.

Fairclough (1992, as explained by Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002, p. 61), describes discursive practice as the process through which texts are produced, consumed, and interpreted.

Discursive practice is both a form of social practice that shapes the social world and is shaped by other social practices. The analysis therefore includes:

- The level of discursive practice: Analyzing the discourses and genres involved in the production and consumption of the text.
- The level of the text: Analyzing the linguistic structure.
- The level of social practice: Considering whether the discursive practice reproduces or restructures the existing order of discourse and the implications for broader social practices.

Data Collection and Analysis

For this study, 21 key texts were selected (see Appendix A) for analysis through a three-phase inclusion process. Initially, documents were chosen based on their publication date, focusing specifically on those that mentioned "climate change," "food security," within the context of the Philippines, published between 2009 and 2023. This initial phase yielded 2778 documents from various sources, including government reports, policy documents, and academic articles. broad sample that could offer insights into how these critical issues have been framed over the past 15 years. The primary goal of this phase was to assemble a broad sample that could offer insights into how these critical issues have been framed over the past decade.

In the second phase, the selection was refined by including only those documents that contained specific key terms such as "colonialism," "neocolonialism," "agriculture," "indigenous practices," and "sustainability" in any combination. This further narrowed the sample to a more focused set of documents that directly addressed the intersections of colonial history, climate change, and food security in the Philippines. Additionally, a

supplemental set of search criteria was applied to capture documents that discussed the impacts of these factors on local communities, with an emphasis on resilience and adaptation strategies. This supplementary search added a number of documents to the sample, ensuring a comprehensive overview of the subject matter.

The final inclusion criteria involved a detailed review of each document, applying structural descriptive codes to capture essential information such as the document type, publication date, author(s), word count, and the specific context in which the Philippines was discussed. The analysis also noted whether the document referenced specific Philippine policy initiatives or included perspectives from local or indigenous communities. Documents that did not have a clear focus on the Philippines or did not directly relate to the study's themes were excluded. The final sample included a curated selection of documents that provided a rich basis for analysis.

Each document in this final sample underwent an in-depth thematic analysis. Descriptive codes were manually applied and then reviewed to develop thematic codes (see Appendix B). Initially, a broad set of themes emerged, which were then refined through further analysis. Ultimately, these themes were distilled into key overarching categories that capture the critical discourse around colonialism, climate change, and food security in the Philippines.

Results and Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis of the discourse surrounding climate change and food security in the Philippines revealed two prominent overarching themes: the persistence of colonial power structures and the exploitation of local resources. These themes reflect a deep-seated division within the national and global narrative—one that not only positions the Philippines in a subordinate role on the global stage but also perpetuates the historical legacies of colonialism that continue to affect local communities and indigenous populations.

The theme of colonial power structures is pervasive in policy documents and media representations that emphasize economic growth, modernization, and integration into global markets as the primary pathways to progress. These discourses often frame local and indigenous practices as outdated or insufficient, thus marginalizing them in favor of Western

models of development. This narrative perpetuates the idea that local communities are inherently deficient, without acknowledging the rich knowledge systems and sustainable practices that have long been part of the region's history.

The second theme, the exploitation of local resources, emerges strongly in discussions about the agricultural sector, where the dominance of multinational corporations and the financialization of agriculture have led to a prioritization of export-oriented cash crops over local food production. This focus on maximizing profits for global markets has resulted in significant environmental degradation and has exacerbated food insecurity within local communities. The narrative of exploitation highlights the ways in which local farmers are often forced into dependency on volatile global markets, further entrenching economic inequalities and environmental vulnerabilities.

These findings suggest that historical and ongoing colonial dynamics heavily influence the discourse on climate change and food security in the Philippines. The persistent framing of development through a colonial lens not only undermines local autonomy but also hinders the pursuit of sustainable and equitable solutions tailored to the unique needs and capacities of the Philippines. The following sections will delve deeper into these themes, exploring their manifestations in specific policy documents and media texts, and discussing their broader implications for the country's future resilience and food sovereignty.

Chapter 3: Colonial Narratives and Climate Change Discourse

Historical Roots of Colonialism

Understanding the challenges of climate change and food security in the Philippines requires a thorough examination of the historical and socio-political context, particularly the colonial history that has shaped the nation's agricultural practices, land use, and socio-economic structures. The country has experienced four major phases of "liberation": from Spanish rule (1565-1898), Japanese occupation during World War II (1942-1945), and American colonization (1898-1946). Through this, each period of colonization introduced distinct forms of governance and economic exploitation, leaving enduring and profound effects on the country (Rodgan, 2021).

Spanish colonization, beginning in the 16th century, introduced the *encomienda* system—a resource extraction method that coerced indigenous Filipinos into producing goods for the Spanish empire, laying the groundwork for deep-seated inequalities that persist in the Philippine agricultural sector to this day (Forster, 2024).

The American colonial period that followed brought about rapid development but also intensified existing inequalities in wealth and income. The Americans introduced a market-driven agricultural economy emphasizing the production of cash crops for export like sugar, tobacco, and coconut rather than food for local consumption (Mahajani, 1974). This shift entrenched land ownership patterns that favored a small elite and marginalized smallholder farmers and indigenous communities, further exacerbating socio-economic disparities (Camba, 2018). As a result, a land tenure system was introduced, perpetuating the exploitation of natural resources.

For over a century, the relationship between the Philippines and the United States has been marked by significant conflict and enduring influence. Following the victory over Spain in 1898, the United States took control of the Philippines and crushed a burgeoning Filipino independence movement (Smith, 1986). After solidifying its colonial rule, the United States spent 48 years molding the political, economic, and cultural structures of the Philippines to

mirror its own systems, ensuring continued dominance and suppressing resistance (McCoy, 2009).

Today, the Philippines remains heavily influenced by colonial legacies, with Western ideologies and economic structures continuing to shape the nation's development. This has led to a persistent ideological dissonance, in which Indigenous practices are marginalized while Western models of development are prioritized, despite being misaligned with the needs and values of local communities (Rodgan, 2021).

Colonial Narratives in Contemporary Climate Change Discourse

The Philippines regularly experiences severe tropical cyclones, monsoons, and El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) events. In 2019 alone, 21 tropical cyclones entered the Philippine Area of Responsibility, with eight making landfall and displacing over 6 million people (PAGASA, 2020). As global temperatures rise, these extreme weather events intensify, exacerbating food and human security challenges (Eckstein et al., 2021; IPCC, 2021).

In response to these growing threats, the Government of the Philippines (GPH) has recognized the need for climate action, beginning as early as 1991 with the acknowledgment of the "right of the Filipino people to a balanced and healthful ecology" (President of the Philippines, 1991; Magalang, 2011). The establishment of the Climate Change Commission (CCC) through the "Climate Change Act of 2009" was a significant step in the nation's climate policy framework, emphasizing the inclusion of various stakeholders in climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts, including the integration of gender-sensitive, pro-children, and pro-poor perspectives in all initiatives (Republic of the Philippines, 2009; CCC, 2011).

However, these policies, while progressive on the surface, often remain rooted in colonial narratives that continue to shape contemporary climate change discourse (Holden, Nadeau, and Porio, 2017). The persistence of these colonial frameworks in policy discourse undermines the effectiveness of climate action, as they fail to address the deep-seated

historical and socio-economic inequalities that make the Philippines vulnerable to climate change (Smith, 2019; Ferrando et al., 2021).

Implications for Vulnerable Communities

As a result of the enduring colonial narratives embedded in this discourse, vulnerable groups often bear the brunt of climate change as they have fewer resources to recover from climate-induced losses impacts despite relying directly on the land for their livelihoods, leading to a cycle of poverty and increased food insecurity (Mahajani, 1974). Additionally, their exclusion from decision-making processes means that their needs and perspectives are usually overlooked in policy development or frequently dismissed in favor of Western scientific approaches, which are perceived as more "modern" or "rational," undervaluing Indigenous systems and undermining the effectiveness of adaptation efforts. This exclusion not only weakens climate resilience but also perpetuates the colonial legacy of devaluing Indigenous cultures and knowledge (Quijano & Ennis, 2000).

Furthermore, the commodification of food and land has resulted in a food system that is highly susceptible to global market fluctuations and environmental shocks, leaving the most vulnerable communities with limited access to food and land (Ferrando et al., 2021a). Thus, the persistence of these colonial narratives in contemporary policy and discourse underscores the urgent need for decolonizing development approaches to challenge the dominant paradigms that continue to perpetuate inequality and environmental degradation.

Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis

In reviewing the materials used in the discourse analysis, the research uncovers the persistence of colonial power structures in contemporary Philippines. The findings from the discourse analysis highlight several recurring colonial narratives that shape contemporary climate change and food security strategies while reinforcing historical power imbalances that hinder sustainable development. Here, I categorize these discourses into Coloniality of Power in Policy, Colonial Dependency, Government as Savior, and International Cooperation Versus Local Action, and Economic Exploitation and Inequality.

Coloniality of Power in Policy

The discourse analysis revealed that colonial power dynamics are deeply embedded in contemporary Philippine policy documents, shaping how sustainability and food security are conceptualized and addressed. Key policies such as the *Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022* and the *Climate Change Act of 2009* prioritized economic growth, modernization, and technological solutions, often at the expense of indigenous knowledge and sustainable practices (Office of the President of the Philippines, 2010; Republic Act No. 9729, 2009).

The language in these policy documents frequently emphasizes terms like "progress," "modernization," and "development," echoing colonial-era rhetoric. Meanwhile, the push for industrial agriculture and the adoption of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) is justified through the use of terms such as "innovation" and "efficiency" (Leonelli, 2018). Coded phrases such as "outdated practices" and "in need of modernization" were also commonly associated with discussions on agricultural policy (Pasadilla, Corong, & Taningco, n.d.). This framing marginalizes traditional farming practices, presenting them as inefficient and mirrors the colonial mindset that equates Western technological advancement with superiority (Leonelli, 2018).

Indigenous agricultural practices, which have sustainably managed ecosystems for centuries, are often sidelined in these policy documents. The focus on large-scale, export-oriented agriculture under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) reflects a

continuation of colonial economic strategies. Coded findings highlight the frequent use of terms like "global competitiveness" and "economic growth," often downplaying the importance of preserving indigenous knowledge and practices (Camba, 2018; Berkes, 2012). The emphasis on integration into the global market further reveals a preference for global market dynamics over local sustainability.

Colonial Dependency

The theme of colonial dependency is one of the most pervasive narratives uncovered through this analysis. This narrative is exemplified in policy documents like the *National Framework Strategy on Climate Change, 2010–2022* and the *National Climate Change Action Plan* (Office of the President of the Philippines, 2010). These documents frequently highlight the need for "support from international partners," emphasizing financial and technical assistance as essential to addressing the country's climate challenges. This reliance on foreign aid and expertise perpetuates the colonial mindset that local capacities are inadequate without external intervention (World Bank, 2010).

For instance, the National Framework Strategy on Climate Change describes the Philippines as being "highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change" and calls for "increased international cooperation" to help the country adapt to these challenges (Office of the President of the Philippines, 2010, p. 5). The emphasis on the need to "align with global standards" further reinforces this dependency, suggesting that local capacities are inadequate without external intervention (World Bank, 2010).

Meanwhile, The World Bank's report "A Strategic Approach to Climate Change in the Philippines" positions international institutions as key actors in shaping national policy, framing the Philippines as needing to "conform to international norms and practices" to effectively address climate change (World Bank, 2010, p. 2). This framing overshadows local knowledge and priorities, portraying the Philippines as dependent on external forces, much like during the colonial period when foreign powers dictated local governance and economic policies (Pasadilla, Corong, & Taningco, n.d.). This narrative not only undermines local

agencies but also perpetuates the idea that the Philippines cannot address its challenges independently.

Government as Savior

A significant narrative identified in the analysis is the portrayal of the government as the central savior in addressing climate change and food security challenges. This narrative is prominently featured in official documents such as the *National Climate Change Action Plan* and Republic Act No. 9729, also known as the Climate Change Act of 2009 (Office of the President of the Philippines, Climate Change Commission, 2010). These documents position the government as the primary actor responsible for leading climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts, often portraying the state as the ultimate authority and protector of the people.

For example, the *National Climate Change Action Plan* emphasizes that "the government shall lead the implementation of strategies to address climate change," highlighting the state's role in coordinating national efforts (Office of the President of the Philippines, Climate Change Commission, 2010, p. 3). This top-down approach to governance mirrors colonial-era structures, where the state, frequently influenced by foreign powers, was seen as the central authority capable of solving all problems. Phrases like "the government will lead" and "state-led initiatives" reflect this paternalistic perspective, suggesting that the state is the only entity capable of addressing the nation's challenges (Heckelman & Wittman, 2015; Patel, 2009).

This narrative tends to marginalize the role of local communities and grassroots movements, which are essential for achieving sustainable and inclusive development. By focusing on the state as the central figure in climate action, these documents often overlook the contributions that local actors can make in building resilience and adapting to climate change. For instance, media reports have highlighted that while government-led initiatives are prominent, there is often a disconnect between these top-down policies and the on-the-ground realities faced by vulnerable communities. In the article "*In the Philippines, Colonial Legacy and Climate Change Collide*," *The New York Times* (2023) notes that government strategies frequently prioritize large-scale interventions over locally-driven solutions, which can lead to the

marginalization of community-based approaches that are often more attuned to local needs and conditions.

Moreover, this portrayal of the government as the nation's hero, leading efforts to combat climate change, reinforces the state's central role in climate action. The government's actions are depicted as vital for protecting the population from the adverse effects of climate change, further entrenching its position as the ultimate authority (Office of the President of the Philippines, Climate Change Commission, 2010; Heckelman & Wittman, 2015). The *National Climate Change Action Plan* describes these initiatives as "crucial for the nation's survival," positioning the state as the primary entity capable of addressing the severe challenges posed by climate change (Office of the President of the Philippines, Climate Change Commission, 2010, p. 7).

This expectation is deeply rooted in the broader cultural context of the Philippines, where there is a historical expectation that the government should take the lead in solving major social and economic issues. As Guerrero (2009) notes, Filipinos have traditionally looked to the government to provide essential services, reduce socio-economic disparities, and address significant challenges. This reflects a continuation of the colonial legacy, where centralized authority was deemed necessary for national progress, and the government's actions are seen as essential for navigating the complex challenges posed by climate change. This narrative is also echoed in media outlets, such as the article from *The New Humanitarian* (2023), which points out that the government's centralized control over agricultural policies is often seen as the only viable solution to the looming food security crisis.

By highlighting these coded phrases and examining the language used in both policy documents and media reports, it becomes clear that the portrayal of the government as the "savior" continues to shape how climate change and food security are addressed in the Philippines, often at the expense of more inclusive, community-driven approaches.

International Cooperation versus Local Action

Another theme within this discourse is the persistent tension between international cooperation and local action. This dichotomy is particularly highlighted in the Initial Communication on Climate Change to the UNFCCC (1999), where the Philippines underscores its commitment to global climate agreements. While these international commitments are indispensable for global climate governance, they pose challenges when adapted to the local context, where unique socio-economic and environmental realities come into play. As highlighted in the Greenpeace Report on Climate and Food Security (2023), these challenges often stem from the difficulty in translating global climate mandates into locally relevant and actionable strategies.

The tension arises primarily because international frameworks tend to impose a one-size-fits-all approach that may not adequately address the specific needs of local communities. This is particularly problematic in a country like the Philippines, where climate vulnerabilities are compounded by socio-economic disparities and historical inequalities. The phrase “global standards often overshadow local needs” aptly encapsulates this disconnect, reflecting the complexities of implementing global climate policies that are often out of sync with the local realities (Greenpeace, 2023).

The analysis also revealed a disconnect through phrases such as "global policies do not always align with local needs" and "empowering local communities" that are central to discussions about the challenges of aligning global climate commitments with local realities. These phrases suggest that while global agreements are critical for collective action, they often fail to account for the distinct priorities and constraints faced by local communities. The coded findings show frequent mentions of terms like "misalignment of global policies" and "local empowerment," indicating a growing awareness of the need for climate policies that are both globally coordinated and locally adapted (Rodriguez, 2014; Greenpeace, 2023).

The Greenpeace Report (2023) particularly emphasizes the need for policies that are sensitive to the local context, arguing that without such sensitivity, global mandates can become ineffective or even counterproductive. The report argues that “empowering local

communities” is not just a moral imperative but a practical necessity for ensuring that climate policies are grounded in the lived experiences of those most affected by climate change. This argument is supported by the broader literature that critiques the imposition of global standards on local contexts without adequate consideration of local knowledge and capacities (Berkes, 2012; Nakashima et al., 2012).

The recurring theme of misalignment between global policies and local needs also reflects a deeper issue of autonomy and sovereignty. As discussed in the literature, the rigid application of international standards can undermine local agency, leaving communities with little control over the climate policies that directly impact their lives (Patel, 2009; Clapp, 2014). This is particularly evident in the Philippines, where the local challenges of climate adaptation are often overshadowed by the pressure to conform to international commitments. The use of phrases like "local adaptation challenges" in the discourse further underscores the difficulties that arise when global frameworks do not adequately account for local conditions, thus emphasizing a need to advocate for policies that are flexible and adaptable to local contexts (Sobrevinas et al., n.d.).

Economic Exploitation and Inequality

Another discourse that emerged from the analysis is that of economic exploitation and inequality. This narrative is deeply intertwined with the discussions surrounding trade reforms and their impact on poverty, and is illustrated in the research brief *Agriculture Trade Reform Leads to Fewer Poor but Poorer Poor in the Philippines* by Pasadilla, Corong, & Taningco. The analysis reveals that trade liberalization, while ostensibly aimed at poverty alleviation, has disproportionately benefited the wealthy elite while exacerbating poverty among the most vulnerable populations. Phrases such as "the poor are affected by global trade dynamics beyond their control" and "trade reforms have benefited the rich while impoverishing the poor" capture the essence of this critique. Rather than leveling the economic playing field, trade reforms have deepened the divide between the rich and the poor.

The narrative of economic exploitation seen in the documents is not new; it echoes historical patterns where resources and wealth were extracted for the benefit of a minority, leaving the majority in a state of deprivation (Pasadilla, Corong, & Taningco, n.d.). This narrative aligns with broader critiques of neoliberal economic policies that prioritize market efficiency and global competitiveness over social equity and justice (Patel, 2009; Clapp, 2014).

Global market dynamics, shaped by historical inequalities, further exacerbate economic exploitation and marginalization of smallholder farmers and rural communities in the Philippines. The *Analysis of the Impact of the Changes in the Price of Rice and Fuel on Poverty in the Philippines* by Sobrevinas et al. underscores how these global market forces disproportionately disadvantage the poor. The coded analysis revealed key phrases such as "disadvantaged by global market dynamics" and "historical inequalities," which highlight the systemic nature of these challenges. These dynamics perpetuate a cycle of poverty that is difficult to break, especially for those in rural areas who are most vulnerable to fluctuations in global markets.

The persistence of these inequalities is a stark reminder of the ongoing influence of colonial legacies in the Philippines' economic structure as the global market often imposes conditions that are unfavorable to small, developing nations. This has led to a situation where the Philippines, despite its rich natural resources and potential for agricultural self-sufficiency, remains heavily dependent on external markets and vulnerable to global price shifts (Sobrevinas et al., n.d.; Berkes, 2012).

Critiques of the neoliberal model of development further support the discourse on economic exploitation and inequality. This is seen in the works of scholars like Clapp (2014) and McMichael (2013) who argue that this model often leads those in the agricultural sector left to bear the brunt of market volatility and economic marginalization.

Chapter 5: Mechanisms Linking Colonialism to Climate Change

In addition to the economic exploitation of the country, the colonial history of the Philippines has laid a foundation for ongoing environmental degradation that exacerbates the country's vulnerability to climate change. Even 75 years after the Philippines gained formal independence, the repercussions including land degradation and resource depletion, remain as the Philippines continues to be highly dependent on agricultural exports (Camba, 2018; McCoy, 2009).

Historical Continuities in Land Use and Agricultural Policies

Enduring Impacts of Land Dispossession

During the colonial era, vast tracts of land were appropriated from indigenous communities, reallocated to colonial authorities, and later to corporate entities, drastically altering traditional land tenure systems (Kramer, 2006). This historical transfer of land ownership created a concentration of land in the hands of a few, which is reflected in phrases such as "land dispossession" and "concentration of land ownership" found in policy discussions. This continued dominance of these skewed land ownership structures has deprived many rural communities of their means of subsistence, exacerbating food insecurity and economic disparity. Davila (2018) highlights that this concentration of land ownership has fundamentally shaped the current food systems, which continues to disadvantage smallholder farmers.

Monoculture and Environmental Degradation

Monoculture, particularly the cultivation of cash crops for export, has also had long-lasting impacts on the environment, contributing to severe land degradation. The emphasis on single-crop farming, particularly the cultivation of cash crops like sugarcane and abaca during the colonial period, has led to widespread soil erosion, loss of biodiversity, and increased vulnerability to pests and diseases—issues that remain prevalent today (Springer, 2015). These cash crops were heavily promoted under Spanish and American colonial rule to meet global market demands, often at the expense of local food crops and sustainable agricultural

practices. The analysis identified phrases like "monoculture" and "environmental degradation," frequently appearing in discussions about the adverse effects of colonial agrarian practices. Davila (2018) underscores how these practices have resulted in unsustainable food systems that fail to meet the nutritional needs of local populations, further exacerbating food insecurity. This persistent reliance on such practices therefore, reflects a failure to transition away from colonial-era agricultural models toward more sustainable and diversified farming systems.

Perpetuation of Inequalities Through Neocolonial Power Relations

Corporate Dominance in Agriculture

The influence of colonialism on the Philippines did not end with its formal independence; instead, it evolved into what is often referred to as neocolonialism, where former colonial powers and global economic institutions continue to exert control over the country's resources and policy-making. This neocolonial control is evident in the dominance of multinational corporations in the Philippines' agricultural sector, where corporations often dictate the terms of trade and the focus remains on the production of export-oriented crops rather than food for local consumption, exemplifying the system that was established during the colonial era (Smith, 2019).

During the colonial period, the Philippines' agricultural economy was restructured to serve the needs of the colonial powers, focusing on export-oriented agriculture rather than local food production. This legacy persists today, with multinational corporations exerting significant control over the agricultural sector, often to the detriment of smallholder farmers and indigenous communities (Springer, 2015). Phrases such as "corporate dominance" and "foreign investment" are commonly associated with these discussions, highlighting the ongoing influence of neocolonial power relations. This is supported by Davila (2018) in that these corporate-controlled food systems undermine local food sovereignty and prioritize profit over the well-being of communities.

Financialization of Agriculture

This neocolonial relationship is also perpetuated through the influence of international financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank which were instrumental in shaping the post-colonial economic policies of many developing nations, including the Philippines, through imposing structural adjustment programs that prioritize debt repayment and economic liberalization over social and environmental sustainability (Ferrando et al., 2021a). Such policies have frequently led to the privatization of essential services, reduced support for small-scale farmers, and the promotion of industrial agriculture—further entrenching the inequalities established during the colonial period.

The discourse analysis uncovers a critical theme regarding the financialization of agriculture and its repercussions on local farmers, revealing a significant shift from pre-colonial agricultural practices in the Philippines, which were largely subsistence-based and the integration of the Philippine agricultural system into global market dynamics (McMichael, 2013). The analysis of key policy documents, such as the Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022 and the National Framework Strategy on Climate Change 2010-2022, reveals a continued emphasis on aligning Philippine agriculture with global value chains, often at the expense of local needs (Office of the President of the Philippines, 2010; Republic Act No. 9729, 2009). Terms like "global value chains" and "financialization of agriculture" frequently appear in these policy documents, reflecting a persistent prioritization of profit over the well-being of smallholder farmers. This integration into volatile global financial markets has left these farmers increasingly vulnerable to market fluctuations and economic instability, a point highlighted by the recurrent theme of "market vulnerability" in the media narratives and policy texts analyzed (Pasadilla, Corong & Taningco, n.d.). Furthermore, carbon trading schemes and other market-oriented solutions promoted as the primary means of mitigating climate change was seen to have lead to the further commodification of natural resources and the displacement of communities from their ancestral lands (Quijano & Ennis, 2000; Varanasi, 2022).

Empirical studies further support these findings, with research by Clapp and Helleiner (2012) demonstrating that financialization contributes to increased price volatility in agricultural

markets, which directly impacts food security. This volatility is evident in the Philippines' ongoing reliance on food imports. The discourse in texts such as the World Bank's *A Strategic Approach to Climate Change in the Philippines* (2010) and media reports from Rappler and *The New Humanitarian* reveals how this dependency exacerbates the country's susceptibility to global price swings, leading to higher costs for essential goods and further impoverishing Filipino farmers (*The New Humanitarian*, 2023). This pervasive influence of financialization in the analyzed texts also suggests that current strategies are not only failing to protect local farmers but are also deepening the structural inequalities that originated in the colonial era (Manogna & Kulkarni, 2022).

Colonialism and Climate Vulnerability

Policy documents such as the Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022 and the Climate Change Act of 2009 (Republic Act No. 9729) revealed how the ongoing vulnerabilities faced by the Philippines are deeply rooted in colonial legacies that have shaped the country's economic and environmental landscapes (Office of the President of the Philippines, 2010; Republic Act No. 9729, 2009). These documents illustrate a pattern where colonial histories of resource extraction and land exploitation have left post-colonial nations like the Philippines particularly susceptible to the impacts of climate change. As Mahony and Endfield (2018) emphasize, these colonial practices not only impoverished local communities but also "eroded the ecological resilience that could have mitigated the effects of climate variability and extreme weather events."

The discourse highlights several mechanisms through which these colonial legacies continue to influence the Philippines' vulnerability to climate change and food insecurity. For instance, the historical dispossession of land, as documented in the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) and other land reform policies, has resulted in the concentration of land ownership, favoring corporate and elite interests. CARP was launched in 1988 as a state effort to redistribute agricultural land from wealthy landholders to landless farmers in order to encourage fair land ownership and social justice. However, the program has faced numerous challenges, including resistance from powerful landowning elites, which has resulted in many rural communities still lacking access to land (Borras, 2006) This

concentration has perpetuated environmental degradation, particularly through the promotion of monoculture—an agricultural practice heavily emphasized during the colonial period. This is seen in the references through terms like "land dispossession," "monoculture," and "environmental degradation," underscoring how these colonial-era practices have persisted in shaping the country's current agricultural and environmental challenges (Davila, 2018; Springer, 2015).

Moreover, the discourse analysis points to the continued dominance of corporate interests in agriculture, a legacy of colonial economic strategies that prioritized export-oriented cash crops over diverse, subsistence-based farming. This corporate dominance is reflected in the language used in policy documents such as the National Framework Strategy on Climate Change (2010) and the National Climate Change Action Plan (Office of the President of the Philippines, 2010) which emphasize global competitiveness and integration into global markets at the expense of local food security. Thus, the analysis reveals that the financialization of agriculture, another colonial holdover, deepened economic exploitation by integrating local farmers into volatile global financial markets. This has made smallholder farmers increasingly vulnerable to market fluctuations, as highlighted by terms such as "global value chains" and "financialization of agriculture" in the analyzed texts (Clapp & Helleiner, 2012; Davila, 2018).

These findings also demonstrate that the persistence of these colonial-era practices highlights an urgent need for a critical re-evaluation of current agricultural and environmental policies. Thus, the discourse advocates for a shift towards more equitable and sustainable systems that prioritize local needs and environmental health, moving away from the colonial legacies that have long dictated the country's approach to land use and agriculture (Mahony & Endfield, 2018; Davila, 2018).

Chapter 6: Potential for Resilience through Decolonizing Development Approaches

In addressing the entrenched challenges of climate change and food insecurity in the Philippines, incorporating food sovereignty, agroecology, and commoning emerges as a powerful strategy for dismantling the colonial structures that persist in the country's agricultural and food systems. As discussed by Wynter (2003) and Ferrando et al. (2021), decolonialism is not only a pathway to self-determination but also a foundation for grassroots empowerment and liberation within food systems. This approach is particularly relevant in the Philippines, where historical and ongoing colonial influences have shaped current agricultural practices and policies.

Food Sovereignty and Resilience

Food sovereignty, as articulated by Heckelman and Wittman (2015), offers a compelling counter-narrative to the dominant, market-driven paradigms of food security that have been shaped by colonial histories. This framework challenges global capitalist structures that perpetuate inequality and environmental degradation by prioritizing the rights of people to define their own food systems. In the Philippines, where the colonial legacy of export-oriented agriculture has marginalized local food systems, food sovereignty is particularly relevant as it seeks to restore local control over food production and distribution (Heckelman & Wittman, 2015).

By focusing on local food production and ecological sustainability, food sovereignty movements in the Philippines are working to reclaim control over food systems from multinational corporations and global markets. This is seen through movements such as Masipag and the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) play a crucial role in these initiatives. For instance, Masipag is a network that empowers farmers through sustainable, organic farming practices, while KMP advocates for agrarian reform and farmer rights, both steadfastly opposing the commercialization of agriculture. These movements not only seek to reestablish local control but also promote environmentally sustainable and culturally appropriate agroecological practices, thus contributing to the restoration of local

communities' autonomy over their food production and consumption patterns (Heckelman & Wittman, 2015; Ferrando et al., 2021).

As Heckelman and Wittman (2015) note, "food sovereignty is not just about access to food, but about the right to produce food in a way that is culturally appropriate and ecologically sound." This approach directly challenges the colonial mindset that equates modernization with Western agricultural practices, offering a more holistic and sustainable model for food production. Moreover, food sovereignty provides a critical lens through which to examine the intersections of gender, race, and class within the global food system. The modern food system often imposes foodways that marginalize the practices and knowledge systems of indigenous and local communities. Thus, by advocating for the rights of these communities to define their own food systems, food sovereignty challenges the imposition of dominant foodways and promotes the development of just, sustainable, and equitable food systems that are grounded in the needs and values of local populations (Williams & Holt-Giménez, 2017; Mihesuah & Hoover, 2019).

Decommodifying Food through Commoning

Agroecology transcends the scope of sustainable agricultural techniques and is instead fundamentally a decolonial practice that challenges the commodification of food and land perpetuated by colonial and capitalist systems. By embracing agroecology and commoning, communities can reclaim and reaffirm the social, cultural, and spiritual significance of food—an essential step in realizing food sovereignty. This reclamation is crucial both at the local level and across diverse food cultures that coexist within local contexts as Ferrando et al. (2021) argue that recognizing food as a commons and practicing commoning highlight the critical connections that food fosters within families and communities, connections often maintained and celebrated, particularly within diaspora communities (Ferrando et al., 2021).

Commoning practices directly challenge the privatization and market-driven approaches that have historically marginalized indigenous and local communities. These practices focus on liberating agricultural practices from the exploitative dynamics of global market systems. The first steps towards moving away from the competitive and unequal market dynamics involve

freeing produce from the limitations of wholesale market distribution channels and releasing farmers from the uncertainties and demands of the global-local supply chain (Ferrando et al., 2021).

Campi Aperti and Genuino Clandestino serve as prominent examples of how these principles can be put into practice. Campi Aperti, a network of farmers' markets in Italy, and Genuino Clandestino, a grassroots movement that promotes the authenticity of local and traditional food products, both work to liberate food production from exploitative global market systems. By prioritizing direct relationships between producers and consumers, these initiatives ensure fair prices for farmers while maintaining the integrity and sustainability of local food cultures (Ferrando et al., 2021).

These initiatives also emphasize commoning practices, where food is treated as a shared resource rather than a mere commodity. This approach reshapes food systems to be more equitable, sustainable, and resilient, aligning with the broader goals of decolonizing development. By embracing such models, communities can reclaim and reaffirm the social, cultural, and spiritual significance of food, which is essential for resisting the harmful legacies of colonialism and neoliberalism in the global food system (Wynter, 2003; Ferrando et al., 2021).

This approach aligns with the broader need to move away from monoculture and cash crop production, legacies of colonial agricultural policies that have contributed to environmental degradation and food insecurity in the Philippines. By promoting diversified farming systems that are ecologically sustainable and culturally appropriate, the shift towards agroecology and commoning can strengthen local food systems and ensure that food sovereignty becomes a reality for communities across the country (Ferrando et al., 2021).

Integrating Indigenous Knowledge and Practices

A crucial aspect of decolonizing development is the integration of indigenous knowledge and practices into national policies and local initiatives. In the Philippines, indigenous agricultural methods, which have supported ecosystems for centuries, are often more adaptable and

resilient in the face of climate change than the monoculture systems introduced during the colonial era (Davila, 2018). Practices such as agroforestry, diversified cropping, and traditional seed saving not only enhance biodiversity but also significantly strengthen the resilience of local food systems.

For example, the Ifugao rice terraces in the Cordillera region, a UNESCO World Heritage site, have been maintained through indigenous knowledge for over 2,000 years. The sophisticated irrigation systems used in these terraces channel water from mountain streams, conserving water and maintaining soil fertility—demonstrating a sustainable agricultural practice that is intricately suited to the region’s unique landscape and climate (Davila, 2018; Makondo & Thomas, 2018). Similarly, the Kaingin system, a traditional method of shifting cultivation practiced by various indigenous groups, involves rotating fields and allowing periods of fallow. Despite often being misunderstood and criticized by Western observers as environmentally harmful, when practiced traditionally, it enhances soil fertility and maintains ecological balance, proving to be well-suited to the local environment (Makondo & Thomas, 2018; Warren, 2020).

Recognition indigenous knowledge is essential for developing climate adaptation strategies that are both effective and culturally relevant as Makondo and Thomas (2018) argue that indigenous practices are often better suited to specific regions because they are developed over generations, closely aligned with local ecosystems, and more responsive to environmental changes. In contrast, Western scientific approaches, while valuable, are not always suitable for these unique contexts and can sometimes undermine local ecological knowledge when applied without consideration of regional specificities (Makondo & Thomas, 2018).

Incorporating indigenous practices into broader development frameworks will allow the Philippines to address climate change challenges in ways that respect and leverage the deep ecological wisdom embedded in these traditions. For instance, agroforestry—where trees and crops grow together—is widely used by indigenous communities as it reduces soil erosion and improves water retention, making it a critical strategy for coping with climate variability in regions where Western monoculture practices have often failed (Makondo & Thomas,

2018; Warren, 2020). By combining indigenous knowledge with modern scientific methods, the Philippines can develop innovative and context-specific solutions that challenges the one-size-fits-all mentality often associated with Western development strategies (Makondo & Thomas, 2018; Mahajani, 1974).

Empowerment Through Local Governance and Community-Led Initiatives

Decolonizing development fundamentally involves redistributing power, empowering local communities, and fostering grassroots governance. Unlike the top-down approaches typically employed by state-led initiatives, community-led efforts provide more inclusive and context-sensitive solutions to the intertwined challenges of climate change and food insecurity.

Through the discourse analysis, it is revealed that these locally driven initiatives are better aligned with the specific needs and realities of the communities they serve, offering a crucial counter-narrative to the dominant, external forces that often dictate development policies (Naguimbing-Manlulu, 2021; Fleming et al., 2014).

The activism surrounding food sovereignty in the Philippines highlights the essential role of local governance in resisting the ongoing impacts of colonialism. As discussed in *The Modern/Colonial Food System in a Paradigm of War* by Felipe, Montalvo, and Zandi (2019), grassroots activism challenges the modern, colonial food systems that have historically marginalized indigenous practices and imposed exploitative structures. This activism is crucial in shifting the focus from global market-driven exploitation to localized, community-centered governance models that prioritize ecological sustainability and social equity.

For instance, local governance structures that actively involve community members in decision-making, such as the Barangay Integrated Development Approach (BIDA), are essential for building resilience against climate impacts. This bottom-up approach not only aligns with the principles of food sovereignty but also reinforces the autonomy of communities, allowing them to shape their development according to their unique cultural and environmental contexts (Balisacan & Pernia, 2002).

The grassroots activism described by Felipe, Montalvo, and Zandi (2019) also underscores the importance of reclaiming control over food systems from the grip of multinational corporations and global markets. Manifested in community-led initiatives, this activism empowers local populations to govern their resources and livelihoods in a way that reflects their values and needs. Organizations like the Pambansang Kilusan ng mga Samahang Magsasaka (PAKISAMA), a national federation of farmers' organizations, demonstrate how activism can drive sustainable agricultural practices that are deeply connected to local cultural and ecological contexts.

By promoting agroecology and community-led governance, these movements challenge the exploitative dynamics of the global food system and foster resilience at the local level. This shift not only challenges the legacy of colonialism but also lays the foundation for a more equitable and sustainable future where local communities are at the forefront of development (Felipe, Montalvo & Zandi, 2019).

Chapter 7: Discussion and Conclusion

Implications for Policy and Practice

This dissertation underscores the critical need to address climate change and food security in the Philippines through decolonizing development approaches that emphasize equity, inclusivity, and sustainability. The findings reveal that current policy frameworks, deeply entrenched in colonial legacies, often perpetuate power imbalances and fail to adequately meet the needs of marginalized communities. These colonial narratives are reflected in the persistent emphasis on market-driven solutions, technological fixes, and the prioritization of export-oriented agriculture over local food systems (Heckelman & Wittman, 2015). Such approaches have historically marginalized indigenous knowledge systems, undermining the potential for truly sustainable development (Briones, Cajiuat & Ramos, 1998).

To create a more just and effective policy landscape, it is essential to actively dismantle the colonial foundations that continue to shape current policies. This involves a critical re-examination of existing strategies, such as the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), which should be restructured to address the historical injustices of land dispossession more effectively. Rather than merely redistributing land, CARP must empower indigenous and smallholder farmers to manage their land sustainably in ways that align with their cultural practices (Camba, 2018). This shift would promote greater local autonomy and resilience.

The ongoing emphasis on monoculture and cash crop production, which is a legacy of colonial agricultural policies, has significantly contributed to environmental degradation and food insecurity. Decolonizing agricultural policy requires a transition towards diversified farming systems that are both ecologically sustainable and culturally appropriate (Ferrando et al., 2021). Supporting agroecological practices that enhance biodiversity, restore soil health, and build resilience against climate change would not only promote environmental sustainability but also strengthen local food systems, ensuring that food sovereignty becomes a reality for communities across the Philippines (Smith, 2019).

The government's reliance on neoliberal economic policies, such as the Rice Tariffication Law, has further exposed the vulnerabilities in the current food security strategy. These policies often prioritize global market demands over local food needs, exacerbating food insecurity and leaving smallholder farmers susceptible to economic shocks (Heckelman & Wittman, 2015). A decolonized approach to food security would involve revising these policies to prioritize local production and consumption, reducing dependency on food imports, and protecting the livelihoods of local farmers (Mendoza, 2024).

Integrating indigenous knowledge into national policy frameworks is also vital for decolonizing development. Indigenous practices, which have sustained local ecosystems for centuries, offer valuable insights into sustainability and resilience (Davila, 2018). Policymakers must recognize the significance of these practices and create pathways for their inclusion in national climate adaptation and food security strategies. This approach would honor the cultural heritage of indigenous communities and provide context-specific solutions to the challenges posed by climate change (Mahony & Endfield, 2018).

The importance of these recommendations is further supported by the critical discourse analysis conducted by Knezevic et al. (2017), which highlights the tension between internalized dominant discourses and the emergence of alternative narratives focused on social justice and systemic change. In the context of the Philippines, this tension is evident as vulnerable communities often internalize narratives that blame them for their food insecurity, while simultaneously beginning to challenge these narratives by highlighting the structural factors rooted in colonial history and neoliberal policies. As these communities engage in discussions about food sovereignty and climate resilience, they develop a stronger sense of agency, which can contribute to more effective and equitable policy responses (Knezevic et al., 2017).

By acknowledging and addressing these tensions, policymakers can facilitate the development of more inclusive and responsive strategies that genuinely tackle the root causes of food insecurity and climate vulnerability. This approach requires a fundamental shift in how the interconnections between climate change, food security, and colonial legacies are

understood and addressed, moving towards policies that truly reflect the needs and aspirations of the most marginalized communities (Escobar, 1995).

Limitations and Future Research

While this dissertation offers significant insights into the colonial roots of climate change and food security challenges in the Philippines, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of the study. The scope of the discourse analysis was primarily confined to policy documents, academic literature, and media sources, which may not fully capture the lived experiences and perspectives of marginalized communities. For instance, the voices of indigenous groups or small-scale farmers may not be adequately represented, potentially leading to an incomplete understanding of how colonial narratives are sustained or challenged within different segments of society (Fairclough, 2003; Knezevic et al., 2014).

Moreover, the methodological approach used in this study, while effective in uncovering the power relations embedded in climate change and food security discourses, is inherently interpretative and subjective. The qualitative nature of this analysis means that the findings are influenced by the researcher's perspective, which could introduce potential biases, particularly in identifying and categorizing discourses (Foucault, 1972; Kendall & Wickham, 1999; Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2017). Additionally, the complexity of colonial and postcolonial contexts makes it difficult to disentangle historical influences from contemporary discourses fully, adding another layer of complexity to the analysis (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 1995).

The study also emphasizes the impact of colonialism and capitalism on land and agricultural practices. However, other dimensions of colonial legacies, such as their influence on education, health, and governance, also warrant further exploration. These factors significantly contribute to contemporary climate vulnerabilities and should be examined in future research. Additionally, the role of international financial institutions and trade agreements in perpetuating neocolonial economic relations needs further investigation to provide a holistic understanding of the global forces that continue to shape local realities (Camba, 2018; McMichael, 2013).

Furthermore, while the research heavily relies on policy documents and public discourse as primary sources of data, there is an inherent limitation in assessing the actual impact of these discourses on the ground. The relationship between discourse and practice is complex, and while discourse analysis can reveal the ideologies and power structures embedded in language, it does not necessarily capture how these discourses translate into action or how they are perceived and resisted by the broader population (Van Dijk, 1993). For example, while the study identifies a disconnect between global climate mandates and local needs, further research is needed to understand how local communities are navigating these challenges in practice (Knezevic et al., 2014).

Finally, the potential of decolonizing development approaches, such as food sovereignty, presents a rich area for future research. Scholars and policymakers should focus on the practical implementation of these approaches, assessing their impact on food security, community resilience, and environmental sustainability. By documenting and analyzing successful case studies, future research can contribute to the development of policies that support resilient and just food systems in the Philippines and beyond (Heckelman & Wittman, 2015; Ferrando et al., 2021).

In summary, while this research provides critical insights into the enduring colonial legacies in Philippine climate change and food security discourses, it is crucial to acknowledge these limitations. Addressing these gaps through future research, particularly by incorporating a broader range of voices and employing mixed methods, will provide a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of how historical power structures continue to shape contemporary policy and public discourse in the Philippines.

Conclusion

This dissertation has critically examined the colonial legacies that continue to shape the challenges of climate change and food security in the Philippines. By exposing the deep-rooted power structures and inequalities that have persisted from the colonial era to the present, this study highlights the need for a fundamental shift in how these issues are addressed. Decolonizing development approaches—centered on food sovereignty, the integration of indigenous knowledge, and community empowerment—offer promising pathways for building a more just and sustainable future for the Philippines.

The study's findings underscore that the current policy landscape, influenced by colonial narratives, often exacerbates rather than alleviates the vulnerabilities of marginalized communities. As climate change intensifies, the urgency of adopting decolonizing approaches becomes increasingly clear. These approaches not only challenge the historical injustices that have shaped the Philippines' socio-economic landscape but also provide a framework for creating more resilient, equitable, and sustainable food systems.

Ultimately, decolonizing development is not just about rectifying past wrongs; it is about envisioning and building a future where all communities, particularly those most affected by climate change and food insecurity, have the power, resources, and agency to thrive. This dissertation contributes to this ongoing effort, offering insights and recommendations that can guide policymakers, scholars, and activists in their work to achieve a more just and sustainable world for the Philippines and beyond.

Future Research and Recommendations

The findings of this dissertation highlight several areas that warrant further investigation and suggest a number of recommendations for both academic research and policy practice. Future research should aim to address the limitations identified in this study and explore new dimensions of the colonial legacies affecting climate change and food security in the Philippines.

Expanding the Scope of Discourse Analysis

To provide a more comprehensive understanding of how colonial legacies continue to shape climate change and food security discourses, future studies should incorporate a broader range of voices, particularly those from marginalized communities such as indigenous peoples, small-scale farmers, and grassroots organizations. This could involve employing participatory research methods that allow these communities to actively contribute to the research process, ensuring their perspectives and experiences are adequately represented (Fleming et al., 2014; Fairclough, 2003). Additionally, expanding the scope of discourse analysis to include a wider variety of media, including social media, local publications, and community-based platforms, would offer a richer, more diverse set of data.

Regional Comparative Studies

Given the geographical limitations of this study, future research should conduct comparative analyses across different regions of the Philippines. Such studies could explore how regional variations in colonial history, cultural practices, and local economies influence the current challenges of climate change and food security. This approach would provide insights that are more applicable across different contexts within the country, offering a foundation for developing region-specific policy interventions that are culturally and environmentally appropriate (Holden, 2018; Mahony & Endfield, 2018).

Interdisciplinary Approaches to Colonial Legacies

Future research should adopt an interdisciplinary approach to explore other dimensions of colonial legacies, such as their influence on education, health, and governance.

Understanding how these factors intersect with environmental vulnerabilities will provide a more holistic view of the challenges faced by marginalized communities in the Philippines. Furthermore, exploring the role of international financial institutions, trade agreements, and global economic policies in perpetuating neocolonial economic relations would offer valuable insights into the broader global forces that shape local realities (Camba, 2018; McMichael, 2013).

Practical Implementation of Decolonizing Development Approaches

One of the most critical areas for future research is the practical implementation of decolonizing development approaches, such as food sovereignty. Scholars and policymakers

should focus on evaluating the impact of these approaches on food security, community resilience, and environmental sustainability. By documenting and analyzing successful case studies, future research can contribute to the development of policies and practices that support resilient and just food systems. This includes examining how indigenous knowledge systems can be effectively integrated into national policy frameworks to enhance climate adaptation strategies (Heckelman & Wittman, 2015; Ferrando et al., 2021).

Recommendations for Policy Practice

Based on the findings of this dissertation, several recommendations can be made for policymakers. Firstly, there is a need to critically re-examine and restructure existing policies, such as the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), to genuinely address historical injustices and empower indigenous and smallholder farmers. This should involve shifting from a focus on land redistribution to supporting sustainable land management practices that are aligned with local cultural traditions (Camba, 2018; Davila, 2018).

Secondly, policies should stop promoting monoculture and cash crop production, contributing to environmental degradation and food insecurity, and instead support diversified, ecologically sustainable farming systems. This shift would not only address ecological sustainability but also strengthen local food systems, making food sovereignty a reality for communities across the Philippines (Ferrando et al., 2021; Smith, 2019).

Lastly, policymakers need to revise neoliberal economic policies, such as the Rice Tariffication Law that prioritize global markets over local food needs and instead focus on local production and consumption, reduce dependency on food imports, and protect the livelihoods of smallholder farmers (Heckelman & Wittman, 2015; Mendoza, 2024).

Integrating indigenous knowledge into national policy frameworks would further enhance the cultural relevance and effectiveness of climate adaptation strategies (Davila, 2018; Mahony & Endfield, 2018).

By pursuing these recommendations, policymakers can begin to dismantle the colonial legacies that continue to shape the Philippines' approach to climate change and food security, paving the way for a more just, equitable, and sustainable future.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Selected Texts for Discourse Analysis

The research utilized these materials to conduct a comprehensive discourse analysis on the influence of colonial legacies on climate change and food security in the Philippines.

Policy Documents

1. Philippine Development Plan (2017-2022)

This document outlines the government's strategic goals, including its approach to climate change and food security. Analyzing this plan will provide insights into how the government frames these issues within the broader context of national development, potentially reflecting colonial legacies (GPH, 2017).

2. Climate Change Act of 2009 (Republic Act No. 9729)

This act established the Climate Change Commission (CCC) and is central to understanding the Philippines' policy framework for climate adaptation and mitigation. The language of this act will be scrutinized to uncover any colonial biases that may influence its implementation (GPH, 2009).

3. Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA) of 1997

This act is crucial for understanding how indigenous rights are incorporated into the Philippines' environmental policies. The analysis will focus on how the act addresses or fails to address the historical marginalization of indigenous knowledge systems (Therriault, 2019).

4. National Framework Strategy on Climate Change, 2010–2022

This document, issued by the Office of the President of the Philippines, outlines the national strategy for climate change mitigation and adaptation. It will be examined for how it aligns with or diverges from colonial-era policies (Office of the President of the Philippines, 2010).

5. National Climate Change Action Plan

This action plan, developed by the Climate Change Commission, provides a detailed roadmap for addressing climate change impacts in the Philippines. The document will be analyzed to see if it perpetuates colonial power dynamics (Office of the President of the Philippines, Climate Change Commission, 2010).

Academic Literature

- 1.** Heckelman, A., & Wittman, H. (2015) "Food Sovereignty: A Framework for Assessing Agrarian Responses to Climate Change in the Philippines."
Their work on food sovereignty offers a theoretical foundation for analyzing resistance to colonial agricultural models. This research will draw on their insights to explore how food sovereignty movements challenge the dominant, colonial-informed discourses on food security.
- 2.** Forster, J. C. (2024). "The Encomienda System in the Philippine Islands: 1571-1597"
This study provides historical context for contemporary land-use issues in the Philippines. It will be used to trace the colonial origins of current agricultural practices and their environmental impacts.
- 3.** Pasadilla, G., Corong, E., & Taningco, A. (n.d.). "Agriculture Trade Reform Leads to Fewer Poor but Poorer Poor in the Philippines."
Their research on agricultural trade reform in the Philippines will be used to examine the economic dimensions of food insecurity, focusing on how trade policies may perpetuate colonial legacies.

Media Articles

- 1.** Rappler
 - Rodriguez, F. (2014). "How Climate Change Threatens Our Food Security"
This article discusses the impact of climate change on food security in the Philippines, providing a contemporary media perspective on the issues.
 - Los Trinos, R.D. (2022). "[OPINION] Food Insecurity and the Politics of Codependency"
This opinion piece explores the intersection of food insecurity and political dynamics in the Philippines, offering critical insights into the ongoing influence of colonial legacies on contemporary issues.
 - Arceo, A. (2023). "Explainer: How Does Climate Change Affect Farming and Food Security?"
This piece offers insights into the public discourse on climate change and agriculture in the Philippines, highlighting potential colonial narratives.
- 2.** The Philippine Daily Inquirer
 - "The Nexus Between Food Insecurity and National Security"
This article explores the connections between food insecurity and national

security, providing a lens to examine how colonial legacies may influence current policies.

3. ABS-CBN News

- "DSWD Chief Gatchalian Tells Gadon Poverty is Real"

This article will be used to analyze how poverty, a significant factor in food insecurity, is discussed in the media and whether these discussions reflect colonial biases.

International Reports

1. Greenpeace (2023)

Greenpeace Report on Climate and Food Security: This report provides a global perspective on climate change and food security, which will be analyzed to see how international viewpoints are localized in the Philippine context.

2. World Bank (2010)

A Strategic Approach to Climate Change in the Philippines: This report by the World Bank was examined to understand the influence of international financial institutions on Philippine climate policies and how they may perpetuate neocolonial dynamics.

3. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

These reports will be used to analyze how international perspectives on climate change and food security are reflected in Philippine policies and whether these perspectives reinforce or challenge colonial legacies.

Online Sources

1. La Via Campesina (n.d.)

Land Grabbing in the Philippine: This online resource discusses land grabbing in the Philippines, providing context for understanding the ongoing impacts of colonial land policies.

2. The New Humanitarian (2023)

Filipino Farmers' Profits and Hunger Looms: This article offers an in-depth analysis of the challenges facing Filipino farmers, linking them to broader discussions on food insecurity and colonial legacies.

3. PhKule (2023)

Persistence of Chronic Hunger Exposes Gaps in National Food Security Strategies:

This article will be used to critique national food security strategies and examine how they are influenced by historical inequalities.

4. Washington Post (2020)

After More Than a Century, Did the Philippines Finally Break Free from the United States?: This article provides historical insights into the long-lasting effects of U.S. colonial rule on the Philippines, which will be contextualized within the broader discourse analysis.

Appendix B - Coding for Discourse Analysis

Category	Code	Example from Text	Description
Colonial Power Structures	Colonial Rhetoric	"progress," "modernization," "development" (National Framework Strategy on Climate Change, 2010-2022, Office of the President of the Philippines, 2010)	Language that echoes colonial-era rhetoric, emphasizing Western models of progress and modernization.
	Marginalization of Indigenous Practices	"outdated practices," "in need of modernization" (National Climate Change Action Plan, Office of the President of the Philippines, Climate Change Commission, 2010)	Discourses that depict indigenous practices as inferior or needing replacement by modern techniques.
	Global Competitiveness	"global competitiveness," "economic growth" (Agriculture Trade Reform Leads to Fewer Poor but Poorer Poor in the Philippines, Pasadilla, Corong, & Taningco, n.d.)	Terms that prioritize integration into global markets over local sustainability and equity.
Colonial Dependency	Reliance on Foreign Aid	"support from international partners," "increased international cooperation" (National Framework Strategy on Climate Change, 2010-2022, Office of the President of the Philippines, 2010)	Emphasis on the need for external assistance, reflecting dependency on former colonial powers or global institutions.
	Conformity to Global Standards	"align with global standards" (A Strategic Approach to Climate Change in the Philippines, World Bank, 2010)	Discourses that suggest local systems must conform to international norms, often at the expense of local needs.
Government as Savior	State-Led Initiatives	"the government shall lead," "state-led initiatives" (Republic Act No. 9729, The Climate Change Act of 2009)	Language that positions the government as the primary actor in solving climate change and food security issues.
	Central Authority	"government will lead," "government as protector" (DSWD Chief Gatchalian Tells Gadon Poverty is Real, ABS-CBN, 2023)	Narratives that reinforce the centrality of the state, often marginalizing grassroots or community-led efforts.
Tension Between Global and Local	Misalignment of Global Policies	"global policies do not always align with local needs" (Greenpeace Report on Climate and Food Security, Greenpeace, 2023)	Acknowledgement of the disconnect between global mandates and local realities, especially in climate policies.
	Local Empowerment	"empowering local communities" (Food Sovereignty: A Framework for Assessing Agrarian Responses to Climate Change in the Philippines, Heckelman & Wittman, 2015)	Calls for strengthening local capacities and governance to address climate change and food security.
Economic Exploitation and Inequality	Trade Reforms and Poverty Impact	"trade reforms have benefited the rich while impoverishing the poor" (Agriculture Trade Reform Leads to Fewer Poor but Poorer Poor in the Philippines, Pasadilla, Corong, & Taningco, n.d.)	Critique of neoliberal policies that disproportionately harm marginalized populations, worsening inequalities.
	Corporate Dominance	"corporate dominance," "foreign investment" (Viacampesina, Land Grabbing in Philippine, 2023)	Terms highlighting the influence of multinational corporations in local agriculture, often to the detriment of smallholder farmers.

	Financialization of Agriculture	"global value chains," "financialization of agriculture" (A Strategic Approach to Climate Change in the Philippines, World Bank, 2010)	Language reflecting the integration of agriculture into volatile global markets, increasing local vulnerabilities.
Resilience Through Decolonizing Approaches	Food Sovereignty	"right to produce food," "culturally appropriate" (Food Sovereignty: A Framework for Assessing Agrarian Responses to Climate Change in the Philippines, Heckelman & Wittman, 2015)	Discourses advocating for local control over food systems, challenging the global capitalist structures.
	Agroecology and Commons	"food as a commons," "liberation from global markets" (Ferrando et al., 2021)	Concepts promoting communal management of resources, countering privatization and market-driven approaches.
	Integration of Indigenous Knowledge	"indigenous practices," "ecologically sustainable" (Analysis of the Impact of the Changes in the Price of Rice and Fuel on Poverty in the Philippines, Sobrevinas et al., n.d.)	Recognition and promotion of traditional knowledge systems in sustainable development and climate adaptation.
	Community-Led Governance	"grassroots activism," "community-centered governance" (Persistence of Chronic Hunger Exposes Gaps in National Food Security Strategies, Phkule, 2023)	Narratives emphasizing the role of local governance and grassroots movements in building resilience.