

A Call for Justice and a New Economic Paradigm: Analyzing Counterhegemonic Discourses for Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Environmental Protection in Philippine Alternative Media

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Abstract : This paper examines the resistance of the Lumad people, the indigenous peoples in Mindanao, Southern Philippines, and of environmental and human rights activists to the Philippine government's neoliberal policies and their call for justice and a new economic paradigm that will uphold peoples' rights and environmental protection in two alternative media online sites. The study contributes to the body of knowledge on indigenous resistance to neoliberal globalization and the quest for a new economic paradigm that upholds social justice for the marginalized in society, empathy and compassion for those who depend on the land for their survival, and environmental sustainability. The study analyzes the discourses in selected news articles from Davao Today and Kalikasan (translated to English as 'Nature') People's Network for the Environment's statements and advocacy articles for the Lumad and the environment from 2018 to February 2020. The study reveals that the alternative media news articles and the advocacy articles contain statements that expose the oppression and violation of human rights of the Lumad people, farmers, government environmental workers, and environmental activists as shown in their killings, illegal arrest and detention, displacement of the indigenous peoples, destruction of their schools by the military and paramilitary groups, and environmental plunder and destruction with the government's permit for the entry and operation of extractive and agribusiness industries in the Lumad ancestral lands. Anchored on Christian Fuch's theory of alternative media as critical media and Bert Cammaerts' theorization of alternative media as counterhegemonic media that are part of civil society and form a third voice between state media and commercial media, the study reveals the counterhegemonic discourses of the news and advocacy articles that oppose the dominant economic system of neoliberalism which oppresses the people who depend on the land for their survival. Furthermore, the news and advocacy articles seek to advance social struggles that transform society towards the realization of cooperative potentials or a new economic paradigm that upholds economic democracy, where the local people, including the indigenous people, are economically empowered their environment and protected towards the realization of self-sustaining communities. The study highlights the call for justice, empathy, and compassion for both the people and the environment and the need for a new economic paradigm wherein indigenous peoples and local communities are empowered towards becoming self-sustaining communities in a sustainable environment.

Keywords : alternative media, environmental sustainability, human rights, indigenous resistance

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