

## **Ideology of Inaction**

### ***Political Psychology of Resilience in the Philippines***

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**Abstract:** Over the past year, netizens made calls to stop romanticizing “resilience” in the wake of growing discontent over government mismanagement and inadequacies in addressing the impacts of the current pandemic and recent typhoons. Rather than express their grievances in political processes, Filipinos tend to simply adapt and remain silent. *Why do Filipinos remain inactive in the midst of political failures and natural disasters?* This study hypothesizes resilience as an ideology that discourages political action and encourages personal adaptation among Filipinos. While conventional concepts and studies of ideology tend to be limited to partisan politics, this study presented an alternative view of ideology as something “bottom-up”, emerging from prevalent cultural and psycho-political tendencies. This paper provides a theoretical exploration on the ideology of resilience as well as an overview of psycho-political and behavioral tendencies towards political inaction using quantitative data from the World Values Survey and Asia Barometer surveys.

## **Introduction**

The Filipino people have been called “resilient” by both international and local media for their capacity to withstand and “bounce back” from crises and difficulties. This is most evident when journalists cover and interview Filipinos during the aftermath of typhoon “Haiyan,” notably by CNN reporter, Anderson Cooper, during the super typhoon Haiyan (De Jesus, 2013). The term sparked controversy when another strong typhoon, Ulysses, caused significant flooding and damage across the country (Geducos, 2020). Presidential Spokesperson, Harry Roque, attempted to massage the situation by alluding and praising the innate “resilience” of the Filipino people (Geducos, 2020).

The reinvocation of Filipino resilience sparked a debate among netizens, claiming that resilience is “overly romanticized” and used as a substitute for “holding the government accountable” (ABS-CBN News, August 2020; ABS-CBN News, November 2020). While resilience is normally understood as a personality and psychological trait, the political debate on resilience highlights the long observable lack of collective political action among Filipino citizens. Despite the country regularly experiencing natural calamities as one of the world’s

most disaster-prone countries, our government’s disaster response mechanisms still leave much to be desired (Alycan et al., 2016).

*Why do Filipinos remain politically inactive despite the government’s repeated failure to prepare and respond to natural disasters and repeated government incompetence?* In addressing this question, this study examines the psycho-political context of the recent discourse on resilience.

This study posits the hypothesis that Filipinos possess an embedded ideology of resilience or *the psycho-political capacity to withstand crises regardless of government competence and reinforces the tendency towards political inaction while focusing on one’s private welfare (e.g. one’s self, family, community, “kapwa” etc.)*. In exploring it, this study focuses its empirical examination on political inaction while generating more hypotheses on its relationship with political resilience and paving the way for future inquiries that directly confronts resilience as a political value and ideology. The following review of related literature examines the themes of resilience in governance, political participation, resilience vs. collective action and resilience as an ideology.

## **Review of Related Literature**

This study takes a psycho-political perspective in its analysis of resilience and reviews the literatures on political inaction, political values, and ideology. However, in illustrating the necessity of conceptualizing political resilience, this review begins with some brief remarks on the current literature on resilience governance.

### ***Resilience Governance: An Overview***

As of now, the literature on resilience has been mostly in the realm of governance that highlighted the necessity of adaptive capacities in the face of crises (Andrew and Kendra 2012; Blanchet, Nam, Ramalingam and Pozo-Martin 2017; Kamal-Yanni 2015; Olu 2017). For this reason, there is still a huge gap in the literature that cannot explain how resilience is being employed in political discourse. This first part of this review aims to summarize some of the key points of understanding on resilience. The second part deals with the importance of ideology and how it is embedded behaviors as much as it is part of partisan politics.

The term resilience is analyzed across many disciplines but generally refers to the ability to return to equilibrium or to sustain development in the face of expected and surprising change (Folk 2016). Chandler (2014) frames resilience as responding to complexity while recognizing that resilience itself is complex as there is little consensus on its meaning. This study focuses on resilience as applied in social sciences, primarily in psychology and governance.

Resilience is more commonly a subject of psychological studies and framed as the ability to learn or derive meaning when facing crises (Engeland et al 1993, Coutu 2002; Hermann et al. 2011). In this field, Resilience can be derived from personality traits, biological traits, and environmental factors throughout an individual's lifespan (Hermann et al. 2011).

In the realm of governance, resilience is managed through the coordination of different processes and network of actors (Lebel et al 2006). Resilience is also commonly applied in the field of disaster response and environmental disasters (Aldrich, Oum and Sawada 2015; Brunetta et. Al. 2019). Philippines is a common case study in this field. However, these studies frame resilience as a

community dynamic rather than a psychological or personality trait (Llanto 2016; Heckelman et al 2017; Baybay and Handmarsh 2018). Because of the sheer impact of environmental disasters, resilience is derived from a community's ability to communicate and participate in response efforts, thus moving beyond the individual resilience. Returning to Chandler (2014), resilience presumes an environment that is flexible, unstable and constantly. He argues for shift from "subject-object" of resilience to a more process-oriented and relational conception of governance. In conceptualizing political resilience, it may be necessary to incorporate both the psychological and social aspects of resilience but contextualized in the realm of politics. However, since public discourse have related resilience with political inaction, this paper deems it apt to review works that gives a hint on the roots of inaction. The succeeding section provides some brief remarks on the massive literatures on social movements and collective action.

### ***The Roots of Inaction: Remarks on Collective Action and Political Alienation***

For the purposes of this paper, this section reviews works on rational choice theory as applied in the issues of collective action and political participation. What this section illustrates is that a mobilization effort faces certain obstacles from their targets. In Tarrow's (1998) terms, both the opportunities and difficulties they face, come not only from institutional and structural factors, but also from psycho-political ones. By focusing on the latter, we can trace political inaction back to how ordinary citizens evaluate both options for political participation, as well as politics as whole. While most threads on the social movements literature have elaborated on the encounters among the politically active (cf. Opp, 2009), there is much work to be done on the issue of inaction beyond the confines of the "free-rider" problem. Moreover, this paper sees both incumbent elites and opposition forces as mere components that are subject to scrutiny by ordinary citizens (cf. Borja, 2015, 2017). To elaborate, this study first looks at how citizens scrutinize such political objects from the perspective of rational choice theory (RCT).

According to Hindmoor (2006) and Parsons (2005), the two core assumptions of RCT are the following: (1) that individuals are rational (they are deliberative, and their preferences are reflexive,

complete, transitive, and continuous); (2) individuals are self-interested (meaning that they have their own sets of beliefs and they act upon these beliefs and desires in order to achieve optimal results). From these, Laver (1999) states that the purpose of the RCT is “to construct a logically coherent potential explanation of the phenomenon under investigation” (p. 2), while for Hindmoor (2006), the RCT is concerned with formulating models to explain human action<sup>1</sup> and not in explaining the factors surrounding a person’s rationality.

Nevertheless, the nature of rationality persists as a point of contention and for Laver (1999) and Riker (1995), it is technically a *goal-seeking behavior* without any value or ethical judgments on the actor being examined, nor any substantial assumptions on human behavior. Riker (1995) states that what “rational choice models cannot do is describe human character as a whole...models are about the relation between goals and outcomes in categories of events” (p. 37), thus it makes no sense for the RCT to attribute consistent traits to actors being examined. In addition, interests varies widely and these goals are not character traits. This clarification is important because while the RCT could provide an effective analytical mechanism to examine goals, other theories are needed to examine the factors behind and forming these goals. Therefore it is important to note that as Petracca (1991) argues, self-interest for RCT could be considered as something without any substantive content and is normatively neutral.<sup>2</sup>

Furthermore, Laver (1999) argues and that it is a common trap for RC theoreticians to either base their assumptions on a purely empirical approach or to end up building complex models over a priori motivational assumptions that are far from reality (i.e. the *economism* of neo-classical economics and its utilization of RCT). When applied to entities, the “rational” actor takes on several characteristics based on certain a priori assumptions. Below is a summarized list presented by Laver (1999):

- Objects of desire “are what motivate people to act in particular ways”
- Each person “is intrinsically motivated by ‘private’ desires that do not include desires about how people ought to interact with each other”
- When interacting with others “people will almost certainly develop ‘social’ desires...which make sense only when applied to social interactions” and would have no meaning to a single person in isolation.
- People “operate in a world which enables them to do certain things and constrains them from doing others”
- Rational actors “are motivated by the urge to fulfill their desires” and the fulfillment of desires “involves the expenditure of resources”, and each “individual is vested by nature with a limited stock of resources denominated, in their most basic form” (p. 18)

It must be noted further that further analysis must focus how an actor decides within the context of existing constraints, and using the information at hand and not what they are supposed to have (i.e. in analyzing political behavior from an RCT perspective, a priori assumptions must be made based on the current and not on the ideal level of information that voters have).

At this point, this review asks, what is the process behind translating thought into behavior? What is the logic and the components of such a process? Though it is easy to say that it is a matter of cost-benefit analysis, a more nuanced understanding of the latter must recognize the difference between objective and perceived costs.

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<sup>1</sup> According to Hindmoor (2006) the Rational Choice Theory, in line with its aim to make models, assumes the existence of a set of preference as something that is constant per model. Thus, pinning the question of why do people choose this instead of that is something that is not applicable to the RCT.

<sup>2</sup> In line with the main tenets of the RCT, and the more prominent economic interpretation of the

RCT by Neo-Classical economics, Opp (2009) stated that there are currently two different versions of the RCT. First is the narrow version that adheres to Neo-Classical economics and was considered by Opp (ibid.) as a mere caricature of the second version of the RCT that could take non-material factors into account and is widely used in the literature.

The latter holds more weight from a psycho-political perspective.

To elaborate, this review turns to the notion of Expected Value (EVT). For Ajzen and Fishbein (1975) man is “an essentially rational organism, who uses the information at his disposal to make judgments, form evaluations and arrive at decisions” (p. 14). In other words, action is based on the cumulative measure of a person’s beliefs that were transformed into either a negative or positive attitude<sup>4</sup> towards a certain object. People act towards a certain object in accordance with how much they know about it, and the results of their evaluations of it. From this, Ajzen and Fishbein (ibid.) states that the basic assumption of the EVT is that:

people learn “expectations”, i.e., beliefs that a given response will be followed by some event. Since these “events” could be either positive or negative “reinforcers” (i.e., could have positive or negative valence)...people would learn to perform (or increase their probability of performing) behavior that “expected” to lead to positively valenced events (ibid., p. 30)

Two models are built upon this assumption. First, focusing on behavioral choice, the *Subjective Expected Utility* (SEU) model according to Ajzen and Fishbein (ibid.) argues that “when a person has to make a behavioral choice, he will select that alternative which has the highest subjective expected utility” (i.e. the alternative that is more likely to lead to outcomes favored by a rational individual). Using the conceptual framework discussed earlier, this model was reinterpreted as the person’s attitude toward a behavior, in relation to other available options. The second one, the *Instrumentality-Value* (IV) Model focused more on the instrumentality of objects in relation to certain valued goals. Ajzen and Fishbein (ibid., p. 31) states that for the IV model, the more a certain object (i.e., an action or policy) is perceived as instrumental in obtaining positively valued goals, the more favorable

the person’s attitude will be for that object, and the contrary is true for objects that are perceived as useless or a hindrance.

In summary, for Ajzen and Fishbein (ibid.) beliefs are the bricks an actor uses in fashioning a filtering device, or a set of standards that would guide him through decision making.<sup>5</sup> In turn, an actor filters the available behavioral options and chooses the one aligned with the cost-benefit analysis located in the interaction between beliefs, attitudes, and intentions. For the purposes of this paper, it would utilize the model made by Ajzen and Fishbein (ibid.) in measuring behavior, and would place the object of concern as the context of this research’s proposed model.

From the discussion above, it could be said that since the subject matter in this paper is a form of behavior (political inaction), an analysis of it from an expectancy-value perspective necessitates the utilization of the SEU and IV models. A synthetic version of these models allows us to trace the roots of political inaction back to political attitudes. However, since conventional modes of political participation can also be collective (e.g. public protests), this study responds to the problem of collective action.

Olson (1971), in analyzing the rational individual in the context of organizations, argues that collective action (formation and maintenance of groups) is based not only upon the harmony but also on the satisfaction of individual interests. The nature of organizations, according to him, is based upon the acquisition and provision of goods that require collective action. Moreover, he emphasizes the importance of individual rationality in analyzing collective action. This view of individuals as the building blocks of organizations provides a better perception that allows analyses to view groups as an association of individuals, instead of being a homogenous block; a collective that is deprived of individual interests.

This perspective also exposes the problem of free-riding. To elaborate, Olson (ibid.) defines the individual in a group, as someone with the

<sup>4</sup> Ajzen and Fishbein (1975) defines attitude as the positive or negative affect of an actor to a stimulus object, and therefore “should be measured by a procedure which locates the subject on a bipolar affective or evaluative dimension vis-a-vis a given object” (p. 216).

<sup>5</sup> According to Ajzen and Fishbein (1975, p. 31) ‘attitudes are necessary because they permit the individual to achieve certain goals or value states (ex., they allow him to organize knowledge, to maintain his self-esteem, to express his views)’.



propensity to “free-ride” in the costs and subsequent provision of certain collective goods. As a critique to the “functional” and “naturalistic”<sup>6</sup> tendencies of the traditional theory of organization, he posits that such a mode of argument (using “inherent instincts” as a cause) would have a severely limited capability to explain the issues surrounding the concept of organizations. Olson (ibid.) states that:

Though all of the members of the group...have a common interest in obtaining this collective benefit, they have no common interest in paying the cost of providing that collective good. Each would prefer that the others pay the entire cost, and ordinarily would get any benefit provided whether he had born part of the cost or not. (p. 21)

Is the free-rider problem applicable to the case of collective political participation? Following the basic RCT analytical thrust that is free from any presuppositions on a person’s interests, this study posits a qualifier, namely, does an individual deems a certain collective political act as something that can provide a collective good. In other words, *how can a person deliberately free-ride on a collective activity if he deems the latter as incapable of satisfying his interests or achieving an explicit goal*. This is an issue that only emerges by inspecting the cognitive processes behind a certain behavior instead of merely assuming utility maximization.

In relation to this, Borja (2015, 2017) argues that political inaction is due to political alienation rather than deliberate free-riding. The latter have been construed as having two basic and intertwined manifestations, namely, how we look at an external political object and how we look at ourselves (Borja, 2015, 2017; Finifter, 1970; Seeman, 1959, 1979; Stoker and Evans, 2014). In analyzing these two, this study looks into alienation in general and as a form of self-reflective spectatorship. The latter is important because it provides an analytical mechanism for how

individuals evaluate themselves in relation to the activities in a public sphere.

To start, alienation is the impeded or deficient praxis of appropriation leading to the reification of an object (Jaeggi, 2014). There are two key factors in this conceptualization. First is *appropriation* or “having access to or command over oneself and the world...the capacity to make the life one leads, or what one wills and does, one’s own; as the capacity to identify with oneself and with what one does” (ibid., p. 37). What is appropriated is itself altered, structured, and formed in the process of appropriation. It is a sustained process of transformation bound to incumbent and “previously existing content and thereby also to an independent meaning and dynamic over which one does not have complete command” (ibid., p. 39). Simply put, dis/alienation is a cycle that builds upon existing factors that cannot be controlled absolutely, and traceable to the results of previous rounds of appropriation.

Second is *reification* or the condition wherein an object is perceived to have developed a dynamic of its own that achieves a measure of rigidity (i.e. constancy and invulnerability to change). It involves the veiling of practical questions that undermines free agency and protects a current system from change by maintaining habitual behavior in it. This presupposition of a domain of potential actions becomes an obstacle to novelty and experimentation. Consequently, it makes an object appear as if it is automatic. Moreover, within a reified system, we are not coerced to follow. Instead, we fail to develop a tendency or will towards control and/or change. This is because the alienated is incapable of seeing an object (e.g. behavior, systems, etc.) as subject to their decisions and actions.

From the exposition above, this study asks if individuals can serve as objects to themselves as part of self-reflection. The answer lies with the notion of political spectatorship as both a condition and a process wherein as alienated entities, individuals can judge themselves vis-à-vis what they see in the public sphere (Borja 2015, 2017) (e.g. the

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<sup>6</sup> According to Olson (1971), the *Traditional Theory of Organizations* was anchored on the supposed instinct of men to herd together in order for them to deal with other opposing collectives. Moreover, the Traditional theory, in line with prior critiques to their mode of analysis stated that groups are meant to perform functions that were, in earlier times,

responsibilities of the family. According to this proposition as society develops, the increase in the number of organizations with various functions ranging from health to religion is caused by the *family’s* surrender of a number of these responsibilities to non-kin organizations.

activities of their representatives and their fellows). Furthermore, a spectacle is a manifestation of reification that is projected back to the alienated that in turn can sustain their sense of powerlessness (Debord 1995). Nevertheless, Jaeggi (2014) notion of appropriation recognizes a spectator's creative and empowering capacity without discounting the strength and sustainability of a spectacle. Within a sustained cycle and struggle for appropriation, the reifying force of a spectacle can be understood as something that varies through time and under different circumstances. What this study highlight is the dynamic of spectatorship as a manifestation of a struggle for appropriation. Rancière (2009) and Borja's (2015, 2017) elaborations on the nature of spectatorship illustrates this. From them, political spectatorship can be construed as something that allows individuals to see and evaluate themselves as political actors. As spectators they evaluate: (1) the efficacy of political acts, (2) their role in public affairs, and (3) their capability to influence politics. It also allows them to start appropriation by recognizing, evaluating, and creatively responding to a political object that has been reified and projected, that is, made into a spectacle.

The realization of a spectacle lies in the existence and sustenance of a crowd of spectators. Alienation and the sustenance of alienated relationships is key to its existence. Despite of this, spectators are not deprived of either creativity or opportunities for empowerment. For Rancière (2009) a spectator is an actor with the capacity to evaluate and creatively interpret a spectacle's projection. He rejects both the ideal of unity through identity and immediacy, and the supposed mystery of reality transforming into disempowering illusions imposed on spectators. Thus, for him a spectator goes beyond passivity and is capable of creatively processing a spectacle in absorbing and interpreting the meaning it conveys.

Borja (2015, 2017) extends this notion of spectatorship towards politics in his adaptation of Debord's (1995) analysis of a spectacle's reifying tendency. By focusing on the political psychology of spectators, Borja (2015, 2017) supports and elaborates Rancière's (2009) argument on the creative and emancipatory capacity of spectators. He shows through the case of the Philippines that political spectatorship refers to the reception and creative processing of spectacular projections. As spectators, citizens recognize that certain values, needs, and interests have a political/public dimension. This frames how they see and evaluate

themselves in relation to public affairs. Our pursuit of these factors, however, are limited to the realm of everyday life (i.e. in the private sphere), thus marking an alienated relationship between us and the public sphere. In other words, political spectatorship is based on a reifying relationship between spectators and those within the spectacle; reifying in the sense that the public sphere appears as impenetrable to our efforts as spectators. They see the public sphere as impenetrable and themselves as inefficacious actors because they see those performing in the public sphere as beyond their control or influence. Nevertheless, those within the spectacle can also facilitate the entry of spectators into public affairs thus temporarily suspending the spectatorship of those affected (e.g. mobilizations, sponsored spaces for deliberation, elections etc.).

Overall, political inaction is based on efficacy or lack thereof, not on free-riding. For this reason, the collective action problem can be reframed as a matter of convincing non-participants that certain behaviors and collective activities can actually produce results. From the vantage point of non-participants, the collective action problem is only applicable if they actually judge a collective activity as a credible instrument in satisfying certain interests or achieving certain outcomes. Simply put, political action is a matter of being convinced that an action is worth taking and a collective activity is worth being a part of. The contrary is true for political inaction outside the frame of free-riding.

### ***Ideology Beyond Partisan Platforms: Ideology as a conceptual map and "bottom up" beliefs***

Ideology is commonly defined as a system of values and attitudes (Federico, Jost and Napier 2009; Freeden 1996, 1998, 2006; Gerring 1997; Jost, Kay, and Thorisdottir 2009) that could be expressed in public discourse (van Dijk 2006). However, Feldman (2003) argues that ideology is not a reliable determinant of attitudinal organization. Specifically, the impact of ideological tendencies on attitudes is not clearly established. Nevertheless, this study reverses the picture by entertaining the possibility of attitudes developing into a general understanding of the world and a person's place in it. Furthermore, this study highlights that ideology is irreducible to partisan claims and platforms.

Instead, it refers to a conceptual map manifested through psycho-political and discursive factors.<sup>7</sup>

Concerning the burdens tied with the concept of ideology, Gerring's (1997) review exposes and schematizes the myriad uses and definitions of ideology without ignoring or rejecting its value nor condemning its inherent semantic diversity. From his definitional analysis Gerring (ibid.) makes the following observations. First is that coherence, contrast, and stability (under the cognitive/affective dimension) were the only characteristics that can be deemed as relatively consistent in the literature. Coherence refers to the internal structure of ideologies, specifically the harmony between the values and beliefs constituting a certain ideology while, contrast is a characteristic that deems an ideology as distinct from others, albeit not necessarily exclusive. Tying these two factors is the relative stability of constituent parts of an ideology.

Gerring's (ibid.) conclusions are echoed by van Dijk (2006) who defines it as the following: (1) as a system of values and beliefs that requires a cognitive approach; (2) as a socially shared by members of a community, specifically, "ideologies consist of social representations that define the social identity of a group" (ibid., 116) by determining shared beliefs and understandings on issues ranging from its fundamental conditions to their ways of living; (3) as distinct from other belief systems because it is more fundamental and axiomatic, thus allowing it provide cognitive cohesion for a certain group;<sup>8</sup> (4) as something gradually acquired and is relatively stable, though subject to change and modifications within a certain life period and in accordance with actual experiences.

To place emphasis on the ontological distinction and normative neutrality of ideology as a

concept, van Dijk (ibid.) has argued further that first ideology is neither necessarily negative nor a form of false consciousness as was espoused by classical Marxists. Second, ideology is not personal belief though the latter can be subsumed under a socio-cognitive belief system. Third, an ideology is not necessarily dominant. Fourth, an ideology is irreducible to the social practices that are meant to express, reproduce, and enact it (e.g. public discourse). Lastly, as was stated earlier, it is not the same as other social belief systems. In summary, ideology can be defined as primarily socio-cognitive in nature, or specifically, it is a system of values, beliefs, and attitudes that is socially shared, coherent, relatively stable, and distinct from other ideologies and belief-systems.

Freedden (1996) makes the study of ideology more flexible by framing it as a conceptual map that is subject to change and development, and as something distinct from political philosophy. He deviated from earlier, that is, normative approaches to ideology by focusing on its systematic nature<sup>9</sup>, and for this reason instead of arguing for either the positive or negative impact of ideology, his ideational-morphological approach renewed the interest towards the dissection of ideologies. This objective was accomplished by taking concepts as a basic unit of analysis and by focusing on the morphology of a conceptual map. This approach was epistemologically based on the distinction between political philosophy and ideology, thus preventing the misuse of assumptions and mechanisms for the former in the analysis of the latter. Specifically, this review notes that first, ideologies, is concerned with the creation of conceptual maps, driven by simplification and appeals to both reason (at the very least, consistency) and emotions<sup>10</sup>. Thus, instead of analyzing ideology through the lenses of logic, it should be approached, primarily as a social and

<sup>7</sup> Gerring (1997) claims ideology's conceptual ambiguity can be construed as a reflection of reality's multi-dimensionality. Despite the complexity of ideology, this study argues that it can be analyzed when focused on a certain dimension depending on the case.

<sup>8</sup> For van Dijk (2006, 116), "ideologies are foundational social beliefs of a rather general and abstract nature. One of their cognitive functions is to provide (ideological) coherence to the beliefs of a group and thus facilitate their acquisition and use in everyday situations. Among other things, ideologies also specify what general cultural values (freedom, equality, justice, etc.) are relevant for the group."

<sup>9</sup> For Freedden (1996) the analysis of ideology must be considered as separate from the function of ideology; that is, analyzing ideology must not guide political action.

<sup>10</sup> Freedden (1996, 30) stated that "ideologies mix rational and emotive debate freely. They will be more hasty in ending discussion if rational persuasion proves inconclusive. They will be less thorough in pursuing the detailed implications of their arguments. After all, ideologies have to deliver conceptual social maps and political decisions, and they have to do so in language accessible to the masses as well as the intellectuals, to amateur as well as professional thinkers. This free mix of reason

historical product that is based on both reason and emotion.

To elaborate, Freedden (2013) illustrates in his recent work that ideology can be construed as referring to both the internalization and expression of a coherent set of ideas and values derived from the temporary decontestation of more fluid and less coherent political thought. Moreover, since political thinking itself involves decontestation, political ideology can be understood as a level directed at creating a more coherent and crystallized conceptual map for a wider public.

From the works reviewed in this section, this study notes that the analysis of ideology must be based on both a minimal definition as a baseline and the recognition that ideology is necessarily multi-dimensional. This may appear contradictory but a minimal definition can contain multiple attributes that can be deemed as related with each other yet distinguishable. This study approaches ideology as both a socio-psychological object (Gerring 1997; Jost 2006; Tedin 1987; van Dijk 2006) and as a conceptual map (Freedden 1996, 1998, 2006), thus, prompting an analysis of both political attitudes and public discourse.

### *Resilience as Political Ideology*

Following Freedden's conception of ideology of a conceptual map and composite of attitudes, resilience has the potential to be for being considered an ideology as it structures and internalizes a certain relationship between individuals, the state, and the environment. This following section highlights resilience as the agency of individuals in interpreting disasters as uncertain rather than the result of state failure.

The paper previously discussed resilience as a frame of governance and socio-psychological ability to adapt. This section summarizes common trends in the discussion of resilience as an ideology particularly as a set of beliefs and attitudes. Though the conception is not new in general, the identification of resilience as an ideology in the Philippines is novel. Resilience can be found in ideological components of culture such as religion and community values. This study hopes to strengthen the relationship between ideology and

resilience and expose the deeper consequences of such a discourse.

As mentioned earlier, Resilience has meanings stemming from the socio-psychological, to the physical and environmental. Much like ideology, Resilience is a highly multi-dimensional word which requires specificity when analyzing (Reghezza-Zitt et al., 2012). The psychological meaning can be considered a skill to adapt but also bears a certain interpretation of an individual's relationship with the world. Donaghue (2019) claims resilience conditions individuals and society to internalize uncertainty and how everyone must prepare for impending crises. Holling (1986) in particular, defines resilience as the capacity to maintain stability in spite of a disturbance, which can be considered part of a society's conservative impulse. In other more extreme cases, it is the ability to return to the previous state before the disaster.

Resilience has been analyzed as an ideology, most notably by scholars connecting it as a manifestation of a neoliberal order (Chandler 2019; Donoghue 2019). For critics of neoliberalism, Resilience "masks" power relations as it places focus on the "agent" as empowered and shifts attention from and even masks the structural defects of neoliberalism (Chandler, 2014, 2019; Dagedeviren, et. al. 2014; Hornberg, 2013). It normalizes the belief that events such as disasters are a product of "uncertainty" rather than structural or political failure. Such conceptions of resilience also allows regimes and incumbent structures to absorb criticisms and avoid collapse. However, in many ways, neoliberalism is mostly a "global and market oriented ideology" that tends to change and adapt once it interacts with local contexts (Springer 2012). While the Philippines is also a country heavily influenced by neoliberal ideology (Bello 2005; Ortega 2018). Resilience need not be solely attributed to neoliberal ideology but also in embedded cultures.

In the Philippines, resilience is not only attributed by foreign observers but somewhat internalized in certain components of Philippine culture. Resilience may be present in many societies but tend to have culturally specific aspects (Ungar, 2008). Some scholars have attributed it to theological justifications from the prevalent Catholic faith such as attribution of disasters of God's will or

and emotion is intolerable to many philosophers, who do not regard emotive reasons for an argument as good ones."



God as a savior (Bellano 2019). Isidro and Callega (2020) found that resilience was reinforced by related communal and social values such as (a) bayanihan, (b) malasakit or care for the person, (c) pananagutan or sense of duty, and (d) sense of volunteerism. They cite "kapwa" which refers to a shared identity or seeing the self-in-others, as a core in the local value system (Pe-Pua, R., & Protacio-Marcelino 2000). The focus of their study was resilience in selected organizations and businesses and it is still to be seen whether this correlation exists in a more public aspect. However, it can be derived that agency is highlighted on the community or organization members to assist their fellow man rather than the government or state institutions. There is a clear thread on Resilience being an internal capacity to adapt rather than expressing their hardships in political dissent or opposition.

### Statement of the Problem and Operationalization

From the discussion above, this study asserts that political inaction, as a result of embedded attitudes related to the concept or ideology of resilience. To an extent, this paper, as a preliminary step is an attempt to reverse engineer resilience as a political value from the attitudes that are usually attached to it by public discourse.

In the context of resilience as a discursive object, may it be a public affirmation or a critique of it, political inaction appears to be its primary object. However, if one looks at the psycho-political context behind it, political alienation appears with political spectatorship being one of its behavioral components. Why are public praises of resilience tied with political inaction? Why are criticisms of resilience directed at its behavioral implications? This study considers political alienation and political spectatorship as attitudinal conditions that causes political inaction.

Based on the study's review, Resilience is an ideology that internalizes uncertainty and favors agency of communities and individuals and masks the inadequacies of the structure. may inform the

relationship between the individual and the community or government. While resilience has been located in culture and religion in the Philippines, Resilience in the political context has yet to be fully examined and verified.

Due to the lack of primary data on this precise manifestation of resilience, it is necessary to derive operationalization from the context of the current debate. Thus, we posit the following hypothetical components of political resilience:

1. It is presumed Filipinos are resilient because they are capable of withstanding or adjusting to crisis such as natural disasters.
2. Because Filipinos, whether as individuals or communities, are capable of withstanding or adjusting to crises, it is not necessary to complain to or about the government.
3. Without the feedback from the populace, the government does not adjust their disaster response or governance and relies heavily on the resilience of the populace.
4. There is a relationship between a perceived control over the welfare of one's self and family, and a perceived lack of control over politics, governance, and the crisis itself.

Although these components are far from an exhaustive description of resilience, these components act as a preliminary core basis for detecting political resilience in this exploratory study.

### Methodology

In order to illustrate the political inaction and the respective attitudes towards political participation, this study exposed the psycho-political context of resilience discourse in the Philippines. It conducted a basic descriptive quantitative analysis of secondary survey data from the 2<sup>nd</sup> (2005), 3<sup>rd</sup> (2010), and 4<sup>th</sup> (2014) Waves of the *Asia Barometer Surveys*.<sup>11</sup> By including these three waves, this

University. The Asian Barometer Project Office ([www.asianbarometer.org](http://www.asianbarometer.org)) is solely responsible for the data distribution. The author(s) appreciate the assistance in providing data by the institutes and individuals aforementioned. The views expressed herein are the author's own. Moreover, the Asia

<sup>11</sup> Data analyzed in this article were collected by the Asian Barometer Projects of (2005-2008), (2010-2012), and (2013-2016), which were co-directed by Professors Fu Hu and Yun-han Chu and received major funding support from Taiwan's Ministry of Education, Academia Sinica and National Taiwan

study showed that there was sustained levels of political alienation and political inaction despite of the multiple crises and disasters from 2005 to 2014. This is relevant as the Philippines experienced three of the strongest tropical typhoons in recorded history, most notably Haiyan in 2013, and Meranti in 2016<sup>12</sup> (Madarang, 2020).

For all the waves analyzed, the *Social Weather Station* (SWS) utilized a multi-stage probability sampling. The Philippines was divided into four study areas, namely, the National Capital Region (NCR), Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. 300 respondents were extracted from each study area. The selection of households was conducted through interval selection starting from a randomly chosen landmark. Voting-age respondents were then randomly using a probability selection table; male family members were pre-listed in the probability selection table of odd-numbered questionnaires while female family members were pre-listed for even-numbered questionnaires. The sample size of 1,200 respondents entailed a margin of error of  $\pm 2.83\%$  with a 95% confidence level.

## Results and Discussion

This study provided a glimpse of sustained political alienation and spectatorship in the Philippines. What was the nature of political spectatorship among Filipinos? Table 1 shows a majority being constantly receptive to projections emanating from the public sphere.

Items #1 and #2 indicated a willingness to follow public affairs while #3 indicated a tendency to make politics as an object of discussion. These three items showed that Filipinos were far from being politically apathetic. Nevertheless, how they saw political affairs suggested that many were kept within the confines of spectatorship.

Juxtaposed with this attachment to the public sphere were the following conditions shown on Table 2 below: (1) most Filipinos did not perceive any repression in the freedoms of speech and organization; (2), from item #1, most Filipinos believed that the people have the power to change a

government; (3) the results for items #5, #6, and #7 indicated that most Filipinos saw themselves as incapable of participating in politics or influencing public affairs. Moreover, when taken with item #2, it appeared that there is a shared attitude towards the government as impenetrable beyond elections.

Tied with the results from Table 1, the public sphere in the Philippines was a reified spectacle for many Filipinos were mere spectators. However, this was not a static condition because political energies were funneled towards electoral politics. Specifically, the positive attitude towards the capacity of people to change their government (item #1) was directed towards and limited within electoral participation. In other words, alongside a reified public sphere was the ballot standing as the predominant means of political participation in the Philippines. Consequently, civic energies were usually directed at elections with non-electoral modes of participation being deemed as inefficacious. Specifically, while elections in the Philippines (from 1992-2016) enjoyed an average voter turnout and registration rates of 75.11% and 88.95%, respectively, the contrary was true for non-electoral participation. Tables 3 and 4 illustrates this contrast.

Table 3 shows the roots of the strong tendency of Filipinos to vote. Most participated in elections while sharing a positive attitude towards the efficacy of elections to make a government aware of popular sentiments. Table 4 in turn shows a general aversion towards non-electoral forms of participation from collective deliberation to acts of public protest. Therefore, in line with both political reification and a general aversion towards non-electoral political participation, elections were considered by most Filipinos as the most credible means of appropriating public affairs (i.e. of participating in it and affecting its conduct).

## Conclusion

Resilience is a word often used as a complement to people who withstood crises and hardships but remains relatively unexamined. The recent debates on resilience bears many potential insights on political inaction in the Philippines.

country, it is relatively weak in comparison to many of the typhoons that have hit the Philippines. This highlights the failure in management, disaster response and infrastructure.

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Barometer Survey of 2014 utilized a randomly selected sample of  $N = 1200$

<sup>12</sup> This period would also include Ondoy in 2009. While it has caused severe flooding across the

Because of the recency of the issue, this paper posits the question on the relationship between resilience and participation by establishing its precedence. The findings of this study are preliminary as it is based on established patterns and attitudes prior to the peak of the debate on resilience in the Philippines. This is related to political alienation which may be one of many factors to contributing to inaction. Furthermore, resilience as a cultural value is still in need of more examination as resilience originates from culture while containing political, and depoliticizing aspects. This study focuses on the politicized meaning of resilience which deters political action. Resilience may be a composite of several attitudes rather than a singular attitude and may include the refusal to complain or focus on rebuilding. However, besides the deployment of the term by journalists, netizens and politicians, it is important to determine what resilience means to ordinary Filipinos and how much is it a societal value to them. The study's hypothesis does not necessarily close off other possible variables that produce inaction. Thus, it is still necessary to isolate resilience as a value and measure it against other related variables or attitudes such as cynicism or apathy to determine its distinct capacity to affect behavior.

Future studies need to directly investigate people's perception of resilience in the context of natural calamities and how it relates to their inclination or disinclination towards political action. Another possible path is conducting discourse analysis between those who critique the idea of resilience, those who hold it as a value, and possibly those in between. Such an approach would be able to document the multiple perspectives and contradictions of the discourse and further examine its effects on political behavior. Lastly, it would be beneficial to revisit the concept of ideology in Philippine politics and political psychology. There is a need to recognize ideology emerging not only from atop the social hierarchy (education, media, political parties, etc.) but also from the patterns of societies and communities themselves.

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## Tables

**TABLE 1: SPECTATORSHIP – RECEPTION (PERCENTAGES)**

Items Waves	1				2				3		
	2nd	3rd	4th		2nd	3rd	4th		2nd	3rd	4th
Very interested	10.7	25	15.2	Everyday	45.9	47.7	43.6	Frequently	9.5	11.1	9.9
Somewhat interested	42.2	49.4	43.8	Several times a week	15.4	16.3	18.7	Occasionally	67	70	67.6
Not very interested	23.5	17.6	23.8	Once or twice a week	16.5	22.8	16.8	Never	22.4	17	22.2
Not at all interested	21.9	7.6	17	Not even once a week	14.3	9.3	15.6				
				Practically never	5.9	3.5	5				
Invalid	1.5	0.4	0.2	Invalid	1.9	0.4	0.3	Invalid	1	1.9	0.3
Total	100	100	100	Total	100	100	100	Total	100	100	100

**Items:**

1. How interested would you say you are in politics?
2. How often do you follow news about politics and government?
3. When you get together with your family members or friends, how often do you discuss political matters?

\* Invalid (Can't Choose, Didn't Understand, Didn't Answer)

**TABLE 2: POLITICAL REIFICATION (PERCENTAGES)**

ITEMS WAVES	1			2			3			4		
	2nd	3rd	4th	2nd	3rd	4th	2nd	3rd	4th	2nd	3rd	4th
Strongly agree	34.8	47.8	31.1	15.8	17.7	15	33.5	42.1	31.3	31.7	35	27.9
Agree	33.9	31.8	40.6	34.2	35.3	41.6	33.1	33.5	39.4	34.7	39.8	41.1
Disagree	18.6	14.7	19.5	32.1	32.6	29.7	21.9	17.3	21.2	21.9	17.4	22.3
Strongly Disagree	11.1	5.5	8.4	13.3	13.2	13.3	9.4	6.8	7.5	9.3	7.1	8.3
Invalid*	1.6	0.2	0.5	4.7	1.3	0.4	2.1	0.5	0.6	2.5	0.9	0.5
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

  

ITEMS WAVES	4			5			6			7	
	2nd	3rd	4th	2nd	3rd	4th	2nd	3rd	4th	3rd	4th
Strongly agree	31.7	35	27.9	8.7	16.9	12.4	25.9	24.9	20.1	19.3	18.7
Agree	34.7	39.8	41.1	18.7	26.8	20.9	31.2	33.9	39.4	32.9	36.8
Disagree	21.9	17.4	22.3	24	23	27.8	25.7	27.2	27.7	31.6	29.4
Strongly Disagree	9.3	7.1	8.3	45.6	33.1	37.8	13.2	13.3	12	15.6	14.1
Invalid*	2.5	0.9	0.5	3	0.3	1.1	4	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.9
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

**TABLE 2: POLITICAL REIFICATION (PERCENTAGES)****Items:**

1. People have the power to change a government they don't like
  2. Between elections, the people have no way of holding the government responsible for its actions
  3. People are free to speak what they think without fear.
  4. People can join any organization they like without fear.
  5. I think I have the ability to participate in politics.
  6. Sometimes politics and government seems so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what is going on.
  7. People like me don't have any influence over what the government does.
- \* Invalid (Can't Choose, Didn't Understand, Didn't Answer)**

**TABLE 3: ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION AND ATTITUDES ON ELECTIONS (PERCENTAGES)**

Items	1		2	
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Waves				
Voted in every election	57.7	59.2	A good deal	19
Voted in most elections	16.2	19	Quite a lot	49.6
Voted in some elections	12.1	11.4	Not much	25.5
Hardly ever voted	5.6	6.4	Not at all	4.8
Invalid	8.5	4	Invalid	1
Total	100	100	Total	100
*Invalid - Can't choose, decline to answer, or not applicable (only registered once as a voter)			*Invalid - Can't choose, decline to answer, or can't understand	

**Items:**

1. Have you voted in every election, voted in most elections, voted in some elections or hardly ever voted?
2. How much do you feel that having elections makes the government pay attention to what the people think?

**TABLE 4: NON-ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION (PERCENTAGES)**

ITEMS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Wave</b>									
Never Done	87.4	82.3	72.4	85.9	92.9	78.2	88.1	91.6	95.2
Once	7.4	10.8	16.2	8.9	3.7	14.5	8.4	5.1	2.8
More than once	5.2	7	11.4	5.2	3.3	7.3	3.5	3.2	1.9
Invalid	0	0	0	0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Wave</b>									
I have done this more than once	3.9	8.7	11.1	4.1	1.1	7.2	2.8	1.7	0.5
I have done this once	8.1	11.6	14.4	8.3	2.3	10.7	6.2	2.9	1.7
I have never done this.	87.6	78.7	73.9	87.1	95.8	81.4	90.3	94.5	97
Invalid	0.4	1	0.7	0.5	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.9
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<b>Items:</b>					6. Got together with others to try to resolve local issues				
1. Contacted elected officials or legislative representative					7. Got together with others to raise an issue or sign a petition				
2. Contacted officials at higher level.					8. Attended a demonstration or protest march				
3. Contacted traditional leaders/community leaders.					9. Used force or violence for a political cause				
4. Contacted other influential people outside the government					<b>* Invalid - Can't choose, decline to answer, or can't understand</b>				
5. Contacted news media									