



UNIVERSITY OF
GOTHENBURG

**“All we have is this beautiful place. But we don’t
have the money”**

The effect of foreign direct investment and global power structures on local
female entrepreneurship in Coron Town, the Philippines

Hannah Johansson

Bachelor thesis in Global Studies

Institution of Global Studies

VT 2023

Supervisor: Malin Hasselskog

Word count: 12659

Abstract

Foreign direct investment (FDI) in the global South indicates both to create and obstruct local entrepreneurship opportunities in host countries. However, foreign business owners' large capitals, and global development policies encouraging FDI in the tourism industry play a significant role in this relation. Through qualitative interviews, this study examines how foreign ownership in the tourism industry in Coron Town, the Philippines, along with global power structures, is affecting local female entrepreneurship opportunities. The Filipino female entrepreneurs' perceptions and perspectives are further analyzed through the theories and concepts of global power structures, westernization, feminist economics, and capital. The result showed that the increased competition with foreign investors may have a negative effect on local female entrepreneurship; hence, the opportunities for entrepreneurship are considered to decrease due to the presence of foreign-owned businesses. Moreover, although the industry empowers women through increased entrepreneurship opportunities, traditional gender norms of the area remain, thus, affecting women's capacity to manage their enterprises simultaneously with household- and reproductive work.

I am expressing sincere gratitude to all the participants of the study, for your honesty, openness, kindness, and for taking the time to participate; hence making this study possible. Keep up the good work, you are inspiring!

Keywords: Foreign direct investment, female entrepreneurship, global power structures, westernization, feminist economics, capital

Table of contents

1. Introduction	3
1.1 Aim	4
1.2 Delimitation	4
2. Previous research and theory	5
2.1 Previous research	5
2.1.1 FDI's and entrepreneurship	5
2.2 Theory	7
2.2.1 Global power structures	7
2.2.1.1 Westernization	8
2.2.1.2 Feminist economics	9
2.2.1.3 Capital	10
2.2.2 Analytical framework	11
3. Method and material	12
3.1 Methods for collecting data	12
3.1.1 Sampling	12
3.1.2 Semi-structured interviews	13
3.2 Methods for analyzing data	13
3.3 Methodological discussion	15
3.3.1 Validity	15
3.3.2 Reliability	15
3.3.3 Methodological considerations and problems	16
3.4 Ethical considerations	17
4. Result and Analysis	17
4.1 Economic capital	18
4.1.1 Reasons: Governmental and municipal policies, and global power structures	18
4.1.2 Effects of the possession of economic capital	21
4.1.2.1 Economic advantages in the market	21
4.1.2.2 Inequality and discrimination	23
4.1.2.3 Women's double responsibilities	26
4.2 Cultural and social capital	28
4.2.1 Reasons: Distribution of capital, westernization, discursive changes and global power structures	28
4.2.2 Effects of the possession of cultural and social capital	30
4.2.2.1 Cultural closeness to the tourists	30
4.2.2.2 Westernization of the area	31
4.2.2.3 The empowerment of women	33
5. Discussion and conclusions	35
5.1 Future research	36
6. References	38

1. Introduction

Globalization, the expanding tourism industry, and neoliberal policies have contributed to increasing foreign ownership in the tourism industry in countries of the global South. Consequently, money is leaving the countries where the businesses are placed (Beazley & Desai, 2014, pp. 411-412; Bishop, 2014, p. 374). The Philippines has for decades been one of the world's top tourist destinations, with one of the fastest-growing tourism sectors (UNWTO, 2019). 8.26 million international tourists visited the country in 2019, according to the Department of Tourism (DOT, n.d.). Coron Town in the province of Palawan is one of the main gates to some of the world's most popular tourist attractions, creating an attractive place for investors (DOT, 2021). Although the tourist industry is recognized to increase work opportunities and improve residents' socioeconomic situation, the Palawan province's poverty rate was measured at 9.4% in 2022, according to the Philippine Information Agency (PIA, 2022).

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) advocates foreign direct investment (FDI) in the tourism industry as a tool for increased and inclusive economic growth. However, this strategy has been questioned since the outcomes show that it does not necessarily improve the socioeconomic situation for residents in the host countries (Kusumawati, Herman & Holzacker, 2021, p. 243). Strategies from the government, the Department of Tourism (DOT), and the Board of Investment (BOI) enable foreign ownership in the country's tourism sectors and attract foreign investors worldwide. On the one hand, there are still some limitations within the foreign investment law regarding foreign ownership in the tourism industry; hence foreign investors can only own up to 40% of a business. On the other hand, the government prioritizes and encourages foreign direct investment (FDI) in the tourist industry and has introduced measures, promotion campaigns, agencies, and regulations to promote it, such as the Foreign Investment Act of 1991 (UNCTAD, n.d). FDI in the Philippines reached 8.66 billion USD in 2019, where the largest investors in the same year were Singapore, Japan, and the United States (Banko Sentral ng Pilipinas, 2023).

FDI's are often considered to positively affect entrepreneurship creation and development in the global South (Munemo, 2018, p. 383). However, the opportunities are considered limited

due to the increased competition with foreign investors (Sun, Lee & Hong, 2017, pp. 627-628). Consequently, female entrepreneurs in the global South are worried about the profitability of their enterprises due to multinational businesses' increased influence (Tajeddini, Ratten & Denisa, 2017, pp. 56-57). In addition, women in tourism-related enterprises in the Philippines are still highly influenced by societal and cultural norms since their traditional gender roles of caring for the household and the family remain. However, the industry itself is considered to empower women (Gutierrez & Vafadar, 2023, pp. 89-93).

The tourism industry contributes to most of the employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in Coron Town; hence the industry has influenced and changed the area (PCSD, 2016, p.56). On the one hand, these circumstances have resulted in many Filipino women appearing in entrepreneurial spaces. On the other, the increased competition within the same sectors due to the growing number of foreign investors is affecting women. Additionally, challenges to run their businesses "successfully" due to gender structures in the area remain. Very limited research has been conducted on FDI and female entrepreneurship in the global South. In addition, statistics show that most entrepreneurs globally are men, highlighting the importance of investigating how female entrepreneurs are affected by FDI's.

1.1 Aim

The aim of this research is to investigate how opportunities for local female entrepreneurship in Coron Town, the Philippines, are affected by global power structures and foreign ownership of enterprises in the area. In investigating women entrepreneurs' perceptions, perspectives, and viewpoints, the study's findings expect to increase the understanding of how global, national, and local actors can be reflected in female entrepreneurship opportunities in the global South.

1.2 Delimitation

The research is delimited to Coron Town on Busuanga island, Palawan, although these circumstances are prevalent in many places in the Philippines, additionally on a global level. The context of Coron Town can be considered to reflect this global phenomenon, hence the town's high presence of foreign investors and the society's dictating gender norms and

structures. In addition, this case can therefore represent these issues on a local level, although the context of Coron Town needs to be considered a unique example. Moreover, this case can work as representing and reflecting on global power structures between different global actors and power relations between the genders.

The delimitations of the study were made considering the time limit and volume of the research. Additionally, the local context simplified the finding of the study's participants. The sample of participants, five Filipino female entrepreneurs in the tourism industry in Coron town, is more reflected upon in *3.1.1 Sampling*.

2. Previous research and theory

Previous research that has been relevant to the study, along with the chosen theories and concepts, will be presented in this chapter. The analytical framework is mainly based on the following theories and concepts: global power structures, westernization, feminist economics, and capital. These perspectives and previous research have set the basis for analyzing the study's results. However, literature regarding the link between FDI and female entrepreneurship remains, as stated above, very limited. Nevertheless, existing literature and the broader field of FDIs' effect on local entrepreneurship have been useful. This study further aims to complement the existing data.

2.1 Previous research

2.1.1 FDI's and entrepreneurship

According to a report from UNCTAD (2007) reflecting on FDI's in the tourism industry, the benefits from the investments are expected to impact economic growth and poverty reduction positively. However, this has often been hindered; hence lack of information and economic knowledge among the local residents regarding how to sustainably use foreign investment as a tool for economic development (UNCTAD, 2007:11). Previous research on FDI and entrepreneurship in the tourism industry in the global South, have shown that FDI's direct effect on entrepreneurship is positive. However, local conditions do come into play, affecting

the absorptive capacity of the FDI's. Countries with more developed markets and financial institutions have a higher absorptive capacity; thus, local entrepreneurship is more positively affected in these countries (Munemo, 2018, p. 383).

Another prior study also concludes that FDI positively affects local entrepreneurship in the global South, such as through skill- and technology spillovers (Dzomonda & Ngwakwe, 2022, p. 76). However, previous studies have shown that FDI's negative effect, the increased competition, reduces entrepreneurship opportunities for local residents and increases the costs of opening businesses (Sun et al., 2017, pp. 627-628). This occurrence affects small and medium-sized enterprises extra in the manufacturing industry; thus, a "crowding-out" effect follows (Doytch, 2016, p. 133). Goel (2018) has studied the relationship between FDI's, entrepreneurship, and gender differences and concludes that national entrepreneurship is decreasing in the presence of FDI's. However, female entrepreneurship is partially increasing, although this is more prevalent in rich countries (Goel, 2018, pp. 887-895).

2.1.2 FDI's and female entrepreneurship

According to Brush and Cooper (2012), there are still very few studies on female entrepreneurship in the global South. Only 10% of all studies on entrepreneurship are directed to women (Brush & Cooper, 2012, p. 1). A previous study showed that women's entrepreneurship in the global South benefits from foreign enterprises' presence to a certain degree. However, when the presence of foreign investors exceeds this level, local female entrepreneurship decreases (Misra, Memili, Welsh & Fang, 2014, p. 54). Moreover, a prior study by Fang, Xu, C. Xu, and Shams (2023) showed that FDI positively affects women's entrepreneurship at the country level since many local women are businesses owners. In addition, this effect is considered as stronger in countries where the institutional environment is *less favorable* for women. However, at the industry level, FDI's are instead considered to crowd out local female-owned businesses due to the challenges of competing with foreign investors. Additionally, FDI's may change business practices and social norms, which are indicated to work in favor of women.

Studies from Bali on female entrepreneurship within the tourism sector showed that the tourism industry has contributed to an increased number of women as entrepreneurs

(Tajeddini, Walle & Denisa 2017, pp. 195-200). However, the females also struggle to combine work within their business with household and reproductive work. Additionally, they lack skills in marketing and leadership and are worried about their enterprises' profitability due to the increased influence of multinational businesses (Tajeddini, Ratten & Denisa, 2017, pp. 56-57). A study from the Philippines of women working in enterprises in the tourism industry showed that the industry empowers women due to their inclusion in economic spaces. However, women are still affected by traditional gender norms and structures, dictating their role in the household (Gutierrez & Vafadar, 2023, pp. 89-93).

2.2 Theory

The chosen theories and concepts of the research will be presented below. Furthermore, how the theories will be applied to the empirical findings and how they will contribute to the analysis of the material, will be discussed at the end of this chapter in the analytical framework.

2.2.1 Global power structures

Theories of structural power have been developed and influenced by many theorists, for example, Robert Dahl. Structural power is the form of power that flows through the systems and institutions shaping society, such as economic, political, and legal systems and institutions. The power is, therefore, not necessarily held by an individual or a group but gives the more powerful group the ability to use their position in society and benefit from it (Sköldberg, 2014, pp. 89-90). Economic, social, and political structures can therefore be used to shape or control other people, influence societal norms and result in the creation and reproduction of economic and social inequality, such as wealth and income distribution.

The present global power structures result from colonization, globalization, and the reproduction of these power relations through global economic and political institutions, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The representations of countries within these multilateral institutions are unequal and cannot reflect the present global economy. However, with the global world order changing, more countries have been allocated spots at, for example, the IMF Executive Board, challenging the power relations

within the institutions (Bøås, 2014, pp. 578-579). Although changes are emerging in the global power structures due to rising economies such as China and India, countries of the global South are still significantly affected by the present economic and political structures. Countries of the global North, and more powerful economies, can still take advantage of countries in the South. Therefore, global institutions with unequal representations are contributing to these power relations.

One of the many results of globalization is the liberalization of economies. Individualism, privatization, and deregulation of labor markets have brought changes and consequences for people worldwide. The World Bank and IMF's implementation of neoliberal policies in the global South through structural adjustment programs (SAPs) aimed to reduce the state's role and strengthen the market's role in trade and industries. This has come to be considered "a new form of colonization" by development actors such as governments and NGOs; hence the structural adjustments are increasing the wealth of a small number of global actors. In addition, the same players are not being held accountable for poverty in the global South, which in many cases has resulted from the SAPs (Beazley & Desai, 2014, pp. 411-412).

Neoliberal policies further facilitate foreign investment and private actors opening and expanding businesses abroad. As a result, multinational and transnational companies gain from low expenditures in the global South, and the profits are directed towards countries situated in the global North, or the country of investment. In addition, many countries in the global South consider FDI as the answer to economic difficulties since it is advocated in economic consulting regarding development strategies (Beazley & Desai, 2014, p. 412). However, as stated above, the power relations between the global North and South have been challenged, and power dynamics changed due to emerging economies such as China, India, Brazil, and Russia. Considering this, understanding global power relations is not as complex as looking through the lens of colonization. However, the power dynamics in the present world are still leaving marginalized or less powerful countries of the global South behind.

2.2.1.1 Westernization

Westernization refers to when Western values, norms, and discourses get implemented globally and therefore considered universal. Furthermore, societies, cultures, and individuals

worldwide are adopting or influenced by Western culture, politics, economics, and practices. This phenomenon can be related to colonization and further globalization, resulting in cultural homogenization, in which traditional values get erased, and other cultures are marginalized. This is a consequence of countries in the global North using their position of power to implement strategies and values globally (Mc Ewan, 2014, pp. 137-138; Murray & Overton, 2014, p. 179). Globalization and the increasing tourism industry have resulted in different values getting easily spread globally, influencing and changing societies and individuals. Historically, Western people are the ones who have been able to travel and therefore brought their values to new places (Hall & Brown, 2006, pp. 3-6). Additionally, global institutions are basing their development strategies on a Western approach, creating a universal definition of development. Therefore, the consequences and the phenomenon of westernization can be yet another consequence of unequal global power structures.

2.2.1.2 Feminist economics

The feminist economic theory focuses on how the economic system can be understood to affect gender relations and how gender influences economic systems. Feminist economics states that the global economy often disempowers women due to historically embedded structures (Benería, Berik & Floro, 2016, pp. 51-55). These structures are considered to have given men advantages in many aspects of life, for example, not having to take as much part in unpaid work. Furthermore, the economic system has created unpaid work sectors that refer to, for example, household and reproductive work (ibid, 2016, pp. 179-181). Moreover, feminist economics argues that colonization and modernization have affected men and women differently since colonization is both a value system and an economic system that was causing class differences in the promotion of capital accumulation. Although men were also affected by these circumstances, gender roles and structures did play a crucial role in the life of women. In addition, feminist economics states that where there is no equality, there is no development (ibid, 2016, pp. 1-12).

Since western gender norms and strategies for equality can be considered to have become universal through global development policies, women in the global South have been affected by them. Different contexts and priorities encompass women in the global South differently than the women in the global North; thus, the western approach to development and

empowering women are not the solution to many problems that women in the global South are facing (Benería et al., 2016, p. 15). Therefore, a one-size fits all approach to gender development strategies does not work since it is not accounting for the different needs and aspirations of women in different places (Purnima Kishwar, 2014, p. 407).

As stated above, women globally often face more responsibilities in the unpaid work sectors. In addition, as a result of changing gender structures on global, national, and local levels and the empowerment of women in the work sphere, married women often get to experience the pressure and expectations of both having to follow the traditional gender norms at home and having to perform at work (Beazley & Desai, 2014, p. 413). Therefore, feminist economists argue that including women in the work sphere does not change gender structures and economic systems that continuously disfavor women. Although, developing strategies have resulted in an increased inclusion of women in the formal economy and additionally supported gender equality in many places (Benería et al., 2016, pp. 72-74). Moreover, neoliberal policies have brought more benefits for men, especially in the global South, since these strategies are also shaped to fit the context of the global North, where another reality covers women (ibid., 2016, pp. 22-23).

2.2.1.3 Capital

Pierre Bourdieu (1986) describes capital as something that you have that is considered to be of worth and is useful, such as powers and resources. The capital is divided into economic, cultural, and social capital, which means that it also includes non-material things (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 114). Economic capital has the same meaning as money but can be institutionalized, for example, into property rights. Cultural capital is also convertible into economic capital, such as education opportunities, and so is social capital through social connections (ibid:242). According to Bourdieu (1984), the possession of capital is essential for an individual's position in society and can play a crucial role in creating and perpetuating differences and inequalities (Bourdieu, 1984, pp. 114-116). Therefore, the possession of capital on a global level can be considered a result of global power structures, creating and reproducing different conditions for access to capital.

Cultural capital relates to an individual's cultural knowledge, education, skills, and competencies and is a form of symbolic capital. Furthermore, cultural capital can be used as an advantage in social situations, such as in the labor market in certain areas linked to culture. It can therefore be transferred into economic and social capital (Sköldbberg, 2014, pp. 72-73). Bourdieu (1986) further describes cultural capital as of three different types; embodied, objectified, and institutionalized (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 243). The embodied cultural capital is described as affecting someone's thinking and acting, such as through cultural knowledge and skills gained through education and socialization. The objectified form of cultural capital is cultural objects, for example, art. Lastly, cultural capital can be institutionalized, which is gained from social institutions such as validation and recognition from universities (Sköldbberg, 2014, p. 72).

Social capital is an individual's social networks and relationships that are, to some extent, institutionalized. This form of capital is also convertible into economic and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986, pp. 241-250). Conversion is possible through social connections and contacts that give access to advantages, such as loans, investment opportunities, knowledge, and institutions. Therefore, social capital describes the advantages of social interactions and contacts, for example, being a member of a specific group, such as a family, friends, or at work. However, these groups' access to capital and other contacts also matters since it indirectly can be useful for the individual.

2.2.2 Analytical framework

The theories above are expected to contribute to understanding how women entrepreneurs in Coron Towns' entrepreneurship opportunities are affected by foreign direct investment and global power structures. Global power structures are used throughout the analysis to demonstrate the female entrepreneur's position of power toward foreign investors and global, national, and local actors. In addition, foreign business owners and female entrepreneurs' economic, cultural, and social capital is analyzed through how it contributes to the power relation between foreign and local entrepreneurs, and how the capital is used as advantages in the market. Moreover, the cultural knowledge of western business owners is further analyzed through the concept of westernization, by how the influence of western values affects local entrepreneurs. Lastly, the feminist economic theory will be applied in the analysis to increase

the understanding of how women in the Philippines have been affected by global economic policies and how these circumstances affect their opportunities for entrepreneurship.

3. Method and material

This chapter will present and discuss the study's methods and how the empirical material has been collected and analyzed. Furthermore, methodological and ethical considerations and problems will be discussed.

Since the research is delimited to Coron Town in Palawan and intends to represent similar cases, it has followed an exemplifying case-study design (Bryman, 2018, pp. 96-99). The study is based on an interpretive perspective since the understanding of the social reality is shaped by how the study's participants understand this reality (ibid, 2018, p. 52). Moreover, the research is further based on an abductive approach, combining induction and deduction. Empirics and theory therefore operate dynamically throughout the study; hence, the result and analysis consist of both empirical and theoretical findings (Bryman, 2018, pp. 478- 479).

3.1 Methods for collecting data

3.1.1 Sampling

The study's sampling was conducted through a purposive sampling method, since the chosen participants were considered as relevant to the study's aim. A snowball-sampling technique was further used to simplify finding relevant participants. Furthermore, variation in the sampling group was considered to highlight eventual differences within the group (Bryman, 2018, p. 496). The "variation within the group" included women of different ages working in different tourism industry sectors, contributing to a broader understanding of the issue through different perspectives.

The sampling group, five female Filipino entrepreneurs in the tourism industry in Coron Town, are all between 29 to 55 years old, owning and running a business in different sectors of the industry (cafe, restaurant, tourist agency, and hotels). Additionally, all of them are born in Coron. This sampling choice enhanced a local context and understanding of the issue.

3.1.2 Semi-structured interviews

The study's empirical material consists of five qualitative semi-structured interviews with Filipino female entrepreneurs in Coron Town. This method enabled the collection of in-depth information about the women's perspectives, thoughts, and viewpoints. Because of the method's flexibility and opportunity for adaptation, the interview questions could easily be adapted to the context of the participants. In addition, the semi-structured interviews made follow-up questions possible, facilitating more in-depth answers and reflections. All interviews were between 30 to 45 minutes and followed a flexible interview guide without any specific questions outlined. This enabled the adaptation of the interview questions, depending on the participant's answers (Hallin & Helin, 2018, pp. 42-43). However, the interview guide followed three themes; *foreign-owned enterprises, advantages and challenges in entrepreneurship, and gender structures*.

Moreover, the semi-structured interviews and the flexible interview guide further resulted in more natural and dynamic conversations, since the method enabled one to focus and pay attention to the participant. In addition, the participants were informed that their participation in the study would be completely anonymous, which also contributed to more comfortable dialogues. However, one of the difficulties with semi-structured interviews is to ensure that the answers and discussions are relevant to the research. The interviews sometimes led to different topics due to the lack of structure. This also resulted in difficulty collecting more developed and reflective answers in some cases. However, the conversations were led back with leading questions. The interviews were conducted in person.

3.2 Methods for analyzing data

The analysis of the empirical material has been conducted through a thematic analysis. Citations have been included in the result and analysis chapter to illustrate the interpretations of them, in addition to allowing the reader to create their own understanding and to increase the transparency of the research.

A thematic analysis enables identifying, interpreting, and analyzing themes and patterns in the empirical material. This analytical method is very flexible and makes it possible to chart out common patterns from the participant's perceptions, experiences, and perspectives (Braun

& Clarke, 2017, p. 297). The central themes of the collected data were identified by organizing the material into repetitive and interesting phrases, words, and sentences. Additionally, the themes were further analyzed through the chosen theories due to the study's abductive approach. This method is considered relevant to the study since it is flexible, adaptive, and not based on any specific epistemology (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017, pp. 2-3). Furthermore, since the study is analyzed through separate theories, this method is considered suitable and helpful in analyzing the material.

The thematic analysis started with a transcription of the material close after the conduction of the interviews. This was done to ensure that important information was remembered and that the material would be accurately interpreted. The transcription was further repetitively and carefully reviewed before the coding of the material started. According to Bryman (2018), coding is integrating with and reflecting on the material, where common and interesting words and sentences are marked to simplify the process of finding common themes and summarizing the empirical material (Bryman, 2018, pp. 705-708). The coding was conducted without any set themes. Furthermore, interesting phrases were marked, although they were not necessarily closely related to the aim of the study. However, the coding focused on finding dialogues and concepts that could be related to the aim. The following seven themes were identified in the coding of the empirical material:

1. Foreign-owned enterprises' economic advantages
2. Governmental and municipal policies
3. Gender structures
4. Foreign-owned enterprises' cultural and social advantages
5. Western values
6. Women's skills and advantages
7. The empowerment of women

Difficulties that can occur with a thematic analysis are that the chosen themes' importance and meanings must be more argued for (Bryman, 2018, pp. 706-707). Considering this, the importance of explaining and showing why the identified themes are essential has been

acknowledged. This has been done in the analysis by showing how themes were identified (by citations) and by explaining the meaning and importance of them.

3.3 Methodological discussion

Methodological and critical considerations, problems and issues have been encountered to increase the reliability and validity of the research. According to Bryman (2018), qualitative research has been criticized for lacking in reliability, validity and transparency (Bryman, 2018:483-486). Methodical problems have therefore been acknowledged during the time of the research and will be discussed below.

3.3.1 Validity

A study's validity is the ability to measure what the research aims to measure (Bergström & Boréus, 2018, pp. 38-39). The case study designs' delimitation to a specific area will imply that the external validity has to be acknowledged. Although the study aims to illustrate an example of similar cases, the results cannot be applied to other places with similar contexts, decreasing the generalization of the study (Bryman, 2018, p. 98). However, this is not the study's goal.

Additionally, the internal validity has also been acknowledged since the result and analysis of the research are mainly based on my interpretations of the empirical material and influenced by my pre-understandings and experiences of the issues. A lack of understanding of the Filipino context, history, culture, and norms can have contributed to conclusions that might not match the context of the participants. In addition, another challenge with the study's internal validity was ensuring that the participants interpreted the questions the way they were meant to be interpreted, from my viewpoint as a researcher. These challenges cannot be avoided; however, these scenarios have been kept in mind during the research, and the questions formulated in a way that enabled the participants to put them into their own context, through, for example, referring to concrete scenarios and experiences.

3.3.2 Reliability

The reliability of the study refers to how reliable the result and the empirical data are (Bergström & Boréus, 2018, pp. 40-41). My position as a researcher will affect the reliability

of the research since the answers to the interview question could be different if someone else asked the questions (for example, someone of different age, gender, and personality). In addition, qualitative research often exhibits variation based on the researcher's interpretations, highlighting the influence of the individual conducting the analysis (Bryman, 2018, p. 484). This methodological problem is challenging to avoid. However, being aware of the issue has been essential to increase the reliability and transparency of the research.

3.3.3 Methodological considerations and problems

As stated above, the study's generalization is affected by the research's delimitation to the Coron Town area. In addition, the limited number of participants will also decrease the generalization of the study since the result cannot be considered to reflect a population. The time limit and the research volume will also contribute to the issue of generalizing the study's results. However, the research is still considered to contribute interesting insights and complement previous research.

At first, the research aimed to investigate "Western" ownership of enterprises in Coron Town. However, the reality looked different since many enterprises are owned by investors from countries other than the "West", such as China, South Korea, and Japan. Therefore, the study aims to investigate foreign ownership and its perceived effect on local female entrepreneurship. However, in reflecting on foreign ownership, western ownership often comes into play. Therefore, both foreign and western ownership are discussed in the result and analysis chapter. The definition of "West" in the research are countries in the global North, where western values are considered to originate from.

Additionally, the definition of *western* and *foreign* can be difficult to separate in an interview. Therefore, my interpretations of the concept were carefully explained before and during the interviews. The concept of "Western" was explained as the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and countries in Europe. However, the participants already had their own interpretations of the concept.

3.4 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations and my role as a researcher have also been reflected on and encountered during the research. My role as a researcher might have affected the study since I was in Coron Town for a limited amount of time, making it difficult to understand the full context of an area. In addition, coming from a foreign country in the West, can have affected how the participants interpreted me as a researcher, since the research aims to investigate foreign ownership. However, the aim of the research was carefully explained.

The research follows the ethical principles of Swedish research. Participation in the study was completely voluntary, and the participants were informed that they could withdraw at any time during the interview. They were also informed about the study's purpose and that their participation would be completely anonymous. Therefore, the name of the participants in the research is fictitious. In addition, the interviews were recorded with consent from the participants (Vetenskapsrådet, 2017).

4. Result and Analysis

In this chapter, the empirical material will be presented and discussed to answer the aim of the study; *how opportunities for local female entrepreneurship in Coron Town, the Philippines, are affected by global power structures and foreign ownership of enterprises in the area*. Furthermore, the result will be analyzed through the chosen theories of the research.

Coron Town has, in recent years, created a suitable entrepreneurship environment for residents to establish businesses due to the growing tourism industry, and many of the entrepreneurs in the area are women. Five female entrepreneurs born in Coron Town explain the benefits and challenges of managing enterprises in the area; through foreign investors and their own economic, social, and cultural advantages, governmental and municipal policies, the influence of western values, gender norms, and women's empowerment. The participants of the study are as follows:

Participant 1: Danica, 30, part-owner of a cafe with her husband since 2019.

Participant 2: Chloe, 38, owner of a travel agency since 2012. Working with the business full-time since 2019.

Participant 3: Melanie, 29, part-owner of a hotel (family business), and owner of a convenience store since 2022.

Participant 4: Allison, 55, part-owner of a hotel with her sister, but running the business herself.

Participant 5: Remi, 34, owner of a cafe since 2019.

4.1 Economic capital

Unequal from the start and further. There is an expressed feeling of discrimination and inequality among the entrepreneurs; hence differences in the preconditions and opportunities for entrepreneurship between foreign and local entrepreneurs are experienced. Foreign investors are described as benefiting from several competitive advantages that are perceived to give their enterprises the upper hand in the market. Furthermore, policies from the government and municipality are mentioned as some of the main reasons for these issues, and the entrepreneurs are expressing frustration about their strategies. Economic capital is considered one of the most considerable advantages for foreign investors in Coron Town; therefore, the *reasons* and *effects* of the possession of economic capital on a global, national and local level are going to be discussed below.

4.1.1 Reasons: Governmental and municipal policies, and global power structures

A business startup requires economic capital. It can be quite a difficult task without any economic support and assistance, such as through loans or investments. The female entrepreneurs described how they were not approved for loans from the municipality and how they started up their businesses from their savings. These conditions are also mentioned as hindering other local residents from opening up businesses and pursuing their entrepreneurship dreams. Furthermore, frustrations over governmental and municipal laws, policies, and regulations that are allowing, approving, and promoting foreign investment are expressed by all the entrepreneurs and further explained as the central issue of the current situation on the island. The frustration comes from the feeling of discrimination and lack of

support. The female entrepreneurs mean that if locals were given the opportunity as a startup loan, or if the municipality of Coron focused on supporting the locals instead of foreign investors to open their businesses, it would create much better preconditions and facilitate local entrepreneurship.

The locals are not really having enough funds. If the locals were just given the opportunity. They know the place, they know how to handle things, they know what to do, they know what people to talk to. If the government were just helping *them*, funding *them*, giving them all the assistance. Then they could do it for themselves (Remi, 2023, April 3).

The locals are explained as wanting to be involved in entrepreneurial spaces and that they would benefit from their social capital and knowledge of the area. However, the economic challenges of starting a business do often hinder them. Moreover, if it does not, as in the case of the study's participants, they most likely have to put all of their savings into their business as a startup capital or try to find someone to invest in their business. The reasons behind this are described as the municipality, or the government does not have enough resources to approve these loans for the citizens.

The government doesn't have that much funds to help the small and big businesses and local entrepreneurs here. The government doesn't even have enough funding for its own operations. So you can imagine giving assistance to other small businesses. So we have to find partners, corporations to be able to help us. But if the government could just provide us with funding, they could even give us a loan with a small interest, then we could do it. But instead a foreigner would come here and have this big fund, and in the worst case our business will die (Remi, 2023, April 3).

The Philippine government's inability to support its citizens in entrepreneurship makes power relations between different global actors visible. As indicated by Beazley & Desai (2014), the power relations in the global economy cannot be considered equal, and the implementation of neoliberal policies in the global South does not facilitate equal conditions for different actors (Beazley & Desai, 2014, pp. 411-412). Considering this, the Philippine government's disadvantaged position in the global economic system affects the citizens and the power relations that flow through all levels. In addition, foreign private actors take advantage of

these conditions, hence the reproduction of these structures, since the profits from foreign-owned enterprises are directed towards the country of investment. As (Sköldberg, 2014, p. 90) describes, this results from how power structures can reproduce unequal power relations and increase differences between different actors.

However, there can be different reasons for these circumstances that can be further discussed, although the occurrence mentioned above indicates the reproduction of unequal power relations in the global economy. Instead of providing economic assistance for the Philippine citizens, the government and municipality encourage foreign investment since it often contributes as a source of income. The promotion of FDI's to work as drivers for economic growth and poverty reduction, as the report from UNCTAD (2007) states, is, as a consequence, additionally decreasing the opportunities for locals to build up enterprises and benefit from the industry. For the residents of Coron Town to be able to take advantage of the presence of foreign business owners, such as through knowledge spillovers, they need to be given the opportunity to start up their businesses. As Munemo (2018) concludes, the absorptive capacity from FDI's, hence how well it affects the local entrepreneurs, depends on financial institutions and markets in the host country (Munemo, 2018, p. 383). If local entrepreneurship instead were more encouraged, the power relations between foreign and local entrepreneurs would be challenged and eventually change the conditions for local entrepreneurs. In addition, the power relations between the Philippines as a nation and other global actors in the global economic system would be challenged.

If only the government had a clear policy, clear regulations. I really believe in more help for the locals. They would really stand out, and they would really give their best for their business if they were just given the chance. For example, if a local is owning a business, then it will most likely become a family business. Then, the employees would have their own percentage share of the profits (Remi, 2023, April 3).

Reflecting on *female* entrepreneurship, women have long been recognized to get empowered by the increased employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in the tourism industry (Gutierrez & Vafadar, 2023, p. 85). In the case of Coron Town, the number of female entrepreneurs is increasing and further contributes to women's social and economic freedom. The women entrepreneurs explain that they are considered more suitable than men in the area

to work in the tourism sectors. However, as feminist economics states (Beneriá et al., 2016, pp. 72-74), the inclusion of women in the formal economy is not changing gender structures and economic systems that continue to play a crucial role in the life of women. Consequently, women struggle to combine their responsibilities according to their traditional gender roles with contributing to the financial aspect of the household.

In Filipino culture, women always follow men. Women should always follow men and men always be the provider. I don't like that idea, that's why I started my own business. We, women, have this mentality because of this that we should empower ourselves. Maybe that has made us become more entrepreneurs than men, because we want to prove that we can also do what men can do, and more (Melanie, 2023, April 3).

On the one hand, women in Coron Town get empowered by the industry and its entrepreneurship opportunities. On the other hand, implemented neoliberal policies are not adapted to the local and cultural context. Consequently, women face double responsibilities (Beazley & Desai, 2014, p. 413); hence, less time can be put into their businesses and contribute to economic growth and development. In addition, the competition with foreign-owned enterprises in the area intensifies this relationship. The effect of these conditions will be further discussed in the following sections.

4.1.2 Effects of the possession of economic capital

4.1.2.1 Economic advantages in the market

One of the largest advantages of foreign investors and business owners in the area are their economic resources, in the way it facilitates “successful” entrepreneurship. Larger startup-capitals and resources for developing and expanding their businesses give the foreign businesses the opportunities of making more profitable choices, such as investing in quality equipment, the design of their enterprises, and choosing good locations. Affording a good location is repeatedly mentioned as a problem for local entrepreneurs in Coron Town, hence the increased competition with the foreign business owners at the market. One of the female entrepreneurs describes the business next doors owned by two Chinese investors, that in 2 weeks after opening up their first business opened up their second branch;

And we said ‘Oh well, good for them that they have the money. It’s so easy for them to put up a big sign saying “Hiring people”, to buy them uniforms and all that stuff.’ But then there’s also the fact that, I have a lot of friends that have been looking for a good location for their businesses, but since the foreigners have the money, they have the first chance to pick the good locations. It’s taking the opportunities from locals, of having businesses here. That’s the challenge here. I think some opportunities are being taken from us. For us locals, we have to compete with these big guys. We have the people to build the market, and we are building the market. But we have to do the job twice, compared to them, they just get the money (Danica, 2023, March 30).

As Sun et al. (2017) describe, a negative effect of FDI's is the increased competition with foreign investors, hence increased costs of opening and running businesses (Sun et al., 2017, pp. 627-628). The costs and competition in Coron Town of, for example, choosing a good location, have increased due to the foreign business owners' significant economic capital brought to the market. All participants stressed that they experience competition with foreign-owned businesses as an issue and worry about the future.

It’s hard to compete with them. Because they have all the resources. We are not from a family that has a lot of money in the bank. So, all of it came from savings, just our savings (Danica, 2023, March 30).

As Bourdieu (1984) describes, access to capital is essential for an individual's position in society; thus, these conditions reproduce differences and inequality among groups (Bourdieu, 1984, pp. 114-116). Moreover, the way that access to capital reproduces power relations is indicated to result in foreign investors continuing advantages in the market.

If they build more, it will really affect us. Because they usually build bigger and better, and that is a problem. We are just a hotel, one establishment. They usually build resorts, all in one place. And they are coming up with new ideas that we have to catch up on (Melanie, 2023, March 31).

As stated above, foreign business owners' economic capital facilitates more cost-effective and profitable entrepreneurship choices. In the food sector, Coron restaurants and cafes depend on importation. Local owners often cannot afford to buy directly from the supplier but must rely on the local market and small shops. This makes them vulnerable to changes in the market

and lack of food supplies, in addition, can be costly. Concurrently, foreign investors are explained not to have to consider or adapt to these challenges since they can afford to buy supplies directly from the supplier. These circumstances can be indicators that support (Misra et al., 2014) findings that when the presence of foreign investors exceeds a certain level, the amount of local women entrepreneurs decreases (Misra et al., 2014, p. 54). In the context of Coron Town, it can be considered to be due to the increased competition. However, this study does not provide evidence of this relationship, but these findings can contribute to understanding it.

Moreover, one of the female entrepreneurs, the owner of a travel agency, explained how she started up her business with only 10000 Philippine pesos (PHP) (approximately 180 USD). In addition, she is still struggling financially and trying to find strategies to increase her income through her business and other sources. 4 of 5 of the participants are running or are planning to open up side businesses to add up to their incomes. Some are even considering working abroad, indicating that the conditions for female entrepreneurs are challenging and might not be advantageous enough for the locals. The desire to work abroad to send remittances back to their families indicates that the global economic systems are creating, reproducing, and intensifying unequal power dynamics. Concurrently, foreign investors consider Coron Town an excellent place for investment.

I only had 10000 pesos to start my business again after the covid-19 pandemic. My sister lives in Chicago so she sended me that, and I managed to make the money grow. We already used all our savings. (...) But the last few weeks I have been thinking of what other business I should open up, in order to add up to our income. (...) You know, my dream is to go abroad, I need to earn more money for my kids. Right now I am taking an early childhood education and a special education course. They are looking for that in the US (Chloe, 2023, March 31).

4.1.2.2 Inequality and discrimination

Aside from the frustrations over governmental and municipal policies and the foreign business owners' large economic capitals, these conditions are also explained as resulting in further unequal circumstances. As stated above, local entrepreneurship opportunities can be

considered less due to the lack of economic resources and the inability to receive loans and investments. Moreover, foreign investors also have the largest share of their businesses' profits; hence employed locals often end up with lower salaries than if they could run a business themselves. The entrepreneurs argue that if residents could become entrepreneurs, for example, by receiving a start-up loan, the situation on the island would be more equal. In addition, the already established local entrepreneurs feel discriminated against by the uneven economic conditions with foreign investors.

The locals are the ones working, working and working. And they would be the ones earning, earning and earning. So if it instead were more local and family businesses, then they would all have a share. And they would be working hard! Because then they know that they will all have the whole share afterwards. The locals would feel more motivated and less concerned about money (Melanie, 3 april 2023).

The foreign business owners, having a large percentage of the incomes, are indicating that the profits are directed towards the countries of investment, thus, reproducing the power structures of the global economy. Neoliberal policies do facilitate this occurrence. In addition, the promotion of FDI as a driver for economic growth is often, according to (Beazley & Desai, 2014, p. 412), advocated in economic consulting with global economic institutions, such as the IMF. Therefore, in national development strategies for strengthening the country's economy, FDI's is frequently used as a tool.

I mean for us Filipinos, it's really hard for us to build something outside the country. So why is it so easy for them to build inside ours? For me, as a local business owner, that is really hurtful. Again, the municipality is the one who should protect the locals. But they are the ones that tell the foreigners 'that place is for sale, you should buy it and build something' (Melanie, 2023, March 31).

Moreover, the Philippine currency can not be considered strong compared to many other foreign currencies. As one of the participants argued above, it is not easy for Filipinos to build or invest in something outside the Philippines. The circumstances of Coron Town are therefore perceived as unfair and upsetting due to the foreign investors' increased presence. In addition, foreign investors are bringing foreign currencies worth much more in the

Philippines. This is another result of the global economic system's creation of inequality and hierarchies.

Entrepreneurship opportunities are explained as being taken from the locals due to their lack of resources. On the one hand, foreign-established corporations create work opportunities for residents. On the other, they are taking the opportunity of running the businesses themselves from them. Additionally, if more residents were business owners, work opportunities would still be created for locals.

I wish that our Municipality would not allow more foreign people to invest here, just to protect the locals. I wish our Municipality would provide us the safety that the locals come first before the foreign and westerners. I wish our Municipality put local business owners first, before foreign business owners. Because this is our home, it is ours, it is supposed to be ours. So why put others before the locals? In the election, they are going to ask us locals and then go and support Westerners, because of more money. I'm not fine with that. I mean, you want us to support you? Then support us. I will give you my 100 percent (Melanie, 2023, March 31).

In addition to the issues mentioned above, the restriction within the foreign investment law, implying a maximum amount of 40% ownership for foreign investors, creates opportunities to take advantage of locals. In many cases, to overlook the law, foreign investors are, according to the participants, using a friend's name or marrying a Filipino resident. Additionally, in worse cases, the law is, according to one of the participants, resulting in consequences such as women being exploited.

I think that it should be a balance with the regulations from the government, and what they are imposing. Because we never want to sell our land, but for these foreigners that get to buy land within our country. It is even resulting in women being exploited because of that, because it is easier to buy land if you are having a Filipino partner. And not everything is about love right? I think there should be a more strict regulation for that, let's say a maximum land area that you can buy (Danica, 2023, March 30).

The participant refers to what she describes as "foreign men" looking to invest on the island. The cases when foreigners take advantage of someone by marriage are seen as a severe problem that has to be addressed by the government and municipality. The reason behind this

occurrence is explained to be a result of Filipinos' lack of access to education; hence these young people are considered easy to manipulate.

It is sad to know that, if you just come here to the Philippines, you choose a woman, whoever you meet. Then after that you get a woman, you marry her. And then after divorce, you can open a business. So what I want is a limit. At least to give the upper hand to the Filipinos. (...) So all of this, most of this, comes down to how the government regulates or provides regulations. It is a result of that (Danica, 2023, March 30).

Structural power that flows through systems and institutions (Sköldberg, 2014, p. 90) affects local entrepreneurship conditions. Besides what is mentioned above, societal structures also play a crucial role in locals' ability to gain educational and entrepreneurship experience.

4.1.2.3 Women's double responsibilities

The Philippine culture and societies do, like in all places, involve a lot of gender norms and structures, affecting societies and the people within. Cultural traditions and norms of the area are dictating roles and responsibilities according to the genders, complicating the situation of women. Women's role involves taking care of the children and the household, and the entrepreneurs describe these circumstances as issues concerning managing their enterprises. All of the female entrepreneurs argue that they struggle to combine work with household- and reproductive work; hence less time can be aligned to their businesses.

I get up at 5.30 am every morning to work and run errands for the tours. When I am done with all of that I need to take the kids to school and go back to work before 8 am. Then at 11 am I have to get my youngest daughter from her grandma, get my other kids home for lunch and bring them back to school again before going back to work. Later I go back to school to get them at 4 pm again, bring them here, later get them back home to eat, and bring them back here again. We are closing around 8.30 pm. Sometimes we stay in the office until 9 or 10pm, but that is not every day. I need to think of my health too (Chole, 2023, March 31).

In line with the study by Tajeddini, Ratten, and Denisa (2017, pp. 56-57), showing that female entrepreneurs struggle to combine their household responsibilities with running their

enterprises, this relationship applies to Coron Town's context. In addition, the findings of this study are also similar to Gutierrez and Vafadar's (2023) findings that women working in the tourism industry in the Philippines are affected by traditional gender norms and structures (Gutierrez & Vafadar, 2023, pp. 89-93), showing that female entrepreneurs in Coron Town are facing the same issues. Considering these circumstances, women's capability to manage their enterprises, thus, increasing their economic capital, can be considered limited. Especially in a competitive environment involving foreign business owners. In addition, traditional gender norms can also hinder women from managing their enterprises. In the question of combining work with other responsibilities, one of the participants owning a cafe with her husband answered;

This is actually our dilemma right now. Right now we are transitioning our cafe. Before, I was working here from 7 am to 9 pm, but ever since we got married, we thought that it would be harder for us to start a family of our own. So that is the biggest challenge for women who are running businesses here. Because, first of all, it's very hard here to ask a stranger to take care of your child. So even though you hire a nanny, it's still very much a different story. So, on my part, we have decided that slowly, I will no longer take part in the cooking, and I'll just stay at home. So, I can prepare for the pregnancy and focus on the child. I don't want to stop being here in the cafe, I still want to work. But I think it is part of the contract that I signed when I got married (Danica, 2023, March 30).

However, women developing businesses and contributing more to the family's income are challenging power structures within the family. As the findings by Gutierrez & Vafadar (2023, pp. 89-93) show, the tourism industry in the Philippines is empowering women due to their managing roles in the industry and their inclusion in the economic sectors. Similarly, female entrepreneurs in Coron Town are experiencing the same empowerment; thus, their economic and social freedom are increasing, and gender roles are being challenged. The empowerment of women will be further discussed in a later section.

4.2 Cultural and social capital

The *reasons* and *effects* of the possession of cultural and social capital on a global, national and local level are going to be discussed below.

4.2.1 Reasons: Distribution of capital, westernization, discursive changes and global power structures

Unequal power relations in the global economy and access to economic capital further result in differences in access to other advantages. As Bourdieu (1986) describes, economic capital can be converted into cultural and social capital and vice versa. Economic capital facilitates access to education, creating cultural capital and the other way around; increased cultural capital facilitates increased economic capital. Social connections through social contacts similarly create opportunities for economic and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 242). The foreign investors' possession of economic capital is therefore creating other advantages in the market, for example, through educational and entrepreneurship experience. In addition, unequal societal structures, such as education access, are intensifying competition with foreign entrepreneurs.

For foreign owned businesses, there are a lot of them here in Coron, apart from the financial aspect of opening a business it seems that we are also competing with the ABS (asset-backed security). They have plenty of ABS; they are well-traveled and they are just bringing their culture from their place to here. The main customers here are foreigners, so their advantage is that they already know what these people want (Danica, 2023, March 30).

Moreover, historical injustice and the global economic system have created differences in what groups, on national and global levels, that can afford to travel. Consequently, the values of the specific groups are spread to tourist destinations, influencing and changing places and cultures. Western people have historically been contributing most to the tourist industry globally, spreading western values worldwide (Hall & Brown, 2006, pp.3-6). Coron Town is no exception to this phenomenon. The female entrepreneurs are all trying to adapt to foreign, particularly Western values, but are also describing this as a challenge because of the foreign investors' cultural capital. In addition, adapting to foreign cultures and values is not

necessarily what they want to do but rather what they feel they must do. Additionally, foreign investors do like tourists who bring their values and are often very familiar with the preferences of the tourists.

Westernization has increased the unequal power relations between the global North and the global South, resulting in the marginalization and homogenization of cultures. In addition, the Western approach to development, economic growth and neoliberalism have facilitated foreign investment and further intensified income distribution between countries (Murray & Overton, 2014, p. 179; Conway, 2014, pp. 106-107). Keeping the Filipino culture and integrating it into the tourism industry in Coron Town is something that the entrepreneurs consider essential. However, as stated above, that is different from what is happening in Coron Town. Similar to the disappointment and frustration over the municipality's priority of foreign investment before local entrepreneurship, the strategies of the government and the municipality are considered the main reason why Filipino culture is fading in the areas influenced by tourism.

It's always a fund agreed with the government and with the Municipality. So sometimes I always blame the Municipality, because they are the ones that accept the changes. When they are the ones that should protect it. If they didn't allow foreigners to build industries here, it wouldn't be possible. It's the Municipality that brings the locals and their traditions down, because they are the ones that always approve and allow it to happen (Melanie, 2023, March 31).

While western values are swiping over the town, this is also contributing to changes in the life of local residents. On the one hand, Filipino women's opportunities and choices have increased. On the other, the gender structures of the area remain. However, they are starting to be challenged. Feminist economics (Beneriá et al., 2016) states that women's involvement and increased inclusion in the paid work sectors are improving the socioeconomic situation for women (Beneriá et al., 2016, pp. 72-74). In some cases, female entrepreneurs are earning more than their husbands. In the question of these circumstances are changing the structures within the family, one of the participants answered;

Not really. But women are getting more empowered and independent. But then again for Filipinos, we have this culture that the husband is still the head of the family. But nowadays it is getting more equal. Decision-making has to be discussed first. Before, the husband would provide us with the rules. The wife is now getting a voice saying 'No we should do this, before we do that' (Remi, 2023, April 3).

4.2.2 Effects of the possession of cultural and social capital

4.2.2.1 Cultural closeness to the tourists

All female entrepreneurs describe foreign business owners benefiting from their cultural knowledge and closeness to the tourists. Since many tourists in the area are foreigners, knowing their preferences is considered an essential competitive advantage. According to Bourdieu, cultural capital can be used as an advantage in social situations such as in the labor market (Sköldberg, 2014, pp. 72-73), which in this case is working in favor of the foreign business owners in Coron Town. In addition, social capital, which refers to an individual's social network (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 247), is another advantage for foreign investors since the target market is often in their own countries. Moreover, other mentioned skills related to foreign business owners' cultural and social capital are marketing, entrepreneurship, and language skills and knowledge. Foreign investors are further considered to easier communicate with tourists due to their cultural closeness.

Something that is affecting my business is that there are some agencies that are offering cheaper prices. If we offer a price, they will offer a cheaper one. Foreigners are checking on that. Most likely Europeans, like Spanish or French. They are good at marketing (Cherry, 2023, March 31).

These circumstances can be considered to support Fang et al. (2023) findings that the increased competition with foreign investors leads to a "crowding-out" effect. However, the study's findings do not confirm that this would be the case for Coron Town, although the female entrepreneurs worry that the future might hold an even more challenging environment. In line with the finding of the study made by Tajeddini, Ratten, and Denisa (2017) concluding that female entrepreneurs worry about the profitability of their businesses

due to multinational businesses' increased influence (Tajeddini, Ratten & Denisa, 2017, pp. 56-57), all of the female entrepreneurs argue that they worry about the future and the profitability of their businesses. This is argued to be due to the increasing presence of foreign investors and the inability to catch up on new trends and ideas at the same pace.

I think that since they are foreigners, they can catch up a bit faster than us because we are locals. So that is really a problem. We only focus on what we have, but since they are still building, they can focus on what they should build and come up with new ideas. Not like us, our hotel is already built. We can renovate little by little, we are supposed to do that to catch up (Melanie, 2023, March 31).

4.2.2.2 Westernization of the area

The consequences of different values influencing an area are unavoidable in areas highly integrated with the tourism industry. The entrepreneurs frequently mentioned the influence of western values brought by tourists and investors. Western values increasingly influence Coron Town, and the entrepreneurs' enterprises are no exception. Consequently, local culture and traditions are fading in the light of Western values, and the local entrepreneurs are similar to what was mentioned earlier, struggling to compete with the Western business owners' cultural knowledge. Remi, owner of a vegetarian restaurant, describes the cultural advantage of Western-owned businesses;

It is hard to meet the demand of western values, because we Filipinos are not naturally vegan or vegetarians. And we put a lot of seasoning in our food. So imagine us, cooking vegan and vegetarian. We have to study this type of food. But the western owners coming here already know (Remi, 2023, April 3).

Adapting to, in particular, western values are considered important in the competition with foreign and western-owned businesses in the area. Additionally, this is considered required to meet the demand of western and foreign tourists. However, some of the answers indicate that adopting western ideas and practices is considered something positive and that the fading of Filipino culture and traditions is not an issue.

The western values are influencing our business. But it's very inspiring. We keep on following business from the West because the ideas are there. The packaging, also the

interior. They are our inspiration actually. Because if you keep on following the Filipino approach of doing business, it would not be good for our business. If you would have been to Coron about 5 years ago, it was really different from this. Especially the architecture and design of everything. Then you could see hotels painted yellow, not really aesthetically pleasing to Western people. But ever since foreigners came to Coron, the locals here have been more competitive (Danica, 2023, March 30).

As Bourdieu describes, the embodied version of cultural capital affects someone's way of thinking and acting (Sköldbberg, 2014, p. 72). Further, the concept of Westernization describes how western norms and practices get spread and implemented globally, influencing people's minds and actions. Additionally, since Western values are often considered universal values, western approaches are further considered as "what is right" (Mc Ewan, 2014, pp. 137-138). The tourist industry bringing Western people to the island has greatly influenced the area. In addition, western-owned businesses are considered to reproduce these values due to their strategies of offering what they know western tourists are used to and to make them feel comfortable on their vacation.

Moreover, a difference in the participant's personal and professional values and opinions is identified. Meeting the demand of tourists to develop their businesses successfully is considered more important than preserving the local culture and traditions. The industry and the competitive market are leaving them with little choice. Concurrently, one of the participants is hoping that other islands in the Philippines, not yet as exposed to the tourism industry, can manage to keep the Filipino culture and traditions and that *"The government should be more strict, to protect and to not lose the authenticity. Maybe so foreign entrepreneurs or business owners are not able to establish"* (Melanie, 2023, March 31). Asking the same participant if she feel upset about the Filipino culture fading away as a result of western values that are influencing the area and their branch; she answered;

Yes. As a local, yes. But as a business owner, no. We need to adapt. I cannot say yes, I have to say no, because we need to adapt. I am really hoping for the small island that is booming right now, like Siquijor, I really hope that they can keep what they have now, because it's really a local vibe. I really hope that the locals can manage and don't have to adapt (Melanie, 2023, March 31).

The cultural advantages of foreign business owners are many. On the one hand, tourists from all over the world visit Coron Island, creating advantages for most foreign business owners because of their cultural closeness to tourists. On the other hand, “universal” western values seem to give western business owners the upper hand in the market. This can be considered a result of historically embedded power structures (Bøås, 2014, pp. 578-579), continuing to influence societies and are considered global hegemonic discourses.

4.2.2.3 The empowerment of women

Despite the challenges that work against local female entrepreneurs, many local women-owned businesses are developing and expanding. The reasons for this are described as women's natural hospitality skills, abilities developed from their role in the household, their social capital and knowledge of the area, and mastering the skill of multitasking. The tourist industry in Coron Town is therefore considered to hold a very suitable entrepreneurship environment for women. The advantages of female entrepreneurs are used well, paving the way for successful entrepreneurship. In addition, these circumstances empower women in the area and challenge the gender norms and structures within the household and society.

Especially here in Coron, a lot of successful entrepreneurs are women. But the environment here for women entrepreneurs is still very tough when it comes to maternity leave and such. But there are still more women on the front line in the tourism industry here in Coron. Because we know how to organize, how to deal with people, we are more loving, caring, and understanding (Danica, 2023, March 30).

The empowerment of women in Coron Town is mentioned by all participants, indicating a discursive shift that is swiped over and influencing the whole town. Feminism, social media, and promoting campaigns are mentioned as reasons for things starting to change and women getting empowered. In addition, the findings of the study by Fang et al. (2023) show that FDI's can positively impact societal norms and business practices that support local female entrepreneurship.

Feminism, empowerment, and all those stuff have affected so much, it has influenced the minds of women. Women these times, this generation, are more about valuing ourselves,

you can do more, we can do this, we are capable of this, we are capable of that. Because of that culture and this society we are in right now, we are getting more confident of trying different careers. Before for Filipino women, maybe you were a teacher, you were a nurse. At this time, you can be a lawyer, doctor, or engineer. But if you want that, you will probably not choose to get married early, because it will keep you at home (Danica, 2023, March 30).

In making strategic choices based on reading the market and the competitors, the entrepreneurs describe how they find strategies to use as advantages in the competition with foreign investors. The importance of good customer service, patience and flexibility, and more specific strategies such as *“People have been coming here to complain that they always get small portions at these places, so we make sure we always serve big portions* (Remi, 2023, April 3), are described by the entrepreneurs.

The customers went to our office to book the same tour again, because they were not satisfied with the service at the western owned place. That’s why I always tell my employees how important our service is, and we benefit from that (Chloe, 2023, March 31).

Moreover, one of FDI's positive effects on local entrepreneurship in the global South is considered to be skill spillovers (Dzomonda & Ngwakwe, 2022, p. 76). The presence of foreign investors, often bringing new perspectives and knowledge to the market, can also positively affect local entrepreneurs. Concurrently, the locals' ability to adapt and be innovative facilitates successful entrepreneurship. However, the entrepreneurship environment for local female entrepreneurs in Coron Town is tough, and the future might imply even more challenging conditions for local entrepreneurs and residents due to the increased amount of foreign direct investment. Reproduced and increased gaps in the global economy enhance power distribution and access to capital; thus, the people at the bottom of the hierarchy are being obstructed. Therefore, changes in policies and regulations regarding FDI, in line with what the female entrepreneurs stressed, are needed and essential.

Let’s face reality. Filipinos are not that rich. Not compared to other nationalities. All we have is this beautiful place. But we don’t have the money. The money to build a hotel or a resort (Danica, 2023, March 30).

5. Discussion and conclusions

The tourism industry has contributed to an increasing number of local female entrepreneurs in Coron Town; hence, women get empowered by their involvement in entrepreneurial spaces and managing their enterprises. However, challenges remain due to a high percentage of FDI and traditional gender norms in the area. Foreign investors' larger economic resources, cultural closeness to the tourists, entrepreneurship experience, and the westernization of the area are some of the most significant challenges for local entrepreneurs. The increased competition due to establishing foreign-owned enterprises is considered challenging; hence, the large economic, cultural, and social capital the foreign investors possess. Therefore, this study supports (Sun et al., 2017) findings that FDI's negative effect may be the increased competition and costs of opening a business (Sun et al., 2017, pp. 627-628).

In addition, governmental and municipal policies promoting foreign investment and declining local entrepreneurs' financial support are adding to the disadvantages of local entrepreneurs. Furthermore, entrepreneurship opportunities for residents may decrease. The strategies of encouraging FDI's in the tourism industry that often, according to Beazley & Desai (2014), are advocated in economic consulting with global institutions such as the IMF (Beazley & Desai, 2014, p.412), indicate that global power structures are affecting actors and individuals on all different levels. The entrepreneurs perceive the Philippine government as not having enough funding to support local businesses; thus, foreign investment works as a tool for economic growth. As a result, gaps in the global economy can be considered to increase and reproduce unequal conditions between individuals and actors. Furthermore, the entrepreneurs are frustrated about foreign investors having a large share of their profits. Consequently, unequal power relations between foreign and local actors in the area intensify since the foreign investors are considered to be taking entrepreneurship opportunities from locals in the first place.

In line with the findings by Tajeddini, Ratten & Denisa (2017), showing that female entrepreneurs in Bali are worried about the profitability of their businesses due to multinational businesses' increased influence (Tajeddini, Ratten & Denisa, 2017:56-57), the findings of this study shows that female entrepreneurs in Coron Town are experiencing the same type of worry. In addition, Filipino female entrepreneurs express difficulties in meeting

the market's demands due to tourists' and foreign investors' values continuing to influence the area.

Moreover, this study is further supporting the findings by Gutierrez & Vafadar (2023), showing that the industry empowers women in tourism-related enterprises in the Philippines but are highly influenced by societal and cultural norms (Gutierrez & Vafadar, 2023, pp. 89-93). As feminist economic states (Beneriá et al., 2016, pp. 22-23;72-74), neoliberal policies and strategies for development are not encountering the different priorities and responsibilities of women in the global South. On the one hand, women's integration in work spheres and roles as entrepreneurs challenge existing gender norms and contribute to women's increased freedom of choice in Coron Town. On the other, women's double responsibilities of managing their enterprises and the reproductive- and household work result in less time to develop their businesses. Furthermore, these circumstances are intensifying the challenging competition with foreign investors.

In conclusion, FDI's in the tourism sectors in Coron Town may have a negative effect on local female entrepreneurship, due to the increased competition with foreign investors. In addition, policies supporting FDI's are not considering women's multiple responsibilities, hence, intensifying the challenges in competing with foreign business owners. Encouraging FDI's on a global level further reproduces unequal power relations between "rich" and "poor" countries and actors. Furthermore, globalization and its following structures empower the women of Coron Town due to their increased entrepreneurship opportunities. However, policy changes regarding FDI's are needed globally, nationally, and locally to support and increase female entrepreneurship in the global South.

5.1 Future research

Finally, further research on FDI's effect on female entrepreneurship in the global South is important due to the limited existing literature. In addition, further research is required to understand whether FDI are "crowning-out" or supporting female entrepreneurship in Coron Town. Future studies could focus on how well the local female-owned enterprises in the area are developing and expanding, in relation to foreign-owned enterprises in the same branch.

Research could also focus on if men and women-owned enterprises are affected differently by the presence of foreign investors.

Furthermore, future research could focus on if the foreign investment law, limiting foreign ownership in the tourism industry to a maximum of 40%, is followed or overlooked by foreign investors, and how these circumstances create or hinder entrepreneurship opportunities for local entrepreneurs. In addition, due to the increased foreign investments and tourists from countries other than the global North, further research could be conducted regarding how this is challenging the "Westernization" of the society and how it affects local female entrepreneurs.

6. References

- Banko Sentral Ng Pilipinas. (2023). *NET FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT FLOWS (BPM6)* By Country of Origin*. <https://www.bsp.gov.ph/statistics/external/Table%2010.pdf>
- Beazley, H. & Desai, V. (2014). Gender and globalization. In: Desai, V & Potter, RB- *The Companion to Development Studies*. Third Edition, London: Arnold.
- Benería, L. Berik, G. & Floro, MS. (2016). *Gender, Development and Globalization. Economics as if All People Mattered*. New York: Routledge.
- Bergström, G. & Boréus, K. (2018). *Textens mening och makt: Metodbok i samhällsvetenskaplig text- och diskursanalys* (4th edition). Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- Bishop, L. M (2014). *Tourism and environment*. In: Desai, V & Potter, RB- *The Companion to Development Studies*. Third Edition, London: Arnold.
- Bøås, M. (2014). Multilateral institutions ‘Developing countries’ and ‘emerging markets’- stability or change? In Desai, V & Potter, RB- *The Companion to Development Studies*. Third Edition, London: Arnold
- Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgment of taste*. (Routledge classics). London: Routledge.
- Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In: Richardson, J., *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*. Westport, CT: Greenwood: 241–58.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
- Brush C. G., & Cooper, S. Y. (2012). Female entrepreneurs and economic development: An international perspective. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*. 24(1-2), 1-6.
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Samhällsvetenskapliga metoder*. (3rd edition). Stockholm: Liber AB.
- Conway, D. (2014). Neoliberalism: Globalization’s neoconservative enforcer of austerity. In: Desai, V & Potter, RB: *The Companion to Development Studies*. Third Edition, London: Arnold.

Department of Tourism Philippines. (n,d). *VISITOR ARRIVALS JANUARY-DECEMBER 2019*.

http://www.tourism.gov.ph/industry_performance/Dec2019/Visitor_Arrivals_Report_FY2019.pdf

Department of Tourism Philippines. (March 5, 2021). *DOT supports Coron's sustainable tourism to bounce back*.

https://beta.tourism.gov.ph/news_and_updates/dot-supports-corons-sustainable-tourism-development-to-bounce-back/

Doytch, N. (2016). Which sectoral FDI flows crowd in domestic entrepreneurship? *Global Business and Economics Review*, Vol. 18, No. 2, pp.124-135

Dzomonda, O. C. Ngwakwe, C. C. (2022). Foreign Direct Investment, Public Sector Venality and Entrepreneurship Development in Developing Countries. *International Journal of Economics and Financial Issues*, 12(5), pp.71-77.

Fang, S., Xu, D. Xu L.C, Shams, H. (2023). Does FDI have a social demonstration effect in developing economies? Evidence based on the presence of women-led local firms. *Journal of International Business Studies*.

Goel, K. R. (2018). Foreign direct investment and entrepreneurship: gender differences across international economic freedom and taxation. *Small Business Economics*, Vol. 50, No. 4, pp.887-897.

Gutierrez, E. L. M & Vafadar, K. (2023). Women in community-involved tourism enterprises: Experiences in the Philippines. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*. Vol. 64, No. 1, pp. 85-97.

Hall, D. & Brown, F. (2006). *Tourism and welfare: ethics, responsibility and sustained well-being*. CABI: Wallingford.

Hallin, A., & Helin, J. (2018). *Intervjuer*. Lund: Studentlitteratur

Kusumawati. P. N. L, Herman, J. Holzacker, L, R. (2021). Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), Inclusive Growth, and Institutions: A Case Study of the Tourism Sector in Badung District. *Challenges of Governance, Development and Governance*. pp.227-245

McEwan, C. (2014). Postcolonialism. In: Desai, V & Potter, RB: *The Companion to Development Studies*. Third Edition, London: Arnold.

Misra, K., Memili, E., Welsh, D. H. B., & Fang, H. (2014). The Impact of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) on Women's Entrepreneurship. *Journal of Small Business Strategy*, 24(1), pp. 45-59.

Munemo, J. (2018). Entrepreneurial Success in Africa: How Relevant Are Foreign Direct Investment and Financial Development? *African Development Review*, Vol. 30, No. 4, pp. 372–385.

Murray, E. W. & Overton, J. (2014). Globalization/localisation and development. In: *Desai, V & Potter, RB: The Companion to Development Studies*. Third Edition, London: Arnold.

Nowell, L., Norris, J., White, D., & Moules, N. (2017). Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16(1). pp.1-13.

Palawan Council for Sustainable Development. (2016). *Municipality of Coron- ECAN Resource Manage Plan 2017-2022*.
<https://pcsd.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/06.-Coron-ECAN-Resource-Management-Plan.pdf>

Philippines Information Agency. (18 October, 2022). *667,900 residents in Mimaropa live in poverty*.

<https://pia.gov.ph/news/2022/10/18/667900-residents-in-mimaropa-live-in-poverty>

Sköldberg, K. (2014). *Maktens många ansikten: Teorier och idéer om makt under två och ett halvt tusen år*. Studentlitteratur: Lund.

Sun, L., Lee, H. I & Hong, E. (2017). Does foreign direct investment stimulate new firm creation? In search of spillovers through industrial and geographical linkages. *Small Business Economics*, Vol. 48, No. 3, pp. 613-631.

Tajeddini, K. Ratten, V. Denisa, M. (2017). Female tourism entrepreneurs in Bali, Indonesia. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management* Vol.31:52-58.

Tajeddini, K. Walle, H, A. & Denisa, M. (2017). Enterprising Women, Tourism, and Development: The Case of Bali. *International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Administration*. Vol. 18:2, pp. 195-218.

United Nations Conference on trade and development. (n,d). *Philippines- Foreign Investment Act of 1991*.
<https://investmentpolicy.unctad.org/investment-laws/laws/95/philippines-foreign-investment-act>

United Nations Conference on trade and development. (2007). *FDI in Tourism: The Development Dimension*.
https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/iteiia20075_en.pdf

World Tourism Organization. (2019). *International Tourism Highlights, 2019 Edition*.
<https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/9789284421152>

Vetenskapsrådet. (2017). *GOD FORSKNINGSSSED*.
https://www.vr.se/download/18.2412c5311624176023d25b05/1555332112063/God-forskningssed_VR_2017.pdf