



CHALLENGES JOURNALISTS FACE IN IDENTIFYING THE CULPRITS OF CLIMATE CRISIS: A CRITICAL SYSTEMIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Environmental degradation and climate change have consensually reached a tipping point but mainstream media reporting remains ambiguous about the identification of main drivers of these profound crises. This paper attempts to examine the challenges journalists can face in reporting the actual culprits responsible for these crises, particularly those drivers that are embedded in global supply chains and capitalist structures. Drawing on a critical framework based on discourses analysis and political economy, this paper synthesizes corporate disclosure and academic literature to point out how capitalist structural features, lack of transparency and capitalist logic of profit accumulation obscure accountability. Findings illustrate that journalists face practical barriers and methodological issues such as public misconceptions, corporate power, fragmented regulatory regimes and limited access to data. The paper concludes that journalistic efforts in identifying actual actors behind climate crises will remain incomplete without adopting a broader perspective interrogating systemic roots of these crises. Recommendations provide alternative investigative approaches for climate coverage framing to highlight systemic accountability.

Keywords: *Climate crisis, Capitalism, Journalism, Accountability, Global Supply Chains.*

Introduction

Environmental degradation and climate crisis are epitome of capitalist civilization. This system promised universal human well-being, prosperity, development and progress through its market principles. The proponents and prophets of capitalism are narrating success stories whereas dissidents are pointing to devastation and destruction it had brought to sentient an insentient creature on this planet. Preparing a balance sheet of capitalist performance and assessing net results is not difficult but actual problem is much complex. This daunting problem involves shifting priorities and commitments, thinking outside

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capitalist mindset, viewing issues from a different worldview and searching such solutions that are intrinsically absent in capitalist thought structure.

Primary objective of this paper is to substantiate two claims: first, climate crisis is exclusively a capitalist crisis; second, that which is a part of problem cannot be a part of remedy. The process of establishing and validating these claims leads us to identify actual roots, causes and culprits of climate crisis. A paradigmatic shift in perspective is required to do this. Having a perspective and seeing things from that perspective is not a challenge at all. The challenge is to report the results of one's thought process and analysis. A greater challenge is to have such results accepted in the dominant capitalist intellectual and academic climate. This challenge is gruesome if one is a journalist and his life and livelihood is dependent on media ecology that is produced and sustained by the culprits. In simple words, the first step toward remedy is impossible to take until and unless one steps outside academic sphere. This statement may seem overgeneralization and exaggeration to academics and working journalists who uphold integrity, honesty and transparency. The case is that all academic disciplines and industries are functioning on capitalist epistemology and axiology for which there is a wonderful label of scientific method. Think of refusing to adopt scientific method in your academic work and then you will realize the gravity of situation. The whole method of scientific exploration and colonization begins with observation and no observation is neutral but always perspectival and value-laden. What it means is that an analysis is biased right from observation. It is biased even before observation. You are thinking from a value-laden perspective when you think about an issue. One thing can be an issue from one perspective but no issue in another perspective. Homosexuality is a virtue for some but evil for others. Now, it is beyond doubt that capitalism is the dominating system in this troposphere and capitalists proudly claim that there is no alternative to this system. Therefore, it is also beyond doubt that one can challenge the norms and procedures of the system while living in that system. Critique of capitalism is impossible when one is educated and trained in a capitalist climate. It demands epistemic heresy and apostasy to see the other side of the situation. An organism cannot bring revolution in its ecology because it remains obliged to ecology for its evolution. Summary up to this point is that etiology of climate crisis and palliative remedies for the diagnosed pathologies are all capitalistic hence seriously problematic and harmful for our planet. An environmental journalist cannot make such a broader claim.

Identifying culprits of climate crisis is complex due to various factors. Fundamental problem is applying analytical tools and methodologies that are provided by capitalist intellectuality and reasoning for this diagnosis. Identification of culprits is only important when an epistemic rebellion is initiated and conventional methodologies are left behind. This sort of identification will pave way for original, sustainable and beneficial solutions. The process starts from defining climate crisis. Crisis in the context of climate change is defined as “a crucial or decisive point or situation that could lead to a tipping point” a situation of “unprecedented circumstance” (Mukheibir & Mallam, 2019). Climate crisis is defined as “the various negative effects that unmitigated climate change is causing or threatening to cause on our planet, especially where these effects have a direct impact on humanity” (Dean, 2019). Climate crisis refers to “the serious problems that are being caused, or are likely to be caused, by changes in the planet’s climate, including weather extremes and hazards, ocean acidification and sea-level rise, loss of biodiversity, food and water insecurity, health risks, economic disruption, displacement, and even violent conflict” (United Nations Development Programme, 2023). Other notable related terms provided by UNDP are “climate justice”, “indigenous knowledge”, “climate security”, “climate finance” and “carbon markets”.

Now consider discursive formulation of “crisis” and “climate crisis”. The word “crisis” gives a sense of urgency in order to justify drastic and swift measures. Considering efficiency and resources of dominant capitalism it is quite sure that these measures will be taken in the light of corporate advisory groups favoring corporate interests. Second, crisis narrative is constructed to create new market opportunities such as disaster response industries, green technologies, carbon trading and research on climate change to benefit corporations and perpetuate capitalist system. Third, emphasis on “tipping points” and “unprecedented circumstances” anonymizes true agents and leads to outsourcing of costs and individualized solutions. In other words, consumer choices and lifestyle changes are indicated rather than systemic and collective action to challenge the capitalist roots of climate change. Fourth, framing of climate change as a crisis is distracting attention from the need of fundamental systemic change and focuses attention on technological solutions and quick fixes thus actually maintaining the status quo of capitalist ideologies. Dean’s (2019) definition of climate crisis is capitalistic in several ways. First, it prioritizes the impact on humanity and reinforces an anthropocentric worldview that places human interests above ecological concerns and aligns with capitalist values that prioritize human economic activity.

Secondly, this definition emphasizes human activity in order to highlight dreadful consequences of climate change. Climate change is getting so much attention because it is damaging infrastructure that is key concern for capitalism. Thirdly, stress on “unmitigated climate change” does not directly address root causes of climate change. These roots are embedded in capitalist mode of production and consumption but this definition focuses on reducing the effects that are produced as consequence of capitalist system. Fourthly, the definition does not consider it worthy to radically transform capitalist system that is the driver of climate change. Rather the definition offers adaptation strategies and technological innovations within the capitalist system, technology that is characteristic of capitalism and has unintended and unexpected consequences.

Finally, other terms related to climate change in the UNDP’s definition are highly problematic as they are conceived in capitalist frame of thought. First issue is that the definition gives prime importance and attention to economic growth therefore it laments economic loss and disruption reflecting that economic growth and stability are of prime value for which every sort of environmental and social disruption can be tolerated. Environment is kept to be safe as far as it sustains capitalist economic of growth and accumulation. This is best reflected in key terms such as “carbon markets”, “climate security” and “climate finance” that essentially market-driven approaches designed to perpetuate exploitative capitalist system. Indirectly, such terms reflect that costs of capitalist accumulation must be paid equally by all whereas benefits are enjoyed by developed nations. The inclusion of “indigenous knowledge” may be seen as tokenistic, appropriating and co-opting indigenous perspectives without fundamentally challenging the dominant capitalist paradigm. Fifth, the term “climate justice” is defined within the framework of human rights and international law which cannot adequately address the root causes of climate change embedded in capitalist systems. It becomes clear that these definitions’ framework is apparently well-intentioned but operates within a capitalist mindset that may hinder genuine solutions to the problems of humankind. Hence, first clue is that definers, managers, advisors and experts of climate crisis are the actual culprits of climate crisis and the supreme perpetrator is the thought structure that is dominating on their minds and steering their analytical faculties.

Capitalism has always maintained an exploitative relationship with environment, nature and natural resources. Earlier, fossil fuels were discovered and consumed in the name of natural gifts for industrial development and economic prosperity. Now, these gifts are

turned into curses and green capitalism or climate capitalism has adopted “emergent accumulation strategy” Carroll, 2020, p. 12) for utilizing renewable energies. Green capitalists are now claiming that green capitalism is the only best way to solve climate problems through steering humanity out of fossil fuels. This shift only assures the continuity of capitalist production. Carbon financing and commercial investments in research are new tactics to protect core of capitalist production. Actually, there is marginal transition in capitalism despite loudly pronounced capitalist transition. Only one thing distinguishable is that climate capitalism recognizes the damages it has done to climate. It is due to the fact that capitalism “never truly solves the crimes it generates” (Wright & Nyberg, 2015, p. 34). With a promise to solve climate problem, capitalism carries on its accumulation production practices. There is much reality in the suspicion that climate capitalism’s promised solution will be a more dangerous problem for climate and mankind. Evidence shows that market-based approaches, adaptations and technology fixes has done nothing to mitigate climate crisis (Adkin, 2017, p. 4). Carbon emissions are not declined and global warming is increasing. This indicates that capitalist problems cannot be solved by capitalist remedies because capitalist system goes on as usual (Griffiths, 2023). Climate crisis has become a buzzword but actions to mitigate this challenge are all in vain (Buchanan et al., 2020). Environmental awareness and education have no impact on humans (Barragan-Jason et al., 2020) because anthropocentrism and rational dissemination of science has delegitimized emotions. This confusion poses a challenge for a journalist whether or not to trust scientific knowledge and promises of rational capitalists. This challenge also involves the differentiation between old and new capitalism and delineating qualitative difference between the two. There is no rational or meta-rational proof that the same capitalists and the same capitalist ideology is not transformed in the face of climatic catastrophe.

Since journalists are among those who are first in raising public awareness and shaping climate change discourses, a critical systemic approach is essential for them. However, journalists are often constrained by institutional barriers and structural complexities. This paper intends to fulfil two purposes in this regard:

1. To examine why journalists find it difficult to identify actual culprits and hold them accountable for climate change, particularly those actors that operate within the capitalist system.
2. To suggest how journalists can frame climate discourse by adopting broader analytical and investigative frameworks to overcome existing challenges.

By examining the systemic barriers obfuscating identification of true culprits behind climate change, the main purpose is to propose a shift in perspective for journalists to critically analyze capitalism as the actual driver of climate crisis. Although capitalism has historically driven economic growth and innovation but its imperatives of relentless expansion and profit maximization are exploitative. These systemic imperatives mask the roles of governments, corporations and industries making it difficult for journalists to identify and report actual actors of climate change. The stated purpose of the paper is answered through the following research questions:

1. What are key systemic and structural factors of capitalist system that make it difficult for journalists to identify and report on the actual actors that are fundamentally responsible for climate crisis?
2. How attribution of responsibility for climate change and environmental degradation differs in conventional and critical perspectives?
3. What critical framing journalists can adopt in alternative investigative approaches redirecting their attention to systemic causes instead of individual actors?

Literature Review

Abundant research explores and highlights media's crucial role in shaping public perceptions, feelings and confusions about climate change (Khanya, 2024). Media narratives are driven by political discourses and have different perspectives on who are actually responsible for climate change (Murali et al., 2021). For climate change information, journalists rely on institutional sources such as corporations, international news sources, national actors (Rochyadi-Reetz, 2022) government sources and scientists (Comfort et al., 2019). Consequently, reporting and coverage of climate change reflect the perspectives of those actors who propose technological fixes, market-based solutions or change in consumer behavior (Jaworska, 2018; Barnett, 2020), thus masking the systemic root causes of environmental degradation. Environmental degradation and climate change is result of capitalist mode of production that is driven by capital accumulation (Gellert, 2020; Sadiq et al., 2022). In this mode of production, profit and growth are relentlessly pursued, thereby sustaining exploitative practices from extraction to consumption (Tawfeeq & Al-Ameer, 2024). It is argued that "resilience" or "green capitalism" are mere repackages for these exploitative capitalist relations to generate new forms of profit in the form of climate finance (Long, 2021).

It is revealed that climate change responsibility is obscured through externalization of ecological costs to geographically distant communities (Hofbauer & Putz, 2020). Pinpointing responsible actors for deforestation, pollution or emissions becomes difficult due to complex web of suppliers, outsourcing and subcontracting (Ermgassen et al., 2022). Original sources of environmental harms often cannot be traced by the journalists due to lack of specialized data (Figueroa, 2017). Public awareness of climate change is increasing but remains fragmented due to such challenges of access to data by the journalists on climate change (Baiardi & Morana, 2020). Media coverage of climate change is complicated by political inertia, corporate lobbying and misinformation campaigns (Ejaz et al., 2021). Lack of regulatory frameworks and lack of political will to penalize corporate polluters further exacerbate climate crisis (UNDP, 2023). Despite diverse and extensive research on climate change communication, few studies take a critical political economy perspective on how journalists can identify systemic culprits. Existing work mainly focuses on improving coverage, resilience and consumer change without addressing how power structures impede accountability, keeping the debate within the systemic boundaries. This paper addresses this gap by positioning journalists' challenges in the broader capitalist ideological and material constraints.

Theoretical Framework

This paper adopts a critical political economy and critical discourse analysis approach positing that media is entrenched in power relations and economic imperatives of broader societal order (Schwartz & Nossek, 2024; (Mosco, 2018). It is examined how capitalist structures shape standards of newsworthiness and framing of issues (Radebe & Chiumbu, 2022). These capitalist structures are characterized by class difference, profit motives and private ownership. Journalists working in this complex structural web face constraints in several ways. Corporations and governments often limit and manipulate data to safeguard economic and political interests (Tao et al., 2019). Ownership concentration in media organizations may discourage investigative practices and critical stances that threaten profit maximization of the media houses (Forcha & Ngange, 2022). The hegemonic narratives tend to normalize market-based capitalist solutions (McGuigan, 2005) entailing that capitalism cannot be transcended and no solution lies beyond this system. Application of these theoretical insights allows to go beyond descriptions of challenges but to interrogate structural roots of these challenges.

Methodology

This paper employs conceptual qualitative analysis guided by critical discourse analysis of academic research, corporate statements and policy documents. The aim of the study is not to produce empirical measurements but to systematically and critically examine how discourses of climate change and environmental degradation are concealed, constructed or framed within the capitalist system. Data sources include literature on climate change, political economy, journalism, official reports, sustainability proposals and attribution of responsibility and framing of climate change in media texts. Analysis is conducted to investigate how specific framing and analytical frames obscure systemic factors and redirect away from actual culprits. It is conceptually argued how reframed versions can better address the issue instead of conventional framing. The study is discursive and conceptual therefore it lacks direct interviews and quantitative analysis of media coverage.

Findings and Conceptual Discussion

Conventional Perspective: From raw material extraction to end-consumer use and disposal there is a widespread and complex distribution of ecological consequences throughout the entire production process (Kumar et al., 2021). This highlights the difficulty in pinpointing specific culprits due to the intricate web of supply chains and the dispersed nature of environmental impacts. Accountability is obscured in current economic system because its environmental impacts are dispersed across global supply chains (Köksal et al., 2018). This complexity of supply chains makes identification of primary culprits very difficult. It is challenging to trace and attribute environmental aspects to original sources because numerous core and peripheral actors and stages are involved in global supply chains (Brun et al., 2020). The proportion of involvement in and responsibility for environmental impacts significantly vary at production, processing, transportation and consumption stages (Wiedmann et al., 2007), often this involvement is indirect and compulsive due to hegemonic dominance of capitalist system. Holding specific entities accountable also becomes difficult due to frequent practices of subcontracting and outsourcing in supply chains (Brun et al., 2020).

Critical Reframing: The inherent drive for growth and profit in capitalist system directly results ecological devastation through extraction, production and disposal of commodities. Supply chains and subcontracting makes a complex web that masks accountability and makes it difficult to identify perpetuation of environmental injustices caused by this system. Capitalist system emphasizes cost-minimization and efficiency but the environmental costs

are externalized in these processes that in turn widens the intensity and scope of ecological crisis. Perpetual plunder of labor and resources is made possible through supply chains that serve as a tool for capitalist exploitation. Capitalist system's profit orientation also disperses environmental impacts. Therefore, instead of identifying individual culprits we must explore and present capitalism's inherent culpability. Ecological crisis is a symptom of contradictions in capitalist system and new forms of crisis indicate that this system is unable to resolve ever-deepening crisis. A truly just and equitable society is only hoped by the abolition of capitalism and establishment of a new order that respects nature emphasis moral responsibility towards it.

Lack of Transparency and Data

Conventional Perspective: Environmental impacts, supply chains and corporate activities that are directly or indirectly contributing to climate crisis are diverse and numerous but comprehensive, reliable and accurate information about them is limitedly available to ordinary journalists and general public. Corporate companies that are culprits of environmental crisis may not give access to the data related to their supply chain, extraction and processing information that is related to climate crisis (Megeid, 2024). Therefore, it is a challenge to identify actual culprits and difficult to assess the impacts of their potential and actual contributions to climate crisis. Accurate assessment of environmental impacts and identification of entities responsible for them is also difficult as the available data is either unreliable or outdated and partial (Hsu et al., 2017). Since there are layers of multiple actors involved in supply chains, it becomes challenging to trace primary culprits and their practices associated to climate change. Citizens, policymakers and researchers can face hurdles and barriers in accessing relevant information (Gonzalez-Zapata & Heeks, 2015) complicating the efforts to ensure accountability of corporate practices regarding environmental impacts. This lack of data and transparency makes it difficult to make comprehensive assessments, identification of key contributors, development of climate planning and strategies and holding corporations accountable.

Critical Reframing: Capitalist system's secrecy and opacity deliberately constructs scarcity of crucial information about corporate activities and their environmental impacts. If companies are held accountable and morally constrained to check their ecologically and environmentally destructive practices then their profit maximization and accumulation will be seriously threatened. That is why actual data is never made public and facts are deceptively

kept in secret as a perpetual obfuscation. The design of supply chains and corporate management is deliberately obscure to avoid transparency and accountability. Working conditions, resource exploitation and damages to nature and people are not made accessible to general public. Capitalism prioritizes profit maximization and accumulation of capital for the sake of capital even if it comes at the cost of environmental destruction. Capitalism inherently resists to accountability and transparency due to its inner contradictions. Dismantling capitalist structures may lead the humankind towards truth and justice.

Systemic Issues and Structural Flaws

Conventional Perspective: Current systemic structures have some inherent and deep-rooted problems that are causing and contributing to climate crisis and hindering efforts to mitigate it. These structural and systemic flaws and issues are many but some major ones are as follows. The endless pursuit of profit maximization and limitless capital accumulation is a fundamental ideological cause of environmental degradation. This immoral pursuit compels corporations and interest groups to dominate on policymaking process causing negligence of social welfare and environmental justice. These corporations function on free market logic and strive for competition that breeds greed and urges them to exploit natural environmental resources. International community, institutions and governments that work on capitalist ideologies lack the will to oppose the unjust exploitation of resources. This lack of institutional capacity causes climate impacts spread disproportionately in vulnerable populations. The globalized nature of the political and economic system affects those populations that are not involved in capitalist practices and have not gained any benefits from this system. This system considers only short-term benefits and neglects long-term harms of systemic practices.

In addressing climate crisis, its actual systemic causes and implications, capitalist states and global governance structures that are guardians and sustainers of this system often show aversion and deflection in their policies. Since these very structures and institutions are involved in climate crisis and there is little, if any, external systemic factors that have caused climate crisis hence it is quite rebellious to identify them and hold them accountable. Effective solutions and meaningful climate action can only be obtained by addressing these underlying problems.

Critical Reframing: So-called structural flaws and systemic issues in capitalism are not flaws but features and essential attributes of the system that sustain and perpetuate it. Capitalism

drives and depends on growth and profit and colonizes nature and produces planetary havoc but this grand level destruction creates profitmaking opportunities under disaster management corporate business. Creation of problems and then their solutions to create more problems is the endless circular process of capitalist exploitation. Capitalist design deliberately prioritizes corporate interests and capitalist sates always come to provide relief whenever there is a capitalist crisis. State intervention and social engineering is always there but there is propaganda of free market and deregulation. Even this free-market mechanism is intentional and adopted in a fundamentalist way. If there is lack of capacity or resources in international institutions and agreements then it is intentional because the system is not lacking sufficient resources. Disproportionate externalization of climate impacts is built-in feature of capitalism because capitalism reaches saturation points in specific territories and then shifts to other ones to continue its exploitation of peripheral or marginal populations. Consideration of only short-term gains is fundamental feature of capitalism as it cannot ascertain long-term benefits and harms of its own practices. Transparency, coherence and accountability are kept at minimum because this system cannot function in just, ethical and transparent way. Why is there so much fundamentalism about capitalism? Why we cannot dismantle capitalism and move to any other previous or new system that prioritizes nature and people and in which capital accumulation is considered unethical and inhuman?

Political and Economic Interests

Conventional Perspective: In the dominant economic and political system there are certain individuals, organizations and interest groups that are motivated by their own agendas. These entities use their influence and power and prioritize profit over environmental responsibility and well-being of people. These interests include:

- Oil, gas and coal companies influence politics and policy-making to protect their interests and delay transition to renewable energy.
- Companies prioritize profits over environmental and social responsibility, driving environmental degradation and climate change.
- Politicians and parties often prioritize ideological agendas and special interest group demands over scientific evidence and public welfare.
- Governments and institutions prioritize economic growth and development over environmental sustainability and climate action.

- Globalization standards and international trade agreements are based on selfish economic interests that neglect local scenarios and social structures.

Special interest groups and corporations have influence on international organizations, government agencies and research institutions to get their interests served(Munsterhjelm, 2023).

- Regulators and politicians are motivated to increase their productivity, industrial and economic growth. They prioritize growth-oriented industries that undermine climate actions. Political and economic interests are particularly averse to environment because such interests:
 - Delay climate action
 - Pay no heed to environmental regulations
 - Promote fossil fuel development
 - Discredit climate science
 - Influence public opinion
 - Shape international agreements
 - Block systemic change

Critical Reframing: The political and economic motivations are not fundamental problems but these are the results of workings of capitalist thought structure that prioritizes profit maximization and capital accumulation. Greed and exploitation is the fundamental characteristic of capitalist individuality and way of life, therefore, individual and communal life is attuned to exploitative practices and tactics. These issues are mere symptoms of capitalist injustices. Capitalism prioritizes corporate interests and neglects broader social benefits as is reflected in the interests of oil and gas companies. Capitalism seeks short term exploitation and neglects sustainability in the long-run, so the corporations prioritize profit maximization at the costs of environmental degradation. Political interests and agendas are also a reflection of how capitalism has corrupted democracy and governance mechanisms. Governmental and institutional setups also illustrate capitalism's drive for capital accumulation for the sake of accumulation. International agencies and trends of globalization are to perpetuate capitalist exploitation and secure this system, not to think beyond capitalist rationality in search of alternative system that is favorable to nature and people. Capitalism also corrupts special interest and pressure groups due to its inherent contradictions of

interests. Capitalism relies on state and political structures that make regulations for the capitalist markets to ensure their efficiency. There is an inherent link between profit and power. Political power is based on capitalist system therefore it cannot disrupt this system.

Limited Regulatory Frameworks

Conventional Perspective: Climate crisis is difficult to handle because there are ineffective, incomplete and inadequate regulations, laws and policies to address environmental degradation. This limited regulatory framework means:

- International regulatory bodies and institutions have no specific powers for enforcement. They make guidelines and proposals leaving their implementation and compliance to individual countries.
- Individual countries lack real-time data and comprehensive climate understanding and legislation. National policies and regulations are fragmentary and ignore the overall ecology.
- Fragmented approach to environmental protection makes it impossible to make reliable and efficient assessments about climate change.
- Often regulations, guidelines and standards are devised and enacted but culprits are not punished for their violations. It is also difficult to identify the exact proportion of individual contribution to environmental degradation.
- Regulatory policies remain focused on conventional pollutants and neglect broader implications of economic activities of capitalist actors.
- Though capitalist systems boast of democracy but citizens remain excluded from decision-making processes.
- Like international bodies, national regulatory agencies also lack personnel or expertise and financial resources to implement these minimal regulations.

Critical Reframing: Considering limited regulations and lack of implementation of such regulations is a myopic approach that seeks to strengthen and reform the capitalist system. It works on capitalist logic and explores solutions within capitalism. At best, this approach is identifying flaws and contradictions of capitalist system. Regulations are solution because:

- Global and international regulatory bodies are devised by the capitalist system itself and the serve the interests of corporations.
- Long-term, sustainable and comprehensive regulation for climate is not possible because capitalist regulatory bodies are unable to prioritize long-term future.

- Flawed and partial assessments and evaluations are deliberate, intending to mask broader and deeper implications of capitalist exploitation.
- Inconsistency is the inherent feature of capitalist system as it allows violation.
- Systematic change is avoided tactically by focusing only a superficial and specific pollutants.
- Capitalist system intentionally and characteristically excludes citizens from decision-making processes so that controlled narrative remains popular.
- There is no lack of funding or investment because corporations prioritize research and development about their products, not to study the consequences of their production processes.

All these issues are not real hurdles but default and designed features that enable capitalism to continue exploitation.

Public Perception and Awareness

Conventional Perspective: Currently, general public is not much aware about environmental problems particularly in developing countries. General public perceives that climate change is natural and there is not human action involved in it. Public pays no attention to pollutants and remains insensitive to environmental degradation due to limited awareness and perception.

General public is not informed of causes and consequences of climate change. They do not even perceive the environmental impact of their consuming habits and lifestyle choices. Those who are sensitive about environmental changes remain aloof of corrective actions. Important is that the public has no access to reliable and accurate information about environmental degradation.

Critical Reframing: The issues of public awareness and perception regarding climate change is not mere insensitivity from the public but a deliberate design that is inherent to capitalism. Public consciousness and subjective constructions are heavily influenced by the capitalist rationality. Consumerism and luxurious lifestyles are imposed by this system that thrives on market expansion. Making public aware about climate change is not a solution as the root cause remains there. This root cause is capitalist logic of exploitation and short-term financial advantages. Public awareness is important but it must be diverted from reformation of capitalism to the overthrow of capitalism. The perception must be changed that environmental degradation is caused by the capitalist mode of production so the capitalist

values must be discarded if there is any value of nature and humanity. Dismantling of capitalism is the only true solution for environmental problems. In this sense, issues of public awareness are not problems but the features of capitalism to maintain control of masses who are continuously being exploited by the capitalists. We must move beyond awareness and reform and towards a fundamental transformation of our economic and political systems to address the climate crisis.

Scientific Uncertainty and Causality

Conventional Perspective: Scientific uncertainty and causality refer to the limitations and complexities in understanding the science behind climate change, particularly in attributing cause-and-effect relationships between human activities and environmental impacts. These include:

- Complexity of climate systems and feedback loops
- Uncertainty in climate modeling and predictions
- Difficulty in attributing specific weather events to climate change
- Limited understanding of tipping points and non-linear responses
- Challenges in quantifying the precise impact of individual activities (e.g., carbon emissions) on climate change
- Debates among scientists on the relative importance of different factors (e.g., Carbon dioxide vs. methane)
- Uncertainty in the timing and magnitude of climate change impacts
- Difficulty in separating natural variability from human-induced change
- Limited understanding of the interactions between climate change and other environmental factors
- Ongoing research and refinement of scientific understanding

Critical Reframing: Capitalism thrives on scientific uncertainty and the challenges listed above, using them as a pretext to delay climate action, exploit natural resources and maintain profits over people and the planet. We can see that:

- Complexity of climate systems and feedback loops is exploited to justify inaction and prioritize economic growth over sustainability.
- Uncertainty in climate modeling and predictions is used to cast doubt on the urgency of climate change, rather than acknowledging the need for precautionary action.

- Status quo is maintained by attributing specific weather events to climate change, that is, climate change is presented as a cause rather than being a consequence.
- The fight over exploitation of natural resources continues even today which reflects that environmental thresholds are disregarded.
- Impacts of individual activities are quantified and are used to shift the burden of responsibility to individuals from corporations.
- Scientific differences and results are manipulated to create confusion among the general public, which in turn enters a state of denial.
- Climate change impacts are uncertain in terms of magnitude and time. This uncertainty is used to justify delayed and slow actions. It is argued that climate changes may be controlled through technological advances.
- Climate impacts of human actions are confused with natural disasters. Human responsibility is downplayed on the grounds that these are natural variations and human actions have nothing to do with them.

Conclusion

Current environmental degradation and climate crisis is an inevitable consequence of capitalism. It is because capitalist system is inherently based on profit maximization and economic growth at the cost of environmental damage. It exploits natural resources and uses it hazardingly, thus transforming organic matter into toxic one. Industries and corporations reap profits through their destructive practices but transfer the costs of these practices to the public. Moreover, capitalism treats nature as inert commodity that is ready to be colonized and exploited. This system is driven by constant economic growth and progress that fuel ever-increasing compulsive consumption behaviors. Global trade agreements and supply chains that are structured to satisfy consumer demands are perpetuating environmentally harmful production mechanisms. Economic and social disparities are fundamental to marketing the products and such disparities also do injustice affecting vulnerable populations. In this way, climate crisis is essentially a capitalist crisis that will lead to end of capitalism, not its reformation.

Though it is difficult even impossible to identify individual and group actors and factors responsible for climate crisis but it is certain that capitalism as a whole alone is responsible. Industrialized and developed nations applying capitalist policy and practice

paradigm are prime culprits who spread this system to other nations. Corporation, the sacred icon of capitalism are the concrete examples of capitalist thought and ideologies. In this sense, every individual advocating capitalist values and ideas is responsible for climate crisis, irrespective of their respective share in this crime against nature and humanity. Therefore, it is essential to recognize that responsibility is not equally distributed and that systemic changes are necessary to address the climate crisis. There are numerous challenges in identifying culprits of climate crisis but even recognition of these challenges is at risk of being framed in capitalist thought and framework. We must recognize that these challenges are features of capitalism. All the field and industry of climate crisis is conceived and developed within capitalism so it has made this crisis a commodity and a concept to steer production of knowledge and an opportunity to earn profits. History of capitalist system and civilization is evident that capitalism cannot solve the problems it has created due to its internal logic of exploitation and profit maximization. Capitalism only shifts and externalizes problems. All the solutions it provides are more complicated problems. There is a need of new knowledge and new kind of human which is not entrapped in capitalist logic.

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