

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN MULTIMEDIA STUDIES
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BACHELOR OF ARTS IN MULTIMEDIA STUDIES

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**SINING PARA SA PAGBABAGO: EXAMINING HOW SHARING PROTEST ART
ONLINE SHAPES THE ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS OF YOUNG FILIPINOS
TOWARDS SOCIO-POLITICAL ADVOCACY GROUPS**

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14 September 2025

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SINING PARA SA PAGBABAGO: EXAMINING HOW SHARING PROTEST ART ONLINE SHAPES THE ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS OF YOUNG FILIPINOS TOWARDS SOCIO-POLITICAL ADVOCACY GROUPS

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Dasha Elisa T. Lariosa September 14, 2025

Acceptance Page:

This paper prepared by **DASHA ELISA T. LARIOS** with the title: “**SINING PARA SA PAGBABAGO: EXAMINING HOW SHARING PROTEST ART ONLINE SHAPES THE ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS OF YOUNG FILIPINOS TOWARDS SOCIO-POLITICAL ADVOCACY GROUPS**” is hereby accepted by the Faculty of Information and Communication Studies, U.P. Open University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Course.

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Biographical Sketch

Dasha Elisa T. Lariosa is an undergraduate student of the Bachelor of Arts in Multimedia Studies degree program at the University of the Philippines Open University. She was born on May 22, 2003, in Manila, Philippines. During her junior and senior high years, she attended Manila Science High School. She graduated with honors in junior high and with high honors in senior high under the STEM program.

Throughout her undergraduate career, Dasha explored and excelled in various courses that deepened her understanding of the multimedia field from both a design and research perspective, with a particular interest in the interconnectedness of multimedia with real-life occurrences and applications. She was one of the founding members of the first organization formally recognized by UPOU, Kathang Ugnayan ng Likhain, Talastasan, Obra't Ulat, and served as the Vice President for Internal Affairs in 2024 for the graphic literature organization.

As an avid follower of socio-political art and following her senior high research on the field, Dasha's undergraduate journey culminated in her thesis, "Sining Para Sa Pagbabago: Examining How Sharing Protest Art Online Shapes The Attitudes And Actions Of Young Filipinos Towards Socio-Political Advocacy Groups." This thesis substantiates her observations and interest in the field of protest art in the current context of the Filipino experience and the digital age of social media. Through this study, she intends to provide a background on this additional avenue of information dissemination and social mobilization that demonstrates the potential impacts of multimedia beyond people's screens. Going forward, Dasha intends to continue pursuing academic and professional growth in the field of multimedia through further education and research opportunities exploring the fields of digital media, popular culture, and socio-political art.

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Abstract

With the Internet's unrelenting presence in people's lives today, the distribution, reach, and accessibility of protest art have been changed irrevocably. In the evolving landscape of protest art and its audiences, this study endeavored to identify and discuss the societal implications of sharing digital protest artworks in online spaces, examining how they shape the attitudes and actions of young Filipino audiences towards socio-political advocacy groups.

Through semi-structured, open-ended interviews and surveys with organization representatives, local artists, and audiences, the data used in this research were analyzed using the Grounded Theory approach by Glaser and Strauss. This research study culminated in a paradigm entitled "Effect Beyond The Screen" that explains the starting grounded theory, "The 'Societal Implications of Sharing Digital Protest Art' is dependent on the consideration of 'Audience-Influencing Factors' in the production of the artworks that serve as the 'Means of Introduction' which consequently restarts the process."

Even with the overarching positive sentiment on the efficacy of sharing digital protest art in shaping Filipino audiences' attitudes and actions towards socio-political advocacy groups, this study found that while digital protest art is a valuable tool, it is most effective when integrated into a broader framework that emphasizes subsequent calls to action and offline engagement beyond digital activism. Awareness, engagement, and participation in digital protest artworks do not necessarily equate to actual, productive community engagement and collective action, as the outcome still relies heavily on the individual's decisions.

Keywords: *Protest Art, Digital Activism, Social Media, Socio-political Advocacy Groups*

I. INTRODUCTION

Rationale

Art remains one of the freedoms people can hold onto to take a stand and retaliate, even in the face of powerful governments and major entities. Through mirroring society and its present circumstances, art has led to scrutiny and reflection of the ruling systems and has served as a catalyst for cultural and societal-wide change at various points in history (CerebralCurrents, 2023). Whether as an act of self-expression, breaking boundaries and perceptions of the status quo, or fighting for people's rights, protest art movements have been at the forefront of demanding action and reform in the face of lacking systems, even amid judgment or legal repercussions.

The concept and act of activism come in varying forms and levels, whether it be a call for change on an institutional or a national scale. Activism is a means of generating an effect or reaching a discernible goal through collective action and solidarity. Forms of activism are not solely limited to works of art, but a large part of the success of activism lies in the various ways in which art can be utilized to support causes. Whether through compelling poems and literature or symbols and posters that resonate with people and embody the soul of the causes being fought for, art is a limitless avenue for change and movement. The relevance of protest art is endless and unbound by time, even through still photographs, because it manages to achieve the goal of activism, which is to generate an effect even decades after systems are brought down and change occurs.

In the Philippines, protest art has played a significant role in the country's struggles and perseverance against colonization and oppression. While the thought of protesting and art being mixed can bring to mind the burning of large effigies of political

figures in the streets, protest art comes in all shapes and forms, with varying intentions and interpretations.

Dating back to the Spanish colonial period, it is witnessed in the creation of Juan Luna's '*Spolarium*' and Jose Rizal's '*Noli Me Tangere*' and '*El Filibusterismo*' that the arts and literary fiction can act as a way of relaying the tragedy of the Filipinos' plight, their continued subjugation, and the loss of rights, opportunities, and culture. The very essence of their works rooted in the pursuit of a change in the status quo, even going against a world power after centuries under the tight grip of colonization. These works may not have immediately brought about change or freedom for Filipinos, but they served to spark the prevailing hope for freedom and the coming together of a fragmented nation, eventually leading to a revolution (Mabanglo, 2000).

In times of extreme censorship and outright fascism, such as the Marcos dictatorship and Martial Law era, activists could not occupy the streets without endangering their lives. Though forced to go underground, activists continued to persist against the suppression of speech and expression upheld by the dictatorial government. Through symbolic and circumventing literature, films, and theater, creatives risked their lives to enlighten the nation about the social and political realities suffered because of the corruption, cronyism, and fascism perpetrated by the Marcos regime (Geronimo, 2013). Eventually culminating in the EDSA People Power Revolution, the various forms of art created to protest moved people to mobilize and stand firm against the government in the hopes of reclaiming their rights and obtaining justice for the victims.

In an unprecedented manner, however, the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown forced activists and creatives to regroup and advocate for their causes in online spaces and social media platforms. Restricted in movement and following quarantine

protocols, the only means of drawing attention to the prevailing issues affecting the country and its vulnerable groups was through digital spaces. As observed by Ferrer (2023) in their analysis of the impact of protest art in the Philippine social media landscape during the COVID-19 lockdowns of 2020, the sharing of protest art in social media spheres opens avenues for raising awareness on issues that also double as opportunities for discussion and accessibility to larger audiences.

Despite this influx of awareness and support for digital protest art due to the COVID-19 pandemic, however, digital activism is in no way a new phenomenon. Dealing with censorship and conflict has long been an ongoing battle faced by activists and creatives, and the proliferation of online spaces and contemporary technology serves as additional avenues and tools for organized activists to further their causes. As defined by Marcaida (2021) in their analysis of the relationship between social media and college students' political activism, *digital activism* refers to the incorporation of contemporary technology in applying and innovating social and political campaigning strategies and practices within a digital network infrastructure. Taking advantage of the fundamental nature of the Internet as a means of communication and organization, digital activism acts as a bridge and means of distributing information between people across various digital networks that would be entirely taxing to accomplish in person.

With the pandemic irrevocably changing people's perceptions and interactions with social media and the Internet, numerous local artists and advocates have achieved great renown with their works, as they prove relatable and easily accessible to Filipinos. Kevin Raymundo, also known online as '*Tarantadong Kalbo*', is one of the artists at the forefront of sharing artworks that evoke nostalgia for growing up in the

Philippines and advocate for various socio-political issues and situations currently faced locally.

One artwork of his, in particular, named '*Tumindig*', made a staggering effect in the months leading up to the 2022 Philippine presidential elections. This artwork, depicting a lone fist raised in the air amid other hands bowing down in subservience and acceptance, in the manner typically associated with former President Rodrigo Duterte's fist bump, made waves in Philippine online spaces. Sparking an organic, online artist community movement, Filipino artists and socio-political advocacy organizations shared their own artistic depictions of the character as a collective message of dissent against the injustices continuously faced by Filipinos due to widespread corruption.

This online movement proved so pervasive that its influence was not limited simply to online platforms, but also effectively translated to and featured heavily in art conventions, campaign rallies, and protest spaces going forward. Given its non-partisan nature, the *Tumindig* sign was universally applicable and open for socio-political groups to join in on the trend. The artwork was not a matter of colors; it was simply a representation – a symbol – of Filipinos taking a stand and demanding better governance. Instances such as this exemplify the possibilities of digital protest artworks prompting real-life discussions, actions, and applications that push socio-political advocacies from niche, online art spaces to regular Filipino households.

Through various thoughtfully crafted artworks and art forms, ranging from visual media to literature and audio-visual works, local protest artists shed light on the perspectives and sentiments of many Filipinos living in the present, difficult circumstances. With the innate audience interactability with multimedia on social media platforms and the growing relevance of protest art online, there is a reasonable

interest in exploring the efficacy and benefits of sharing protest art online in shifting the attitudes and actions of Filipinos towards socio-political advocacy groups.

To analyze whether protest art is successful or effective, Duncombe (2016) collated a list of complementary intentions held by protest artists for their work:

- [1] Imminent Cultural Shift: Creating an immediate impact by making an avenue for reflection and discussion of an ongoing issue.
- [2] Ultimate Cultural Change: Set into motion an enduring, lasting impact on how people perceive and act on an issue.
- [3] Imminent Material Impact: Inclining people to alter the present material reality in the immediate future.
- [4] Ultimate Material Result: Initiating a contemporary phenomenon that seeks to address underlying structures that need to be dismantled or reformed.

By examining the factors that comprise a protest artwork and identifying what motivates Filipino audiences to relate and react positively, this research aims to serve as a guide for local artists and advocacy groups on aspects to focus on conveying in their dissemination, marketing, and promotion of their causes and donation drives.

Statement of the Problem

With the emergence of the Internet and its unrelenting presence in people's lives today, art – particularly protest art – has been changed irrevocably in terms of its distribution, reach, and accessibility. In the evolving landscape of protest art and its audiences, this study endeavored to identify and discuss the societal implications of sharing digital protest artworks in online spaces, examining how they shape the attitudes and actions of young Filipino audiences towards socio-political advocacy groups. Particularly, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. Does the ease in accessibility and exposure to digital protest art or art depicting socio-political issues influence people to gain an interest in learning about, discussing, or supporting an advocacy?
2. What are the key factors in a digital protest artwork that resonate with Filipino audiences and incline them to act in support?
3. How are Filipino audiences' perceptions and actions towards socio-political advocacy groups affected by digital activism in the form of sharing digital protest art? Are they more prone to engaging with advocacy groups, volunteering, and donating, or does it only serve to garner attention and discussion on the related issues?

Objectives of the Study

The goals of the study were to gather insights from the public regarding whether there are significant benefits to this additional avenue of promoting critical thinking, fostering government accountability, and increasing awareness of socio-political issues. Mainly, this study aimed to:

1. Determine whether encountering digital protest art or art depicting socio-political issues led to people gaining an interest in learning more about or supporting an advocacy.
2. Establish the key points in a digital protest artwork that resonate with Filipino audiences and move them to act in response.
3. Assess how digital activism in the form of sharing digital protest art affects young Filipino audiences, whether in garnering engagement or further exposure for advocacy groups, increasing volunteer numbers and donations, or if it only serves to educate or garner interest in the issue.

Significance of the Study

The efficacy and potential benefits of protest art shared in digital spaces, particularly in the context of local advocacy groups, remain observably underexplored. The prevalence of digital protest art underscores the need for a grounded theory that can provide insight into the social phenomenon and the potential long-term effects resulting from the shift in medium, accessibility, and reach of protest art online.

Through this study, the influence of digital protest art can be examined and possibly given credence as to its effectiveness as a method of: [1] educating and informing the public, [2] encouraging critical thinking amid the endless inundation of misinformation, and [3] garnering further support for socio-political advocacy groups aimed at helping grassroots movements and marginalized populations.

This research can offer valuable insights to local artists and advocacy groups on how they can: [1] observe how the general public views or approaches protest art or art depicting local advocacies and issues, [2] determine what elements resonate the most with audiences and moves them to act in response, and [3] better understand how to garner support and mobilize people effectively.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

The scope of the study only covered the societal implications of protest art on the attitudes and actions of young Filipino audiences towards local socio-political advocacy groups, given their exposure to or familiarity with protest art shared on social media sites. The study and its findings are limited to the answers and insights provided by the respondents and the research gathered from supporting primary and secondary sources. The study does not cover the societal implications for other countries and cultures, nor should the data and concluding grounded theory created from this study

be considered a generalization of the impacts of digitally shared protest art on people's views towards socio-political advocacy groups.

Given the subjectivity of the responses gathered from the respondents, even after subsequent coding and winnowing, social, cultural, and environmental factors continue to influence the responses and views of both the respondents and the researcher. Thus, the findings and conclusions do not apply to all situations and may not always be able to be reproduced, given the nature of Grounded Theory. The field has room for further research and would benefit significantly from additional explorations into insights from other demographics. Lastly, the grounded theory that culminated from this research is to be considered only a developmental theory, as insights and human experiences change over time (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

To develop a comprehensive analysis and understanding of the potential impacts of protest art shared online on the views and actions of young Filipino audiences towards socio-political advocacy groups, it is necessary to review the existing literature on the intersection of social media, mobilization, and solidarity in the Philippine context. These studies offer diverse perspectives and approaches on how online platforms shape political engagement and collective action, highlighting both the potential and limitations of digital activism.

The Philippines' high social media usage makes it a prime location for studying digital activism, particularly concerning young Filipino audiences, as more than half of the Filipino youth encounter and engage with political content online primarily through

social media platforms such as Facebook and X, formerly Twitter. In a 2021 National Youth Survey conducted by YouthLedPH in partnership with the Social Weather Stations (SWS), it was reported that around 60% of Filipino youth like or share political posts, 54% intentionally search for political issues, while 49% percent discuss the information they learned online with peers in both online and offline settings (Tinampay, 2021).

As Agojo et al. (2023) discussed in their study examining how young Filipino activists utilized social media platforms (SMPs) to practice digital activism, participants highlighted the instrumental use of SMPs in raising public awareness, disseminating information, and mobilizing support for various causes. This easier access to information is not taken for granted either, as instead of being merely passive consumers, young Filipino SMP users processed this information and launched conversations, boosted advocates' and marginalized people's voices, and connected people to policy-making processes as a means of engaging in politics and fleshing out their roles in society.

The use of inherent SMP features, such as hashtags, was used by Filipino netizens to hold the government accountable during the pandemic, as it was the only means of spearheading mobilizations and actions due to the COVID-19 pandemic looming over everyone and limiting in-person protests. Demonstrated by the hashtag #NasaanAngPangulo (#WhereIsThePresident), users demanded and questioned the absence of the then-president Rodrigo Duterte as the country suffered the onslaught of typhoons and dealt with pandemic-related problems.

Furthermore, this study by Agojo et al. (2023) only skimmed the surface regarding the potential of art activism as it tackled Kevin Raymundo or Tarantadong Kalbo's artwork, Tumindig, that played a significant role in expressing dissent against

the government's mishandling of the pandemic at the time the research was being conducted.

Although the use of social media platforms was necessary for digital activism, especially during the pandemic, it was not without its issues and limitations. At the forefront of the issues faced by activists, the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020 raised significant concerns about the safety of activists in practicing their right to freedom of speech and expression amid heightened government surveillance and rampant red-tagging. As the controversial act offered limited distinctions on what could be constituted as terrorism and activism in practice and simply focused on intent rather than actual committed acts, it implicitly stifled dissent, no matter how valid, and perpetuated a culture of violence as it allowed for the warrantless detention of suspected terrorists up to 24 days and offered no entitlements to payment of damages in the event of unproven charges (Agojo et al., 2023).

The limitations of online spaces were not only restricted to censorship, however, as algorithms and the very nature of social media platforms inevitably lead to issues, such as the falsification of information and historical revisionism. Serving as a double-edged sword, the ease in dissemination of information goes both ways, whether it is facts or misinformation. Again, owing to the nature of social media platforms adjusting to the interests of its users, echo chambers pose a similar challenge to digital activism as they not only focus on the biases of the user, but also the outright removal of opposite perspectives, no matter the objective truth (Agojo et al., 2023).

Agojo et al. (2023) concluded that, although digital activism poses significant opportunities and tools unmatched by traditional approaches, it serves not as an alternative, but rather as a complementary platform for enhancing resistance and on-the-ground mobilization. The study presented the potential of using social media

platforms as a means of transforming and evolving the way young Filipino audiences' political agency was understood and implemented in both online and offline spaces.

Connected by the use of social media platforms for dissemination of information, the mixed-methods study conducted by Marcaida (2021) presented the pitfalls of college students' misconceptions concerning activism, especially digital activism, and how it affects their engagement and behavior towards it and its potential. In the study's exploration of the relationship between social media and political activism, the quantitative results showed a favorable correlation between using social media as a news source and students' subsequent digital activism, with the caveat that this correlation is not as strong as other factors, such as affiliation with student political organizations. The qualitative data, on the other hand, reveals skepticism and condescension towards digital activism as students viewed it as less impactful than its traditional forms.

The quantitative analysis indicated that social media news use was a significant predictor of online protest participation, but less so for offline participation. Control variables, such as political affiliation, ideology, and efficacy, also significantly influence overall activism.

The qualitative data revealed three key themes that resulted in the wary disposition students hold over digital activism, mainly: (1) digital activism does not encompass the entirety of student activism, (2) student activism is stigmatized and branded with negative connotations of radical, leftist, and communist ideologies impacting students' willingness to participate, even online, and (3) students are hesitant to self-identify as activists, even those engaging in online activities, due to the high standards associated with traditional activism (Marcaida, 2021).

From the students' narratives, social media protest engagement was recognized as a substantial first step towards activism due to its reach and ability to inform people who are apolitical in the first place. However, the first recurring theme from the narrative analysis is that digital activism does not encompass the entirety of student activism. The students struggle to equate digital activism with their understanding of "real" activism due to its comparison with the unattainable, original understanding of student activism, which emphasizes the importance of offline mobilization and face-to-face interactions for genuine impact, as well as the fear of clicktivism. Regarding the second theme, the respondents explained that they were prevented from engaging in protest events and initiatives due to their parents' concerns and fears for them. This leads to the third and final recurring theme, wherein students find themselves unable to identify themselves as activists because they do not feel up to par with activist standards. This third theory lends further context to the low regard they place on digital activism, as they have built up traditional student activism to be solely dedicated to rallying and being activists to the point of cutting classes.

Thus, Marcaida (2021) concluded that while social media news use positively correlates with student activism, particularly online, audiences' narrow definition of activism hinders engagement. Students' high standards for activism, rooted in the context of the high-risk, historical notion of traditional activism, only led to skepticism towards digital forms and a reluctance to self-identify as activists. In future studies, the study suggests broadening the definition of activism to encompass the diverse forms of engagement possible in the digital age, shifting the misconceptions of people regarding digital activism from a narrow range of activities to the possibilities it can contribute to actual mobilization, and the viewing of activism in terms of utilizing the

appropriate forms that different situations may call for in an effort to maximize all channels of political engagement.

The analysis of #PrayForMarawi offers a valuable case study on how social media platforms can shape narratives of solidarity, yet still fall short of achieving meaningful social change. To illustrate an example of performative online solidarity and the downsides to the technologization of communication, the study conducted by Crisostomo (2021) examines how the hashtag #PrayForMarawi served as a form of online post-humanitarian solidarity that eventually died down and failed in providing a collective and sustained commitment to justice towards the suffering of others.

Though messages of support flooded social media platforms when the news about the Marawi siege hit people's feeds, this online solidarity eventually culminated in nothing, as it failed to translate into a long-term, sustained commitment to attain justice for the 100,000 displaced Marawi residents two years after it happened.

While there are benefits brought by the "technologization of communication," it has also left an impact on humanitarian action. The research argued that the hashtag facilitated a form of "mass self-communication," wherein users expressed their emotions and proclaimed solidarity online, but in actuality, lacked sustained commitment to securing justice for the distant others, or the victims. Similarly, this "monitorial citizenship" adopts cosmopolitan rhetoric without necessarily taking action. Due to people's inability to assist in solving the siege, the hashtag served as the vehicle for purging people's guilt, co-performed by the online audience through a mutual sense of forgiveness (Crisostomo, 2021).

Upon the liberation of Marawi, audiences achieved a false sense of redemption as it was seen as an "answered prayer" and an alleviation of guilt rather than the start of the long process of rebuilding and addressing the ongoing suffering and

displacement of Marawi residents. Thus, it is proven that when solidarity is not constructed and organized into a framework, the disconnect between solely online expressions of solidarity and the lack of sustained action for rehabilitation will leave the issue frayed and broken.

Crisostomo (2021) concluded with an emphasis on the limitations of performative solidarity and the potential for social media to create a post-humanitarian imaginary context, where people are bombarded with endless information, resulting in compassion fatigue and neoliberal perspectives that lead to fleeting online expressions replacing long-term commitments to addressing the root causes of suffering.

All three papers underscored the complex and multifaceted role of social media in shaping political participation and collective action in the Philippines. While social media platforms offer powerful tools for mobilization and information dissemination, their effectiveness is contingent on various factors, including the perceived value of digital activism, the potential for misinformation, and the limitations of performative solidarity. The studies collectively suggest that effective mobilization strategies should consider the interplay between online and offline engagement, address the potential pitfalls of digital activism, and strive for sustained commitment to justice beyond fleeting online expressions of solidarity.

Artists innovate and adapt to the changing tides of time and the allowance of expression, and the transition to the online sharing of protest art is merely one of such instances. However, the instantaneous accessibility and reach of digital protest art affords advocacy groups and artists an invaluable opportunity and avenue of expression that can assist with the promulgation of advocacies and collective action like no other previous advancement.

Protest art affords the members of a movement the power and means to challenge authority and the ruling systems in ways that words cannot (Argun, 2024). Whether for grassroots movements or international causes, the collaborative participation of artists locally or worldwide in reinforcing symbols of movements, such as the watermelon for Palestine, raises awareness and establishes support that can be easily identified and cannot be diminished. The efforts and skills displayed by protest artists decades or centuries ago are astounding, because without the impact of catching the audience's attention and challenging them to move, the masses would have been left rooted and motionless (Duncombe, 2016).

Everhart (2014) points out that art plays a vital role in mobilization processes, as it enhances the communication, visibility, and emotional work of movements. Social movements aim to inform the broader public and stimulate discourse; cultural performances and practices are integral tools in embodying agency, engaging the audience, and fostering solidarity (Juris, 2014). Without these three factors, collective action would be inconceivable, as recruitment and garnering support for the cause would be extremely difficult.

Although there is no universal effective art form, artistic expressions in various media have significant potential to circumvent government repression, convey messages to diverse constituents with varying demographics and literacy levels, and evoke emotional resonance that could lead to action (Everhart, 2014). By creating a spectacle, either through conventional or atypical means, attention can be drawn to issues and causes that may be otherwise ignored or glossed over. Collective action in the form of large-scale protests proves most effective in affecting incognizant audiences both internally and externally, and social movements can only be

organically induced through activist performances that yield new ways of thinking and inspire further action (Juris, 2014).

In just the last three decades, freedom of expression has become increasingly hindered and obstructed as 117 Filipino journalists have been killed, with the majority of the cases remaining unsolved (United Nations, 2024). Tragedies and injustices such as this have left activists, artists, journalists, and even students fearing for their lives due to red-tagging and unlawful killings despite only exercising their rights. Such acts of censorship, manipulation, and deception limit the extent to which Filipino creatives and organized activists can express themselves and the reflections they wish to share (Azuma et al., 2024).

However, hope for revolution and reform remains bright and blazing in the hands of artists worldwide. Acting as a fundamental tool of resistance and a show of collective dissent, Ferrer (2023) discusses in their study that social media protest art creates possibilities for spreading information and allows for the discussion and sharing of a work to a limitless audience, with the benefit of privacy and anonymity provided by social media features. In a way, digitally shared protest art can act as a means of circumventing the usual restrictions on freedom of speech and expression faced in in-person protests, alongside engaging untapped audiences. In conducting visual activism on social media, individuals fighting for a common cause can claim a collective identity and create an avenue for discussion about unexamined, pertinent local narratives and issues (Sebastian & Teresa, 2023).

As Duncombe (2016) posits, sharing activist art with the world has the potential to bring about unintentional, inconceivable consequences and effects as people engage with and perceive it in varying, unique ways. That in itself does not diminish

the intentions of the artist; rather, it displays the spectrum and endless potential of how art can bring about unanticipated waves among its audiences.

Though admittedly, solely online engagement will not amount to anything as it can inevitably lead to merely *clicktivism*, *slacktivism*, and *armchair activism* — instances where digital activism is reduced to fetching numbers through likes, shares, and retweets without any follow-through of genuine engagement, commitment, or support, in-person or otherwise, to the cause or issue. Engagement must be rendered into actual, actionable, and productive community engagements and collective action to induce reform and influence public policies (Agojo et al., 2023). To protest is to engage and offer public witness, and social movements are actualized only through sustained acts of protest (Reed, 2019).

Furthermore, though the Internet has removed some of the common obstacles faced in mobilizing people, it does not automatically result in participation and collective action (Resurreccion, 2009). The emphasis on and necessity of on-ground, demonstrative protests will never be diminished even with the additional avenue of digital activism, as it merely serves as a supporting component in the grand scheme of promoting advocacies, engaging the public in participating in public affairs, and calling out the incompetencies of the existing systems (Agojo et al., 2023).

Though previous studies have examined the efficacy and limitations of using online spaces for digital activism and mobilization efforts, there is a relatively unexplored gap in the literature that particularly looks into the benefits of sharing protest art online with people's views on socio-political advocacy groups. This study ultimately aims to determine whether sharing protest art online is effective in drawing attention, fostering empathy, and generating support for socio-political advocacy groups and the reforms they advocate for. Furthermore, the research seeks to

establish how and in what ways online protest art is perceived and affects Filipino audiences' overall outlook on local socio-political advocacy groups.

Theoretical Framework

Social media applications' core value of establishing connections with people, no matter the distance, has never been more essential than the ease it has afforded socio-political advocacy groups to band together and show their collective strengths to accumulate support and bring about reform. As represented in Edwards and Gillham's (2013) discussion of Resource Mobilization Theory, in pursuit of shared sentiments for social, political, or cultural exchange, the experiences and perspectives of marginalized groups can motivate them to mobilize and overcome even seemingly insurmountable obstacles brought about by resource inequality.

Access to social media serves as the link that bridges the gap between members mobilizing in pursuit of shared goals and the empathetic audiences that can offer support. The development of Internet-based communication technologies has led to a more efficient means of collective action processes and information dissemination, while simultaneously breaking down social and financial barriers previously associated with such mobilizations (Spier, 2017).

Beyond being a means of showing collective action and mobilization, virality on social media platforms proves critical than ever in drawing attention to matters that are incredibly pertinent to the present troubles faced by the country.

Although initially focused on the effects of long-term exposure to television, the Cultivation Theory, created by Gerbner (1998), can be similarly applied in the context of the influence that current mass media and social media platforms hold over frequent users and audiences. This theory posits that over time, the homogenous and, at times,

deliberate messages presented by various forms of media will eventually be absorbed and adopted at face value as a shared understanding of social reality and worldview among its audiences.

Additionally, Gerbner et al. (1986) presented new concepts that provide further insights into the original theory of media influence, mainly Mainstreaming and Resonance. Mainstreaming proposes that even viewers from different demographics may eventually come to share the same perspectives and beliefs as those reflected in multimedia. Resonance posits that when a media message is similar to a past occurrence in an individual's lived experiences, the intended effects of the message are enhanced (Vinney, 2024).

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Cultivation Theory was observable in real-time, as the majority of people relied on social media as a primary source of information. This theoretical framework then serves as the structure that the researcher relies on to understand how factors are interrelated and affected in the observation of the social phenomena related to the research problem.

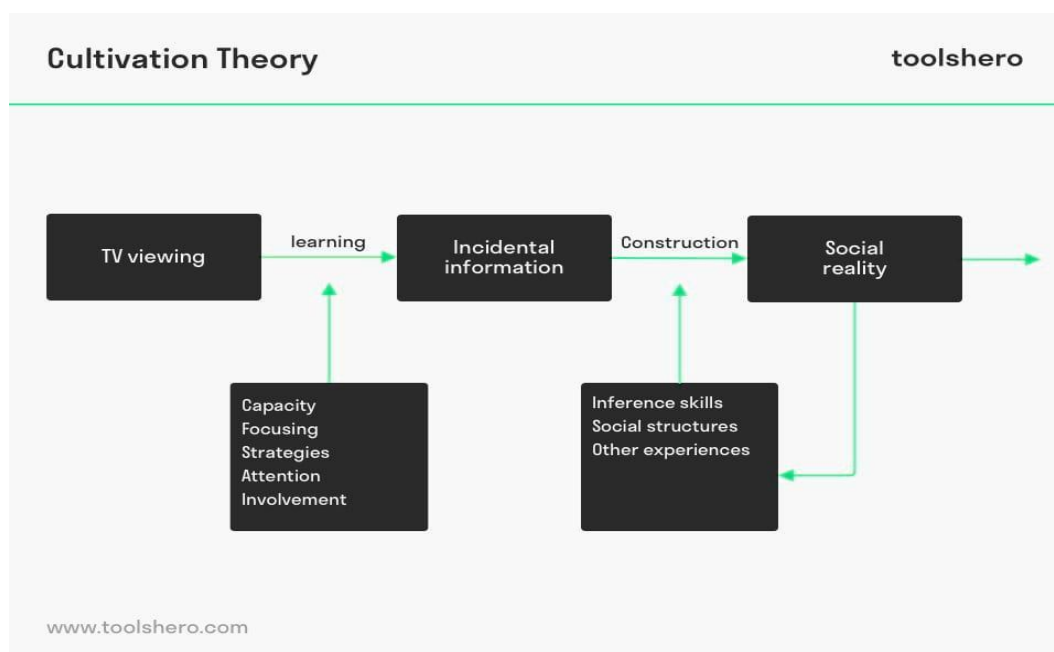


Figure 1. The Cultivation Theory (Gerbner et al., 1986); Model adapted from Mulder (2019)

Conceptual Framework

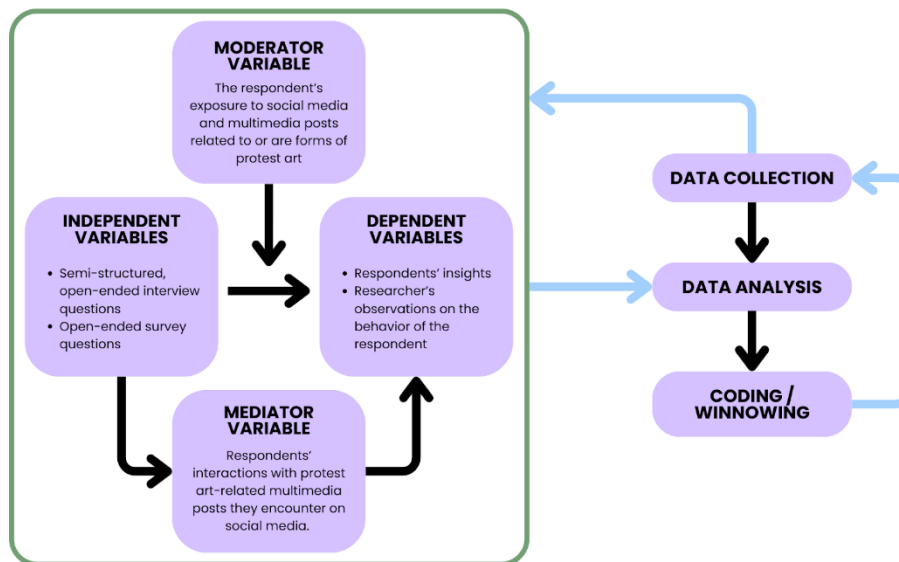


Figure 2. Conceptual Framework

As the research method for the study is Grounded Theory, the data collection and analysis process occur simultaneously. The respondents' insights are to be gathered through semi-structured, open-ended interview and survey questions, with the manner of questioning dependent on whether they were local artists, organization representatives, or audiences. These insights and responses are understandably influenced by both moderator and mediator variables – unavoidable factors such as respondents' exposure to multimedia posts relating to or that are forms of protest art and their interactions with these posts they encounter on social media.

The collected data in the form of transcripts and excerpts are then analyzed and winnowed into codes, categories, and eventually themes that are compared and collated until a starting grounded theory is formulated. Once data is gathered and analyzed, another round of interviews and surveys are to be conducted. This process will occur in an iterative manner until theoretical saturation is reached, wherein the data gathered is no longer providing any new substantial insights or observations.

Operational Definition of Terms

- *Protest art* – any form or medium of art created with the intention in mind of reflecting present societal troubles, challenging people’s perceptions on systematic issues, or rising against social injustices
- *Socio-political issues* – problems and circumstances faced by people due to the current state of social and political realities
- *Socio-political advocacy groups* – organizations or alliances aimed to educate and advocate for reform and development of existing social and political systems that impact particular causes or populations
- *Coding* – the process of analyzing the data by breaking it down and saturating it into a core concept

Hypotheses

Given that the intended research method for the study was Grounded Theory, there were no preconceived hypotheses about the study's outcome. Instead, it was through the collection and analysis of data, along with subsequent coding and winnowing, that a collection of themes and the grounded theory were crafted in response to the research problem and objectives. The results of the study were left open to interpretation based on the researcher’s findings and the experiences and insights of the respondents.

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study was conducted as qualitative research, specifically employing the Grounded Theory method, to sufficiently gather the in-depth, subjective responses required from the respondents, discover patterns in the data, and develop an understanding of the complex socio-cultural phenomenon through a substantive theory. Considering that qualitative research proves more effective in observing attitudes within a culture or a group of people, this form of research fit the research's need to look into the perspective of young Filipinos.

Respondents were identified and gathered through stratified random sampling and theoretical sampling to account for diversity in the sample and to ensure that the study could be considered a representative of the larger population.

Qualitative research methods, such as open-ended, semi-structured interviews and surveys, were employed to gather respondents' insights and experiences with the prevalence of sharing digital protest art in online spaces and its implications for the attitudes and perceptions of young Filipinos towards local socio-political advocacy groups. Through open coding and thematic analysis, meaning was extracted from selected transcriptions and condensed into codes, which were subsequently categorized and refined into relevant, corresponding themes applicable to the entire study. These themes were then used to create a theory, model, and explanation of the phenomenon of the research problem.

Locale of the Study

For all data and resource gathering, such as one-on-one interviews or deployment of survey questionnaires, the study was conducted online using videoconferencing and web applications. The area of study was not limited to a select region in the Philippines. The decision to conduct this study entirely online was to allow for convenience and flexibility on behalf of the respondents, as well as not to limit the reach and diversity of respondents and data gathered.

Respondents of the Study

In line with the Grounded Theory research method, the demographics of the target respondents of this study were not necessarily taken into account, as the different perspectives each participant can offer with their lived experiences were the priority. However, following the stratified random sampling method, the researcher aimed to interview and survey twenty (20) respondents with varying demographics and familiarity with protest art, accounting for five (5) representatives or affiliates of local socio-political advocacy groups, five (5) local artists sharing art on social media platforms, and ten (10) audience members with varying familiarity with protest art.

The researcher approached and sent interview inquiries to various socio-political advocacy organizations and local artists present on social media platforms, resulting in approximately fifty possible leads and respondents. The target number of ten interview respondents was successfully reached; however, due to the lack of response from or the unavailability of some organizations and local artists, the diversity of the respondents' demographics, insights, and experiences was inadvertently affected. Thus, the researcher's ability to ensure that particular demographics were

adequately explored or represented was limited as it was dependent on the responsiveness and availability of these possible respondents.

The number of respondents was tentative, as it depended on whether theoretical saturation occurred after a certain number of respondents, at which point additional data no longer contributed any new information to the existing categories or themes. The target number of respondents may have also proven lacking if there was still a need for elaboration or diversity in insights to ensure that the sample was representative of the population.

Sampling Procedure

The study employed two sampling methods: stratified random sampling and theoretical sampling. The researcher had target categories of respondents at the onset, but conducted new rounds of interviews with additional participants, analyzing and coding the data afterward. Depending on what was discovered from the analyzed data, the recruiting criteria could have been adjusted to make way for either a confirmation or a different perspective from the previous code and category findings (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

The theoretical sampling in Grounded Theory was not carried out through only one survey, but rather a continuous round of interviews and surveys with new participants. The researcher was in an iterative loop of sampling, data collection, and analysis until the study reached theoretical saturation, at which point the data collection ended, and a theory was formulated.

Ethical Considerations

Given the delicate nature of sharing one's private information, particularly so for local artists and members of socio-political advocacy groups, the researcher endeavored to protect the identity of all respondents throughout the research process by ensuring they maintain anonymity so that they may fully express their opinions and insights without fearing any repercussions due to their subjective perceptions. The researcher presented options for the respondents to only provide information that they were comfortable with sharing, such as simply providing a general location, an age range, and first names that would not lead to their identification.

Before any interviews were conducted or any survey questions presented, all participants were sufficiently and clearly informed of the objectives of the study as well as their rights to data privacy and confidentiality in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (R.A. 10173), particularly that all responses would be kept strictly confidential and only used for the outlined purpose of the study. Respondents were assured that their information and responses would be stored securely and presented in a compiled form to ensure anonymity, and mentions of members of any organizations would only be made when necessary and relevant. Furthermore, all respondents were made aware of their right to withdraw their participation from the study at any time.

All interview participants were informed and provided consent to the necessary audio-visual recording of their interviews for transcription and subsequent analysis. The matter of recording was discussed in all initial interview inquiries and was reiterated before any interview was conducted. Similarly, all survey respondents were required to acknowledge and affirm that they read and understood the information provided and were willing to continue their participation.

Data Gathering Procedure

Following a qualitative research design and the Grounded Theory research method, the data used in this study were gathered from multiple sources through various means and from individuals with diverse backgrounds. The data gathering procedures undertaken consisted of semi-structured, open-ended interviews and surveys.

The interviews were conducted virtually through a videoconferencing application and were scheduled to accommodate the availability and convenience of the respondents. These interviews were one-on-one, semi-structured, open-ended interviews that were video- and audio-recorded for transcribing and record-keeping purposes with the express consent of all parties, typically lasting between 40 and 100 minutes. The interviews were intended to allow respondents to elaborate on their observations and experiences that could lead to new themes, focusing on local creatives or associates of socio-political advocacy groups, to gain insight into their observed effects of sharing digital protest art online as a creator.

On the other hand, the online open-ended survey questionnaires focused on Filipino audiences that held varying familiarity and connections to protest art. The survey consisted of open-ended questions intended to capture respondents' views, stances, and observations regarding the societal implications of sharing protest art online on Filipinos' actions and perceptions of socio-political advocacy groups as audience members.

All participants were asked to respond to five sections made up of open-ended questions, with the sections being: (1) Exposure to Protest Art on Social Media with four questions, (2) Effectiveness of Digitally Shared Protest Art with three questions, (3) Relevance of Protest Art to Socio-Political Advocacy Groups with seven questions,

(4) Impacts of Digital Protest Art on Following with four questions, and (5) Real World Implications of Digital Protest Art with two questions. Each section was composed of questions that facilitated discussions regarding respondents' views on or interactions with protest art and the efficacy of digital protest art in shaping audiences' perceptions and actions towards socio-political advocacy groups, with the inclusion of some targeted questions to address the research objectives specifically.

In line with the iterative nature of the grounded theory method, modifications and changes to the questions were made at each stage of data collection, depending on the data observed and deduced from the earlier stages of data collection. The interviews were conducted in a relatively consistent manner throughout to follow the planned structure of the interview. However, some slight modifications to the questioning method were implemented to fit the flow of the conversation when necessary. Furthermore, there was originally a question directed towards gathering the analytics of socio-political advocacy groups' page followings, posts, and donation drives to attribute observable changes after certain artworks and posts were made; however, it was discontinued and removed from the question roster as it did not prove feasible to acquire from early interviews. There were also additions or deductions to the interview guide when needed, such as when the organizations were considered legacy organizations or if the respondents were local artists or representatives of an organization.

Data Analysis

Upon gathering data from one source, such as an interview or survey, the researcher transcribed or copied the answers to analyze and winnow them into a category or theme. The audio recordings were transcribed verbatim by the researcher

with the use of a transcription tool, Evernote. The reliability of the transcriptions was verified by rigorous checking of the produced transcription against the recording, with the researcher making sure that all verbatim responses were recorded accurately. To facilitate the coding and analysis of the transcribed data, the MAXQDA software program was utilized for streamlined data management.

The process was then repeated with every round of interviews or surveys. Rather than steps leading into the next, data analysis in grounded theory entailed that the process of collecting, analyzing, and coding data occurred recursively, as fitting for the study.

Through the transcripts and survey responses, categories or themes were identified, compared, and refined as data were accumulated. Three different levels of coding were implemented to reach the core themes: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. In open coding, the researcher read through the transcribed data and survey responses line by line, and carefully created codes from the excerpts that act as summaries of the concept or the theme. In axial coding, data collection was still ongoing, but the existing codes were compared with new data to identify similarities and differences. This back-and-forth process helped create comprehensive summaries that gradually evolved into an emerging theory. With open and axial coding, each code and category were supplemented with theoretical memos that served as the researcher's notes while conducting the coding process to retain the analysis, understanding, and criteria of each concept that emerged. Lastly, the selective coding stage involved utilizing and combining the comprehensive categories or summaries to identify the core concept or themes of the research.

The data analysis process culminated in a comprehensive set of themes that could be applied to the research and were used to formulate a theory and model. This

set of themes or categories was then integrated into a central idea or a new grounded theory using selective code taken from the gathered data and generated from its analysis.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the analysis and consolidation of the collected data from twenty-three (23) respondents that have contributed to the accomplishment of the research objectives, which are: (1) determine whether encountering digital protest art led to people gaining an interest in learning more about or supporting an advocacy; (2) establish the key points in a digital protest artwork that resonate with Filipino audiences and move them to act in response; (3) assess how digital activism in the form of sharing digital protest art affects Filipino audiences.

Socio-demographic Profile of Respondents

As the study was conducted with stratified random sampling, there were no specific target demographics taken into account for the respondent sampling. Instead, the study was solely focused on gathering the different perspectives each participant could offer with their lived experiences in relation to their relationship with protest art, irrespective of their socio-demographic profile.

The initial target number of respondents was successfully reached, accounting for six (6) representatives or affiliates of local socio-political advocacy groups, five (5) local artists sharing art on social media platforms, and twelve (12) Filipino audience members who may or may not be familiar with protest art, totalling twenty-three (23) respondents.

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage
19-25	17	73.91
26-30	4	17.39
30s	2	8.70
Total	23	100

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents according to Age

Throughout the data collection process, however, the respondents were found to be mostly in their early 20s to early 30s, particularly older Gen Z and younger Millennials. This demographic could be linked to how the gathered respondents were more likely to be younger, given their presence and engagement in social media spheres and their active membership in organizations, particularly cultural and collegiate ones.

Furthermore, the researcher had no role in selecting the representatives sent by the organizations for the interviews, nor were the demographics of the artists considered when interview requests were issued. Inquiries for interviews were sent to approximately fifty organizations and local artists, and the eleven interview respondents taken into consideration were the only ones to respond with their availability within the timeframe for data collection. Thus, further data collection and representation of other demographics were simply not feasible due to the lower response rate achieved from interview invitations.

Location	Frequency	Percentage
NCR / Metro Manila	14	60.87
Rizal	3	13.04

Caloocan City	1	4.35
Aklan	1	4.35
Cavite	1	4.35
Laguna	1	4.35
Leyte	1	4.35
Cebu	1	4.35
Total	23	100

Table 2. Demographic Profile of the Respondents according to Location

The general location of the respondents served to highlight the external factors that possibly affect the experiences and insights of the study's respondents. The majority of the interview respondents were based in the National Capital Region (NCR) or Metro Manila, with 8 out of 11 respondents. While the survey respondents, on the other hand, were primarily based in other provinces and regions, with only 5 out of 12 respondents currently in Metro Manila.

Observing the general location of the respondents may indicate a link between their location and the general accessibility of the Internet for people there, as well as the propensity of people's use of social media platforms and their access to socio-political advocacy groups. Given that mobilizations and initiatives often occur in Metro Manila, as it is the capital of the Philippines, being based there may increase the likelihood of people having higher awareness and access to active socio-political advocacy groups, particularly collegiate and cultural organizations.

As socio-political advocacy organizations make use of in-person events such as forums, festivals, and conventions for the promotion of their causes and organization, the locations these organizations hold their mobilization efforts at are

extremely critical in encouraging people’s awareness of national or region-specific issues and their ability to participate in wide-scale protest efforts and campaigns.

Rather than focusing solely on the National Capital Region (NCR), socio-political advocacy groups should strive to extend their coverage, promotions, and mobilizations to other regions. Besides uncovering overlooked issues, this can serve as a step towards addressing the still-present digital divide plaguing the Philippines and hindering people from speaking out about the issues they are experiencing.

Social Media Platforms	Frequency	Percentage
Facebook	14	60.87
Instagram	14	60.87
Youtube	12	52.17
Twitter / X	10	43.48
Tumblr	4	17.39
Bluesky	3	13.04
TikTok	1	4.35

Table 3. Respondents’ Most Used Social Media Platforms

The majority of the study’s respondents indicate that Facebook and Instagram are their most used social media platforms, with YouTube and X, formerly Twitter, trailing closely behind. This table provides insight into the most prevalent social media platforms on which respondents engage and could potentially interact with protest art.

Given the limited number of respondents and the subjective nature of choosing which platforms to use, this may not provide an accurate representation of the most commonly used social media platforms among the general Filipino population. Further

studies may yield differing data on this topic, depending on the sample population they collect.

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Student	14	60.87
Artist (Illustrator/Graphic Designer)	6	26.09
Freelance Writer / Researcher	2	8.70
Student Assistant	1	4.35
Virtual Assistant	1	4.35
Archivist	1	4.35
Creative Director	1	4.35
Communications Director	1	4.35
Pharmacist	1	4.35

Table 4. Demographic Profile of the Respondents according to Current Occupation

As can be observed from the table, the majority of respondents were still students, with some holding freelance jobs while pursuing their education. In particular, all twelve (12) survey respondents were students, which could be reasonably attributed to the manner in which the survey was distributed. The survey was primarily shared through student group chats and university environments, as it would be easiest to gather responses from peers. As previously mentioned, four of the survey respondents also hold freelance jobs, with two being freelance artists, one a freelance writer, and another a visual assistant.

On the other hand, for the eleven (11) interview respondents, only two were still students, with one being a political science student. The majority of the interview respondents notably hold employment in various positions related to the art field, such

as freelance artists, freelance writers, an archivist, a creative director, and so forth, with the exception of one respondent who is a pharmacist by profession.

Discussion of Results

Upon completion of the coding process, the data analysis of the gathered data resulted in the development of three main themes: (a) Audience-Influencing Factors, (b) Means of Introduction, and (c) Societal Implications of Sharing Digital Protest Art. These three themes constructed the resulting paradigm, “Effect Beyond The Screen,” represented in Figure 3, that explains the formulated grounded theory, “The ‘*Societal Implications of Sharing Digital Protest Art*’ is dependent on the consideration of ‘*Audience-Influencing Factors*’ in the production of the artworks that serve as the ‘*Means of Introduction*’ which consequently restarts the process.”



Figure 3. Effect Beyond the Screen Model

This final grounded theory and paradigm emerged from the synthesis of all the data gathered. The societal implications of sharing digital protest art can only be determined if the audience-influencing factors are considered in the creation of these

artworks, which serve as a means of introduction to socio-political advocacy groups. Given that these audience-influencing factors are always subject to change, the whole process becomes an iterative one wherein organized advocates and creatives are constantly innovating and learning from each other as they navigate these changes that affect digital protest art's use as a means of introduction and the subsequent societal implications of it being shared on online platforms.

The categories and subcodes that make up these main components are then discussed and supported through the use of excerpts from the respondents.

Audience-Influencing Factors

The first theme, "Audience-Influencing Factors," was constructed through six main categories: "Pandemic's Effects on Traditional Protest Methods," "Being Grounded in One's Praxis," "Emotional Appeal to Audiences," "Reach Out to Untapped Audiences," "Becoming Organized," and "Censorship Examples." These categories explored the elements at play that influence the effectiveness of digital protest art in influencing young Filipino audiences.

(1) Pandemic's Effects on Traditional Protest Methods

The study's participants recognized that the COVID-19 pandemic left a lasting impression on the operations of socio-political advocacy groups going forward as people were forced to shift from traditional, in-person protests to using online platforms as their only available avenue. Activists and organizations now have a wider understanding of the possible avenues available for protesting beyond traditional mobilizations. Participants remarked on the adaptability of activism and the importance of leveraging available technologies, as even non-cultural organizations

had to innovate how they would protest digitally. These effects continue to be observed in how digital protest art or events now offer hybrid formatting and setups.

Diba dati yung mga protest, lalabas tayo mag-rally, mag signboard. Dahil nagkaroon ng pandemic, kahit yung mga non-cultural organizations, naka isip sila ng way para mag protest digitally... *(In the past, we would go out to rally with signboards. But because a pandemic happened, even non-cultural organizations found a way to protest digitally...)* (Org Representative 3)

So nakakatuwa na after nung pandemic patuloy pa rin yung exploration at pagpaparami pa talaga ng mga ginagawang outputs na pino-post online. At may mga nakikita pa akong ngayong mga likhang sining na parang hybrid na din...So nakakatuwa na isipin pa yung mga evolution ng sining na pwede pang mabuo ngayong kakaiba yung panahon na di umano umuunlad yung teknolohiya. *(So it's heartening that after the pandemic, the exploration and production of outputs posted online still continues. And I even saw artworks that seemed to be hybrid...So it's gratifying to think of the evolution of art that could occur now that technology is evolving greatly.)* (Org Representative 3)

(2) Being Grounded in One's Praxis

The interview respondents emphasized the importance of being grounded in one's praxis in order to produce compelling, authentic artworks. Being grounded in one's praxis entails engaging with the issues and marginalized groups depicted in the art firsthand through on-the-ground initiatives, thereby fully capitalizing on one's knowledge and understanding to creatively and accurately represent these issues and potential solutions. Protest art needs to be rooted in the lived experiences of and collaborative efforts with the affected communities, rather than relying on a base-level understanding and perceived reality of the situation. Learning theories is similarly not sufficient enough; continuous reflection and dialogue are necessary to bridge the gap between theory and action, as what you do will change and deepen your understanding of the theory and affect your subsequent actions.

[I]t really goes back to how grounded you are in your praxis and how— in that you're actually engaging with these issues on the ground because that's how you will know. What is more appropriate. (Local Artist 1)

So sa amin bilang mga artists, hindi lang yung parang insights namin mahalaga sa pagpapalano kung ano yung ilalabas na output or cultural output or artwork. Importante na collaborative kami sa mga iba't ibang organisasyong panlipunan, iba't ibang mga sektor na lipunan, at kahit yung mga normal na tao lang. Kasi ito yung nagpapanatili na grounded yung nilalaman mo, kung kolektibo kayong gumagawa, diba? So yun yung pinapanatili namin sa proseso ng paggawa ng sining. *(So for us as artists, it's not just our insights that are important in planning for the output or cultural output or artwork that we are going to release. It is important that we are collaborative with different social organizations, different sectors of society, and even normal folk. Because that's what keeps our content grounded, if you're working collectively, right? So that's what we maintain in the process of making art.)* (Org Representative 3)

Another aspect of being grounded in one's praxis is the consideration of whether one's contribution to a particular issue is actually adding to the conversation. This consideration plays a significant role in the plans of socio-political advocacy groups, as prevalent social issues and red-letter dates often generate an abundance of inputs and digital protest art from all organizations. Standing out with something significant or new in the approach and presentation of a socio-political advocacy group can significantly impact the visibility and effectiveness of their work among audiences.

So parang sa pagp-post ay mas may ganun nang pagtingin na pag ipopost ba ito, I think nabanggit ko na kanina, pag ipopost ba ito ay nakakadagdag ba ito sa social media clutter? Or value adding pa ba siya? *(So in posting, there is more of that perspective or consideration of whether if this is posted, I think I mentioned it earlier, if this is posted, does it add to the social media clutter? Or is it still value adding?)* (Org Representative 2)

Similarly, the respondents indicated that protest art or statements must be made carefully, with the priority of considering what avenue or format would be most suitable for approaching or representing an issue. Insensitive or inappropriate representations must be avoided entirely as they greatly affect audiences' reception, understanding, and reactions to the message being conveyed.

Take for example, the genocide of Palestine. Hindi pwedeng infographic lang yan. Hindi pwedeng bar graph lang yan. Hindi pwedeng column chart lang yan of the historical sites that have been bombed, the hospitals that have been decimated, the people that have been lost. Dapat literary ang suntok. Kasi without a capable writer or

without a writer who is capable of writing politically and creatively, mawawala yung emotional appeal. *(Take for example, the genocide of Palestine. It can't just be an infographic. It can't just be a bar graph. It can't just be a column chart of the historical sites that have been bombed, the hospitals that have been decimated, the people that have been lost. The punchline should be literary. Because without a capable writer or without a writer who is capable of writing politically and creatively, the emotional appeal would be lost.)*
(Org Representative 1)

Effective and accurate representation, as well as inclusivity, are also deemed important for audiences to better resonate with the subject matter. Lending credence to the study's theoretical framework, respondents' insights corroborate the Resonance concept in Gerbner's Cultivation Theory as they affirm that when a media message evokes a past occurrence or situation in an individual's lived experience, the message's intended effects on the audience are amplified.

Because I think that also helps when people see themselves dun sa art na yun.
(Because I think that also helps when people see themselves in those artworks.)
(Local Artist 4)

[M]as maraming tumitigil, nagbabasa, at nakikialam, siguro dahil may bigat at agarang koneksyon ang mga larawang ito sa kasalukuyang realidad. *(More people stop, read, and engage, perhaps because these artworks hold weight and have an immediate connection to current realities.)*
(Local Artist 5)

I think presenting accounts from people involved and other factors that can highlight the advocacy's relatability empowers the viewers more, since there is so much strength in knowing you're not alone in what you're going through.
(Audience 5)

In conclusion, proper and effective presentation of a cause is necessary in preventing any breakdown in communicating with audiences due to misunderstandings or misinterpretations. This repeated emphasis on adding value to existing conversations and avoiding insensitive or inappropriate representations further underscores the need for thoughtful and responsible creation of digital protest artworks.

(3) Emotional Appeal to Audiences

A majority of the respondents noted that appeals to the audience's emotions are crucial in capturing their attention and motivating them to take action. It is through humanizing issues and the people involved in these movements that people can gain a new perspective on current situations, as there is a prevailing tendency in people to become desensitized to news that they have no emotional connection to.

Pinahahalagahan ko ang pagpapakita ng damdamin at emosyon— galit, lungkot, pag-asa, at paninindigan ng mga taong tampok sa likha. Para sa akin, ito ang nagpapalapit sa mga manonood at nagtutulak sa kanila na makiramay o kumilos [...] Mas napapalapit ang mga ordinaryong manonood sa mga isyung panlipunan sa paraang mas damhin kaysa sabihing teoretikal. *(I place importance on the expression of feelings and emotions – anger, sadness, hope, and determination of the characters in the work. For me, this is what endears and draws the audience closer and pushes them to empathize or take action [...] Ordinary viewers are more likely to engage with social issues in a way that is more tangible and emotional than theoretical.)*

(Local Artist 5)

[A]rt kasi yung nagpo-process nung subjectivities ng mga tao. Siya yung uma-appeal sa emotions, sa lahat ng bagay outside the objective truth [...] Kulang siya [data] in persuading or influencing other people. So I think dun papasok yung art sa lahat ng kakulangan na yun. Kasi you can express a message through iba't ibang forms talaga. So pinapaganda mo yung katotohanan para mas maging convincing, mas maging influential, at mas makapag-spark ng mobilization movements. *(Art is what processes the subjectivities of people. It is the one that appeals to the emotions of everything outside the objective truth [...] Data lacks in persuading or influencing other people. So I think that's where art comes in to fill all those gaps. Because you can express a message through different forms. So, you embellish the truth to make it more convincing, more influential, and more likely to spark mobilization movements.)*

(Org Representative 2)

Participants note that to achieve and maintain audience attention, they need to be well-versed in understanding and considering the tastes of the masses. Beyond aiming to be aesthetically pleasing, the reasoning behind the most suitable style and format used for appealing to audiences must be sound in logic.

One aspect to also consider is the accessibility of the artworks. They should keep in mind questions such as “how will the general public react?”, “is it contextualized to the target audience?”, “is it readable, audible, or visible?”, “what platform will be the most effective to use?”, and such. (Audience 2)

Artists can also empathize with the general public by considering their perspectives, which can further engage audiences. (Audience 12)

Respondents observed that audiences can garner a deeper understanding of the reasons behind activists' actions, including their fervor for the cause and the emotions they grapple with, by encountering and engaging with protest artworks that share their lived experiences on the ground and simultaneously disprove misconceptions about activists, activism, and mobilizations.

We just don't have to stay too far away from our lived experiences as organizers on the ground. Because it's something we can share...I think art, like [fellow activist]'s work, where she talks about being scared for the first time, it humanizes organizers in an extent that solely political or propaganda work just cannot do.

(Org Representative 1)

And it's something that art really has the capacity to make organizers or the movement look less "scary," look less intimidating, less... Alam ko kasi maraming misconceptions na puro rarara lang kami or sobrang tapang lagi or sobrang lakas [...] Kasi if you just see pictures of [fellow activist] like at the event, she looks so strong. She looks like wala siyang katakot-takot. So, reading about na, oh, tao lang din naman siya. It's very moving. (...I know that there's a lot of misconceptions that we are just always rallying or always so brave or super strong [...]) Because if you just see pictures of [fellow activist] at the event, she looks so strong. She looks like she has no fear. So, reading about how she's also just human. It's very moving.)

(Org Representative 1)

Consistent exposure to protest art can help dismantle the stigma against activism.

(Audience 2)

In essence, the lasting impression left by protest artworks or simply art forms that depict socio-political issues has the power to affect cultural change, depending on the effectiveness of the content in igniting these emotions and these feelings that spark one's interest and motivation to join or support a cause.

(4) Reach Out to Untapped Audiences

One of the primary goals of sharing protest art in online spaces is to reach out to untapped audiences about socio-political advocacy groups and their causes. Participants emphasized the relevance of the Internet, particularly with the dissemination of protest art, as an additional avenue for connecting with audiences who may not have had the opportunity to know about or engage in these causes and organizations.

So I think nakakatulong talaga siya [digital protest art] sa pagdi-disseminate ng ideology, ng information, and ng sentiments ng isang tao or ng isang movement. *(So I think it [digital protest art] really helps in disseminating the ideology, information, and sentiments of a person or a movement.)* (Local Artist 3)

Sa obserbasyon ko, ang pagbabahagi ng protest art online ay may kakayahang buksan ang kamalayan ng mga tao, lalo na ng mga hindi pa aktibong kalahok sa kilusan...Dahil biswal at mabilis maikalat, mas madali itong umabot sa mga hindi aktibong bahagi ng kilusan. *(In my observation, sharing protest art online has the capability to open people's minds and awareness, especially those who aren't actively participating in the movement... Because it is visual and easy to share, it can more easily reach people who aren't active participants in the movement.)* (Local Artist 5)

This also allows protest media to become even more accessible for persons with disabilities that may not be able to participate in live events or have difficulties in consuming protest media (visual impairments, mobility concerns, being bedridden) using accessibility tools that are often readily available on their devices. (Audience 1)

In order to reach out to untapped audiences, digital protest artworks are made with the intention of catching people's attention and creating a spectacle. Respondents note that it is through starting or leveraging trends and creating visually engaging content that audiences can become intrigued by causes or issues, which are crucial for gaining traction and support for urgent or longstanding issues.

[B]ecause part of protests is really the spectacle – of how big it is, how noisy it is, of how different it is from everyday life. Because that's how you bring attention to what you're actually talking about in the protest – that's how you make people listen. And it shows people in a very loud way that there are so many people that care about this issue, and they're talking about it and are doing something about it right now.

(Local Artist 1)

I believe art acts as a catalyst, giving people a visual representation to focus on when social issues are brought up. This further solidifies the message, drawing people's eyes and ears so that they listen and may even start to understand the very root of these artworks, which is to draw awareness and attention to their cause. (Audience 9)

The potential for digital protest art to highlight often-overlooked local and regional issues was also explored, as the unavailability or inaccessibility of socio-political advocacy groups in certain regions can contribute to the lack of engagement and participation in socio-political matters among people in those areas. Some of the respondents observed that digital protest art held the ability to introduce audiences to local, unrecognized issues that may be typically overshadowed by issues from Metro Manila or the National Capital Region (NCR).

I feel like nas-share ko yung mga ibang issues from the regions to my audience na not really from Cordillera, not really from Baguio City. And na-introduce ko itong mga issues na to as something important but rarely highlighted sa mga ibang medium or baka mga ibang organizations kasi parang hindi siya from that region, kaya hindi siya talagang nakikita agad-agad or hindi siya nagiging main campaign point. *(I feel like I'm able to share the other issues from the regions to my audience that aren't really from Cordillera, not really from Baguio City. And I'm introducing these issues as something important but rarely highlighted in other mediums or maybe other organizations because they aren't from that region, so they aren't really visible right away or they don't become the main campaign point.)* (Local Artist 3)

Social media brought obscure or under-talked-about topics to light for me. One such example is the Masungi Georeserve's IG account that posts about ecological preservation. (Audience 10)

Upon reaching audiences, digital protest artworks must possess an appeal that incentivizes audiences to explore the issues presented to them further. The use of protest artworks in accompanying statements may encourage audiences to look further and read statements with all the nuances and full meaning of the attached messages.

(5) Becoming Organized

While individual actions towards activism have their merits, as every effort and contribution is precious in keeping causes alive, they are limited in their reach and effectiveness when compared to collective action. The interview respondents, particularly organized activists, were clear in stressing the necessity of being part of a bigger collective or organized group of activists.

Becoming organized is one of the primary goals of promoting socio-political advocacies and groups, whether through digital protest artworks or otherwise, as acting collectively can lead to more meaningful interactions and efforts to support advocacies on the ground. Activism is inherently difficult to accomplish alone, and the belief that being able to be a true activist even when not attached to any organizations only defeats the point of activism, as it is meant for arousing, organizing, and mobilizing.

It's not about what you post online or what you read online, it's about what you do in your life as a member of an activist organization. You can't just do it on your own, you definitely just can't do it online. (Local Artist 1)

I just wish more people who aren't in orgs understand that it's not just the sharing that helps, it's the joining for yourself. (Org Representative 1)

Kasi may tinatawag na arouse, organize, mobilize, diba? So lahat ng nakakakita ng aming mga sining, lahat ng nakakarinig ng mga kanta, ganyan. Ang end goal lagi ay mapasama sila. Mapasama sila sa laban. Maging mas malawak at mas malakas yung mga boses para eventually yun yung magsaspark ng pagbabago. (*Because there's a saying called arouse, organize, mobilize, right? So, everyone that sees our art, everyone that hears our songs. The end goal is always for them to join. To include them in the fight. To make our voices reach wider and grow louder so that eventually that will spark change.*) (Org Representative 3)

Audiences may want to show their support through progressive actions, but they may need help finding organizations that align with their beliefs or that advocate for and campaign on causes they support. Digital protest art is one way socio-political

organizations can promote the advocacies they believe in and support, as well as the reforms they want to see implemented.

I think yung protest art, especially those that are shared online, ay beneficial para sa mga pagpapatampok ng mga different social issues sa bansa na pwedeng meron kang bagong audience na ma g-garner or pwedeng meron kang audience na alam na tong issue na to pero kailangan ng pagpapalalim. At nakaka-help yung mga pag-create ng protest artworks na visual or literary sa pagkatuto nila. And hopefully ay makapag-mobilize din sa kanila to engage sa kanilang community, sa mga communities na affected ng mga issues na to. *(I think protest art, especially those that are shared online, is beneficial for highlighting different social issues in the country that may garner a new audience or that has an audience that knows of the issue but needs to learn more about it. And creating protest artworks that are visual or literary really helps in their understanding. And hopefully it can also mobilize them to engage in their community, in the communities that are affected by these issues.)* (Local Artist 3)

[Y]ung pinaka maaalala ko is yung Tindig by Tarantadong Kalbo, if you're familiar. Nung pandemic pa, ayun, naalala ko pinakamalaki talaga yung reach nila since umabot yun sa ibang, very popular din na artist. And then nag-branch out siya sa ibang organizations which used it to like, yung mga captions nila, dun nila siningit yung advocacies nila. So parang ang laki ng influence nung time na yun. *(The one I remember the most is Tindig by Tarantadong Kalbo, if you're familiar. That was during the pandemic, I remember their reach was really wide since it reached other very popular artists. And then it branched out to other organizations who used it to insert their advocacies in their captions. So, its influence was really huge at the time.)* (Local Artist 4)

Besides spotlighting socio-political advocacy groups and their issues, digital protest artworks must also serve to inspire audiences to volunteer or contribute to the cause.

Kasi ako na parang audience, parang because of the works I see online, hindi lang yung mga visual artworks but also literary works, sometimes mga press releases or mga statements ganyan na na l-layout. Itong mga bagay na to yung nagpush sa akin para maging mas active sa movement at mag-engage pa sa mga tao, not just online but people sa communities. *(Because for me that's like the audience, it's because of the works I see online, not just the visual artworks but also literary works, sometimes the press releases or statements that are laid out. These things are what pushed me to become more active in the movement and engage with people, not just online but people in communities.)* (Local Artist 3)

Halimbawa pag may mga post na ang taas ng engagement, [...] masasabi mo nagtranslate siya sa awareness sa issue, tapos din sa pinaka-maximum pa, umaabot siya na nagiging interesado yung mga tao na sumali sa org dahil nagagandahan sila sa mga gawa. Tapos nasusukat din namin sya kasi pag mayroong mga walk-in na recruits, na maraming tao na yung mga dahilan nila kung bakit sila nag-walk-in ay dahil maangas daw yung art na nilalabas ng org. Tapos yun, mula dun tingin ko mahihinuha mo naman na ang pangunahin niyang epekto ay meron talaga siyang potensyal na

magpakilos ng tao. *(For example, when there are posts with high engagement, [...] you could say that it translates to awareness of the issue, and at the very maximum, it reaches a point that people become interested in joining the organization because they are impressed by the work. Then we could also measure it when there are walk-in recruits, with many people citing that the reason they walked in is because the art that the organization is putting out is great. Then, from that, I think you can conclude that its main effect is that it definitely has the potential to mobilize people.)*

(Org Representative 6)

After raising awareness about socio-political advocacy groups and their causes and inspiring volunteerism, the only remaining factor for an effective digital protest artwork is to provide a call to action. Respondents shared the same sentiment that creatives must provide audiences with a call to action to establish what they can and are supposed to do after they come across and interact with a protest artwork.

Kaya tayo nag-publish ng mga libro, naglalabas ng mga balita, ganyan. Kasi anong mangyayari? What's next after mong maantig? Di ba? Di naman pwede bukas ulit maantig ka. *(That's why we publish books, and release news. Because what happens? What's next after you're moved? Right? It's not like you can just be moved again tomorrow.)*

(Org Representative 3)

Malinaw yung gustong sabihin at malinaw yung gusto nating ipagawa sa mga tao. Parang ang hirap na magr-release tayo ng something na brilliant tapos maiiwan lang yung audience na okay, saan ako pupunta? At least meron tayong solid na call to action. *(What we want to say and what we want people to do is clear. It's hard to release something brilliant then leave the audience wondering where they're going next. We need to have a solid call to action at least.)*

(Org Representative 4)

The findings from the respondents pointed to the feasibility of digital protest art for recruitment and mobilization, connecting individuals with relevant organizations and fostering a sense of community. Compelling digital protest artworks should not only serve to raise awareness or interest in volunteering for an issue, but also guide audiences towards concrete actions.

(6) Censorship Examples

To effectively circumvent censorship and ensure that the intended message of socio-political advocacy groups actually reaches their intended audiences, one must understand the ways in which censorship manifests in the current societal landscape.

Lalo't tumitindi ang sigalot sa pagitan ng estado at ng mamamayan, lalong nagiging mas makitid ang puwang sa pagpapahayag. Tahimik na pinipili ng mga platform ang "mas ligtas" na nilalaman, na kadalasang depolitikal. Ang ganitong uri ng censorship ay hindi lamang teknikal na problema, kundi ideolohikal, isang paraan ng pagsasabi kung sino lang ang may karapatang magsalita. *(As the conflict between the state and citizens intensifies, the space for expression becomes increasingly narrow. Platforms quietly choose "safer" content that is often depoliticized. This type of censorship is not just a technical problem, but rather an ideological one, a way of saying who has the right to speak.)* (Local Artist 5)

It's horrible. Kasi hindi lang protest art yung na tatamaan. For example, pag on the ground ang mga journalists sa Palestine. But not even journalists, just people living their lives in the West Bank and in Gaza. Natatabunan yung cries for help. And natatabunan yung kanilang messages to the world, essentially. *(It's horrible. Because it's not just protest art that's being affected. For example, when journalists are on the ground in Palestine. But not even journalists, just people living their lives in the West Bank and in Gaza. Their cries for help are being drowned out along with their messages to the world, essentially.)* (Org Representative 1)

It is definitely worrisome. In a time where dissent is labeled as terrorism and tech giants of various social media platforms are being more rampant on the censorship of very relevant issues, it becomes another issue itself that needs to be fought. (Audience 2)

I feel disheartened because these causes wouldn't reach people which makes them unaware of socio-political problems. Sometimes I can't blame the person for being uninformed because it's just the way how information is shared nowadays---it only goes to the interested. (Audience 7)

Censorship can significantly impact users, particularly artists engaged in socio-political activism. On one hand, it can help create a safe environment on social media platforms for everyone. On the other hand, when censorship is excessive, it can restrict freedom of speech, which may undermine the principles of a democratic society. (Audience 12)

Alongside knowing the forms in which censorship is carried out and maintained, the study's participants have stressed how necessary it is to know and understand the realities and systems of censorship that occur both online and offline.

Ineexpect talaga at tinatanggap kasi 'yan yung buhay ng struggle eh. (*It's really expected and accepted because that's the life of the struggle.*) We live in a capitalist society, right? So it doesn't want anything that threatens its existence. We're already taking on that challenge. If you spend all of your time thinking about red-tagging and talking about red-tagging, you're not talking about the real issues anymore. For me, part na siya ng buhay, because you also have to understand as a class struggle meron kang allies and meron kang kalaban. So, syempre hindi mabait sayo yung kalaban, yung ruling class, ine-expect lang talaga yun. (*For me, it's part of life, because you also have to understand as a class struggle, you have allies and you have enemies. So, of course, the enemies aren't kind to you, it's just expected.*) So, you have to accept it, you can't let it stop you. Because if you let it stop you, if you let it make you hesitate, they will win. Because that's what redtagging is for – it's to stop you, it's to repress you. So the only way to win is to keep moving. (Local Artist 1)

Tingin ko sa isang banda, hindi na rin naman na nakakagulat na nangyari yun. Kasi parang maasahan mo rin naman na mangyari na kahit sa digital man o traditional, magkakaroon at magkakaroon talaga ng censorship tungkol sa mga pinagbabawal na paksa o yung mga ganung klaseng paksa. (*I think on one hand, it's not surprising that it happens. Because you can expect that whether it's digital or traditional, there will always be censorship regarding taboo subjects or those kinds of subjects.*) (Org Representative 6)

It is only through continuous, collective understanding and collaboration that activists are equipped with sufficient strategies to overcome censorship and arbitrary algorithms in order to reach audiences through all available avenues.

Sa ngayon, wala akong aktibong estratehiya. Gayunpaman, kinikilala ko ang limitasyon ng platforms at mas pinapahalagahan ang kolektibong pagbabahagi. kapag may sapat na mag-share, nalalampasan ang algorithm. (*At the moment, I don't have an active strategy. However, I do recognize the limitations of platforms and place more importance on collective sharing. When enough people share, the algorithm is overcome.*) (Local Artist 5)

May magagawa pa rin against censorship. It's to speak. Diba? To continue speaking. To continue doing things. Kasi kapag ka nabahag ang mundo mo dahil sa censorship, chilling effect siya e. Diba? So, now more than ever, kailangan ng artists at ng CSOs na mag-collaborate with each other, organize collectively [...] Nawawala naman ang censorship kapag mas maraming nagsasalita about it. Diba? Kasi hindi ka na makakacensor kung lahat ay against it na. So, meron ka pa rin magagawa. It's just mahirap lang siyang i-navigate lalo na kung takot yung mga tao kasi nga may chilling effect. Lalo na sa journalists, diba? So, mahirap siyang i-navigate pero that's the price you have to pay for knowing things, for understanding things." (*There's still something that you can do against censorship. It's to speak, right? To continue speaking. To continue doing things. Because when your world is torn apart because of censorship, it has a chilling effect, right? So, now more than ever, artists and CSOs need to collaborate with each other, organize collectively [...] Censorship disappears when more people talk about it. Because you can't censor if everyone is against it. So, you can still do something. It's just difficult to navigate, especially when people are afraid,*

because it has a chilling effect. Especially for journalists, right? So, it's hard to navigate, but that's the price you have to pay for knowing things, for understanding things.)

(Org Representative 4&5)

Bukod dun sa gumawa kami ng bagong page, tapos bukod din dun sa sinusubukan naming i-maximize yung iba pang mga platform tulad ng TikTok, andyan din yung sinusubukan naming paunlarin pa kung paano kami maglabas ng protest art sa mga physical space. Sa labas din ng mga exhibit. Kaya, ayun din yung pinag-uusapan din namin, paano pa namin mas mab-breakthrough na hindi lang pangunahin online yung pinakamalakas naming venue, kumbaga avenue na kung saan naglalabas kami ng protest art. *(Apart from us creating a new page, and besides us trying to maximize other platforms like TikTok, we are also trying to develop how we release protest art in physical spaces. Outside of exhibits. So, that's what we're also discussing, how we can further break through and not primarily have online as our strongest avenue where we release protest art.)*

(Org Representative 6)

It must be kept in mind, however, that it is not only outright censorship that can place limitations on how organizations and creatives can present their work to an audience. It can also manifest in subtler forms of censorship, such as differing interpretations and criticism of protest art forms that do not fit into what may be deemed agreeable or proper.

[H]indi natin maiiwasan yung iba't ibang interpretasyon at pag tingin pagdating sa protest art. Kagaya ng nabanggit ko sa effigy, diba maraming tao din yung parang mga haters na, "eh, dumi lang yun blah blah blah." Pangalawa, isang halimbawa din yung graffiti or yung pag susulat at pagpipinta ng mga panawagan sa mga public spaces. Kung maalala natin, nandiyan yung nangyari sa PS5 (Panday Sining 5) na nahusgahan sa Internet ng mga "netizens" or trolls at syempre pati yung mayor ng Maynila galit na galit kaya nga sila pinahuli, ganyan. *(We can't avoid different interpretations and perceptions when it comes to protest art. Like I mentioned with the effigy, there are a lot of haters who say, "eh, it's just trash blah blah blah." Second, another example is graffiti or writing and painting calls to action in public spaces. If we remember, that's what happened with the Panday Sining 5 that were criticized on the Internet by "netizens" or trolls and, of course, even the mayor of Manila was incensed and had them arrested.)*

(Org Representative 3)

Means of Introduction

The second theme, "Means of Introduction," was actualized through four main categories: "Protest & Protest Art Occasions," "Maximizing Avenues for Reaching People," "Processing Information On Or Outside The Internet," and "Effects Beyond

The Screen.” These categories determine how digital protest art serves as an entry point for individuals to engage with socio-political issues and advocacy groups.

(1) Protest & Protest Art Occasions

To gather information on where and when protest artworks are traditionally encountered by audiences and creatives, the respondents were asked to discuss the contexts in which they typically encounter protest art, both in online and offline settings. Protest art was found to be quite prevalent and often associated with significant events, red-letter dates, and in online discussions surrounding current events or hot topics.

Siguro yung pinaka-usual is during pag may events, may rallies, ganyan, may mobilizations na gagawin during red letter dates or lightning rallies, ganyan. And usually nakikita ko rin sila right after sa social media. And sometimes dumadaan din sa feed ko yung mga different kinds ng protest art sa Twitter or mas sa Twitter actually ko siya nakikita. *(Maybe the most usual is during events, rallies, things like that, mobilizations that are done during red letter dates or lightning rallies. And I usually see them right after on social media. And sometimes different kinds of protest art come across my feed on Twitter.)* (Local Artist 3)

Kadalasang lumilitaw ang protest art tuwing may umiigting na isyu ng inhustisya o paglabag sa karapatang pantao. Kapag may balitang pumupukaw ng damdamin, natural na kasabay nitong sumusulpot ang sining bilang tugon at panawagan. (Protest art often appears whenever there is a growing issue of injustice or human rights violations. When there is news that stirs emotions, it is natural for art to emerge as a response and call to action.) (Local Artist 5)

All the time, I suppose. Hangga’t hindi maayos ang lipunan, lalabas-lalabas ang protest art [...] May protest talaga because may mga bagay pa rin na hindi ina-acknowledge ng government that we want them to acknowledge. *(All the time, I suppose. As long as society is not well, protest art will keep appearing [...] There is protest because there are still things that the government doesn’t acknowledge that we want them to acknowledge.)* (Org Representative 4&5)

They are prevalent whether issues arise! I find it interesting because it doesn't depend on a certain event but aims to inform based on what is currently happening (e.g. arrest of former president Duterte) or happened before that didn't have justice (e.g. extrajudicial killings). (Audience 7)

(2) Maximizing Avenues for Reaching People

In gauging the collective opinion on the potential of digital protest art as an introduction to socio-political advocacy groups and causes, the respondents all responded favorably to the use of the Internet and social media platforms in sharing digital protest art as a matter of maximizing avenues for reaching people. That is not to say, however, that awareness of socio-political issues cannot be wrought irrespective of the Internet, as some respondents pointed out.

In activism kasi, we have to understand na maraming iba't ibang channels and avenues to do our political campaigns, to reach new people, noh. At depende talaga sa context on who you want to reach and what is appropriate for the situation. At dapat ginagamit lahat ng avenues, mina-maximize. *(Because in activism, we have to understand that there are many different channels and avenues to do our political campaigns, to reach new people. And it really depends on the context on who you want to reach and what is appropriate for the situation. And all avenues must be used and maximized.)* (Local Artist 1)

Karaniwan kong nasasaksihan ito [protest art] sa mga protesta sa lansangan, ngunit agad din itong naipapakalat sa social media. Nagiging daluyan ito [protest art] ng mensahe — sabay na presensya sa lansangan at online, kaya nagsisilbing dalawahang anyo ng protesta. *(I usually witness it [protest art] in street protests, but it is also immediately spread on social media. It [protest art] becomes a medium for the message — a simultaneous presence on the ground and online, thus serving as a dual form of protest.)* (Local Artist 5)

Yes, definitely. Most of my radicalization, while it did not happen on the Internet, it definitely was partly by being more socio-politically aware because of easy access to information. (Org Representative 1)

Filipinos today are extremely tied with social media and online relevancy, so digital activism is a natural progression of this I believe. Art and writing is difficult to put out in the real world for a multitude of reasons, so having the digital world be an option for the youth or anyone who wants to engage in advocacies could definitely strengthen the causes they support. (Audience 1)

The internet is a vast space of information, allowing people to communicate and interact with posts in an instant. As such, exposure to local and even global socio-political issues has become more accessible, allowing more people to enter the conversation and for them to become more aware of the issues around them. (Audience 9)

Although digital protest art has been deemed a good starting point for being informed, the respondents all shared similar insights on how it should always be part of something bigger. The act of simply sharing or creating protest art proves insufficient, as it can only lead to clicktivism and performativeness. Digital protest art should be an active component of a broader strategy within the interconnected framework and process of advocating for socio-political causes.

So art is a consideration like that – it has to be a part of something bigger. Of like a broader plan or strategy in whatever it is you're doing. People have this concern that it's performative or something. It's only performative if it's isolated and if it's the only thing you're doing with no follow-through, no build-up, it's not part of a bigger design [...] Awareness is part of that, of course, but we're always looking towards the ultimate goal of building political power. (Local Artist 1)

So it's a jumping pad and it's a contribution. But it has to be lockstep with every other tool in the toolbox. (Org Representative 1)

I think yes, malaking first step siya. Pero at the same time, kailangan siyang ikabit to a mas long term, mas engaged na process of communication...kumbaga hindi siya end-all-be-all na kapag nakita mo yung protest art na to, ah okay na. It influences na may behavior sa lahat. Kailangan siya parang step-by-step, proseso siya proseso. (*I think yes, it is a big first step. But at the same time, it needs to be connected to a long term, more engaged process of communication...basically, it isn't the end-all-be-all that when you see this protest art, that's enough. It influences one's behavior towards everything. It needs to be done step-by-step, like a process.*) (Org Representative 2)

I believe that digital activism serves as a medium for online conversations about socio-political advocacy groups, which can then translate to real world participation in the movement. The more these issues are discussed online, the more people are informed and talking. A lot will see the importance of these advocacy groups, opting to rally with their cause. (Audience 9)

The potential of digital protest art was further demonstrated as the study's participants shared their own lived experiences and observations on the benefits of social media platforms and shared digital protest art in relation to their behavior and actions towards socio-political advocacies and organizations.

I've seen more people be braver, at least, to voice out stuff because when they share it, the visuals will back them up instead of them having to make their own posts. You know, that feeling like oh, I'm alone. But if you share a post with art attached to it, that's such a strong way of communicating it, because you already have a visual attached.

And you don't even need to do much anymore. You just have to have the courage to add on to that. (Local Artist 2)

Sa panahon ng social media, ang isang imaheng matapang o mapagmuni ay maaaring makabukas ng diskusyon, magtulak ng pagkiling, o mag-udyok ng suporta sa isang adbokasiya. (*In the age of social media, a bold or thought-provoking image can open discussions, challenge prejudices, and inspire support for an advocacy.*)

(Local Artist 5)

They are definitely easier to access. While traditionally, protest art can be mostly observed on cartoon editorials in newspaper, comics, or other forms of print media, the Internet has provided a space for more artists to share their work to a larger and wider audience both locally and internationally. In turn, the use of the Internet and protest art has helped in making people more aware about relevant socio-political issues and spur people into action. (Audience 2)

It can deeply affect Filipinos' perception of socio-political issues. Seeing that Filipinos are one of the most active in social media, I believe protest art (especially visual) is effective in breaking down barriers of language and distance and can help inspire transformative change among the status quo. Consistent exposure to protest art can help dismantle the stigma against activism. (Audience 2)

(3) Processing Information On Or Outside The Internet

Assuming that audiences' interests have been piqued by digital protest art, the process of absorbing the message does not end with only glancing at or appreciating it. Respondents emphasized the importance of processing the gathered information beyond the initial online encounter, as while the Internet provides users easy access to information, it is crucial to engage in offline discussions and to pursue further research to confirm that one has fully understood the issues at hand. Information found on the Internet can be helpful, but it should still be used in conjunction with outside sources to supplement the information gathered and ensure proper processing.

Because it's just a first step, being informed, liking a post or seeing it, it's still important to process the information or art you consumed. So even though we're bombarded with or consume information every day, it's still important to process it outside the space of the Internet. So you have friends, you have groups, you have teachers, you have communities. You need to process the information you access on the Internet outside the Internet and talk about it in the most basic way — in person, face-to-face. (Org Representative 2)

Hindi ko dun nakukuha yung wisdom, kasi nakukuha ko yung wisdom or yung pag-intindi pa sa issue kapag nagbabanlaw ng mga nababasa online [...] Pero laging mas

ine-encourage namin na mag-usap pa din lagi. Kasi mas madaming perspective yung pwede mong marinig on ground tsaka face-to-face.” *(I don't get the wisdom from that, because I get the wisdom or the understanding about the issue when I process what I read online [...] But we always encourage conversations and discussions. Because you can hear more perspectives on the ground and face-to-face.)*

(Org Representative 4&5)

Utilizing the striking features of the artwork and the wide reach of the internet, people are exposed to important social topics which they might not see much of in traditional spaces. Aside from that, it also helps in structuring public discourse, allowing people to think critically and decide on what to support given the data presented to them.

(Audience 9)

Societal Implications of Sharing Digital Protest Art

The last theme, “Societal Implications of Sharing Digital Protest Art,” was established through these six main categories: “Ultimate Goal of Activists,” “Question and Disrupt the Status Quo,” “The Movement Finds A Way,” “Actualization of Experiences,” “Community Building,” and “Limitations of Digital Activism.” This theme analyzed the advantages and disadvantages of sharing digital protest art for activism, specifically its efficacy in shaping the behavior and outlook of young Filipino audiences towards socio-political advocacy groups and issues.

(1) Ultimate Goals of Activists

In consolidating respondents’ insights on what activists are ultimately trying to achieve, they shared protest artwork or events that moved them to act in support of causes, discussed why continuing to speak out is crucial, and presented organic socio-cultural movements they witnessed occur through online platforms.

The participants all provided differing reasons that ignited their motivation to become organized and support the causes they care about. However, all these events, works, and experiences share a common theme in that they made them feel so strongly and resonated with them to the point that they felt invested in the matters and were even moved to act in some cases.

My father is in the military. And he was in the military during the time that there was the EJK drug war. So it's a very personal fight for me, because the enemy is home. Because when my father gets angry, that's not just my father – that's a [military position]. So, I can't really pinpoint a specific event, political event outside of my home. But let's say personally, it was when they found out I was bi and then they reacted violently. That moves anyone to radicalization. (Org Representative 1)

So isa sa pinakatumatak talaga sa akin noon, kahit nung hindi pa ako super organized na activist or cultural worker, is yung tradisyon ng mga protest, ng mga national democratic protests, yung pagsunog ng effigy sa mga rally, ganyan [...] nakikita na ngayon yung paraan ng paggawa, tapos makikita mo yung dedication ng mga artists na matapos yung work. Tapos masusunog lang din, so hindi nila talaga magiging pag-aari yung work. Tapos kapag nandun na yung symbol na pagsunog, syempre nandun yung lakas ng imagery na nakikita na nagpupunyagi yung mamamayang lumalaban, ganyan. Tapos marami pang layers of meaning yun na parang, sa huli, yung ginawa nyo hindi na siya material na bagay. Talagang naging mensahe na siya. Parang naging abo na yung imahe ng isang diktador, imahe ng mga rehimen, ganyan, at napagsasamantala. So yun yung talagang nagmove sa akin or nag-inspire sa akin na gumawa ng mga protest art.

(So, one of the things that really impacted me the most back then, even when I wasn't a super organized activist or cultural worker, was the tradition of protests, of national democratic protests – the burning of effigies at rallies [...] nowadays, you can see the creation process, and you can see the dedication of the artists to finish the work. Then, it just ends up burned, so they don't really own the work. And when the symbol of burning it is there, of course there's the power of the imagery that shows the people fighting. And there are many more layers of meaning that it's like, in the end, what you did is no longer a material thing. It really has become a message. It's like the image of a dictator, the image of regimes, has turned to ashes and is being taken advantage of. So that's what really moved me or inspired me to make protest art.)

(Org Representative 3)

The zine community of the Philippines has been a long-time inspiration for me. If I had to pinpoint an exact creator of protest art, I'd most definitely say Mako Micro-press. Their zines resonated a lot with me, inspiring me to create my own zines. The subject material they usually tackle in their zines are sociopolitical issues in the Philippines such as the jeepney phaseout, Lumad students, ancestral lands, fascism and capitalism, and press freedom. All of these are causes I believe in and stand for, though I wasn't as well-informed in the past up until encountering their zines and being inspired to do further research [...] Artworks and poetry by Palestinians that I encounter on Bluesky and Substack also inspire me. In spite of their bleak situation, they still hold hope and continue to protest the genocide against them. (Audience 1)

As previously addressed, dealing with censorship is a reality that activists have faced far longer than the existence of the Internet. It is in maintaining solidarity with fellow activists against injustices with the hope and intention of bringing about societal reform that the act of activism is achieved. The study's respondents adhere to this belief strongly, and their insights shed light on how continuing to discuss and speak

out about topics is an act of protest in itself, which is only supported by other components, such as digital protest art, in the framework of organized activism, as it challenges and rejects the dominant narrative.

So, sa tingin ko lang kung gusto mong magkaroon ng pagbabago dun sa platform mo, gusto mong mas maraming taong nakikinig, maglabas ka lang ng maglabas at mag-effort ka dun sa nilalabas mo tsaka huwag kang susuko. *(So, I just think that if you want to make a difference on your platforms, if you want more people to listen, just keep putting effort into what you're releasing and never give up.)*

(Org Representative 3)

Tsaka ang maganda ay, nagf-foster siya ng pag-experiment as pagiging mas creative yung mga creatives now. Kasi kung alam nang sine-censor ka, talagang gagawa ka talaga ng paraan para kung gusto mo talaga. Mapipilitan kang, maf-force kang gumawa ng paraan para mas to put out things there. *(And the good thing is, it fosters experimentation and being creative in creatives now. Because if you know that you're being censored, you'll really find a way to do it if you really want to. You will be forced to make a way to put things out there.)*

(Org Representative 4&5)

Insistence on the main cause is ultimately what can be a catalyst for change because having a solid presence in spite of dissent or opposition shows that you're committed and have genuine conviction in a cause.

(Audience 1)

Social media platforms enable the dissemination of information and facilitate communication between people across great distances. These features afforded by the use of online platforms have often resulted in bringing about and supporting organic movements that would have faced trouble gaining traction through traditional means. Through the respondents' own encounters with organic movements, the capabilities of digital protest art in fostering solidarity and driving change are highlighted.

Oo. Ilan sa mga kilusang nakita kong umusbong nang kusa sa social media ay ang Laban Gabriela, #SaveLumadSchools, at #JunkTerrorLaw. Mula sa simpleng mga post at artworks, naging daan ito sa mas malawak na talakayan, pagkilos, at aktwal na pagkakaisa na hindi direktang pinamunuan, kundi inianak ng sama-samang damdamin ng mga tao. *(Yes. Some of the movements that I witnessed organically appear on social media are Laban Gabriela, #SaveLumadSchools, and #JunkTerrorLaw. From simple posts and artworks, it led to broader discussions, actions, and actual solidarity that was not directly led, but was born of the collective sentiments of the people.)*

(Local Artist 5)

Siguro sa nitong mga nakaraang mga taon, yung pinakamagandang halimbawa siguro niyan ay yung Tumindig ni Tarantadong Kalbo. Na parang nagsimula lang talaga siya. Na tingin ko nakita yun nang lahat na as in parang sa loob ng maikling panahon, ng ilang buwan. Ang laki ng inabot niya na yung mga tao organically lang na pumapasok sila sa trend. Tapos ang taas ng engagement niya, layo ng inabot niya. Kahit yung target audience niya, lumalabas sa intended target audience niya sa sobrang layo ng inabot niya na kahit literal mga militar ginagamit siya.” *(In recent years, the best example of that is probably Tumindig by Tarantadong Kalbo. That felt like it really just started. I think everyone saw that in a short period of time, in the span of a few months. It reached so far that people were just organically joining the trend. And the engagement was so high, that it reached so far. It even went beyond his intended target audience that even military people made use of it.)* (Org Representative 6)

Artists for Palestine is one that I frequently encounter and have seen develop into their own niches; one of my major fandoms, Fear and Hunger, has its own dedicated social movement for Palestine called Fungor Gacha for Gaza and is still an on-going niche movement. I've also seen the ACAB movement, which initially began in the USA, develop further in the Philippines and other nations as police brutality became a point of contention. There's also a recent movement that I've learned about called Protect the Dolls, which intends to support transgender women. (Audience 1)

One notable movement I remember is the #BabaeAko movement in 2018. It was to combat the misogynistic remarks from PRRD. It started with a social media campaign that eventually evolved into live protests echoing equal rights for women. (Audience 9)

These motivations and objectives offered by the respondents only emphasize that strong emotional resonance inspires action and fosters solidarity. Digital protest art is simply another tool in the pursuit of achieving these goals.

(2) Question and Disrupt the Status Quo

In actively choosing to protest something, one is questioning and disrupting the status quo – the very system and cultural hegemony that perpetuates people’s lives – by challenging dominant narratives and promoting alternative perspectives. Thus, the act of creating and sharing digital protest art is inherently a form of resistance and solidarity with the oppressed and marginalized, as it seeks to question and disrupt the prevailing systems that perpetuate corruption and injustice. The respondents similarly expressed such sentiments as they discussed the subsequent benefits of sharing digital protest art in mobilizing and presenting the complete picture of an issue.

They saw that they cannot control what goes on in TikTok, and TikTok became an avenue for alternative news, for people to share different perspectives rather than what was being shown on mainstream media that's also controlled by the ruling class of the US. That's why the ruling class of the US panicked – they needed to either shut it down or take control of it. (Local Artist 1)

Dapat ilantad ng mga lokal na artist at advocacy groups hindi lamang ang bunga ng pang-aapi kundi ang mga estruktura't mekanismo na nagpapanatili nito, mula sa lupaing inagaw hanggang sa katahimikang ipinapataw. Hindi sapat ang pagkukuwento ng pasakit; kailangang iguhit ang ugat, ang galit, at ang pag-asa. Sa pamamagitan ng sining, maaring basagin ang pagiging "normal" ng pang-aapi at maitanim ang kamalayang hindi lang nakikiramay, kundi handang kumilos. Ang sining ay dapat hindi lang sumasalamin, kundi tumataga ng daan para sa pagbabago. (*Local artists and advocacy groups must expose not only the consequences of oppression but also the structures and mechanisms that sustain it, from stolen lands to imposed silences (censorship). It is not enough to tell the story of pain; we must draw the roots, the anger, and the hope. Through art, we can break the "normality" of oppression and instill a consciousness that is not only sympathetic, but ready to act. Art must not only reflect, but pave the way for change.*) (Local Artist 5)

[H]indi dapat lahat ng uri ng sining ay parang "yes, yes, ang ganda," parang ganun. Kailangan nangangahas siya na mang kwestiyon ng iba't ibang naghaharing ideya, o kaya kaugalian, kultura. (*Not all forms of art should be like "yes, yes, it's beautiful." It should dare to question the different prevailing ideas, customs, cultures.*) (Org Representative 3)

[W]e are trying to dismantle the dominant narratives and push for our desired narratives [...] So, we present better narratives and stories that translate to action to people. Because that's the power of narratives and storytelling. (Org Representative 4&5)

It [protest art] bends the norms of many that simply stand by and watch as the world progresses. I think it's important we break that "bystander" culture and take an effective stance against or with something. (Audience 6)

(3) The Movement Finds A Way

Whether in offline or online settings, there will always be roadblocks that arise when fighting for societal change. Activists and creatives, however, are not deterred by such issues and continue to persist and put forward their best efforts in conveying their message using whatever means necessary. Respondents have found that treating these roadblocks as challenges, rather than insurmountable barriers, proves effective in planning their approach to sharing their advocacies and accomplishing their goals.

I think despite oppression, the movement finds a way. The movement makes a way to make itself visible, to make people aware that they are still around, that these calls are still active. (Org Representative 1)

Kaya nga may performance art eh. Kasi sa huli, pag wala ka nang lapis, papel, wala ka nang boses, pwede ka na lang mag-pose, sumayaw. Kung ano man, gumalaw, kumilos. So sa huli, laging may paraan kung gusto mo. *(That's why performance art exists. Because in the end, when you don't have a pencil, paper, or voice, you can just pose, dance. Whatever, move, act. So in the end, there is always a way if you want it.)* (Org Representative 3)

Kasi prior to that, ang political cartoonist ay nasa dyaryo. Pero now, hindi na masyadong nagbabasa ng dyaryo ang mga tao. So, nakahanap din ng way o ng paraan yung mga illustrators, political cartoonists, tsaka comic artists para mailapit sa tao yung art. *(Because prior to that, the political cartoonists were in the newspapers. But now, people don't read newspapers that much anymore. So, illustrators, political cartoonists, and comic artists have also found a way or means to bring art closer to the people.)* (Org Representative 4&5)

In paving the way for movements to reach people, the necessity of the interconnectedness of protests and cultural aspects is only further evidenced by the respondents' insights as they discuss how every act of protest is and should be accompanied and supported by a cultural output or artwork.

Sa parehong espasyo [online and offline], nagsisilbi ang sining bilang daluyan ng mensahe at damdamin ng mamamayan. *(In both online and offline spaces, art serves as a medium for the message and sentiments of the people.)* (Local Artist 5)

[T]initignan natin na lahat ng protest ay may kaakibat na cultural output or art... walang protest na dapat hindi creative or hindi art. *(We see that all protests have an accompanying cultural output or art...no protest should ever be deprived of creativity nor art.)* (Org Representative 3)

[S]imula pa lang, noong nagkaroon nung unang Mayo Uno nung 1980, nandyan na yung Tambisan sa Sining para kumanta, mag-paint ng mga mural sa protest... gamitin yung sining para maghikayat pa ng mga manggagawa sa magagandang movement. Parang ganun makikita na may ganun din palang role yung artist. *(From the very beginning, when the first Labor Day took place in 1980, Tambisan sa Sining was there to sing and paint murals at the protest...and use art to encourage workers to participate in good movements. It's in that way that one realizes that the artist also holds that role.)* (Org Representative 3)

Trojan horse siya for us sa DAKILA na itatago mo yung issue. Make it palatable. And then eventually, people will just understand or realize like, ah, okay, yun pala yung meaning niya. Or yun pala yung gusto niyang sabihin. Pero nakuha mo na yung audience. *(It's a Trojan horse for us at DAKILA to hide the issue. Make it palatable. And then eventually, people will just understand or realize like, ah okay, that was its meaning. Or that's what the art meant to say. But you've already hooked the audience.)* (Org Representative 4&5)

I would even argue that it is a person's first exposure to activism. Songs, zines, and even graffiti are one of the most accessible and common forms of protest art that is accessible to everyone. (Audience 2)

Art isn't just about the expression of feelings and emotions; there is a reason why art is considered political. Art is a tool that can be used for change as it can spark the low-lying feelings deep within a person's soul as they hear what is needed to be said. Society can never move forward without change, and change comes from the fact that there are problems needed to be fixed. Take all the Free Palestine artworks surfacing on social media. (Audience 6)

Through the innovation and creative efforts of socio-political advocacy groups and creatives, digital protest art can effectively represent issues in a manner that guides audiences toward the truth and changes their perspective and outlook on advocacy groups and campaigns.

This has personally happened to me, so I'm inclined to believe that this is indeed the case; I was previously an avid supporter of Rodrigo Duterte during the 2016 elections, though seeing protest art and the engagements surrounding them were able to help me reframe my beliefs. (Audience 1)

Art can really reshape or reframe the issue into something else na kaya niyang makakuha ng mga mag-uusap pa or mga mag-a-advocate para doon. Through creativity. Kaya mahalaga yung art sa pagmo-mobilize and organize. *(Art can really reshape or reframe the issue into something else that can get people talking and advocating for it. Through creativity. That's why art is important for mobilizing and organizing.)* (Org Representative 4&5)

So, naf-feed kasi yung action ng isang tao depende sa kung ano yung paniniwalaan niya. At naniniwala lang siya sa mga bagay kung sino ang nagsabi, paano sinabi sa kanya, at kung ilang beses niya narinig yung storya na iyon...mas lalalim yung pagbabago sa pag-kilos niya kung madalas niya ito makikita, may mga paulit-ulit na nagsasabi sa kanya at nai-imagine or naiintindihan niya siya sa iba't-ibang lente ng pag-unawa. *(So, a person's actions are influenced by what they believe. And they only believe things based on who told them, how they were told, and how many times they heard the story... their actions will only be changed if they see it often, if they have people telling them again and again, and if they imagine or understand it through different lenses of understanding.)* (Org Representative 4&5)

It shapes the public sphere by being integrated into the narrative/conversations of the masses. (Audience 2)

It makes the audience aware of problems. Awareness allows the audience to gain empathy and this may spark a light for change. (Audience 7)

Protest art, particularly digital protest artworks, proves instrumental in creatively bypassing the typical censorship imposed by algorithms and the system itself. Through innovative means, digital protest art can serve as a loophole that allows advocacy groups to reach their target audiences.

I don't think there's a safer way to do it than just showing instead of telling. If that makes sense. So, I think protest art is a pretty strong resistance to censorship. Because, I mean, you can't stop people from drawing necessarily. It will still happen.

(Local Artist 2)

Ang digital protest art ay naging taktikal na anyo ng paglaban. Ito'y nagiging lihim na panawagan, pahapyaw na sigaw, o tahasang pagtutol sa loob ng espasyong kontrolado ng kapangyarihan. Sa panahong sinisikil ang pananalita, ang sining ay nagiging tagapagdala ng tinig ng masa, sa paraang hindi agad nasasakal. (*Digital protest art has become a tactical form of resistance. It has become a secret call, a general cry, or an outright protest within a space controlled by those in power. In a time when speech is suppressed, art becomes a carrier of the voice of the masses, in a way that is not immediately stifled.*)

(Local Artist 5)

On the part of creators, it's also safer to do so since encryption and protective measures are easier to employ online. Concerns such as red tagging in the Philippines is difficult and a scary reality, so having the option to remain relatively anonymous online is an option that's definitely beneficial and viable.

(Audience 1)

Online spaces disseminate information and build trends faster than the traditional way. It is a great tool for people to learn how to speak up without the fear of physical violence and to know more about the diverse cultures out there (and even immerse themselves in it).

(Audience 5)

In acknowledging the challenges faced by activists, such as censorship, the study highlights the movement's resilience and adaptability in finding creative ways to overcome obstacles and reach its audiences. Mirroring Edwards and Gilham's Resource Mobilization Theory, these respondent insights corroborate the belief that the experiences and perspectives of marginalized groups brought to light by digital protest art can push people to overcome even seemingly insurmountable obstacles. By utilizing social media as a link to bridge the gaps between organized activists and the audience, these shared sentiments and goals for societal change can be supported by empathetic audiences who may eventually join in as well.

(4) Actualization of Experiences

Art possesses the unique ability of allowing people to share and actualize their experiences, which were once feelings, into art forms. These art forms, in the form of digital protest art, then assume numerous roles when used in conjunction with the promotion and dissemination of socio-political advocacies online. In analyzing respondents' insights, digital protest art represents issues in a concise manner through the application of visual communication, embodies the identity of a movement, and documents and archives significant moments in time simply through its creation.

But I think that art gives me an avenue not only to release these feelings, but to strengthen myself. Because they're not just feelings anymore. They're art.

(Org Representative 1)

Gusto namin isipin lahat may talent. Dapat lahat nakakapag-express, nakakapagsabi, nakakapag— na-utilize nila yung art na gusto nilang i-express sa mundo para, alam mo yun, mas diverse, mas malawak. *(We want to think that everyone has talent. Everyone should be able to express, to say, to— they should utilize art that they want to express to the world so that it becomes more diverse, more expansive.)*

(Org Representative 2)

When planned for and produced properly, digital protest artworks assist and influence audiences into gaining an understanding and interest in issues that may have been deemed complicated, inaccurately represented, or overlooked.

Sa pamamagitan nito [protest art], mas naipapakita nang biswal at masining ang mga panawagan, saloobin, at hinaing ng masa. Nagiging midyum ito ng pagkakaisa, minsa'mas tumatagos kaysa sa teksto lamang. *(Through protest art, the calls, thoughts, and grievances of the masses are more visually and artistically expressed. It becomes a medium of solidarity, sometimes more impactful than text alone.)*

(Local Artist 5)

Art and writing tends to resonate with people because of how its presented (free screenings, enticing marketing) or because it derives from well-known concepts (i.e. Balota, Heneral Luna and the series of movies that follow it). Art can also be taught or tutored, which adds to the social element.

(Audience 1)

It's especially useful in bringing awareness to the larger masses (specifically the younger generation) who might find themselves disinterested in reading news articles.

(Audience 2)

Since these are in a form where it is easily digestible to the viewer (e.g. comics, art, songs), protest art such as these enable one's interest to view it at a glance. This might be because nowadays the attention span of people is significantly lower so they would most likely pay attention to artworks than a block of text. (Audience 7)

Digital protest artworks and their use of visual symbols sustain movements by shaping how revolutions are fought and depicted, while also combating repressive censorship by evading the algorithmic biases of social media platforms. It takes advantage of how people often create connections with symbols, and it is the hope of creatives that they successfully convey their intended message to the audience by just seeing it. Relying on the intrinsic simplicity and adaptability of visual symbols, such as a raised fist or a watermelon, people can relate to and feel that they can be part of uniting in solidarity against tyranny.

[A]ng Tumindig ni Tarantadong Kalbo ay may malakas na naging epekto sa akin. Malinaw ang paninindigan ng Tumindig, at sa simpleng imahen ay naipahayag ang panawagan para sa pagkilos at pakikiisa. Ito'y naging simbolo ng paninindigan para sa tama noong eleksyon 2022, at naging inspirasyon sa maraming artist na makiisa sa pampulitikang diskurso. Hanggang ngayon, daladala pa rin ng imahe ang mensaheng hindi tayo dapat manahimik. (*Tumindig by Tarantadong Kalbo had a strong impact on me. The stance of Tumindig is clear, and just through a simple image, it expressed a call for action and solidarity. It became a symbol of standing up for what is right during the 2022 elections, and inspired many artists to join and participate in political discourse. To this day, the image still carries the message that we should not remain silent.*) (Local Artist 5)

I mean the fact that Palestinian people have found a way with the watermelon. Because [...] they're forbidden to wave the flag, right? In occupied Palestine. So, they made a way to represent [their flag] [...] as a watermelon. (Org Representative 4&5)

It [protest art] introduces symbols, slogans, and ideas that are curated to be distributed quickly. (Audience 2)

I perceive it as highly beneficial in garnering support and spreading awareness about a particular issue. Art has the power to transcend different boundaries. Art is a language in itself that can be understood by many people from different backgrounds. (Audience 2)

It can give a movement a visual identity protesters identify with, for example, pride with all the colored flags. (Audience 10)

Art has long been used to memorialize significant historical and cultural events. By simply creating and sharing digital protest artworks, this practice of archiving and documentation remains true and alive, as keeping records is a sure way to help dismantle misinformation and historical revisionism, which are notably growing more prevalent nowadays.

And ang dami rin firsthand information na available ngayon. Like for example, alongside yung news na nanggaling sa outlets, yung social media posts and updates ng let's say yung mga nakatira sa Gaza ngayon, I feel like since firsthand yung information na nakukuha natin, it gives us like a deeper or more personal understanding sa political events kumpara sa yung nababasa mo lang or na-air on TV. *(And there is a lot of firsthand information available now. Like for example, alongside the news that comes from outlets, the social media posts and updates of those living in Gaza today, I feel like since the information we get is firsthand, it gives us a deeper or more personal understanding of political events compared to what is read or aired on TV.)* (Local Artist 4)

So, unang-una, nandyan yung record, digital record. Kahit walang audience, I think yan yung unang merits — archived yung information. Recorded history. *(So, first of all, there's the record, the digital record. Even if there's no audience, I think that's the first merit — the information is archived. Recorded history.)* (Org Representative 3)

Parang ancestors nun, yung dati, yung mosquito press. [...] yung sa Martial Law, ganyan, pinagbawal yung balita. May maraming nag-self-publish. So happy naman na parang makikita mo din yung evolution ng forms of art. *(It's like the ancestors, in the past, the mosquito press. [...] during Martial Law, news was banned. So there were many who self-published. So, I'm happy that you can also see the evolution of forms of art.)* (Org Representative 3)

Artworks and poetry by Palestinians that I encounter on Bluesky and Substack also inspire me. In spite of their bleak situation, they still hold hope and continue to protest the genocide against them. (Audience 1)

Gerbner's Cultivation Theory posits that over time, the deliberate messages presented by various forms of media will eventually be absorbed as a shared understanding of social reality and worldview among its audiences. Through the continuous application of digital protest art in establishing connections between visual symbols and socio-political advocacies, audience's exposure to various forms of media can serve to shape their perceptions and actions towards these socio-political advocacies and the organizations that seek to bring about reform in these sectors.

(5) Community Building

As previously discussed, joining and participating in socio-political advocacy groups is a key goal of promoting advocacies through digital protest art in online spaces. Social media platforms offer users an essence of interactivity and an added matrix in the audience's involvement with news and discourse. Audiences are made to feel more involved due to the interactive nature of social media, which incentivizes people to comment on matters. In analyzing the participants' insights, the collaborative aspect of creating and sharing art also inadvertently results in the creation of communities, community support, and solidarity.

Kasi again, we try to locate ourselves sa isa nang ecosystem of advocates, activists, and communicators, na we trust in other groups, other collectives, other networks na they're doing their job posting, communicating an issue, or making a protest art. So mas pag-aambag lang doon sa ganung proseso. *(Because again, we try to locate ourselves in an ecosystem of advocates, activists, and communicators, that we trust in other groups, other collectives, other networks that they're doing their job posting, communicating an issue, or making protest art. So just contributing more to that process.)* (Org Representative 2)

Collaboration with each other, among CSOs, among progressive groups, among artists. Kaya yung sinasabi ni [Org Representative 5] kanina na collective. Ang ginagawa ng DAKILA, dahil we always seek for collaboration. At kung yung collaboration na yun ang makakapag-engage sa mga tao, then so be it. Gagawa natin siya...Tapos lahat ng medium ay ka-collaborate. Iba't ibang may photography, may writers, etc. So collaboration, parang through art and collaboration, doon lumalabas yung engagement din ng mga tao. *(Collaboration with each other, among CSOs, among progressive groups, among artists. That's why [Org Representative 5] said earlier that it's collective. What DAKILA is doing is because we always seek for collaboration. And if that collaboration is what engages people, then so be it. We'll do it... And all the mediums will collaborate. There's different types like photography, writers, etc. So collaboration, through art and collaboration, that's where people's engagement also comes out.)* (Org Representative 4&5)

With the rise of the internet and social media as a news source, I found myself caring more about news stories since there are more ways to interact with news stories, their authors/reporters, and other readers. This interactivity helps me form a more personal—but still informed—opinion and ultimately become more empathetic since it makes me feel involved in the discourse. (Audience 1)

Oftentimes, protest artists also start to build their own community and use this community as the breeding grounds for activism. It helps in building solidarity among its members and also empower other individuals to act. (Audience 2)

Sharing art online also builds a sense of community, making people feel they're part of a bigger cause. It's a powerful way to get people involved. (Audience 4)

Yes, online protest art can totally spark action. When people engage with it, they feel more connected to a cause, which can lead to real-life action—like joining protests, donating, or spreading the word. It's a great way to turn digital engagement into collective action. (Audience 4)

In connection with keeping records of significant historical events, protest art forms have also been passed through generations, especially with legacy organizations that date back before the advent of the Internet. This generational legacy keeps the mission of these organizations alive and prominent, despite the inevitable passage of time and potential changes in processes and approaches. Digital protest art and technological advancements can extend and ensure the longevity of these multi-generational art forms, as these records would prove valuable in tracing the rich cultural history and past endeavors of socio-political advocacy groups.

Merong mga flyers, usually ganun yung mga nakita kong mga campaign materials ng Tungtongan ti Umili at ng Cordillera People's Alliance during the 70s, the 80s, ganun. Mas ganun siya. Tapos yung mga streamers na ginagamit sa mga events, hindi lang naman sometimes, hindi lang sila words. Meron silang mga visual elements or mga full-blown na mga illustrations na parang mural. So yun yung mga ways na ginagamit para i-promote yung mga advocacies, even before nagka-boom ng internet. *(There were flyers, usually that's the kind of campaign materials that I saw from Tungtongan ti Umili and the Cordillera People's Alliance during the 70s, the 80s. It's more like that. Then the streamers that are used in events, not just sometimes, they're not just words. They have visual elements or full-blown illustrations that look like murals. So, those are the ways that are used to promote advocacies, even before the Internet boom.)* (Local Artist 3)

And that's why it's also important when you go to mobilizations that, of course, there are chants, there are callbacks, but there are also songs – Ang Uring Manggagawa (The Working Class), Ang Kabataan (The Youth). And these songs have been passed down from generation to generation to generation across the movement. So it keeps people united and it definitely gives the movement a sense of identity. (Org Representative 3)

Respondents found that even in the simple act of sharing digital protest artworks depicting issues or accompanying statements, users were rewarded with a feeling of accomplishment that they were doing their part. When audiences are unable

to financially or physically support initiatives and mobilizations, they can contribute even minutely to the cause by helping disseminate information regarding advocacies and the organizations that seek reform.

We actually got a lot of signatures in SPARK for an open letter campaign because of the very appealing pubmat (publication material) that showed, it was specifically about Mayor Joy partnering with Israel for certain civilian negotiations. Without protest art and without people sharing this to their Instagram stories, we wouldn't have been able to reach around a thousand respondents. (Org Representative 1)

Again, beneficial siya kasi madali siyang gawin, convenient, magpo-post ka lang. Two, kapag donation drives, donation channels, talagang makakatulong siya. And I think three... mahalagang, I mean for us, mahalagang tingnan na yung bawat post ay mga seeds, parang mga binhi, na you just scatter it anywhere, tapos may tutubo, okay, good, kapitan natin yun, alagaan natin yun. Kapag wala, okay lang din, we did our part. So yes, mas ganun, sana siyang tingnan din ng iba. *(Again, it's beneficial because it's easy to do, convenient, you just have to post. Two, when it comes to donation drives, donation channels, it can really help. And I think three...it's important, I mean for us, it's important to see that every post is like seeds that you just scatter anywhere, then some will grow, okay, good, we hold onto that, we take care of that. If it doesn't [grow], it's alright, we did our part. So yes, I hope others will look at it in that way too.)* (Org Representative 2)

We may not be able to support financially enough but, the support in raising your voice through art and extending the reach of any advocacy, especially to the right people who can act on it, is enough. (Audience 5)

Respondents then found that upon doing one's part, it only felt natural to start discussions in relation to these posts with peers and close relationships, both online and offline. This act goes hand-in-hand with processing information beyond the Internet, and only serves to deepen one's understanding of the subject matter that was introduced or better explained through digital protest art forms. It is through this awareness that understanding and inspiration are brought forth that can alter one's worldviews and perspectives.

So I think mas gusto namin i-utilize na conversation starter yung mga gawa namin. Since naglalalatag din kami sa mga art events, sa mga markets, gusto namin isipin na yung mga stickers namin ay conversation starters. Or mga zines namin, pag nagbasa sila ng zine, ine-explain namin yung context, yung laman ng zine, or yung sticker na ito, ito yung context niya, ito yung isyung ina-ano. So mas gano'n, yung pagpapalawig ng conversation, pag-ignite ng conversation, na gusto naming isipin na ano man yung

espasyong nilalagan namin ay site of resistance siya. *(So I think we want to utilize our work more as a conversation starter. Since we also table at art events, at markets, we want to think that our stickers are conversation starters. Or our zines, when people read the zine, we explain the context, the content of the zine, or this sticker, this is its context, this is the issue it's addressing. So it's more like that, extending the conversation, igniting the conversation, we want to think that whatever space we occupy is a site of resistance.)* (Org Representative 2)

So ang benefit niya ay it sparks conversation, yung sharing. Na shinare ko to, tapos may magko-comment and then discuss, discuss. Diba? So I think yun yung general na pwedeng maging benefit ng pag-share ng protest art online is you spark a conversation. *(So the benefit of sharing is it sparks conversation. I shared this, then someone commented and then we discussed. Right? So I think that's the general benefit of sharing protest art online is that you spark a conversation.)* (Org Representative 4&5)

[B]atay din sa karanasan ng mga cultural org na nakatrabaho namin, na nakasalamuha namin, na talagang yung engagement sa kahit anong anyo ng protest art sa net, madalas doon nag-uumpisa yung maraming bagay. *(Also based on the experience of the cultural organizations we've worked with, that we've encountered, is that engagement with any form of protest art on the Internet is often where a lot of things start.)* (Org Representative 6)

Nevertheless, it keeps people talking, helping these issues stay alive and relevant so that they can be addressed. (Audience 9)

Assuming that awareness was gained and conversations were held, most respondents acknowledged and discussed the need for actual, productive steps to be taken beyond digital activism in order to fully support the cause. It is only through productive community engagement and collective action that the impacts of digital activism through the sharing of digital protest art can be observed.

[S]yempre yung pinaka mahirap na next step is yung paggawa ng action talaga. But napapansin ko naman personally, in small ways, tulad ng pag boycott ng brands or pag donate ng small amounts or kung sino iboboto mo, yun yung nakikita ko na nangyayari talaga. *(Of course, the hardest next step is actually taking action. But I personally observe, in small ways, like boycotting brands or donating small amounts or who you vote for, that's what I see happening.)* (Local Artist 4)

Oo, naniniwala akong may kakayahan ang digital protest art na humantong sa aktwal na pakikilahok at kolektibong pagkilos tulad ko kung saan ako nagsimula. Kapag may emosyonal na koneksyon ang isang tao sa sining, lalo na kung ito ay tumatalima sa kanyang karanasan o paninindigan, mas nagiging bukas siya sa mas malalim na pag-unawa. Sa mga nakita kong kilos, marami ang nagsimula lamang sa pag-share ng artwork, at kalaunan ay lumahok na sa mga pagtitipon, diskurso, o organisasyon. Ang sining, kung gayon, ay hindi lang biswal, isa rin itong panimulang hakbang tungo sa sama-samang pagbabago. *(Yes, I believe that digital protest art has the potential to*

lead to actual participation and collective action like I did when I started. When a person has an emotional connection to art, especially if it aligns with their experience or beliefs, they are more open to gaining a deeper understanding. In the movements I have seen, many started simply by sharing artworks, and eventually participated in gatherings, discourses, or organizations. Art, then, is not just visual, it is also a starting point towards collective change.) (Local Artist 5)

Before deleting my Twitter account, I frequently reposted art by Palestinians or art made for Palestinians and noticed that artists began to create commissions though the funds would instead be donated to Care for Gaza or for buying eSims for Palestinians. I found myself inspired by this cause and ended up doing something similar, donating a percentage of my own art sales to Care for Gaza. I still continue to do this in the present day, though I have also been looking into donating to other causes.

(Audience 1)

The inherent collaborative nature of art creation fosters community and solidarity among advocates and audiences. Online platforms facilitate these intersections and engagements, as they enable individuals to connect with like-minded people and participate in collective action, particularly as digital protest art seeks to build a shared purpose. This collective action is carried out by (1) gaining awareness and doing one's part by sharing, (2) starting discussions about the information they gathered and processing this information with peers and outside sources, and (3) by actually taking action outside of digital activism to support the cause entirely.

These gathered insights from respondents corroborate the idea put forward by the Resource Mobilization Theory, which posits that the development of Internet-based communication technologies enables a more efficient means of collective action processes and information dissemination, without the added burden of social and financial barriers that previously limited similar attempts at forming mobilizations traditionally.

(6) Limitations of Digital Activism

Throughout the data collection process, without any prompting, respondents were able to identify various factors that could significantly affect the efficacy of sharing digital protest art online in shaping audiences' perceptions and actions towards socio-political advocacy groups. These contributions shed light on how limited this avenue of activism is if it is not properly integrated into a larger framework that seeks to maximize all available avenues for disseminating and promoting socio-political advocacies and organizations.

I think double-edged sword siya [protest art]. Kasi on one hand, mas malawak yung reach na makukuha mo, pero hindi yun automatic kasi syempre may mga echo chambers tayo [...] On the other hand, nakita ko na medyo nagiging complacent din yung mga tao 'pag puro online lang. They think na just because nag share sila ng protest art or kung anong political kind of post na eme, mga charity or whatever, tingin nila activist na rin sila – which is not the case [...] You can't just do it on your own, you definitely just can't do it online, so parang nag b-build siya ng sense of complacency na it's just okay or it's enough to be sa level ng online sphere nang wala kang experience on the ground. *(I think protest art is a double-edged sword. Because on one hand, the reach you get is wider, but it's not automatic because we have echo chambers [...] On the other hand, I've seen people become a bit complacent when it's just online. They think that just because they share protest art or some political kind of post, like, charities or whatever, they think they're activists too – which is not the case [...] You can't just do it on your own, you definitely just can't do it online, so it seems like it's building a sense of complacency that it's just okay or it's enough to be at the level of the online sphere when you don't have actual experience on the ground.)*

(Local Artist 1)

Because on one hand, it is effective. It's eye-catching, it's appealing. Everyone likes to look at it. On the other hand, I'm worried that for people that aren't organized or aren't already in political orgs, they will think that sharing, liking, and harping on is enough. Or that it's enough to watch and to share it. Or it's enough to create art and to share it. And while I think it's good that people are engaged politically in this way, I think that shouldn't be the end of it. Because one person can only do so much. It's really collective action and collective power that can push a movement forward.

(Org Representative 1)

[H]indi siya yung tanging tool na available. Nandyan pa rin naman yung mga ibang forms ng protest art, labas ng digital, na pwedeng gamitin in conjunction para mas maging effective sa kabila ng, syempre, lahat naman ng uri ng pagpapahayag ay maaari mong asahan na magkakaroon at magkakaroon talaga ng suppression. *(It's not the only tool available. There are still other forms of protest art, outside of digital, that can be used in conjunction to be more effective despite, of course, all forms of expression you can expect to have suppression.)*

(Org Representative 6)

Some respondents were quick to point out that despite the increasing reliance on the Internet after the COVID-19 pandemic, Internet accessibility is still not guaranteed nor present in all regions of the country, particularly in rural areas. This observation suggests that efforts to reach audiences from rural regions should explore alternative avenues, rather than relying solely on digital activism, in order to engage with previously untapped audiences. Furthermore, it is worth considering holding initiatives and mobilizations in and extending them to remote locations, especially when these populations are the ones affected or marginalized, to ensure that overlooked, region-specific issues can also be highlighted and addressed correctly.

[P]arang mas sa urban siguro or bilang peti b (petit bourgeois), ganon, kaya sometimes sa internet talaga yung main source ng information. Pero parang siguro yung experience ko na pag sa mas rural or from the regions, usually hindi pa rin internet yung pinaka-main [source of information], like talagang radio pa rin, ganon, TV. *(It seems more of an urban or a petit bourgeois perspective, that the Internet is the main source of information. But in my experience, when it's more rural or from the regions, usually the Internet is still not the main source of information, it's still the radio or TV.)*
(Local Artist 3)

Pero I guess mahalaga pa rin i-contextualize na sinasama namin ito sa presentations naming, na halos half pa rin, according sa social weather station, halos half pa lang rin ang Filipinos na may regular and stable internet access. And yung half na yun, majority nun ay taga-NCR pa. So, meron pa rin talagang digital divide na nangyayari. And yun yung kailangan laging i-remind sa mga internet users, online artists, online activists na nagpo-post online na meron at meron pa rin gaps at digital divide at hindi na n-visibility sa internet... *(I guess it's still important to contextualize, and we include this in our presentations, that almost half still, according to the social weather station, only about half of Filipinos have regular and stable internet access. And that half, the majority of them are still from the NCR. So, there is still a digital divide that is happening. And that's what we need to always remind internet users, online artists, online activists who post online that there are still gaps and the digital divide that are not visible on the internet.)*
(Org Representative 2)

Given that social media platforms are privatized and capitalistic in nature, these online spaces cater to the interests of those who fund them. Thus, algorithms are often arbitrary to fit the agendas being perpetuated by those who hold power over them. Furthermore, navigating social media platforms proves finicky given the nature of most

social media platforms to cater to the interests of the user, or “the self-curation of feeds,” which can lead to echo chambers that prevent posts from showing up on untapped audiences’ feeds.

[H]indi rin kasi fair. I feel like you do need a certain amount of, you know, moderation. Kasi nga, dahil sa hate speech. But also, kung pag-uusapan is yung censorship or like pag-adjust ng algorithms to serve a more far-right agenda, ang hirap maglabas ng information. Meaning, mas mahirap mag-organize ng tao outside of Twitter or social media in general. *(It's not fair either. I feel like you do need a certain amount of, you know, moderation. Because of hate speech. But also, when you're talking about censorship or adjusting algorithms to serve a more far-right agenda, it's hard to get information out. Meaning, it's harder to organize people outside of Twitter or social media in general.)* (Local Artist 4)

I was formerly critical of digital activism, seeing it as a "lesser" form of protest compared to the EDSA People Power Revolution or other mass mobilizations in our history though I've come to realize that we have entered the digital era and the sociopolitical stakes, risks, and implications are far different from the past. (Audience 1)

It's a business and some agendas pay more. It's up to the user to follow reliable news outlets and filter biased reports (from both the left and the right). (Audience 10)

Expanding on these considerations, respondents pointed out other factors such as subject matter virality affecting the engagement of digital protest art posts, the possible misconceptions people hold regarding activism and activists, the end of the pandemic leading to lesser engagement as things go back to normal, and that the measurement of impact should not be overly reliant on analytics.

[W]hat's hot on social media really helps, what's trending. Even though we try to attack every issue under the sun because it's important. But since we're posting on social media, social media trends will benefit us more technically in terms of the algorithm. (Local Artist 2)

Yeah, I think may epekto rin talaga yung nature of posting. Kunyari kapag bagyo, tapos kapag may mga posts kami about typhoons and climate crisis during bagyo. Marami rin talagang nagla-like. And I guess aspect din nun ay dahil lahat naman nasa loob ng bahay, especially may maayos na internet access. Wala silang magawa kundi mag-share ng donation channels, ng balita kung gaano kataas na yung baha. So may element of physicality pa rin talaga sa digital na mundo. Tapos types of posts. I guess nakakaapekto rin talaga yung virality, of course. Kung gaano kainit yung balita. *(Yeah, I think the nature of posting also has an effect. For example, during typhoons, we have posts about typhoons and the climate crisis during typhoons. That garners a lot of likes. And I guess an aspect of that is because everyone is indoors, especially with those*

that have stable Internet access. They have nothing to do but share donation channels, news about how high the flood is. So there is still an element of physicality in the digital world. Then types of posts. I guess virality also really affects, of course. How hot the news is.) (Org Representative 2)

Actually, isa yun sa mga mahirap na ano, kasi ang metric lang ng social media ay likes, comments, ganyan. Pero kasi medyo critique din siya sa social media kasi nare-reduce niya yung effectivity ng isang post through those numbers. Dahil ba viral ang isang post, dahil ba maraming nagko-comment sa isang post, effective na siyang protest art or influential na siya? *(Actually, the metric of social media being likes, comments, etc. is one of the difficult things to navigate. But it is also a critique of social media because it reduces the effectiveness of a post through those numbers. Just because a post goes viral, or just because a lot of people comment on a post, does that mean it's an effective protest art or that it's influential?)* (Org Representative 2)

Kung nandun ka sa goal na in person mapalapit sa'yo yung mga tao, sumali sila sa organization, ganun. Parang one step on the way na lang yung pag-garner ng likes and shares. Kasi pwedeng tatlo yung, pwedeng 50 yung shares pero wala namang sumali or na-recruit. Parang pwedeng tatlo yung shares pero yung tatlong yun sumali kasi naantig sila or naintindihan talaga nila yung message. So for us, mas malaking win yung tatlong share. *(If you have a goal of getting people to come to you, to join the organization, garnering likes and shares is just one step along the way. Because it could be 50 shares but no one joins or is recruited. It's like it could be three shares but those three join because they were touched or they really understood the message. So for us, three shares is already a bigger win.)* (Org Representative 3)

Protest art, no matter how effective, can only go so far. The audience, or the individual, has to actually take further steps in order for the shared digital protest art to lead to any productive community engagement and collective action. Respondents listed out various ways in which digital protest art efforts prove ineffective due to the inaction of the individual or a false, perceived accomplishment on their part. The sharing of digital protest art can fail to meet the goals of its creation if the audience chooses to have no meaningful interactions or takeaways from the media, the audience is participatory but lacks a framework, the audience assumes that liking and sharing are enough, or if the audience simply creates and interacts with digital protest art for selfish, performative purposes.

[K]umbaga may limitations pa rin siya. Kasi sa huli, kailangan lang mag-mulat, mag-inspire. Pero nasa person na na yun, nasa individual yung pagkilos. *(Basically, it still has limitations. Because in the end, you just have to raise awareness, inspire. But that's up to the person, the action is up to the individual.)* (Org Representative 3)

Ang importante yung kagustuhan ng isang indibidwal na kumilos, makibaka, mag-organisa. Ayun, yun yung pinaka importante. *(What's important is the will of the individual to act, to resist, to organize. That's what's most important.)*

(Org Representative 3)

In conclusion, the discussion of results reveals a complex interplay of factors that influence the efficacy of digital protest art in shaping Filipino attitudes and actions towards socio-political advocacy groups. While digital platforms do offer significant opportunities for digital protest art and advocacies to reach audiences and foster community and a shared purpose, the analysis of the gathered data highlights the importance of contextual factors, strategic considerations, and a balanced approach that integrates online and offline strategies to achieve meaningful societal change and maximize the impacts of digital protest art.

V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This research study endeavored to analyze the societal impacts of sharing digital protest art in online spaces on shaping young Filipino audiences' perceptions and actions towards socio-political advocacy groups, with the goal of understanding the role and efficacy of digital protest art in fostering interest in socio-political advocacies and inspiring action.

Data analysis, using the Grounded Theory methodology with open, axial, and selective coding and with the theoretical framework of Resource Mobilization Theory and Cultivation Theory, revealed three main themes: (1) Audience-Influencing Factors, (2) Means of Introduction, and (3) Societal Implications of Sharing Digital Protest Art. These three themes then constructed the resulting paradigm, "Effect Beyond The Screen," represented in Figure 3 that explains the resulting, starting

grounded theory, “The ‘*Societal Implications of Sharing Digital Protest Art*’ is dependent on the consideration of ‘*Audience-Influencing Factors*’ in the production of the artworks that serve as the ‘*Means of Introduction*’ which consequently restarts the process.”

This final grounded theory and paradigm emerged from the synthesis of all the data gathered. The societal implications of sharing digital protest art can only be determined if audience-influencing factors are considered in the creation of digital protest art that serves as the means of introduction to socio-political advocacy groups. Given that these audience-influencing factors are always subject to change, the whole process becomes an iterative one wherein organized advocates and creatives are constantly innovating and learning from each other as they navigate these changes that affect digital protest art’s use as a means of introduction and the subsequent societal implications of it being shared on online platforms.

These three main themes developed from the data also serve to answer how the objectives of the study have been achieved. The theme “Audience-Influencing Factors” established the key points in a digital protest artwork that resonate with Filipino audiences and move them to act in response. Respondents highlighted the need for authentic, emotionally resonant art that addresses the audience’s values and avoids contributing further to social media clutter by always taking into consideration whether they are adding to the conversation.

The theme “Means of Introduction” determined whether encountering digital protest art or art depicting socio-political issues led to people gaining an interest in learning more about or supporting an advocacy. Respondents emphasized the Internet’s role in expanding access to information and diverse perspectives, but also acknowledged the importance of offline engagement and the processing of

information. Digital protest art proved most effective when it was applied as part of a broader framework, and not just a standalone action.

The final theme, “Societal Implications of Sharing Digital Protest Art,” examined how digital activism in the form of sharing digital protest art impacted Filipino audiences. This analysis focused on understanding the advantages and limitations of utilizing digital protest art for activism, specifically in its efficacy in shaping the behavior and outlook of young Filipino audiences on socio-political advocacy groups. Respondents noted that the inherent collaborative nature of art creation fosters community and solidarity among advocates and audiences. Online platforms assist in facilitating these intersections and engagements as it allows individuals to connect with like-minded people and participate in collective action, especially as digital protest art aims at building a shared purpose. This collective action is carried out by (1) gaining awareness and doing one’s part by sharing, (2) starting discussions about the information they gathered and processing this information with peers and outside sources, and (3) by actually taking action outside of digital activism to fully support the cause. However, protest art, no matter how effective, can only go so far. The audience, or the individual, has to actually take further steps in order for the shared digital protest art to lead to any productive community engagement and collective action.

Overall, this research study establishes a starting grounded theory and paradigm that seeks to explain the complex social phenomenon of how sharing digital protest art in online spaces can shape Filipino audiences’ attitudes and actions towards socio-political advocacy groups and issues.

Despite the positive overarching sentiment on the efficacy of sharing digital protest art in shaping Filipino audiences’ perceptions and actions towards socio-political advocacy groups and issues, this study also found that while digital protest art

is a valuable tool, it is most effective when integrated into a broader framework that emphasizes subsequent calls to action and offline engagement beyond digital activism. Awareness, engagement, and participation in digital protest artworks do not necessarily equate to actual, productive community engagement and collective action, as the outcome still relies heavily on the individual's decisions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Effect Beyond the Screen paradigm and the starting grounded theory, "The Societal Implications of Sharing Digital Protest Art is dependent on the consideration of Audience-Influencing Factors in the production of the artworks that serve as the Means of Introduction which consequently restarts the process," were both built by the shared insights and lived experiences of Filipino respondents with varying connections and outlooks on protest art. The model suggests that for digital protest art shared in online spaces to be effective in shaping Filipino audiences' perceptions and actions towards socio-political advocacy groups, advocates and creatives must consider various factors in the production of these digital protest artworks that will serve as an introduction to socio-political advocacies and organizations. The efficacy of sharing digital protest art is dependent on this iterative process that organized advocates and creatives must undergo and learn from in order to innovate and circumvent the limitations placed on protesting.

With this study, a starting grounded theory focusing on Filipino perspectives has been developed to contribute to the underexplored field of analyzing the efficacy and potential benefits of digital protest art shared in online spaces in relation to socio-political advocacy groups. This grounded theory aims to lend understanding to the

complex social phenomena and the potential long-term effects resulting from the change in medium, accessibility, and reach of digital protest art online.

Through this study, the influence of digital protest art has been given some credence as to its effectiveness as a method of educating and informing the public, encouraging critical thinking amid misinformation, and garnering support for local socio-political advocacy groups. This research offers valuable insights to local advocacy groups and creatives on how the general public perceives and engages with digital protest art, what elements resonate most with audiences and prompt them to take action, and, lastly, how to effectively garner support and mobilize people online.

Recommendations

Given that the majority of the respondents were of a younger generation, particularly Gen Z to younger Millennials in their 20s to 30s, there is merit in purposefully selecting older respondents in future studies to further explore and expand the understanding of the effects of the use of digital protest art in advancing or promoting socio-political advocacy groups and advocacies. Insight into older respondents' perspectives, lived experiences, and observations would be significant in providing a better account of how they witnessed the shift to a greater reliance on the Internet and its effects on how socio-political advocacy groups operate in the more encompassing digital age.

Similarly, it would be valuable to specifically target interview respondents from regions outside of Metro Manila, especially organizations that focus more on regional issues. The study respondents' socio-demographic profile highlights the need for further exploration and discussion with advocates and audiences in other regions, who

can contribute their experiences and perspectives on interacting with digital protest art and identifying local, regional socio-political advocacy organizations.

Lastly, the researcher recommends that future research on the topic should be conducted by a team of researchers. Having a team of researchers would prove highly beneficial in terms of the pacing of the data gathering and analysis process, as well as in achieving greater credibility, since codes, categories, and themes can be peer-reviewed and checked against others who may hold different opinions and perspectives.

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Appendices

APPENDIX A

Interview Matrix

SINING PARA SA PAGBABAGO: EXAMINING HOW SHARING PROTEST ART ONLINE SHAPES THE ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS OF YOUNG FILIPINOS TOWARDS SOCIO-POLITICAL ADVOCACY GROUPS <i>Interview Matrix</i>		
Objectives	Data Needed	Questions
Determine whether encountering digital protest art or art depicting socio-political issues led to people gaining an interest in learning more about or supporting an advocacy	Respondents' exposure to protest art in-person and on social media	Have you ever encountered protest art in-person or on social media? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On what occasions do you typically come across protests and protest art? • Where or on what platform do they often occur?
		With people depending on the Internet as the main source of information and means of communication, has your awareness of local and global socio-political issues grown?
		Have you noticed digital protest art becoming more accessible and available due to the regularity of Internet usage?
		In your experience and personal observation, does this ease in accessibility and exposure to digital protest art influence people to learn about, discuss, or support an advocacy?
	Limitations that could affect respondents' exposure to protest art	Since the COVID-19 pandemic has reshaped the accessibility and reach of online posts, what changes (increase/decrease) have you noticed in terms of audience views and

		<p>engagement in your advocacy posts, particularly protest artworks?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you taken note of any particular aspects or components in posts that tend to garner more eyes on it?
		<p>How do you deal with social media platforms adjusting their algorithms to favor certain perspectives or agendas?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you ever felt that your posts have been shadowbanned on Facebook or Twitter (or on any other platform)? What were the subject matters of these posts? • Did you observe any patterns on how well certain posts performed depending on what they were about?
		<p>What are your thoughts on the increasing censorship throughout social media? And have you found ways to combat these barriers?</p>
		<p>What can you say about digital protest art amid the restrictions and suppression on freedom of speech and expression growing rampant nowadays?</p>
		<p>How are you or your organization circumventing the usual restrictions and suppression on freedom of speech and expression?</p>
<p>Establish the key points in a digital protest artwork that resonate with Filipino audiences and move them to act in response</p>	<p>Background on organizations' advocacies and use of protest art</p>	<p>What advocacies does your organization focus on? And how do you go about advocating for these causes?</p>
		<p>Does art play a role in your advocacy, and can you explain the forms and ways in which it is</p>

		utilized online and in-person activities? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What forms of protest art does your organization create? (Literary works, visual media, short films, songs, editorial cartoons, photography, burning effigies)
		[For legacy organizations] How did you promote your advocacies before Internet use and social media platforms were prevalent? What kind of publications did you create and how were they distributed to inform people?
	Background on local artists' advocacies and use of protest art	Does art play a role in your advocacy, and can you explain the forms and ways in which it is utilized online and in-person activities? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What subjects do you usually focus on in your artworks? If you create protest art, what advocacy or cause do you typically depict?
	Key elements prioritized and identified to be critical in making effective protest art	What elements do you or your organization tend to prioritize in the creation of protest artworks?
		Is there a particular protest artwork or event that moved you to act in support of a cause? What aspects or subjects did it contain that resonated with you?
		What can local artists and advocacy groups focus on conveying in the dissemination and promotion of their causes and donation drives?

<p>Assess how digital activism in the form of sharing digital protest art affects young Filipino audiences, whether in garnering engagement or further exposure for advocacy groups, increasing volunteer numbers and donations, or if it only serves to educate or garner interest in the issue.</p>	<p>Respondents' observations on the effectiveness of protest art shared online</p>	<p>Are there any online social movements you've seen occur organically?</p>
		<p>What role does art play in social mobilization?</p>
		<p>What would you say are the possible benefits to sharing protest art online?</p>
		<p>How is your audience affected by sharing digital protest art, particularly their perceptions and actions towards socio-political advocacy groups?</p>
	<p>Real world implications of digital protest art</p>	<p>How do you perceive protest art, particularly works shared on online platforms, as a beneficial avenue for garnering support for socio-political advocacy groups and causes?</p>
		<p>Can engagement with online protest art lead to actionable, productive community engagement and collective action?</p>

APPENDIX B

Survey Matrix

SINING PARA SA PAGBABAGO: EXAMINING HOW SHARING PROTEST ART ONLINE SHAPES THE ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS OF YOUNG FILIPINOS TOWARDS SOCIO-POLITICAL ADVOCACY GROUPS <i>Survey Matrix</i>		
Objectives	Data Needed	Questions
Determine whether encountering digital protest art or art depicting socio-political issues led to people gaining an interest in learning more about or supporting an advocacy	Respondents' exposure to protest art on social media	With people depending on the Internet as the main source of information and means of communication, has your awareness of local and global socio-political issues grown? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elaborate on your answer in the previous question. <i>If yes, what local or global socio-political issues have you learned about? If not, are you simply uninterested in socio-political issues or have no sufficient access to such topics?</i>
		Have you noticed digital protest art becoming more accessible and available due to the regularity of Internet usage?
		How often do you come across protest art on social media?
		Are there any particular occasions wherein you typically come across protests or protest art? Or are they prevalent whenever issues arise? <i>e.g.: Independence Day, Labor Day, EDSA People Power Revolution Anniversary</i>
		What forms of protest art have you encountered and/or typically interact with?

		<p>What online platforms do you follow or come across protest art?</p>
		<p>How long have you been following or became interested in protest art? <i>Feel free to indicate if this question does not apply to you</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the previous question does not apply, do you choose to intentionally have less interaction with protest art and socio-political advocacies or is it a matter of simply not following socio-political advocacy groups or local protest artists?
	<p>Respondents' interactions with digital protest art</p>	<p>What are your thoughts and impressions on protest art or art that depicts local advocacies and issues in the Philippines?</p> <p><i>e.g.: Are you ambivalent? Do they interest you? Do you find them relatable?</i></p>
		<p>In what ways do you interact with a protest artwork when you come across it?</p> <p><i>e.g.: Do you comment on it or join discussions replying to it? Do you share it with friends and family? Do you seek further information on the issue?</i></p>
		<p>Have you made any observations as to how the general public views and interacts with protest art? <i>Feel free to indicate if you may have no personal experience or observation on this.</i></p>
		<p>In your experience and personal observation, does this ease in</p>

		accessibility and exposure to digital protest art or art depicting socio-political issues influence people to learn about, discuss, or support an advocacy? <i>Feel free to indicate if you may have no personal experience or observation on this.</i>
	Limitations that could affect respondents' exposure to protest art	What are your thoughts on the increasing censorship throughout social media?
		How do you deal with social media platforms adjusting their algorithms to favor certain perspectives or agendas? <i>e.g.: do you purposefully search for topics related to your interests, do you follow certain accounts and turn on notifications for their posts</i>
Establish the key points in a digital protest artwork that resonate with Filipino audiences and move them to act in response	Key elements prioritized and identified to be critical in making effective protest art	Is there a particular protest artwork that moved you to act in support of a cause? What aspects or subjects did it contain that resonated with you? <i>Feel free to indicate if you may have no personal experience or observation on this.</i>
		What are the primary aspects of a protest artwork that can move you to follow and support a cause?
		What do you think local artists and advocacy groups can focus on conveying in the promotion of their causes to garner people's interests?
Assess how digital activism in the form of sharing digital protest art affects young Filipino audiences,	Respondents' observations on the effectiveness	How do you think digital activism in the form of sharing digital protest art could affect Filipino audiences' perceptions and

<p>whether in garnering engagement or further exposure for advocacy groups, increasing volunteer numbers and donations, or if it only serves to educate or garner interest in the issue.</p>	<p>of protest art shared online</p>	<p>actions towards socio-political advocacy groups?</p>
		<p>Are there any online social movements you've seen occur organically?</p> <p><i>e.g.: #Tumindig, #BlackLivesMatter, #MeToo</i></p>
		<p>What role do you think art plays in social mobilization?</p>
		<p>What would you say are the possible benefits to sharing protest art online?</p>
	<p>Real world implications of digital protest art</p>	<p>In what ways can protest art being shared in online spaces affect cultural change?</p>
		<p>How do you perceive protest art, particularly works shared on online platforms, as a beneficial avenue for garnering support for socio-political advocacy groups and causes?</p>
		<p>Can engagement with online protest art lead to actionable, productive community engagement and collective action?</p>

APPENDIX C

Google Form Survey Questionnaire



Sining para sa Pagbabago
EXAMINING HOW SHARING PROTEST ART ONLINE
SHAPES THE ATTITUDES & ACTIONS OF YOUNG FILIPINOS
TOWARDS SOCIO-POLITICAL ADVOCACY GROUPS

Sining Para Sa Pagbabago: Examining How Sharing Protest Art Online Shapes the Attitudes and Actions of Young Filipinos Towards Socio-Political Advocacy Groups

This survey is being conducted in partial fulfillment of the implementation of my Capstone Project for the degree program BA Multimedia Studies in the University of the Philippines Open University.

This research study aims to gather insights from **Filipino** public audiences as to whether there are significant benefits to this additional avenue of promoting socio-political advocacies and actions. Mainly, this study is meant to:

1. Find whether seeing digital protest art or art depicting socio-political issues lead to people gaining an interest in learning more about or supporting an advocacy.
2. Establish the key points in a digital protest artwork that resonate with Filipino audiences and move them to act in response.
3. Assess how digital activism in the form of sharing digital protest art affects Filipino audiences: whether it garners engagement or further exposure for advocacy groups, increases volunteer numbers and donations, or if it only serves to educate or garner interest in the issue.

For the purposes of this study, these terms will be defined as such:

- **Protest art** – any form or medium of art created with the intention in mind of reflecting present societal troubles, challenging people's perceptions on systematic issues, or rising against social injustices
- **Socio-political issues** – problems and circumstances faced by people or particular groups due to the current state of social and political realities
- **Socio-political advocacy groups** – organizations, formations, or alliances aimed to educate and advocate for reform and development of existing social and political systems that impact particular causes or populations

Participation in this study is **completely voluntary**, and you may choose to withdraw at any time. The survey will take approximately **20-25 minutes** to complete as most questions are open-ended.

Data Privacy and Confidentiality
In accordance with the **Data Privacy Act of 2012 (R.A. 10173)**, all responses recorded will be kept strictly confidential and will only be used for the purpose of this study. No personal information will be released and data will be stored securely. To ensure anonymity, responses will likely be presented in a compiled form and information relating to respondents will be mentioned only when necessary and relevant (e.g., affiliation to an organization).

Email *

Record my email address with my response

Note to remember while answering:

This research is intended to grasp the general insights of Filipino audiences. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions, and it would prove most helpful if you could freely express your personal thoughts and opinions on the topics and questions laid out.

By proceeding with this survey, I acknowledge that I have read and understood * this information, and consent to participate in this study.

I agree

Demographics

Name *

Please supply even just your first name

Your answer _____

Age *

Your answer _____

General Location *

e.g.: NCR, Manila

Your answer _____

Current Occupation *

Your answer _____

Most Used Social Media Platforms *

Select all that may apply

Facebook

Twitter/X

Instagram

YouTube

Tumblr

Bluesky

Exposure to Protest Art on Social Media

With people depending on the Internet as the main source of information and means of communication, has your awareness of local and global socio-political issues grown? *

- Yes
- No

Elaborate on your answer in the previous question. *

If yes, what local or global socio-political issues have you learned about? If not, are you simply uninterested in socio-political issues or have no sufficient access to such topics?

Your answer _____

Have you noticed digital protest art becoming more accessible and available due to the regularity of Internet usage? *

- Yes
- No

How often do you come across protest art on social media? *

- Daily
- A few times a week
- A few times a month
- Rarely
- Never

Are there any particular occasions wherein you typically come across protests or protest art? Or are they prevalent whenever issues arise? *

e.g.: Independence Day, Labor Day, EDSA People Power Revolution Anniversary

Your answer _____

What forms of protest art have you encountered and/or typically interact with? *

Select all that may apply

- Literary works
- Visual media
- Short films
- Songs
- Editorial cartoons
- Photography
- Burning effigies

What online platforms do you follow or come across protest art? *

Select all that may apply

- Facebook
- Twitter/X
- Instagram
- YouTube
- Tumblr
- Bluesky

How long have you been following or became interested in protest art? *

Feel free to indicate if this question does not apply to you

Your answer _____

If the previous question does not apply, do you choose to intentionally have less interaction with protest art and socio-political advocacies or is it a matter of simply not following socio-political advocacy groups or local protest artists? *

Your answer _____

Interactions with Digital Protest Art

What are your thoughts and impressions on protest art or art that depicts local advocacies and issues in the Philippines? *

e.g.: Are you ambivalent? Do they interest you? Do you find them relatable?

Your answer _____

In what ways do you interact with a protest artwork when you come across it? *

e.g.: Do you comment on it or join discussions replying to it? Do you share it with friends and family? Do you seek further information on the issue?

Your answer _____

Have you made any observations as to how the general public views and interacts with protest art? *

Feel free to indicate if you may have no personal experience or observation on this.

Your answer _____

In your experience and personal observation, does this ease in accessibility and exposure to digital protest art or art depicting socio-political issues influence people to learn about, discuss, or support an advocacy? *

Feel free to indicate if you may have no personal experience or observation on this.

Your answer _____

Effectiveness of Digitally Shared Protest Art

Are there any online social movements you've seen occur organically? *

e.g.: #Tumindig, #BlackLivesMatter, #MeToo

Your answer _____

What role do you think art plays in social mobilization? *

Your answer _____

What would you say are the possible benefits to sharing protest art online? *

Your answer _____

Relevance of Protest Art to Socio-Political Advocacy Groups

Is there a particular protest artwork that moved you to act in support of a cause? *

What aspects or subjects did it contain that resonated with you?

Feel free to indicate if you may have no personal experience or observation on this.

Your answer _____

What are the primary aspects of a protest artwork that can move you to follow and support a cause? *

- If it leaves you feeling conflicted
- If it makes you sympathetic/empathetic for a cause
- If it makes you sad or angry about a situation
- If it makes you resonate with the subject matter
- If it challenges you with present social realities
- Other: _____

How do you think digital activism in the form of sharing digital protest art could affect Filipino audiences' perceptions and actions towards socio-political advocacy groups? *

Your answer _____

What do you think local artists and advocacy groups can focus on conveying in the promotion of their causes to garner people's interests? *

Your answer _____

Real World Implications of Digital Protest Art

What are your thoughts on the increasing censorship throughout social media? *

Your answer _____

How do you deal with social media platforms adjusting their algorithms to favor certain perspectives or agendas? *

(e.g.: do you purposefully search for topics related to your interests, do you follow certain accounts and turn on notifications for their posts)

Your answer _____

In what ways can protest art being shared in online spaces affect cultural change? *

Your answer _____

How do you perceive protest art, particularly works shared on online platforms, as a beneficial avenue for garnering support for socio-political advocacy groups and causes? *

Your answer _____

Can engagement with online protest art lead to actionable, productive community engagement and collective action? *

Your answer _____