

# **Makibaka o Matakot: A Study on the Different Levels of Red-Tagging and its Effect on the Number of Active Participants within the Makabayan Bloc**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Red-tagging, labeling individuals or groups as communists or terrorists, has become a critical issue affecting political participation in the Philippines. This quantitative study, entitled *Makibaka o Matakot: A Study on the Different Levels of Red-Tagging and its Effect on the Number of Active Participants within the Makabayan Bloc*, seeks to examine how varying levels of red-tagging influence the civic engagement of members and affiliates of progressive party-list groups, including Kabataan, Gabriela, Bayan Muna, and ACT Teachers, in the National Capital Region. Grounded in Political Process Theory, the research focuses on how red-tagging shapes perceptions of personal safety, social stigma, government surveillance, and public support. Survey data from 267 participants were analyzed using correlation and regression techniques to determine the relationship between red-tagging and political involvement. The findings reveal that increased red-tagging correlates with decreased political participation, driven by heightened fear, stigma, and perceived surveillance among respondents. This study highlights red-tagging as a tool of state repression that undermines democratic freedoms, offering recommendations for human rights advocates, policymakers, and scholars to better protect political rights in the Philippine context.

**Keywords:** Red-tagging, Civic Engagement, Political Involvement, Repression, Political Rights

## BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The concept of red-tagging is not an isolated case in the Philippines as its concept is rooted in the United States of America, used by Joseph McCarthy to instill fear and suspicions all over the country in their fight against the communists from the Soviet Union. The concept then was tagged as “*McCarthyism*,” which was defined as “*the political practice of publicizing accusations of disloyalty or subversion with insufficient regard to evidence*,” and “*the use of methods of investigation and accusation regarded as unfair, in order to suppress opposition*.”<sup>1</sup> The Philippines, on the other hand, despite not using the term McCarthyism employed similar tactics during the Martial Law Era under Ferdinand Marcos Sr. in their fight against the New People’s Army (NPA), however, suppressing the opposition and those who opposed the regime were more prevalent in the utilization of such tactics. This form of tactic has not perished, especially under the regime of Rodrigo Duterte, where a number of individuals ranging from students to government officials were red-tagged due to the fact that they aired opposing views against the decisions made by Duterte.<sup>2</sup> One of the most prominent receptors of red-tagging allegations in the government is the *Makabayang Koalisyon ng Mamamayan Bloc*, a coalition consisting of five partylists namely *ACT Teachers*, *Anakpawis*, *Bayan Muna*, *Gabriela*, and *Kabataan*,<sup>3</sup> as the government has continuously suspected and tagged them as fronts of the NPA despite the groups denying such allegations.<sup>4</sup>

While the government is one of the most prominent agencies that partake in the tactic of red-tagging to counter dissent and opposition, the Supreme Court of the Philippines has defended victims of such allegations, specifically Justice Marvic M.V.F. Leonen in his concurring opinion on G.R. No. 254753. He stated that *red-baiting*, another term for red-tagging, is an act of labeling critics of the government as communists or criminals to justify human rights abuses and silence dissent, which then creates a chilling effect on others.<sup>5</sup> The Supreme Court as a whole, on the other hand, has stated that red-tagging constitutes as a threat to Article III of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,<sup>6</sup> which states that a person must have the right to life, liberty, and security. Moreover, it was also stated that red-tagging constitutes as a form of harassment and

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<sup>1</sup> Eisenhower Presidential Library. n.d. “Online Documents - McCarthyism / The “Red Scare.”” Eisenhower Presidential Library. <https://www.eisenhowerlibrary.gov/research/online-documents/mccarthyism-red-scare>.

<sup>2</sup> Gupta, Sarthak. 2024. “Global Freedom of Expression | Red-Tagging in the Philippines: The Modern McCarthyism Threatening Freedom of Expression - Global Freedom of Expression.” Global Freedom of Expression | <https://globalfreedomofexpression.columbia.edu/publications/red-tagging-in-the-philippines-the-modern-mccarthyism-threatening-freedom-of-expression/>.

<sup>3</sup> Guda, Kenneth. 2024. “Progressive Party-List Representatives from the Makabayan Bloc in the House of Representatives, 2001-present.” Datatalk.asia. <https://www.datatalk.asia/story/detail/19/progressive-party-list-representatives-from-the-makabayan-bloc-in-the-house-of-representatives-2001-present.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Senate of the Philippines. 2020. “Press Release - Red-tagging of Makabayan bloc another diversionary scheme - De Lima.” Senate of the Philippines. [https://legacy.senate.gov.ph/press\\_release/2020/1203\\_delima1.asp](https://legacy.senate.gov.ph/press_release/2020/1203_delima1.asp).

<sup>5</sup> Leonen, Marvic. 2023. “254753 Concurring Opinion: Justice Marvic M.V.F. Leonen.” Supreme Court of the Philippines. <https://sc.judiciary.gov.ph/254753-concurring-opinion-justice-marvic-m-v-f-leonen/>.

<sup>6</sup> Roosevelt, Eleanor, Peng-chun Chang, Charles Malik, William Hodgson, Hernan Santa Cruz, Rene Cassin, Alexandre Bogomolov, Charles Dukes, and John Humphrey. 1948. “Universal Declaration of Human Rights | United Nations.” the United Nations. <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>.

intimidation due to the fact that a person tagged as red is subjected to surveillance, harassment, and more often than not, death.<sup>7</sup>

With that being said, this research investigates the impact of varying intensities of red-tagging on the participation levels within the Makabayan Bloc, specifically examining how such practices influence the number of individuals engaging in activism within this coalition. Red-tagging, rooted in anti-communist practices such as McCarthyism in the United States, has become a systematic approach in the Philippines for suppressing dissent, especially against groups and individuals who openly criticize governmental actions. Since the Martial Law era under Ferdinand Marcos Sr. and persisting through subsequent administrations, red-tagging has often resulted in harassment, surveillance, and even fatalities among those accused of affiliations with the New People's Army (NPA). Despite legal protections and the Philippine Supreme Court's recognition of red-tagging as a violation of basic rights, this tactic fosters a climate of intimidation, potentially discouraging or encouraging public engagement in activism. This study seeks to empirically assess how differing levels of red-tagging influence the Makabayan Bloc's membership and activist involvement, thereby offering insights into the broader implications of such practices on democratic participation and civic engagement in the Philippines.

## **SCOPE AND LIMITATION**

This study examines the effects of red-tagging on political participation within the Makabayan Bloc, with a particular focus on how varying intensities of red-tagging influence activist involvement, visibility, and perceived security in the Philippines. It analyzes four core dimensions: perceived personal safety, societal stigma, government surveillance, and levels of public support. These dimensions are assessed based on respondents' self-reported experiences with red-tagging, categorized as mild (e.g., online accusations), moderate (e.g., public naming in discussions or reports), and severe (e.g., surveillance, legal threats, and direct harassment). Moreover, the research draws data exclusively from members and affiliates of four Makabayan-aligned organizations: Kabataan, Gabriela, Bayan Muna, and ACT Teachers. Geographically, the study is limited to the National Capital Region (NCR), which has served as a focal point for both progressive activism and intensified red-tagging practices. To provide broader contextual insight, the study also incorporates perspectives from political science experts and human rights advocates familiar with the issue.

Temporally, the study concentrates on the Duterte administration (2016–2022), during which red-tagging became notably institutionalized through mechanisms such as the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC) and the enactment of the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020. While the practice predates and continues beyond this period, the Duterte administration marked a significant escalation in both the scope and legitimacy of red-tagging efforts. To assess its longer-term implications, particularly in relation to activist

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<sup>7</sup> Leonen, Marvic, Alfredo Benjamin Caguioa, Ramon Paul Hernando, Amy Lazaro-Javier, Henri Jean Paul Inting, Mario Lopez, Samuel Gaerlan, et al. 2023. "254753 Siegfred D. Deduro Vs. Maj. Gen. Eric C. Vinoya, in his capacity as Commanding Officer of the 3rd Infantry Division, Philippine Army." Supreme Court of the Philippines. <https://sc.judiciary.gov.ph/254753-siegfred-d-deduro-vs-maj-gen-eric-c-vinoya-in-his-capacity-as-commanding-officer-of-the-3rd-infantry-division-philippine-army/>.

participation, the study also incorporates data on the number of active members in the year 2025. This allows for a limited yet meaningful projection of how red-tagging during Duterte's term may have affected organizational participation in the years that followed.

Now, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the study is restricted to four Makabayan-affiliated organizations and does not account for the experiences of other activist groups or political movements that may have similarly been subjected to red-tagging. Second, the geographic focus on NCR limits the generalizability of the findings, as activists in other regions, especially rural or militarized areas, may encounter different manifestations of red-tagging. Third, while the incorporation of 2025 participation data allows for some forward-looking analysis, it offers only a partial view of evolving trends beyond the study's primary historical frame. Fourth, due to the sensitivity of the topic, some participants may have been reluctant to provide fully candid responses, which could affect the depth and reliability of the data. Lastly, although the study explores public support as perceived by respondents, it does not conduct a nationwide survey and therefore cannot claim to represent national public opinion.

Despite these limitations, the study offers a focused and empirically grounded understanding of the relationship between red-tagging and political participation in the Philippine context. By centering the lived experiences of NCR-based members of Kabataan, Gabriela, Bayan Muna, and ACT Teachers, and incorporating post-administration participation data, the research contributes to a deeper and more nuanced analysis of how state-sponsored political labeling undermines civic engagement and democratic participation.

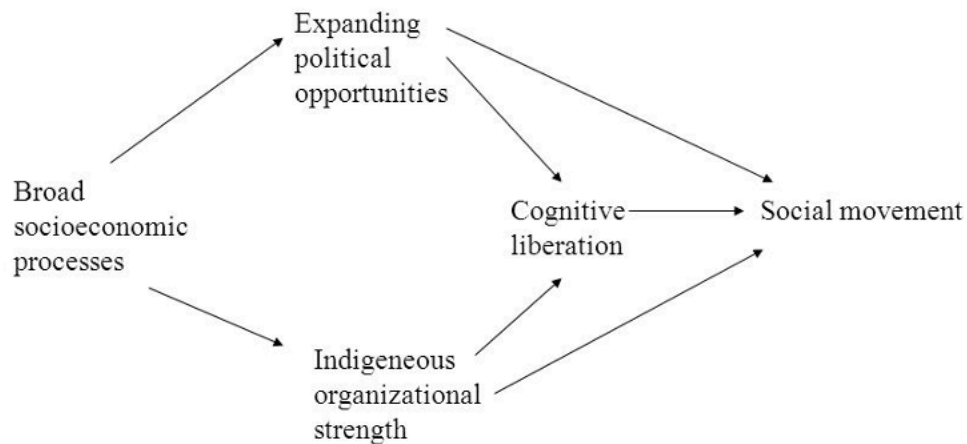
## **THEORETICAL/CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

This study will employ Political Process Theory as its primary theoretical framework to analyze the effects of red-tagging on political participation within the Makabayan Bloc. Developed as a response to social movements in the 1970s and 1980s, Political Process Theory focuses on the relationship between activists, the opportunities for political action, and the actions of the state.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, the Political Process Theory posits that social movements flourish or falter based on the favorability of political conditions, which either support or restrict organized dissent.<sup>9</sup> When political constraints, such as suppression tactics and intimidation, are present, they may limit the ability of individuals and groups to mobilize and participate in activism. This study aims to explore red-tagging as a form of political constraint within the Filipino context, specifically examining its potential to either suppress or motivate engagement within the Makabayan Bloc.

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<sup>8</sup> Caren, Neal. 2007. "Political Process Theory." ResearchGate.  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/373242466\\_Political\\_Process\\_Theory/citation/download](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/373242466_Political_Process_Theory/citation/download).

<sup>9</sup> Sen, Anindya, and Omer Avci. 2016. "Why Social Movements Occur: Theories of Social Movements." *Journal of Knowledge Economy & Knowledge Management* 11 (1): 125-130.



*Figure 1.7.1. McAdam's Political Process Model*<sup>10</sup>

The Makabayan Bloc, a coalition of progressive party-list organizations in the Philippines, serves as an ideal case study for the Political Process Theory. As a political movement advocating for labor rights, human rights, and national sovereignty, it operates within an environment shaped by both political opportunities and state-imposed constraints. Red-tagging functions as a barrier that restricts the Makabayan Bloc's ability to organize, mobilize, and sustain its advocacy efforts, creating an atmosphere of fear, surveillance, and political repression. At the same time, red-tagging may also lead to heightened solidarity among its members, reinforcing their collective identity and commitment to political resistance. The Political Process Theory provides a lens to examine whether red-tagging discourages activism within the Makabayan Bloc or, conversely, strengthens their movement by increasing political awareness and resistance.

To further elucidate how the Political Process Theory applies, this study will use Doug McAdam's<sup>11</sup> model, which highlights three key components that determine a social movement's success: political opportunities, organizational strength, and cognitive liberation. Political opportunities refer to the extent to which the state allows space for activism; in this case, red-tagging serves as a mechanism of state repression that limits these opportunities. Indigenous organizational strength, on the other hand, pertains to the Makabayan Bloc's ability to sustain its movement despite external threats; red-tagging may erode its access to resources, public support, and recruitment efforts, thereby affecting its long-term viability. Meanwhile, cognitive liberation refers to activists' perceptions of their ability to create change; this study will assess whether red-tagging fosters a chilling effect that discourages participation or, alternatively, mobilizes activists to resist state repression.

<sup>10</sup> Casey, Curtis. n.d. "Skocpol's Model of State Capacity Administrative Capacity International Relations Domestic Relations Source: Theda Skocpol, States and Social Revolution." Slide Player. <https://slideplayer.com/slide/4357432/>.

<sup>11</sup> McAdam, Doug. 2013. "Political Process Theory." The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements, 1-4. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470674871.wbespm160>.

At the end of the study, Political Process Theory will be used to analyze the Makabayan Bloc's response to red-tagging and its implications for democratic participation. The research will determine whether red-tagging has significantly weakened the bloc's activism by instilling fear and suppressing participation or if it has inadvertently strengthened their movement by reinforcing their cause and attracting public sympathy. The findings will be evaluated within the framework of McAdam's model, providing empirical insights into the broader impact of red-tagging on political activism and social movements in the Philippines.

## **RESEARCH APPROACH**

This study will implement a quantitative research approach to analyze the political phenomenon of red-tagging and its impact on the active participation within the Makabayan Bloc. The investigation will focus on four main indicators: (1) participants' perception of personal safety and security, (2) societal stigma or public pressure related to activism, (3) perceptions of government surveillance and monitoring, and (4) the degree of public support or opposition to the Makabayan Bloc's objectives. These variables are framed within Political Process Theory, which explains how state-imposed constraints such as red-tagging influence political opportunities and patterns of mobilization. Using survey questionnaires, respondents will rate their experiences and perceptions related to these indicators. This method allows for the systematic collection of numerical data to quantify the effects of red-tagging on political engagement.

In line with the research questions, the use of Likert-scale surveys is deemed the most appropriate approach to capture the nuanced attitudes of Makabayan Bloc members. The survey will target members from organizations such as Kabataan, Gabriela, Bayan Muna, and ACT Teachers, ensuring diverse representation within the Bloc. By measuring perceptions across multiple dimensions, the study aims to comprehensively assess how varying intensities of red-tagging affect participation levels and related factors. This approach will also facilitate comparison across the different organizations affiliated with the Makabayan Bloc. Through this, the study seeks to uncover both common and divergent experiences among members.

The study will also be adopting a non-experimental, quantitative design incorporating correlational and regression analyses. Such a design is appropriate as it allows for observation of naturally occurring relationships between variables without manipulation. Correlational analysis will be used to determine the strength and direction of associations between red-tagging intensity and the participation indicators. Meanwhile, regression analysis will explore whether red-tagging can predict changes in active membership levels. This dual analytical approach ensures a robust examination of both relational and predictive aspects of the data.

Moreover, data collection will be carried out through anonymous surveys distributed to participants without introducing any additional information that might bias their responses. Only essential details about the study's objectives and ethical guidelines will be shared to maintain transparency and protect participant integrity. This ensures that responses reflect genuine perceptions and experiences of red-tagging. The anonymity of the survey also aims to encourage

honest and uninhibited feedback from respondents. Overall, this method maintains ethical rigor while maximizing the reliability of collected data.

## **RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS**

The participants of this study will primarily consist of members and affiliates of the Makabayan Bloc, a coalition of progressive political groups in the Philippines. These groups, which include ACT Teachers, Bayan Muna, Gabriela, and Kabataan, represent a significant portion of the country's activist movements. By focusing on these groups, the research aims to gain insight into how red-tagging impacts those directly involved in political activism, particularly in the context of government opposition. Members of the Makabayan Bloc have been subject to red-tagging by the government, and their experiences make them uniquely qualified to provide valuable perspectives on the issue. The study will target individuals who are actively engaged in these organizations or have been affiliated with them, ensuring that the data gathered accurately reflects the impact of red-tagging on those most affected.

To ensure a diverse range of perspectives, the study will aim to include participants across different age groups, though the emphasis will be on the younger generations, particularly those from the millennial and Generation Z cohorts. These groups are integral to the Makabayan Bloc, as they are often the most active in advocacy and social movements. By focusing on these generations, the study seeks to explore how red-tagging affects the youth, who may face unique challenges related to societal stigma, personal safety, and government surveillance in their activism. This focus on younger participants is important because it sheds light on the future of political engagement and activism in the Philippines and how government actions like red-tagging might shape the next generation of activists.

As of 2025, the Makabayan Bloc comprises an estimated total of 247,310 active participants. Consequently, using a 6% margin of error, the calculated sample size for this study is 267 respondents. To ensure the representativeness of the data, the sample will be drawn to encompass a broad spectrum of experiences from various political organizations within the Bloc. Moreover, the selection criteria will specifically prioritize active members or affiliates who have direct experience with red-tagging or who have participated in public advocacy amid the political climate during the Duterte administration. In addition, ethical considerations will be rigorously observed throughout the study, guaranteeing that participants are thoroughly informed about the study's objectives and the voluntary nature of their participation, while also safeguarding their identities and security given the sensitive nature of the research topic.

## **DATA GATHERING PROCEDURE AND INSTRUMENTS**

The data gathering procedure for this study will primarily involve the collection of quantitative data through a structured survey questionnaire. This instrument is designed to assess the perceptions of Makabayan Bloc members regarding the impact of red-tagging on their civic engagement and political participation. In order to maximize accessibility and reach, the survey will be administered through both online platforms and face-to-face distribution. Prior to data collection, the researcher will secure the necessary permissions from Makabayan Bloc representatives to formally approach potential participants. In alignment with ethical standards,

all respondents will be fully informed about the objectives of the study, their rights as participants, and the voluntary nature of their involvement, with strict assurances of anonymity and confidentiality due to the sensitive nature of the topic.

In addition to primary data obtained from the survey responses, the study will also make use of secondary data to establish the population size of the Makabayan Bloc. Specifically, the estimated number of active members, totaling approximately 247,310 as of 2025, was acquired through direct communication with Makabayan Bloc officials via email. In this correspondence, the Bloc provided their estimated voter base from previous national elections as a proxy for active membership. This secondary data served as the foundation for computing a statistically representative sample size of 267 participants, using a 6% margin of error. Thus, the integration of both primary and secondary sources enhances the empirical grounding and credibility of the study.

Now, the survey questionnaire is designed to examine how members of the Makabayan Bloc perceive red-tagging and its consequences for political engagement. In particular, the instrument includes items that measure the respondent's (1) perception of personal safety and security; (2) perceived societal stigma associated with activism; (3) perception of government surveillance and monitoring; and (4) perception of public support or opposition to their political advocacy. These dimensions are directly informed by the research questions and are conceptually grounded in Political Process Theory, which emphasizes how state-imposed constraints shape civic behavior and mobilization patterns.

To accurately capture the range of participant perceptions, the survey will employ a five-point Likert scale with the following response options: (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neutral, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Agree. This format enables a standardized and quantifiable approach to measuring the degree of agreement with key statements related to red-tagging. In order to ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument, it will undergo expert validation by three specialists from the Department of Political Science and Statistics. Moreover, a pilot test will be conducted with a small subset of potential respondents to assess the clarity, coherence, and overall effectiveness of the survey, with necessary revisions implemented based on the feedback received.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

The data analysis for this study will employ both correlation and regression techniques to systematically explore the relationships between red-tagging and the key variables related to civic engagement and political participation among members of the Makabayan Bloc. To begin with, correlation analysis will be conducted to measure the strength and direction of associations between variables such as perceived personal safety, societal stigma, perceived government surveillance, and levels of public support. Pearson's correlation coefficient will be used to assess these relationships, while the statistical significance of the correlations will be tested using the t-test. Both tests will be conducted at a 5% level of significance to ensure the reliability and rigor of the findings.

Subsequently, regression analysis will be undertaken to evaluate the extent to which various factors predict changes in participation levels among Makabayan Bloc members in response to red-tagging. Specifically, multiple regression analysis will be used to examine how independent variables, such as exposure to red-tagging, organizational affiliation, and perceptions of repression, influence the dependent variable, which is the degree of civic and political engagement. To determine the overall significance of the regression model, the F-test will be applied, also at a 5% level of significance. This approach enables the researcher not only to identify which factors are statistically significant predictors but also to understand the magnitude of their impact.

Moreover, this analytical framework is aligned with the study's objective of identifying both correlational and causal patterns within the data. While Pearson's correlation and the t-test will reveal whether associations exist between the variables, the regression model and F-test will provide a more nuanced understanding of predictive relationships. Through this combination of statistical techniques, the study ensures a comprehensive and empirically grounded evaluation of how red-tagging influences participation levels and perceptions among progressive activists.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This fourth chapter contains the researcher's gathered data through the chosen research methodology and instrument, which will be analyzed to draw insights that address the research problem of the study. The data presented will serve to determine the impact of red-tagging on political participation within the Makabayan Bloc, with reference to the indicators identified in the Political Process Theory, used as the framework of the study. The analysis of findings is intended to explore both the extent and nature of how red-tagging affects civic engagement among members of the Makabayan Bloc in the National Capital Region (NCR).

The researcher will present the data obtained from the responses to the validated survey questionnaire, completed by 267 active participants within the Makabayan Bloc. These respondents were selected to represent a cross-section of affiliated organizations, namely Kabataan, Gabriela, Bayan Muna, and ACT Teachers. The data will be interpreted in direct response to the research questions posed in the earlier chapter, with a focus on four specific dimensions: (a) perception of personal safety and security, (b) societal stigma and pressure, (c) perception of government surveillance and monitoring, and (d) perceived public support or opposition to the Bloc's goals. Comparative analysis will be conducted across these organizations to identify significant differences in experiences and perceptions.

The main research problem centers on how varying intensities of red-tagging influence the number of active participants within the Makabayan Bloc. For this study, red-tagging has been categorized into three levels based on the nature and severity of experiences reported by respondents: mild (e.g., social media accusations or online tagging), moderate (e.g., being named in reports or public discussions), and severe (e.g., legal threats, active surveillance, and direct harassment). These classifications aim to provide a structured understanding of how different intensities of red-tagging may impact participation differently.

Accordingly, the main research problem centers on how varying intensities of red-tagging influence the number of active participants within the Makabayan Bloc. Accordingly, the following sub-problems will guide the analysis: (1) determining the impact of red-tagging on the four dimensions across each affiliated organization; (2) establishing whether there are significant differences in participation levels based on the perceived extent of red-tagging; (3) identifying the presence and strength of correlations between red-tagging and participation levels; and (4) assessing the predictive power of red-tagging intensity on participation using regression analysis.

The researcher utilized both primary and secondary sources in the data-gathering process. Primary data were obtained through a custom Likert-scale survey instrument, while secondary data concerning the estimated number of Makabayan Bloc members (247,310 as of 2025) were secured through formal correspondence with the organization, which referred the researcher to the number of votes garnered during previous electoral campaigns as a proxy for active membership. The sample size of 267 was determined using a 6% margin of error and a 95% confidence level.

It should be noted that prior to the full deployment of the survey instrument, a pilot test was conducted with 15 participants. Feedback from the pilot, along with validation by a statistician, confirmed the reliability and clarity of the survey instrument. This step was essential to ensure that the questions adequately captured the intended dimensions of red-tagging's effects on participation. All quantitative data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics, including Pearson correlation and t-tests for significance testing, and regression analysis using F-tests to determine predictive influence, all computed at a 5% level of significance.

*4.1.1 Findings on the Impact of Varying Levels of Red-Tagging on Active Participation in the Makabayan Bloc*

<i>Indicators</i>	<i><u>Kabataan</u> P-Value</i>	<i>Significance at Alpha = 0.05</i>
The participants’s perception of personal safety and security	0.00000052	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The level of public stigma or societal pressure associated with activism	0.235	<b>NOT SIGNIFICANT</b>
The perception of government surveillance and monitoring	0.001	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The degree of public support or opposition to the Makabayan Bloc’s objectives	0.0000136	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>

*Table 1. Significant Difference of the Levels of Red-Tagging and Active Participation of Kabataan Partylist Across Given Indicators*

Table 1 presents the significance of the effects of varying levels of red-tagging on active participation within the Kabataan Partylist across four indicators. At a 0.05 alpha level, red-tagging was found to significantly affect three indicators: perception of personal safety and security, perception of government surveillance and monitoring, and degree of public support or opposition to the bloc’s objectives. These results indicate that increased red-tagging is strongly associated with heightened fears of personal risk, increased perception of surveillance, and reduced public support, all of which may lower participation levels. Meanwhile, public stigma or societal pressure was not statistically significant, suggesting that stigma does not notably impact active involvement. Thus, the null hypotheses  $H_{01}$ ,  $H_{03}$ , and  $H_{04}$  are rejected, and  $H_{a1}$ ,  $H_{a3}$ , and  $H_{a4}$  are accepted, while  $H_{02}$  is retained. Meaning, there is a significant difference in the perception of personal safety, government surveillance, and public support across varying levels of red-tagging, while there is no significant difference in the effect of public stigma or societal pressure on active participation within the Kabataan Partylist.

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>Significance</i>
The participants’s perception of personal safety and security	0.00000163	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The level of public stigma or societal pressure associated with activism	0.132	<b>NOT SIGNIFICANT</b>
The perception of government surveillance and monitoring	0.007	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The degree of public support or opposition to the Makabayan Bloc’s objectives	0.35	<b>NOT SIGNIFICANT</b>

*Table 2. Significant Difference of the Levels of Red-Tagging and Active Participation of Gabriela Women’s Party Across Given Indicators*

Table 2 shows that varying levels of red-tagging significantly affect perception of personal safety and security and perception of government surveillance and monitoring within the Gabriela Women’s Party, indicating that red-tagging increases fears of personal risk and state monitoring. However, public stigma or societal pressure and public support or opposition do not show significant effects on active participation. Thus, the null hypotheses  $H_{01}$  and  $H_{03}$  are rejected, while  $H_{02}$  and  $H_{04}$  are retained. Meaning, there is a significant difference in perceptions of safety and surveillance across red-tagging levels, but no significant difference in the influence of public stigma or public support on participation.

**Bayan  
Muna**

**Significance at Alpha = 0.05**

<b><i>Indicators</i></b>	<b><i>P-Value</i></b>	<b><i>Significance</i></b>
The participants's perception of personal safety and security	0.00000217	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The level of public stigma or societal pressure associated with activism	0.247	<b>NOT SIGNIFICANT</b>
The perception of government surveillance and monitoring	0.0000136	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The degree of public support or opposition to the Makabayan Bloc's objectives	0.002	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>

*Table 3. Significant Difference of the Levels of Red-Tagging and Active Participation of Bayan Muna Across Given Indicators*

Table 3 presents that varying levels of red-tagging significantly affect perception of personal safety and security, perception of government surveillance and monitoring, and degree of public support or opposition within Bayan Muna, indicating that red-tagging heightens fear and perceived scrutiny while influencing public alignment. Meanwhile, public stigma or societal pressure does not show a statistically significant effect on active participation. Thus, the null hypotheses  $H_{01}$ ,  $H_{03}$ , and  $H_{04}$  are rejected, while  $H_{02}$  is retained. Meaning, there is a significant difference in perceptions of safety, surveillance, and public support across varying levels of red-tagging, but no significant difference in the influence of public stigma on participation.

**ACT  
Teachers**

**Significance at Alpha = 0.05**

<b><i>Indicators</i></b>	<b><i>P-Value</i></b>	<b><i>Significance</i></b>
The participants's perception of personal safety and security	0.0000126	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The level of public stigma or societal pressure associated with activism	0.008	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The perception of government surveillance and monitoring	0.004	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The degree of public support or opposition to the Makabayan Bloc's objectives	0.006	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>

*Table 4. Significant Difference of the Levels of Red-Tagging and Active Participation of ACT Teachers Across Given Indicators*

Table 4 shows that all four indicators, perception of personal safety and security, public stigma or societal pressure, perception of government surveillance and monitoring, and degree of public support or opposition, are statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This indicates that varying levels of red-tagging significantly influence active participation within ACT Teachers through increased concerns over safety, heightened awareness of surveillance, social stigma, and shifts in public support. Accordingly, the null hypotheses  $H_{01}$ ,  $H_{02}$ ,  $H_{03}$ , and  $H_{04}$  are all rejected in favor of their alternative hypotheses, therefore, there is a significant difference across all four indicators of participation based on the level of red-tagging.

**ANOVA**

	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	1	27316428	27316428	0.05	0.839
Residual	2	1020000000	211000000		
Total	3	1050000000			

*Table 5. Analysis of Variance on the Effect of Red-Tagging Intensity on Active Political Participation in the Makabayan Bloc*

The table shows the results of a test used to find out if different levels of red-tagging affect how actively members of the Makabayan Bloc participate in political activities. Looking at the results, the important number to focus on is the "Significance F" which is 0.839. This number tells us whether the changes we see are meaningful or just happened by chance. Usually, if this number is below 0.05, it means there is a significant effect. But in this case, 0.839 is much higher than 0.05. This means that there is no clear evidence that red-tagging has an effect on how active members are. So, we can conclude that the level of red-tagging does not influence whether members of the Makabayan Bloc stay active or not.

	<i>Coefficients</i>
Intercept	135393.7203
Red-Tagging	<b>-26865.01086</b>

*Table 6. Linear Regression Coefficients Showing the Relationship Between Red-Tagging and Active Participation in the Makabayan Bloc*

Table 6 shows the results of a linear regression analysis that looks at how red-tagging affects the number of active members in the Makabayan Bloc. The intercept is 135,393.72, which means that even if there is no red-tagging at all, there would still be around 135,394 active members. This indicates that participation exists regardless of red-tagging. However, the slope is -26,865.02, which shows that for every unit increase in red-tagging, the number of active

members decreases by about 26,865. In other words, as red-tagging becomes more intense or frequent, the number of active members tends to go down. In summary, this analysis suggests a negative relationship between red-tagging and active political participation. While members may still be active without red-tagging, increased levels of red-tagging are associated with a noticeable decline in participation.

**Findings**

To answer the main research question using data from the four Makabayan Bloc-affiliated organizations, Kabataan, Gabriela, Bayan Muna, and ACT Teachers, the findings show that different aspects of red-tagging significantly affect levels of active political participation. Specifically, indicators such as personal safety, government surveillance, and public support showed statistically significant effects, while public stigma or societal pressure had mixed results, with only one organization showing significance. This suggests that red-tagging, when it threatens safety or creates fear of surveillance, effectively discourages political involvement. Public support also plays a role, as reduced backing from the community due to red-tagging further decreases participation. Table 5, which presents the ANOVA results, shows a high Significance F value of 0.839, indicating that red-tagging, when viewed broadly, does not have a statistically significant effect on participation. However, Table 6 adds nuance through regression analysis, showing a negative slope of -26,865.02, which means that as red-tagging increases, the number of active members decreases. The intercept value of 135,393.72 also shows that participation exists even without red-tagging. Taken together, while red-tagging may not universally determine participation, specific forms of it, particularly those tied to safety risks, surveillance, and public perception, clearly have a negative impact, allowing us to conclude that **active membership is not entirely dependent on red-tagging, but does decrease as red-tagging intensifies.**

*4.1.2 Findings on How Red-Tagging Levels Influence Active Participation in Kabataan, Gabriela, Bayan Muna, and ACT Teachers Across Given Indicators*

<u>Kabataan</u> Significance at Alpha = 0.05				
<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Red-Tagging</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Personal Safety Concerns	r = 0.504	<b>LOW POSITIVE</b>	0.00000382	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
Social Stigma and Pressure	r = 0.148	<b>NEGLIGIBLE POSITIVE</b>	0.0195	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
Perceived Surveillance Intensity	r = 0.353	<b>LOW POSITIVE</b>	0.4826	<b>NOT SIGNIFICANT</b>
Level of Public Support for Activism	r = 0.379	<b>LOW POSITIVE</b>	0.0041	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>

*Table 7. Correlations and Significance of Red-Tagging and the Indicators of Kabataan Partylist*

Table 7 reveals the correlation and significance between red-tagging and key indicators of participation within the Kabataan Partylist. At an alpha level of 0.05, three out of the four indicators showed statistically significant relationships with red-tagging. Personal safety concerns demonstrated a low positive but significant correlation, indicating that increased red-tagging is associated with heightened concerns for personal safety. Similarly, social stigma and pressure had a negligible yet statistically significant positive correlation, and the level of public support for activism had a low positive and significant correlation. Therefore, the null hypotheses  $H_{01}$ ,  $H_{02}$ , and  $H_{04}$  are rejected in favor of their alternative hypotheses  $H_{a1}$ ,  $H_{a2}$ , and  $H_{a4}$ . In contrast, perceived surveillance intensity was not statistically significant, leading to the retention of the null hypothesis  $H_{03}$ . These findings suggest that while **red-tagging is significantly related to personal safety, stigma, and public support, it does not have a significant relationship with perceptions of surveillance within the Kabataan Partylist.**

<i>Gabriela</i> <i>Significance at Alpha = 0.05</i>				
<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Red-Tagging</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Personal Safety Concerns	r = 0.520	<b>MODERATE POSITIVE</b>	0.000000331	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
Social Stigma and Pressure	r = 0.184	<b>NEGLIGIBLE NEGATIVE</b>	0.00000383	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
Perceived Surveillance Intensity	r = 0.354	<b>LOW POSITIVE</b>	0.307075	<b>NOT SIGNIFICANT</b>
Level of Public Support for Activism	r = 0.186	<b>NEGLIGIBLE POSITIVE</b>	0.52902	<b>NOT SIGNIFICANT</b>

Table 8. Correlations and Significance of Red-Tagging and the Indicators of Gabriela Women’s Party

Table 8 presents the correlation and significance values between red-tagging and key indicators of participation within the Gabriela Women’s Party. At a 0.05 significance level, two out of the four indicators showed statistically significant relationships. Personal safety concerns exhibited a moderate positive and highly significant correlation, indicating that increased red-tagging is strongly associated with heightened fears for personal safety. Social stigma and pressure, though showing a negligible negative correlation, was also statistically significant, suggesting a slight inverse relationship where increased red-tagging may relate to lower perceived stigma, possibly due to member resilience. Hence, null hypotheses  $H_{01}$  and  $H_{02}$  are rejected in favor of  $H_{a1}$  and  $H_{a2}$ . Conversely, perceived surveillance intensity and level of public support for activism were not statistically significant, leading to the retention of  $H_{03}$  and  $H_{04}$ . These results suggest that **red-tagging significantly affects concerns for safety and experiences of stigma, but does not significantly influence perceptions of surveillance or public support within Gabriela.**

Bayan Muna

Significance at Alpha = 0.05

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Red-Tagging</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Personal Safety Concerns	r = 0.734	<b>HIGH POSITIVE</b>	0.000197	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
Social Stigma and Pressure	r = 0.204	<b>NEGLIGIBLE POSITIVE</b>	0.00327	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
Perceived Surveillance Intensity	r = 0.696	<b>MODERATE POSITIVE</b>	0.167323	<b>NOT SIGNIFICANT</b>
Level of Public Support for Activism	r = 0.564	<b>MODERATE POSITIVE</b>	0.018008	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>

Table 9. Correlations and Significance of Red-Tagging and the Indicators of Bayan Muna

Table 9 displays the correlation and significance of red-tagging in relation to key indicators of participation within Bayan Muna. At the 0.05 alpha level, three out of the four indicators showed statistically significant relationships. Personal safety concerns had a high positive and significant correlation, indicating that increased red-tagging is strongly associated with greater fears for personal safety. Social stigma and pressure showed a negligible but significant positive correlation, while the level of public support for activism revealed a moderate positive and significant relationship. These findings lead to the rejection of null hypotheses  $H_{01}$ ,  $H_{02}$ , and  $H_{04}$  in favor of  $H_{a1}$ ,  $H_{a2}$ , and  $H_{a4}$ . In contrast, perceived surveillance intensity, though showing a moderate positive correlation, was not statistically significant, resulting in the retention of  $H_{03}$ . These results suggest that **red-tagging significantly affects personal safety, perceived stigma, and public support in Bayan Muna, but does not have a statistically significant effect on perceptions of government surveillance.**

ACT Teachers

Significance at Alpha = 0.05

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Red-Tagging</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Personal Safety Concerns	r = 0.711	<b>HIGH POSITIVE</b>	0.000109	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
Social Stigma and Pressure	r = 0.224	<b>NEGLIGIBLE POSITIVE</b>	0.174494	<b>NOT SIGNIFICANT</b>
Perceived Surveillance Intensity	r = 0.518	<b>MODERATE POSITIVE</b>	0.81294	<b>NOT SIGNIFICANT</b>
Level of Public	r = 0.244	<b>NEGLIGIBLE</b>	0.22718	<b>NOT</b>

Support for Activism		<b>E POSITIVE</b>		<b>SIGNIFICAN T</b>
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Table 10. Correlations and Significance of Red-Tagging and the Indicators of ACT Teachers

Table 10 outlines the correlation and significance between red-tagging and selected indicators of participation within ACT Teachers. At an alpha level of 0.05, only one indicator, personal safety concerns, showed a statistically significant relationship with red-tagging, indicating a high positive correlation. This suggests that increased red-tagging is strongly associated with elevated fears for personal safety among ACT members. Consequently, the null hypothesis  $H_{01}$  is rejected in favor of  $H_{a1}$ . In contrast, social stigma and pressure, perceived surveillance intensity, and level of public support for activism did not yield statistically significant results, leading to the retention of hypotheses  $H_{02}$ ,  $H_{03}$ , and  $H_{04}$ . These findings imply that while **red-tagging significantly affects feelings of personal safety within ACT Teachers, it does not have a meaningful statistical relationship with stigma, perceived surveillance, or public support.**

### Findings

Based on the correlation and significance data across Kabataan, Gabriela, Bayan Muna, and ACT Teachers, red-tagging has been shown to significantly affect the number of active participants in terms of personal safety concerns, with all four organizations reporting statistically significant positive correlations, ranging from low to high, between red-tagging intensity and perceived threats to personal safety. Thus,  $H_{01}$  is rejected in favor of  $H_{a1}$  across all groups. Regarding societal stigma and pressure, three out of the four organizations (Kabataan, Gabriela, and Bayan Muna) found negligible but statistically significant correlations, supporting the rejection of  $H_{02}$  in favor of  $H_{a2}$  for those groups, while ACT Teachers did not, resulting in a mixed finding. For perceived surveillance intensity, none of the organizations showed statistically significant results despite low to moderate positive correlation coefficients, leading to the retention of  $H_{03}$ . Similarly, the level of public support for activism only showed statistically significant relationships in Kabataan and Bayan Muna, but not in Gabriela or ACT Teachers, producing partial evidence for  $H_{a4}$ . Now, to answer the second sub-problem, **there is a significant relationship between red-tagging and personal safety concerns across all organizations, and a partial significant relationship with societal stigma and public support, but no significant relationship with perceived surveillance intensity.**

#### 4.1.3 Findings on the Impact of Red-Tagging Intensity on Participation Levels Within the Makabayan Bloc Across Key Factors

*Significance at Alpha = 0.05*

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Personal Safety Concerns	0.865	<b>NOT SIGNIFICANT</b>
Social Stigma and Pressure	0.413	<b>NOT SIGNIFICANT</b>

Perceived Surveillance Intensity	0.647	<b>NOT SIGNIFICANT</b>
Level of Public Support for Activism	0.168	<b>NOT SIGNIFICANT</b>

*Table 11. Significance of Difference of Participation Levels within the Makabayan Blocs for the Given Indicators*

Table 11 presents the p-values assessing whether participation levels within the Makabayan Bloc differ significantly across four key indicators in relation to the extent of red-tagging. At the 0.05 significance level, none of the indicators showed statistically significant differences: personal safety concerns, social stigma and pressure, perceived surveillance intensity, and level of public support for activism. These findings suggest that the extent of red-tagging does not lead to statistically significant differences in participation levels when comparing across the various Makabayan-affiliated organizations. As such, the null hypotheses  $H_{01}$ ,  $H_{02}$ ,  $H_{03}$ , and  $H_{04}$  are all retained, indicating uniformity in how red-tagging affects participation across the bloc in terms of the indicators examined. This may imply that while red-tagging has measurable effects within individual groups, **these effects do not significantly vary between the different organizations in the bloc.**

*4.1.4 Findings on the Correlation and Predictive Impact of Red-Tagging Intensity on Active Membership in the Makabayan Bloc*

*Significance at Alpha = 0.05*

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Number of Active Members</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Intensity of Red-Tagging	$r = 0.16$	<b>NEGLIGIBLE POSITIVE</b>	0.839	<b>NOT SIGNIFICANT</b>

*Table 12. Significance of Correlation and Regression of Intensity of Red-Tagging and the Number of Active Members in the Makabayan Bloc*

Table 12 presents the results of the correlation and regression analysis between the intensity of red-tagging and the number of active members within the Makabayan Bloc. The correlation coefficient indicates a negligible positive relationship, and the p-value of 0.839 exceeds the 0.05 significance threshold, demonstrating that this relationship is not statistically significant. Consequently, the null hypothesis for correlation is retained, indicating **no significant relationship between red-tagging intensity and active membership levels.** Similarly, the regression analysis suggests that **red-tagging does not significantly predict changes in the number of active members**, as reflected by the same nonsignificant p-value. Therefore, the null hypothesis for prediction is also retained. These findings suggest that while red-tagging may influence individual perceptions and experiences, it does not statistically correlate with or predict fluctuations in the overall membership levels of the Makabayan Bloc.

## DISCUSSIONS

The Political Process Theory by Doug McAdam served as the main theoretical framework of this study, guiding the analysis of how different levels of red-tagging affect the number of active participants within the Makabayan Bloc. This chapter discusses the findings in relation to the four key indicators, personal safety, societal stigma, perceived surveillance, and public support, based on responses from 267 participants across Kabataan Partylist, Gabriela Women's Party, Bayan Muna, and ACT Teachers. The goal of this section is to interpret the data through the lens of Political Process Theory, relating the findings to the broader implications for civic engagement and democratic participation in the Philippines.

### *4.2.1 Overview of McAdam's Political Process Model*

Referring back to Chapter One, this study employs Political Process Theory as its primary theoretical framework to analyze how varying levels of red-tagging impact political participation within the Makabayan Bloc. Political Process Theory, developed in response to the emergence of social movements during the 1970s and 1980s, focuses on the dynamic interaction between activists, political opportunities, and state actions.<sup>12</sup> It posits that the success or decline of social movements largely depends on the political environment, specifically, whether it offers conducive opportunities or imposes constraints that either facilitate or hinder collective mobilization.<sup>13</sup>

According to Doug McAdam's<sup>14</sup> Political Process Model, which guides this study, three core components shape social movement trajectories: political opportunities, organizational strength, and cognitive liberation. Political opportunities describe the extent to which the state allows or restricts space for activism; in the Philippine context, red-tagging functions as a form of political repression that constrains these opportunities by fostering fear, intimidation, and surveillance. Organizational strength refers to the Makabayan Bloc's capacity to sustain mobilization efforts amid external pressures; red-tagging threatens this strength by limiting resources, reducing public support, and disrupting recruitment. Cognitive liberation captures activists' beliefs about their ability to effect change, which may be suppressed by the chilling effects of red-tagging or, conversely, invigorated by heightened political awareness and solidarity.

The Makabayan Bloc, a coalition of progressive party-list organizations advocating labor rights, human rights, and national sovereignty, serves as a fitting case for applying Political Process Theory. This framework allows the study to critically examine whether red-tagging suppresses activism by creating barriers to participation or galvanizes resistance by strengthening collective identity and commitment to political causes.

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<sup>12</sup> Caren, Neal. 2007. "Political Process Theory." ResearchGate. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/373242466\\_Political\\_Process\\_Theory/citation/download](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/373242466_Political_Process_Theory/citation/download).

<sup>13</sup> Sen, Anindya, and Omer Avci. 2016. "Why Social Movements Occur: Theories of Social Movements." *Journal of Knowledge Economy & Knowledge Management* 11 (1): 125-130.

<sup>14</sup> McAdam, Doug. 2013. "Political Process Theory." *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements*, 1-4. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470674871.wbespm160>.

Now, this section will provide a detailed discussion of McAdam's three components in relation to the study's findings. By situating the data within this theoretical lens, the research aims to offer a nuanced interpretation of how red-tagging affects the Makabayan Bloc's political engagement and the broader implications for democratic participation in the Philippines.

#### *4.2.2 Discussion on the findings related to the Impact of Varying Levels of Red-Tagging on Active Participation in the Makabayan Bloc*

The findings of this study reveal a clear relationship between the intensity of red-tagging and the level of political participation within the Makabayan Bloc. **This study introduces a novel contribution by quantitatively examining red-tagging through the lens of Political Process Theory and disaggregating its effects into four specific indicators: personal safety, societal stigma, government surveillance, and public support.** By categorizing red-tagging into mild, moderate, and severe forms, **the research offers a structured analysis of how different intensities influence civic engagement.** This approach moves beyond general narratives by providing empirical evidence of the suppressive effects of red-tagging. **It also highlights the value of examining repression not just as a singular experience but as a multidimensional phenomenon with measurable impacts.**

Anchored in Political Process Theory, the results suggest that increased repression through red-tagging reduces perceived political opportunity, discouraging participation. Personal safety and government surveillance, two of the most significantly impacted indicators, reflect heightened perceptions of risk and state hostility, which directly erode political opportunities. The theory posits that when perceived costs of participation outweigh potential gains, mobilization becomes less likely, a pattern clearly demonstrated in the rejection of null hypotheses  $H_{01}$  and  $H_{03}$ . These indicators relate to the theory's assumption that state repression constrains the space for activism by making it physically and psychologically unsafe. This reduces access to political opportunities and directly limits the capacity for collective action.

The study also examined public support and societal stigma, which map onto the theory's dimension of cognitive liberation and framing processes. Public support was significantly affected across most organizations, leading to the rejection of  $H_{04}$ . This shows that declining external legitimacy and societal endorsement weakens the ability of movements to frame their cause as just and attainable, thereby limiting collective motivation. In contrast, societal stigma yielded mixed results, with only one group showing a statistically significant relationship, leading to the general retention of  $H_{02}$ . While reputational damage may affect individual morale, it appears to have a less consistent impact on broader mobilizing structures, unlike threats tied to personal safety and institutional surveillance.

Support for these conclusions is reinforced by the regression analysis presented in Table 6. The model shows a negative slope coefficient of -26,865.02, demonstrating that every unit increase in red-tagging results in a substantial decline in active participants. With an intercept of 135,393.72, the model confirms that participation exists even without red-tagging but declines as repression intensifies. **This quantitative relationship between red-tagging levels and participation represents a unique empirical contribution, offering measurable insight into how political repression operates.** This aligns with Political Process Theory's claim that

political structures and threats from state actors significantly shape mobilization potential. When red-tagging undermines both perceived opportunity and the cognitive framing of activism as safe or effective, it discourages even those already embedded in mobilizing networks.

In conclusion, **this study offers a new, data-driven understanding of how red-tagging suppresses political participation in the Philippines.** Through its indicator-based framework and integration of Political Process Theory, it captures how red-tagging acts as a tool of political repression. **The findings demonstrate not only that red-tagging reduces participation, but also how it does so, by disrupting political opportunities (via threats to safety and surveillance), damaging framing processes (via declining public support), and weakening mobilizing structures (through mixed effects of stigma).** By quantifying the relationship between red-tagging intensity and participation levels, the research affirms that increased repression reduces both perceived opportunity and willingness to act. **This study therefore highlights red-tagging as a strategic mechanism that weakens democratic participation by undermining the conditions essential for sustained and effective collective action.**

#### 4.2.3 Discussion on the findings related to How Red-Tagging Levels Influence Active Participation in Kabataan, Gabriela, Bayan Muna, and ACT Teachers Across Given Indicators

Based on the findings of the study, the relationships between red-tagging and key indicators of participation within the organizations of Kabataan Partylist, Gabriela Women’s Party, Bayan Muna, and ACT Teachers were analyzed using Pearson correlation coefficients. To interpret the strength and significance of these relationships, the researcher refers to the Pearson Correlation Coefficient Interpretation Scheme:

<i>r Value Range</i>	<i>Strength of Correlation</i>	<i>Direction</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
±0.70 - ±1.00	High	Positive / Negative	Strong positive / negative relationship
±0.30 - ±0.69	Moderate	Positive / Negative	Moderate positive / negative relationship
±0.10 - ± 0.29	Low	Positive / Negative	Weak positive / negative relationship
0.00 - 0.09	Negligible	Positive	Almost no correlation
-0.09 - 0.00	Negligible	Negative	Almost no correlation

The Pearson correlation coefficients provide empirical insight into how varying levels of red-tagging affect key participation indicators across the four organizations. What sets this study apart is its novel operationalization of Political Process Theory by linking distinct red-tagging intensities to specific dimensions of political participation, personal safety, societal stigma, government surveillance, and public support. This disaggregated approach allows for a deeper analysis of how different mechanisms of repression interact with mobilization structures. The

results show that concerns over personal safety had the strongest and most consistently significant correlations, with values ranging from low to high positive. These findings align with PPT's emphasis on perceived risk as a key factor in shaping political opportunity: when individuals feel physically endangered, their willingness to act collectively declines. Personal safety, in this context, directly undermines the structural conditions needed for mobilization.

Societal stigma and pressure, although statistically significant in three organizations, exhibited only negligible correlations, suggesting that reputational damage alone does not serve as a strong deterrent to activism. According to Political Process Theory, framing processes, how individuals interpret and internalize social cues, play a vital role in mobilization outcomes. The weak effect of stigma may imply that activists are able to reframe or resist reputational attacks when they do not translate into tangible threats. Thus, while stigma may damage public perception, it exerts limited influence on political participation unless paired with more immediate or material consequences. **This study advances the theory by providing evidence that not all forms of repression equally alter perceived opportunity; some are symbolically damaging but behaviorally inert.**

Interestingly, perceived government surveillance presented moderate correlation values without reaching statistical significance in most cases. This suggests that being watched does not automatically translate into behavioral inhibition, unless the surveillance is perceived as actionable or threatening. Political Process Theory acknowledges that repression's effect is mediated by interpretation, activists may normalize or dismiss surveillance unless it crosses a threshold that triggers fear or enforcement. This finding underscores the distinction between perceived and experienced repression, reinforcing the theory's idea that mobilization is shaped as much by interpretation of threat as by its objective presence. **By isolating surveillance as a separate domain of analysis, the study adds nuance to Political Process Theory's treatment of repression, showing that deterrence depends on perceived credibility and proximity of threat.**

Public support emerged as a more variable indicator, with significant correlations in organizations like Kabataan and Bayan Muna, but weaker results elsewhere. This supports the Political Process Theory concept of cognitive liberation, wherein movements sustain engagement when participants believe that change is both desirable and possible. In contexts where red-tagging delegitimizes groups in the public eye, participation may falter due to perceived isolation. Yet when organizations are able to frame repression as unjust and gain external sympathy, red-tagging can sometimes backfire, activating political identities and strengthening resolve. **This study contributes an original insight by illustrating how framing processes within Political Process Theory can mediate the demobilizing effects of repression, transforming red-tagging from a silencing tool into a rallying point under specific conditions.**

Taken together, the Pearson coefficients reveal a dynamic interaction between state repression and political participation, moderated by individual perception, organizational framing, and structural opportunity. **This study's unique contribution lies in its quantitative application of Political Process Theory to a highly contextualized form of repression, red-tagging, using differentiated indicators to trace the distinct pathways through which it**

**affects activism.** The findings affirm that repression primarily suppresses activism when it escalates perceived personal risk or erodes external legitimacy. However, the variation in significance across indicators demonstrates that repression's effects are not automatic but shaped by how individuals and groups interpret their political environment. Thus, while red-tagging broadly inhibits civic engagement, its success depends on whether movements can resist, reinterpret, or withstand its pressures through strategic framing and internal resilience.

#### *4.2.4 Discussion on the findings related to the Impact of Red-Tagging Intensity on Participation Levels Within the Makabayan Bloc Across Key Factors*

This sub-section presents and interprets the data on significant differences in participation levels within the Makabayan Bloc across four key indicators, personal safety, societal stigma, government surveillance, and public support, through the lens of Political Process Theory. What sets this study apart is its novel application of Political Process Theory to quantitatively examine how distinct dimensions of red-tagging, categorized by severity and by psychological and social impact, shape political participation within leftist party-lists. While previous studies have generally treated red-tagging as a singular phenomenon, this research disaggregates it into specific domains, offering a more nuanced understanding of how repression operates in practice. The findings reveal that there are no statistically significant differences in participation levels across the four organizations, Kabataan, Gabriela, Bayan Muna, and ACT Teachers, with p-values for all indicators exceeding the 0.05 threshold.

From the perspective of Political Process Theory, this uniformity suggests that all organizations operate under a similarly repressive political environment that constrains mobilization opportunities across the board. Specifically, the theory posits that when perceived political opportunities are low, due to real or anticipated threats, collective action becomes riskier and less appealing. The indicators measured in this study reflect these dynamics: personal safety and surveillance relate to the cost of action, public support reflects external validation of opportunity, and stigma affects internal motivation and social consequences. **By connecting each of these indicators to the theory's core mechanisms, threat, opportunity, and framing, this study provides empirical support for how red-tagging reshapes the perceived structure of political participation.** Ultimately, the retention of hypotheses  $H_{01}$  to  $H_{04}$  supports the conclusion that red-tagging constrains activism uniformly across organizations, reinforcing the broader idea that repression reduces participation when political opportunities are perceived as minimal.

#### *4.2.5 Discussion on the findings related to the Correlation and Predictive Impact of Red-Tagging Intensity on Active Membership in the Makabayan Bloc*

This sub-section examines the relationship between the intensity of red-tagging and the number of active members within the Makabayan Bloc. The correlation analysis shows a negligible positive correlation with a p-value of 0.839, which is not statistically significant since it exceeds the 0.05 threshold. Similarly, the ANOVA results in Table 5 confirm that red-tagging does not have a significant overall effect on participation, with a Significance F of 0.839. Furthermore, the regression analysis in Table 6 reveals a negative slope of -26,865.02, suggesting a decrease in active members as red-tagging increases, but this effect is not

statistically significant. Together, these findings indicate that red-tagging intensity is not a strong predictor of changes in active membership within the Bloc.

What makes this study a unique contribution is its empirical and multidimensional approach to measuring red-tagging's effects, disaggregating it into four specific indicators, personal safety, societal stigma, government surveillance, and public support, and interpreting them within the framework of Political Process Theory. Rather than treating repression as a singular experience, this research captures the psychological and social mechanisms through which different intensities and forms of red-tagging affect participation. Interpreted through Political Process Theory, the results imply that despite constrained political opportunities resulting from state repression, the Makabayan Bloc maintains a relatively stable level of engagement. This resilience may be attributed to strong internal mobilizing structures and collective identity, which buffer the impact of repression and sustain participation.

Although red-tagging significantly heightened concerns related to personal safety and societal stigma, these did not result in a measurable decrease in active membership. This aligns with Political Process Theory's claim that mobilization is shaped not only by external opportunities but also by internal movement strength. **The findings demonstrate that direct threats, like surveillance and violence, may shape perceptions of risk, but when internal motivation and group cohesion are strong, participation persists.** Government surveillance and perceived public support, though less consistently significant, also reveal that the perception of repression alone is not enough to inhibit activism. What matters is how individuals interpret and respond to these constraints.

Ultimately, these findings reinforce the concept of cognitive liberation, an internal psychological readiness to act despite risks, which allows members to maintain participation even under repressive conditions. In line with Political Process Theory, repression may reduce perceived political opportunity, but it does not uniformly suppress activism where collective efficacy is high. **This study advances the field by showing how red-tagging operates through multiple, measurable dimensions and how internal organizational strength mediates its effects, offering a more granular understanding of how civic engagement endures under threat.**

## SUMMARY

This study, entitled *Makibaka o Matakot: A Study on the Different Levels of Red-Tagging and its Effect on the Number of Active Participants within the Makabayan Bloc*, aimed to examine how varying intensities of red-tagging affect levels of active political participation among four progressive party-list organizations: Kabataan, Gabriela, Bayan Muna, and ACT Teachers. Anchored in Doug McAdam's Political Process Theory<sup>15</sup>, the research was guided by four core indicators hypothesized to mediate red-tagging's influence on participation: (1) perception of personal safety and security, (2) public stigma or societal pressure, (3) perceived government surveillance and monitoring, and (4) level of public support or opposition to the

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<sup>15</sup> McAdam, Doug. 2013. "Political Process Theory." *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements*, 1-4. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470674871.wbespm160>.

bloc's objectives. The study employed a quantitative methodology involving correlation analysis, significance testing, and linear regression, all evaluated at a 0.05 level of significance. It sought to determine the extent to which red-tagging affected each of the four indicators within each organization, whether these effects varied significantly across groups, and whether the overall intensity of red-tagging predicted observable changes in bloc membership. In doing so, the research aimed to provide empirical insight into the relationship between political repression and democratic engagement in the Philippines.

In response to the main research problem, how varying levels of red-tagging affect political participation within the Makabayan Bloc across perceptions of safety, stigma, surveillance, and public support, the findings reveal that red-tagging significantly impacts certain dimensions of participation while producing limited effects in others. Personal safety concerns emerged as the most consistently affected indicator, with all four organizations, Kabataan, Gabriela, Bayan Muna, and ACT Teachers, reporting statistically significant results, affirming that heightened fears of harm are a key deterrent to political involvement. Perceived government surveillance was also significant in three organizations, while public support showed significant effects in Kabataan and Bayan Muna, resulting in partial confirmation of its influence. Public stigma, however, remained mostly insignificant except in ACT Teachers, suggesting reputational pressures exert weaker influence than direct threats. While these results underscore the psychological and relational dimensions through which red-tagging discourages activism, broader statistical tests produced more complex outcomes. As shown in Table 5, ANOVA results yielded a non-significant p-value, indicating that red-tagging does not uniformly affect overall participation levels across the bloc. Similarly, Table 6's regression analysis found a negative slope coefficient, suggesting that participation declines as red-tagging increases; however, this trend was not statistically significant. Together, these findings affirm that while **red-tagging strongly influences individual perceptions, particularly around safety and surveillance, it does not significantly predict or explain fluctuations in total membership**, aligning with Political Process Theory's assertion that repression alters the mode rather than the existence of political engagement.

In relation to the first sub-problem, which asked whether there is a statistically significant relationship between red-tagging and each of the four indicators, the results of the Pearson correlation analysis offer nuanced support. Personal safety was the only indicator with a significant positive correlation across all organizations, confirming the rejection of  $H_{01}$  in all cases. Public stigma showed statistically significant, albeit negligible, positive or negative correlations in Kabataan, Gabriela, and Bayan Muna, supporting partial rejection of  $H_{02}$ . Perceived surveillance, despite moderate correlation values in some groups, did not show statistical significance, resulting in the retention of  $H_{03}$  across the organizations. On the other hand, public support exhibited significant correlations in Kabataan and Bayan Muna, but not in Gabriela and ACT Teachers, leading to partial acceptance of  $H_{a4}$ . Overall, these results affirm that **red-tagging consistently shapes perceptions of personal threat but demonstrates variable influence on stigma, support, and surveillance depending on the group's framing and external context**.

Now, the second sub-problem focused on whether the effects of red-tagging differed across organizations. Comparative analysis revealed that, while each organization demonstrated

internal variation across the four indicators, there were no statistically significant differences between the organizations themselves. All p-values for between-group comparisons exceeded the 0.05 threshold, leading to the retention of null hypotheses  $H_{01}$  through  $H_{04}$  in this context. This finding implies a shared experience of repression across the Makabayan Bloc, regardless of organizational identity. **The systemic nature of red-tagging, therefore, reinforces the idea that it acts as a national-level political constraint**, broadly limiting civic space and deterring mobilization, irrespective of subgroup affiliation, a conclusion that further substantiates the Political Process Theory's emphasis on environmental conditions as key determinants of mobilization.

The third and fourth sub-problems concerned whether red-tagging intensity correlates with or predicts changes in the overall number of active members in the Makabayan Bloc. Regression analysis yielded a negligible positive correlation coefficient and a non-significant p-value of 0.839, leading to the retention of the null hypothesis. Similarly, the regression slope of -26,865.02, although suggestive of a negative relationship between red-tagging and membership, was not statistically significant. These results suggest that **red-tagging may influence the quality of participation, lowering engagement, visibility, or willingness to lead, but does not significantly alter the quantity of membership at the aggregate level**. This distinction supports the Political Process Theory's assertion that repression often transforms the mode of political engagement rather than eliminating it entirely. Activism may shift to less formal or less visible forms, reflecting adaptive strategies in response to perceived threat.

## CONCLUSION

In light of the evidence, this study concludes that red-tagging operates as a powerful deterrent to political participation within the Makabayan Bloc, chiefly by eroding individual perceptions of safety and undermining public legitimacy. The findings offer strong empirical support for the core tenets of Political Process Theory, which argue that state repression constricts avenues for collective mobilization by elevating the perceived risks and costs of activism.<sup>16</sup> While red-tagging does not yield uniform statistical effects across all organizational indicators or membership figures, it fosters an environment of systemic intimidation, driven by fear of violence, surveillance, and public delegitimation, that undermines democratic engagement in more diffuse but still consequential ways.

Yet, despite these repressive conditions, the sustained participation observed across the Makabayan-affiliated organizations points to a countervailing force rooted in organizational resilience and cognitive liberation. As articulated by McAdam<sup>17</sup>, movements can resist the suppressive effects of repression when they are undergirded by strong internal networks, a shared political identity, and a deep sense of moral or ideological purpose. The continued mobilization of Makabayan members, even in the face of threats, demonstrates the enduring power of collective commitment and political framing in defying attempts to dismantle grassroots

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<sup>16</sup> McAdam, Doug. 2013. "Political Process Theory." The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements, 1-4. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470674871.wbespm160>.

<sup>17</sup> McAdam, Doug. 2013. "Political Process Theory." The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements, 1-4. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470674871.wbespm160>.

activism.<sup>18</sup> This endurance, however, should not obscure the subtle but measurable ways in which red-tagging constrains participation; the downward trend reflected in the regression analysis, though statistically non-significant, signals a persistent pressure that may gradually suppress visible engagement and disincentivize broader recruitment.

Ultimately, red-tagging's effects must be understood not only in terms of direct suppression but also through its capacity to shape political behavior over time, dampening enthusiasm, fragmenting networks, and shifting activism into less visible or more defensive modes. This phenomenon, long familiar to Philippine social movements operating under authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes, reveals that repression's most potent form may lie not in halting participation outright, but in recalibrating the terms of civic action to favor caution over confrontation. The study thus affirms that red-tagging, while not always immediately reflected in quantitative declines, remains a deeply corrosive force, subtly but persistently undermining the democratic right to organize, dissent, and participate in public life.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

With all that has been said, the findings and discussions produced by the study have determined that red-tagging significantly affects the level of political participation in the Makabayan Bloc, particularly in terms of perceived personal safety, public support, and government surveillance. The study also found that although different organizations within the bloc experience red-tagging differently, these effects are not significantly different in magnitude when compared statistically. Furthermore, while red-tagging influences perceptions and internal behavior, it does not significantly correlate with or predict active membership numbers across the Bloc as a whole. With this, the researcher wishes to offer several recommendations to future researchers, advocacy groups, and policymakers based on the insights gained through this academic inquiry.

*To future researchers who wish to explore a similar topic* - Drawing from the conduct and analysis of this study, the researcher puts forth the following recommendations to enhance future academic works on red-tagging and political participation:

- a. It is recommended that future researchers explore a longitudinal study to assess the long-term effects of red-tagging on political engagement. A cross-sectional approach, such as the one used in this research, can capture perceptions at a single point in time, but may not fully capture whether disengagement intensifies or fades over time.
- b. Future studies may also consider expanding the geographical scope to include Makabayan-affiliated groups outside of Metro Manila or Luzon. This would allow for a broader comparison of how red-tagging operates in varying local political climates, especially in more conflict-prone regions like Mindanao or far-flung areas in the Visayas.

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<sup>18</sup> Sare, Clark Ashley. 2021. "Towards People's Democratic Revolution: The Entail Manifestation of Proletariat Struggle in the Hands of Imperialism A Critical Paper on "Philippine Society and Revolution."" [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/358243093\\_Towards\\_People%27s\\_Democratic\\_Revolution\\_The\\_Entail\\_Manifestation\\_of\\_Proletariat\\_Struggle\\_in\\_the\\_Hands\\_of\\_Imperialism\\_A\\_Critical\\_Paper\\_on\\_Philippine\\_Society\\_and\\_d\\_Revolution?enrichId=rgreq-c86a35425e6bf61e93](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/358243093_Towards_People%27s_Democratic_Revolution_The_Entail_Manifestation_of_Proletariat_Struggle_in_the_Hands_of_Imperialism_A_Critical_Paper_on_Philippine_Society_and_d_Revolution?enrichId=rgreq-c86a35425e6bf61e93).

- c. Additionally, the researcher recommends using mixed methods, such as combining quantitative surveys with in-depth qualitative interviews. This would provide richer narratives to contextualize the statistics, especially concerning how red-tagging shapes individual decisions to participate or withdraw from activism.
- d. Lastly, researchers are encouraged to explore the intersectionality of vulnerability by examining how other demographic variables, such as gender, economic status, and educational background, might influence how individuals experience red-tagging. This could help determine whether certain groups within the Makabayan Bloc face disproportionate levels of fear, stigma, or surveillance.

*To human rights organizations, academic institutions, and political advocacy groups* - The findings of this study should prompt urgent attention to the psychological and political costs of red-tagging on democratic participation. The researcher recommends the establishment of legal aid, psychosocial support, and digital security training programs for activists who are at heightened risk of harassment and intimidation. Universities, NGOs, and civic institutions should work collaboratively to document, archive, and expose red-tagging practices as a form of political repression. Moreover, public awareness campaigns should be implemented to challenge the legitimacy of red-tagging narratives, protect freedom of expression, and reinforce the value of peaceful political dissent in a democratic society.

*To policymakers, particularly in the Philippine Congress and Commission on Human Rights* - The study shows that red-tagging has a statistically significant effect on the democratic rights of citizens to participate in political life without fear. Therefore, the researcher recommends the urgent crafting and passage of legislation that clearly defines and penalizes red-tagging as a form of state-sponsored intimidation. Moreover, institutional reforms in the military, police, and public communications sectors are necessary to prevent the weaponization of public platforms to label activists as insurgents. Oversight mechanisms must also be strengthened to hold public officials accountable for red-tagging pronouncements and ensure that civil society spaces remain free, safe, and pluralistic.

Lastly, *to members and supporters of the Makabayan Bloc* - Although the study found no significant statistical difference in the experience of red-tagging across organizations, it is clear that the shared impact on safety, surveillance, and legitimacy is real and deeply felt. The researcher recommends that the bloc strengthen its internal solidarity, expand its support networks, and build community-based political education programs to counter misinformation and fear. Resilience must be cultivated not only through mobilization, but also through collective healing, digital security, and political literacy. The defense of democratic participation begins with the courage to speak, organize, and educate in the face of repression.

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