



Moral Framing in Election-Adjacent YouTube Content: The 2022 Philippine Presidential Campaign

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Abstract

The 2022 Philippine presidential race was the country's most digitally contested to date, with YouTube serving as a key venue for building, spreading, and challenging political and moral appeals. While scholars have examined official campaign materials, coordinated influencer networks, and disinformation ecosystems, the political undertones of informal, election-adjacent YouTube content remain comparatively unexamined. This paper presents a qualitative content analysis of three such videos: "Wag Magpapabudol," a voter-awareness advertisement fronted by actress Angelica Panganiban; "Bitter Len-Len," a scripted web-series segment featuring Senator Imee Marcos dismissing online critics as bitter "bashers"; and "Nauto ka na ba ng mga nagmamalinis?," a lifestyle vlog addressing performative moral superiority. Using framing theory, the study traces how political and moral frames are built and differentiated across this spectrum of advocacy, commentary, and lifestyle content, all of which engage the campaign's moral economy through the themes of voter deception, voter irrationality, and moral hypocrisy. Independently verified YouTube metrics show that a production house's existing audience predicted a video's reach more strongly than how explicitly it engaged the campaign's politics. The paper argues that moral framing in election-adjacent YouTube content works as a form of political persuasion operating beneath the threshold of formal campaign communication and proposes a transferable analytical procedure for examining YouTube video corpora in electoral settings.

Keywords *Moral framing, Bobotante, Nagmamalinis, Framing theory, Qualitative content analysis, YouTube, 2022 Philippine elections*

INTRODUCTION

The 2022 Philippine presidential election became the country's most digitally contested election to date. With COVID-19 restrictions still curbing in-person campaigning during the February–May 2022 campaign period, political discourse moved decisively onto social platforms, particularly YouTube, Facebook, and TikTok, which became the main arenas where candidates and supporters competed for public attention.

YouTube, in particular, became central to this shift. Gaw et al. (2022) traced how hyperpartisan channels, some disguised as news outlets, actively steered voter sentiment throughout the race, while Soriano and Gaw (2022) described a pattern of "networked political brokerage" in which Filipino YouTube influencers displaced traditional journalistic authority by projecting closeness to ordinary people. Arugay (2022) documents a parallel intensification of social media's overall weight in the race, of which this YouTube-specific dynamic was one part. Together, these findings point to YouTube's evolution from an entertainment platform into a genuine political communication space where formal and informal content reinforce one another.

A notable feature of the election's online discourse was the spread of moralized vocabulary across video formats. Three terms anchored this moral economy: wag magpapabudol (do not be

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fooled, warning naive voters against manipulation), bobotante (a blend of bobo [stupid] and botante [voter], used to shame voters seen as uninformed or complicit), and nagmamalinis (those who feign moral purity, typically aimed at critics or opponents). These terms circulated through lifestyle vlogs, commentary channels, and celebrity-fronted voter-education content, reaching wide audiences without ever registering as formal political advertising.

This gap matters beyond scholarly completeness. Content that moralizes political choice while never presenting itself as an advertisement escapes the disclosure and spending scrutiny that formal campaign communication receives, a regulatory blind spot examined further below. It also carries a more basic democratic stake: when voters encounter persuasive political appeals framed as personal testimony, satire, or lifestyle commentary, they may process that content without recognizing it as political persuasion, weakening the transparent, identifiable contestation that electoral accountability depends on. Understanding how moral framing operates in this register is therefore not only a matter of extending framing theory to a new content type but also of mapping a channel of political influence that currently sits largely outside both scholarly attention and regulatory reach.

This study analyzes three videos that together embody this vocabulary: (1) “Wag Magpapabudol” ([Philstar News, 2022](#)), a civil-society voter-awareness ad featuring actress Angelica Panganiban, produced by the youth organization Young Public Servants and reposted to YouTube by Philstar News, whose channel hosts the copy this study analyzes; (2) “Bitter Len-Len” ([VinCentiments \[OFFICIAL\], 2022a](#)) (YouTube ID: -SUS45ZXi-w), the first installment of VinCentiments’ scripted “Kape Chronicles” web series, written and directed by Darryl Yap and featuring Senator Imee Marcos dismissing online critics as bitter “bashers”; and (3) “Nauto ka na ba ng mga nagmamalinis?” ([VinCentiments \[OFFICIAL\], 2022b](#)), a lifestyle-commentary vlog produced by the same VinCentiments team and fronted by actress Juliana Parizcova Segovia under the Sawakass Briefs banner. V2 and V3 therefore share a single production house, while V1 stands as this corpus’s sole independently produced text. This documented production link is a criterion for the corpus’s selection, not merely a finding reported later: Parizcova Segovia’s video directly answered Panganiban’s PSA with a parody titled “Mag-ingat sa pa-victim at nagmamalinis” ([Politiko, 2022](#)); VinCentiments is separately credited with producing its own parody of the same ad ([PhilNews, 2022a](#)); and Parizcova Segovia later appeared alongside Senator Marcos in a subsequent Kape Chronicles installment — a web of response documented in contemporary press coverage rather than inferred after the fact. These three were selected over other entries in the same production network (for instance, VinCentiments’ later Kape Chronicles installments) because they represent the earliest and most format-diverse responses to Panganiban’s PSA, spanning advocacy, scripted satire, and lifestyle vlogging within the same ten-day window.

All three videos were published on February 2–3, 2022 — five to six days before the Commission on Elections’ official campaign period formally opened on February 8, 2022. This timing has regulatory significance: content published before the official window falls outside the campaign-period disclosure and spending rules the Omnibus Election Code applies to formal political advertising, even though, as this paper argues, it performs comparable persuasive work. The corpus therefore captures moral framing operating in a regulatory gap that precedes, rather than coincides with, the period regulators are currently equipped to monitor.

Guided by framing theory ([Entman, 1993](#)), the study asks: (1) What political and moral frames appear in each video, and how are they constructed verbally, narratively, and visually? (2) How do framing strategies differ across the three formats? (3) What rhetorical and affective appeals are used, and how do they engage the dominant discourses of the 2022 campaign? (4) How does a video’s platform visibility shape its messaging strategy? This last question follows from the corpus itself: the three videos span advocacy, commentary, and lifestyle formats that circulated to

markedly different audience sizes, and reach is a plausible constraint on how openly a creator can engage with political material, making visibility a variable worth testing rather than an incidental detail.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Framing and moral framing

[Entman's \(1993\)](#) model frames framing as a four-part editorial choice: naming the problem, attributing its cause, passing moral judgment, and prescribing a response — a framework that continues to anchor political communication scholarship. [Ampon and Salathong \(2024\)](#) found that the Philippine 2022 campaign messaging leaned heavily on patriotism, unity, compassion, and hope, casting candidates as agents of moral renewal. This study extends that lens to informal video content, where moral framing tends to be subtler yet no less effective.

Critiques and boundaries of framing theory

Framing theory is not without its critics, and this paper's application of it should be read in light of those limits. Entman's own formulation has been criticized for operational vagueness: the boundary between a “frame” and a “topic” is not always self-evident, since any thematic emphasis can be redescribed as a frame after the fact, risking circularity. A second, related challenge is distinguishing frame-building — how frames are constructed by communicators — from frame-setting — how audiences take them up. This study addresses only the frame-building side: it examines how the three videos construct moral frames, without audience-reception data to confirm how those frames were actually decoded (see Limitations). To reduce circularity in its own application, the coding framework (Table 2, below) was built around the four functions Entman specifies — problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation — rather than open-ended thematic labels. Each frame identified in the Findings section is anchored to specific verbal, narrative, or visual evidence rather than inferred from a video's general subject matter.

YouTube as a political platform

YouTube has become the Philippines' leading video platform. [Gaw et al. \(2022\)](#) documented the rise of hyperpartisan, news-like channels during the 2022 cycle, particularly those aligned with the Marcos camp. [Soriano and Gaw \(2022\)](#) showed how influencers translate partisan content into culturally resonant narratives, acting as active framers rather than passive conduits.

Prior studies on framing, informal content, and the 2022 Philippine election

To situate this study's contribution, Table 1 below summarizes ten prior studies included in this review, characterizing each by method, platform focus, corpus, and treatment of informal political content. These characterizations are drawn from each study's stated method and scope, as reported in its abstract or summary; readers consulting this table alongside the full source texts may find further nuance than a single-row summary can capture.

Table 1. Summary of Prior Studies on Political Influencers and Informal Campaign Content in the Philippines

Study	Method	Platform Focus	Corpus	Treatment of Informal Content
Ampon & Salathong	Comparative message/discourse	Cross-platform campaign materials	Official 2022 campaign	Not addressed — focuses on

(2024)	analysis		messaging	official campaign communication
Gaw et al. (2022)	Platform and network mapping	YouTube	Hyperpartisan, news-like channels	Addresses partisan “news” channels, not lifestyle/commentary formats
Soriano & Gaw (2022)	Qualitative discourse analysis	YouTube	Political YouTube influencers	Central focus — influencer “networked political brokerage”
Gaw & Arugay (2024)	Policy-oriented synthesis and estimation	Cross-platform (chiefly YouTube/Facebook)	~44,530 estimated influencer accounts	Quantifies informal influencer activity; does not analyze individual video texts
Gaw et al. (2025)	Computational/quantitative mapping	Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, TikTok	1,000+ influencer accounts	Quantifies covert campaigning at scale; not a close reading of individual texts
Riedl et al. (2023)	Conceptual review	Social media, generally	N/A (introduction to a special issue)	Establishes influencers as a communicator category; not Philippines-specific
Ong & Tapsell (2022)	Qualitative fieldwork/interviews	Facebook-centered	Disinformation “work” production networks (Indonesia and the Philippines)	Addresses informal production labor, not moral framing specifically
Tapsell (2021)	Comparative regional analysis	Social media, broadly	Southeast Asian election campaigns	Documents underground/s ubversive campaigning as a regional pattern
Barte (2023)	Discourse/signifier analysis (Mouffe-informed)	Not platform-specific	The bobotante discourse	Close analysis of one moral-political term, not video content
Mendoza	Case study/political	TikTok	Marcos	Platform-

(2022)	analysis	campaign's TikTok use	specific but not framing- theoretic
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This study departs from the table's other entries in two ways: it applies framing theory specifically (rather than discourse analysis or network mapping generally) to individual video texts (rather than aggregated platform activity), and it deliberately spans advocacy, scripted satire, and lifestyle formats rather than focusing on a single content type.

The bobotante discourse

The bobotante label — merging “stupid” and “voter” — became one of the campaign's sharpest moral weapons. Barte (2023), building on Chantal Mouffe's account of liberal political theory, contends that the label cuts two ways: it appeals to a liberal ideal of the rational voter even as it brands supporters of non-liberal candidates as irrational and pushes them outside that ideal. The Marcos-Robredo contest sharpened this us-versus-them dynamic, with Robredo supporters (“Kakampinks”) framed as rational and Marcos supporters branded bobotante, and vice versa — a bidirectional shaming pattern common across commentary vlogs. A closely related trope in this study's corpus is the “bitter basher” framing examined in V2: both bobotante and “bitter” dismiss the opposing side's supporters as driven by a deficiency — irrationality in one case, emotional excess in the other — rather than by legitimate grievance, functioning as cousin strategies within the same shaming vocabulary.

Nagmamalinis and pa-victim

Alongside bobotante, the terms nagmamalinis (feigned moral purity) and pa-victim (performed victimhood) were used to question opponents' moral sincerity. Following populist communication scholarship (Moffitt, 2016), these frames pit an authentic actor against a hypocritical, self-righteous one. Videos like the third case study engage this economy even without naming candidates, folding political framing into ordinary lifestyle content — precisely the “grey zone” communication Gaw and Arugay (2024) describe.

Influencers in the grey zone

Gaw and Arugay (2024) estimate that roughly 44,530 influencers took part in the 2022 election, operating between formal campaigning and organic civic expression. Their carefully performed ordinariness — the quality Soriano and Gaw (2022) identify as what earns YouTube influencers their credibility — lets them carry political messages under the guise of cultural commentary — a space that all three videos in this study occupy at different points along the spectrum from advocacy (V1) to commentary (V2) to lifestyle (V3).

Regional context

The Philippine pattern fits within a broader Southeast Asian trend toward informal, creator-driven electoral communication. Tapsell (2021) traces how underground and subversive campaigning strategies have taken hold across the region as formal media channels face growing restrictions, while Riedl et al. (2023) contend that political influencers have become a distinct kind of communicator, one whose authority derives less from any formal position and more from appearing ordinary — a dynamic that both V2 and V3 in this study echo. Ong and Tapsell (2022) show that Indonesia and the Philippines share overlapping informal production networks for politically charged content, suggesting that the gray-zone practices documented here are not uniquely Philippine. Gaw et al. (2025) quantify this shift: more than a thousand influencer accounts

ran undisclosed political campaigns across Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and TikTok in the 2022 Philippine race alone — evidence that informal video content deserves serious study as electoral communication in its own right.

Research gap

Existing work leans toward organized political actors and quantitative or computational methods, leaving informal, non-official videos and close qualitative reading underexamined. Three gaps remain: (1) no study has closely compared framing strategies across formats spanning advocacy, scripted satire, and lifestyle content on YouTube during the 2022 race; (2) existing quantitative work (e.g., [Gaw & Arugay, 2024](#); [Gaw et al., 2025](#)) counts informal political activity at scale but does not analyze how individual texts construct moral frames; and (3) existing qualitative work on Philippine YouTube politics (e.g., [Soriano & Gaw, 2022](#)) examines influencer positioning broadly but does not isolate moral framing as a distinct analytical category. This paper addresses all three gaps.

RESEARCH METHOD

Design

The study adopts an interpretive qualitative content analysis approach ([Schreier, 2012](#)) that focuses on meaning, narrative structure, and embedded ideology rather than statistical representativeness.

Corpus and sampling

Three videos were purposively selected (Table 2) to maximize variation in format, producer type, production quality, and political explicitness, while sharing the common context of the 2022 campaign's moral vocabulary. The documented production-and-response relationship among the three videos (see Introduction) was an inclusion criterion, not an incidental discovery: a video was eligible only if its intertextual connection to at least one other corpus text could be established through contemporary press coverage rather than inferred from content alone. Three further inclusion criteria applied: each video had to have been produced or published at or near the 2022 campaign period (which formally ran February 8 to May 7, though, as noted in the Introduction, all three corpus videos were published in the five to six days immediately preceding that window); it had to be publicly accessible; and it had to engage, directly or indirectly, with themes of voting behavior or the election itself.

Table 2. Research Corpus

#	YouTube ID	Title / Description	Format & Producer	Moral Frame	YouTube Metrics (retrieved Aug 25, 2026)
V1	Rce0_J9SI0o	“Wag Magpapabudol” — Angelica Panganiban's election reminders (Feb 2, 2022; Philstar News, 2022)	Civil-society celebrity voter-awareness ad; produced by Young Public Servants, reposted by Philstar News	Deception–Discernment	100,000 views; 3,100 likes; 1,515 comments (on the Philstar News repost, 455K subscribers)
V2	-SUS45ZXi-w	“Bitter Len-	Scripted satirical web	Bitterness–	356,000 views;

		Len” — first installment of the “Kape Chronicles” web series, feat. Sen. Imee Marcos (Feb 3, 2022; VinCentiments [OFFICIAL], 2022a)	series; VinCentiments (dir. Darryl Yap)	Composure	24,000 likes; 2,287 comments (VinCentiments [OFFICIAL], 1.85M subscribers)
V3	2sdPcUWs_U	“Nauto ka na ba ng mga nagmamalinis?” — Sawakass Briefs / Juliana Parizcova Segovia (Feb 2, 2022; VinCentiments [OFFICIAL], 2022b)	Lifestyle/commentary vlog; VinCentiments (feat. Parizcova Segovia)	Moral Hypocrisy–Authenticity	331,000 views; 22,000 likes; 1,875 comments (VinCentiments [OFFICIAL], 1.85M subscribers)

The YouTube metrics above were retrieved from the Philstar News channel's repost of V1 rather than from a Young Public Servants–owned channel. Young Public Servants remains the video's credited producer, while Philstar News is the outlet whose copy achieved the reach recorded here. Reach attributed to V1 in this study should accordingly be read as the reach of this particular repost, not of every copy of the video circulating on YouTube.

Data collection

Each video underwent (1) a full verbatim transcription, including Taglish code-switching; (2) a timestamped visual-annotation log covering setting, camera work, editing, on-screen text, sound, and body language; (3) metadata documentation (title, channel, and upload date; contemporary press-reported cross-platform figures were available; and independently retrieved YouTube-native views, likes, comments, and subscriber counts, all verified for all three videos on a single date — August 25, 2026 — for direct comparability); and (4) a screenshot archive for reference during coding.

Coding

Following [Schreier \(2012\)](#), the analysis proceeded through open coding. Open coding was conducted iteratively, without a formal running count. Emergent patterns were consolidated into the four deductive categories in Table 3 below.

The analysis then focused on four deductive categories (Table 3): frame type (Entman's four functions), moral vocabulary and positioning, rhetorical and affective appeals, and political subtext.

Table 3. Coding Framework

Category	Sub-dimensions	Coding Indicators (neutral, disconfirmable)
A. Frame Type (Entman, 1993)	Problem definition; causal interpretation; moral	Any textual, narrative, or visual element that names a problem, attributes its cause,

	evaluation; treatment recommendation	renders a moral judgment, or recommends a response, coded regardless of which party (candidate, voter, critic) is positioned as responsible.
B. Moral Vocabulary & Positioning	Victim/aggressor; authentic/hypocrite; informed/deceived; rational/bobotante; in-group/out-group	Presence of wag magpapabudol, bobotante, nagmamalinis, pa-victim, tunay na Pilipino, or comparable othering language, coded regardless of which side of a binary a given passage falls on.
C. Rhetorical & Affective Appeals	Celebrity authority; populist appeals; emotional tone; authenticity performance; parasocial intimacy	Any appeal to celebrity or institutional authority, populist framing, emotional address (e.g., hugot, indignation, humor), or performed ordinariness, coded independent of its apparent persuasive success.
D. Political Subtext	Implicit candidate alignment; discursive silences; echoes of 2022 narratives	Any implied reference to a candidate, party, or 2022-specific narrative that stops short of explicit naming, coded as present or absent without presupposing which candidate is implicated.

The indicators above deliberately do not specify which outcome each video is expected to show; instead, the case-by-case expected patterns emerge from the analysis reported in Findings and Discussion, so that the coding categories themselves remain neutral and disconfirmable rather than built to anticipate a predicted result.

Trustworthiness

To strengthen the trustworthiness of the analysis, the study drew on strategies aligned with [Lincoln and Guba's \(1985\)](#) criteria for qualitative rigor. Three coders independently applied the deductive framework in Table 2 to the full three-video corpus, each maintaining a dated coding log; these logs constitute the audit trail supporting the dependability and confirmability of the interpretations.

Additional trustworthiness measures included a reflexivity memo situating the first author's positionality as a Filipino researcher based in Metro Manila who was of voting age during the 2022 election and had followed Philippine political YouTube discourse, including content adjacent to the channels examined here, for several years before undertaking this study; a running log of coding decisions, maintained in a shared spreadsheet and available on request for audit purposes; and informal debriefing with co-authors during coding.

Because coders recorded observations as timestamped free-text excerpts rather than selecting from a fixed checklist, reliability was assessed by classifying each coder's applied codes according to which of Table 2's named sub-dimensions they addressed (e.g., problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation under Frame Type), yielding a binary presence/absence judgment for each of 17 sub-dimensions across the three videos (51 units in total). Fleiss' kappa across all three coders was $\kappa = .14$ (pairwise Cohen's kappa ranged from .09 to .18), well below the study's target threshold of .70. Reliability was highest for Frame Type ($\kappa = .60$) and near zero or negative for Rhetorical & Affective Appeals ($\kappa = -.20$) and Political Subtext ($\kappa = -.04$), indicating that coders converged on whether a passage did some kind of interpretive work but diverged substantially on which named sub-dimension best captured it — consistent with this framework's sub-dimensions being conceptually overlapping (a passage coded as populist appeal by one coder was often coded as authenticity performance or emotional tone by another) rather than mutually exclusive. This is best read as a limitation of the coding scheme's

granularity rather than of the underlying observations: unanimous agreement (all three coders present, or all three absent) held for 26 of the 51 units assessed, and disagreement clustered specifically around fine-grained sub-dimension labeling rather than whether a passage was politically or morally salient at all.

Ethics statement

This study analyzes publicly available YouTube videos and contemporaneous public news coverage; no private data, direct human subjects, or non-public communications were accessed. Because the analysis involves named public figures (a sitting senator and public content creators) acting in their public or political capacity, claims about their statements or actions are limited to what is documented in the videos themselves or in their own public statements as reported by named news outlets. Interpretive claims about audience reception or political intent are explicitly flagged as such rather than presented as established fact (see Findings and Limitations).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

As established in the Methodology, the documented production-and-response relationship among the three videos was a criterion for their inclusion in this corpus, not a finding of the analysis that follows. Accordingly, the discussion below treats that relationship as context: V3's creator, Juliana Parizcova Segovia, directly responded to Panganiban's "Wag Magpapabudol" PSA with a parody titled "Mag-ingat sa pa-victim at nagmamalinis" ([Politiko, 2022](#)), produced by the same VinCentiments team responsible for V2 ([PhilNews, 2022a](#)). Parizcova Segovia later appeared alongside V2's Senator Imee Marcos in a subsequent Kape Chronicles installment.

V1 — Deception-Discernment (RQ1, RQ3)

V1 frames voter deception as the core problem, casting the electoral relationship as courtship in which the candidate is a suitor and the voter the courted party. Panganiban opens by recalling personal heartbreak — "Naloko ka na ba ng pagmamahal sa maling tao? Yung akala mo gold medalist ka na, tapos fake news pala?" ([Interaksyon, 2022](#)) — establishing a romantic metaphor for political betrayal. Responsibility is split evenly between dishonest candidates ("manloloko," "magnanakaw") and voters' insufficient scrutiny, a softer indictment than V2's. Its moral anchor, "wag sa magnanakaw," implies corrupt candidates without naming them; audience reaction ("walang names pero alam na agad") suggests the implied targeting registered with at least some viewers ([Fashion Pulis, 2022](#)), though this reading rests on a single entertainment-aggregator source and should not be read as a representative audience measure. The recommended remedy is due diligence — "Kilatisin mabuti ang mga manliligaw... Alamin at tingnan ang character references" — delivered in Taglish and Panganiban's signature hugot style, following a testimony arc from heartbreak to wisdom to advice. Contemporary press coverage reported over 671,000 Facebook views within days of release ([Interaksyon, 2022](#)). Independently retrieved YouTube-native metrics (August 25, 2026) show a far more modest 100,000 views, 3,100 likes, and 1,515 comments on the Philstar News upload — a reminder that the video's reported cross-platform virality in February 2022 was driven substantially by Facebook sharing rather than sustained YouTube-native reach.

V2 — Bitterness-Composure (RQ1, RQ3)

V2, "Bitter Len-Len," opens VinCentiments' scripted web series "Kape Chronicles." Darryl Yap wrote and directed the episode. Vincent L. Asis handled camera work and editing, and the cast pairs Senator Imee Marcos with actress Roanna Marie. Over coffee, Marcos counsels Marie against engaging online critics: "Imagine, kung nagpapapatol ako, hay Apo... sa dami ng mga nagba-bash sa

amin, baka hindi ako ganito kaganda at my age!” (PhilNews, 2022b). The video locates the problem not in voters but in online critics themselves, framing their engagement as bitterness rather than legitimate grievance, and offers composed indifference to “bashing” as the moral remedy. The video never names Vice President Leni Robredo. “Kakampinks” (Robredo’s supporters) read the “Len-Len” persona as targeting her directly, a reading that gained traction after Yap’s public response to the ensuing criticism (PhilNews, 2022b); this is best described as a widely circulated audience interpretation that Yap did not publicly dispute, rather than a confirmed statement of creator intent. The video itself was produced as part of VinCentiments’ documented response to Panganiban’s ad (PhilNews, 2022a). Its moral evaluation is delivered through a polished, scripted register very different from V1’s testimony arc — institutional authority (a sitting senator) substituting for celebrity hugot appeal, and composure substituting for discernment as the recommended virtue. Contemporary press coverage reported roughly 2.7 million views within days (Showbiz Mismo, 2022), the highest cross-platform reach reported for any video in this corpus. Independently retrieved YouTube-native metrics (August 25, 2026) show 356,000 views, 24,000 likes, and 2,287 comments on VinCentiments’ channel (1.85 million subscribers).

V3 — Moral Hypocrisy-Authenticity (RQ1, RQ3)

V3 targets nagmamalinis (feigned virtue) and pa-victim (performed victimhood). Unlike V1’s implicit warning and V2’s celebrity-adjacent staging, V3 names the 2022 election directly rather than merely gesturing at it through vocabulary and timing; its release date (the same day as V1) reinforces a political register that is explicit, not merely contextual.

Parizcova Segovia opens by framing the video’s target through a rapid sequence of rhetorical questions: “Minsan ka na bang naniwala sa mga nagmamalinis? Yung akala mo — biktima sila? Kawawa sila? Bida sila?” (0:05–0:15) [“Have you ever believed people who feign virtue? You’d think — they’re the victim? They’re pitiful? They’re the hero?”], casting apparent victimhood and moral superiority as performances to be doubted rather than accepted at face value. She later names both target behaviors together and ties them explicitly to the 2022 race: “Kaya sa darating na eleksyon, magingat sa mga pa-victim at nagmamalinis” (1:52–1:57) [“So in the coming election, watch out for those who play the victim and feign virtue”] — the clearest evidence in the corpus that V3 engages the campaign directly rather than only through shared vocabulary and timing. The video closes on the same warning, stripped to its punchline: “Ingat sa mga pa-victim!” (2:37) [“Watch out for those who play the victim!”] Visually, the monologue opens with a static medium shot of Parizcova Segovia seated casually on outdoor patio furniture against a tropical garden backdrop, a drink and phone in hand, addressing the camera directly while gesturing with both hands; burned-in captions synchronize with each spoken line throughout. From 1:52 to 2:37, carrying the video’s explicit election reference and closing punchline, the setting shifts to Parizcova seated in the driver’s seat of a car with the door left open, phone still in hand — a change in location that coincides with, though does not obviously motivate, the video’s most direct political statements.

It argues that social harm stems from those who weaponize apparent virtue while evading accountability, mapping onto the Kakampink–Marcos-supporter divide, with each side accusing the other of nagmamalinis behavior — a mapping this paper draws from the video’s vocabulary and its documented place in the VinCentiments response network, not from any explicit statement by its creator naming a side. Structured around authenticity versus performance, V3 functions as the inverse of V1: whereas V1 warns against dishonest candidates, V3 warns against those who falsely claim the moral high ground, implicitly defending V1’s targets. Delivered as an unscripted, conversational monologue in a casual lifestyle-vlog setting, it invites the audience to feel emotionally discerning enough to spot performed suffering. Unlike V1 and V2, no view count for V3

was found in the contemporary press coverage consulted for this study. Independently retrieved YouTube-native metrics (August 25, 2026) close that gap and complicate the video's apparent low profile: V3 drew 331,000 views, 22,000 likes, and 1,875 comments on VinCentiments' channel — nearly matching V2's YouTube-native reach despite V3's near-absence from 2022 news coverage and its more implicit, lifestyle-coded messaging (see Visibility and messaging strategy, below).

Cross-format comparison (RQ2)

Four axes distinguish the videos: (1) Location of the moral problem — V1 splits blame between candidates and naive voters; V2 relocates it to online critics (“bashers”); V3 relocates it to the moral critics themselves — V2 and V3 thus share a structural move of shifting blame onto critics rather than candidates, consistent with their shared production house. (2) Authority and authenticity — V1 relies on celebrity and civil-society-organization backing; V2 on the institutional authority of a sitting senator in a professionally produced short film; V3 on personal lifestyle experience, each performing a different register of authenticity. (3) Explicitness of targeting — V1 and V3 avoid naming candidates, with decodability varying by audience knowledge, but V2 is the most explicit of the three: its persona was widely read, days after release, as targeting Vice President Robredo, a reading that Yap's public response to critics did not dispute ([PhilNews, 2022b](#)). (4) Audience moral positioning — V1 positions viewers as capable of growth, V2 as either composed or a bitter basher, and V3 as potential victims of nagmamalinis, flattering their discernment.

Table 4. Cross-Video Comparison

Dimension	V1: Advocacy Ad	V2: Web Series Segment	V3: Lifestyle Vlog
Central Frame	Deception–Discernment	Bitterness–Composure	Hypocrisy–Authenticity
Location of Problem	Candidates and naive voters	Online critics (“bashers”)	Performatively moral critics
Authority Basis	Celebrity + civil-society organization	Sitting senator + professional production house	Personal/lifestyle authority
Political Explicitness	Implicit, widely decoded	High — persona widely read as targeting a rival candidate, a reading its director's public response did not dispute	Implicit, masked by lifestyle framing
Production Register	Polished, styled as a personal vlog	Polished, scripted short film	Casual, conversational
Audience Positioning	Deceived but capable of discernment	Composed or a bitter basher	Potential victims of nagmamalinis

Rhetorical appeals (RQ3)

V1's signature move is the hugot appeal — using emotionally resonant personal history to deliver political advice and lower viewers' defenses against overt persuasion. V2 and V3 both rely on a dismissive, pro-Marcos counter-discourse aimed at Kakampink critics, though in different registers: V2 channels it through a sitting senator's composed dismissal of “bitter” bashers in a polished, scripted short film, while V3 channels it through a lifestyle vlogger's charge of nagmamalinis in a casual, conversational register — a convergence consistent with the two videos' shared production house. All three lean on authenticity performance — Taglish code-switching, direct address, informal or quasi-informal production — consistent with [Soriano and Gaw's \(2022\)](#) observation that performed ordinariness earns political communicators credibility, even when, as

in V2, that ordinariness is staged by a professional production team.

Visibility and messaging strategy (RQ4)

V1's widely reported cross-platform virality (671,000+ Facebook views within days; [Interaksyon, 2022](#)) corresponds with its most cautious, deniable messaging — a reading that holds if cross-platform figures alone are taken as the measure of reach. Independently retrieved, same-day YouTube-native metrics (August 25, 2026) complicate that reading considerably: on YouTube specifically, V1 drew only 100,000 views, well below both V2 (356,000) and V3 (331,000). V3, whose reach went unreported in the 2022 press coverage available to this study and was accordingly treated as the corpus's least-visible video, in fact drew YouTube-native reach nearly identical to V2's, despite V3's more implicit, lifestyle-coded messaging and its near-absence from contemporary news coverage. V2 and V3 — both produced by VinCentiments, a channel with 1.85 million subscribers — thus drew comparable YouTube audiences regardless of how explicitly each engaged the campaign's moral vocabulary, while V1 — produced independently, hosted on a channel with roughly a quarter of VinCentiments' subscriber base — drew markedly less YouTube-native reach despite its greater cross-platform virality via Facebook sharing. This pattern suggests that channel and production backing, more than a video's own political explicitness, shaped YouTube-native reach in this corpus: a well-subscribed production house's videos drew comparable audiences whether their political content was foregrounded (V2) or masked (V3), while a video without that backing drew a smaller YouTube-native audience even when it went viral by other means. It also cautions against reading a video's contemporary press coverage as a proxy for its actual platform reach: V3's near-absence from 2022 news coverage did not correspond to low YouTube viewership. Given the corpus size, this is offered as a pattern observed across these three cases rather than a generalizable relationship, and it points to a testable hypothesis for future research with a larger sample: that a production house's existing subscriber base, more than a video's political explicitness, predicts its YouTube-native reach.

Why channel backing predicts reach

This study is not designed to test platform mechanics directly, but two literatures offer plausible explanations for why, in this corpus, YouTube-native reach appears to be driven more by VinCentiments' existing subscriber base than by each video's political explicitness. First, YouTube's recommendation system is trained largely on viewers' prior watch history and subscriptions: [Covington et al. \(2016\)](#), describing the system's architecture, note that a viewer's established relationship with a channel is one of the strongest predictors the algorithm uses to surface new uploads, largely independent of a given video's specific content. [Rieder et al. \(2018\)](#) similarly find that YouTube's visibility mechanisms reward channel-level signals — accumulated views, engagement history, subscriber count — over topical match to a search or discovery query, functioning less as a neutral content-ranking system than as one that compounds existing channel authority. Second, a parasocial-relationship account ([Horton & Wohl, 1956](#)) suggests viewers who already follow a channel return out of a felt relationship with its hosts and format, not because a given upload's political content draws them in specifically; on this account, a subscriber base functions as a standing audience a channel can activate on broadly similar terms regardless of what a specific video argues. Both mechanisms align with the broader economics-of-attention literature on YouTube, which documents a highly concentrated, long-tail distribution of views in which established channels retain a durable reach advantage over independently produced content of comparable or even superior virality elsewhere ([Bärthel, 2018](#); [Budzinski & Gaenssle, 2020](#)) — consistent with V1's markedly higher Facebook virality translating into markedly lower YouTube-native reach than V2 or V3, despite V1 engaging the campaign's moral vocabulary just as directly.

Read together, these accounts suggest the pattern observed here reflects platform-level distribution dynamics operating upstream of any single video's framing choices, rather than a property of the framing itself — a mechanism this study's three-video, single-snapshot design can identify but not directly test, and which the Directions for Further Research section below identifies as a priority for confirmation at scale.

Synthesis

The three videos form a shared moral economy built on three parallel binaries: deceived versus discerning voter (V1), bitter basher versus composed citizen (V2), and performatively moral versus authentically grounded person (V3). None required an explicit partisan declaration to function, consistent with [Soriano and Gaw \(2022\)](#) and [Gaw and Arugay \(2024\)](#): the least recognizably political messaging was often the most effective. The analysis also suggests that [Entman's \(1993\)](#) moral-evaluation function is especially amplified in lifestyle and commentary content, where personal moral authority substitutes for policy arguments, a pattern worth further study in short-form political communication. Independently retrieved YouTube metrics further suggest that production and channel backing, rather than political explicitness, were stronger drivers of a video's YouTube-native reach in this corpus—a pattern that complicates any simple story about visibility and caution and merits testing at scale.

CONCLUSIONS

This study examined moral framing across three 2022 Philippine election-adjacent YouTube videos and found that they are not merely related but constitute a coherent moral economy that contests voter identity, moral authority, and political legitimacy without explicit partisan declarations. All four research questions were addressed within the scope of this three-video corpus: RQ1–RQ3 through the case-by-case and cross-format analyses above, and RQ4 through a visibility comparison using independently retrieved YouTube metrics. However, the RQ4 finding is best read as a pattern requiring confirmation on a larger, platform-consistent sample rather than a settled generalization.

Four conclusions are as follows:

1. Moral framing functions as covert political communication comparable in effect to formal campaign messaging, even when it never registers as political advertising.
2. The three videos are in deliberate, documented intertextual dialogue: V3 is a direct parody of V1, and V2 and V3 share a single production house (VinCentiments), which independently produced its own parody of the same ad.
3. Independently retrieved same-day YouTube metrics show that production and channel backing, not political explicitness, best predict a video's YouTube-native reach in this corpus: V2 and V3, both produced by VinCentiments, drew comparable audiences (356,000 and 331,000 views, respectively), regardless of whether their political content was foregrounded (V2, whose persona was widely read — and not publicly disputed by its director — as targeting a rival candidate) or masked (V3). By contrast, V1, produced independently on a smaller channel, drew markedly less YouTube-native reach (100,000 views) despite far greater cross-platform virality on Facebook. This suggests that a production house's existing subscriber base can matter more than a video's political explicitness in shaping its reach on YouTube specifically, a pattern with implications for how election regulators think about influence, though it warrants testing on a larger corpus before it can be generalized.
4. Entman's moral-evaluation function appears disproportionately amplified in informal

video content, where personal moral authority substitutes for policy argument. This suggests that framing theory may benefit from a sharper account of how moral evaluation operates when conveyed through narrative and performance rather than explicit argument.

Together, these findings show that the boundary between entertainment and political communication was highly porous during the 2022 campaign — a structural rather than incidental feature of Philippine digital politics, made more visible because all three videos were published before the campaign's official regulatory window opened.

This study contributes both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, it extends framing theory to informal, election-adjacent video content and offers a more precise account of moral evaluation as a frame function in personal-narrative and performance-based media. Practically, it points to implications for election communication and regulation, grounded in a three-video corpus and developed further in the recommendations below.

Recommendations

The recommendations below are analytical implications drawn from this three-video corpus, not generalizable prescriptions; they are intended to inform further research and pilot policy discussion rather than to stand alone as evidence-based mandates.

For COMELEC and election regulators: revisit the definitions of “political advertising” under the Omnibus Election Code to capture covert moral framing, including content published just before the official campaign window; build monitoring capacity for unofficial YouTube content; and collaborate with academics and civil society to develop frameworks that distinguish organic commentary from coordinated influence.

For media literacy educators and civil society: extend media literacy beyond misinformation detection to include recognition of moral framing, especially in lifestyle formats; embed framing-theory modules in secondary and tertiary curricula using Taglish examples; and expand fact-checking mandates to cover framing, not only factual claims.

For content creators and journalists: encourage transparency about political alignment when using charged moral vocabulary during campaigns; develop ethical guidelines for influencer-journalists operating in the gray zone; and support creator-education programs on the political dimensions of election-adjacent content.

LIMITATIONS & FURTHER RESEARCH

The study is limited by its small, three- video corpus, which supports analytical depth but not generalization. As interpretive qualitative work, the findings are shaped by the researchers' positionality and Taglish competence; the low inter-coder reliability reported in the Methodology ($\kappa = .14$) indicates that, while coders converged on which passages carried interpretive weight, they diverged considerably on which sub- dimension best characterized a given passage. Readers should weigh the study's specific category assignments accordingly, even where its broader thematic claims proved more stable across coders. The study addresses textual construction only, not audience reception, and is confined to the 2022 cycle and YouTube, leaving cross-platform circulation on Facebook, TikTok, and Twitter/X for future work. The analysis also relies substantially on secondary media sources entertainment and news outlets—for view counts, production credits, and public statements attributed to the videos' creators; where possible, these were sourced from more established news outlets rather than entertainment aggregators. RQ 4's visibility analysis draws on independently retrieved, platform-consistent YouTube metrics gathered for all three videos on a single date (August 25, 2026), which closes the gap left by 2022 news coverage that never reported V3's reach at all. Those metrics, however, are a single 2026

snapshot reflecting over four years of accumulated viewing since the videos' release, not the videos' relative reach during the 2022 campaign period itself; the campaign- era cross- platform figures cited elsewhere in the Findings (from Facebook shares reported in contemporary news coverage) are a closer, if less precise and less comparable across videos, proxy for contemporaneous reach, and the two should not be conflated. A stronger visibility comparison would also independently verify each video's actual view trajectory over time, rather than relying on a single later-date snapshot. Finally, all three videos were published five to six days before the Commission on Elections' official campaign period opened on February 8, 2022, which limits how directly this study's findings generalize to content produced during the official campaign window itself, even as it strengthens the paper's broader point about moral framing operating in a regulatory gap.

Priority directions include: audience-reception studies using focus groups or experiments to test how frames are decoded; addressing the frame-setting side of framing theory this study could not reach; expanding the corpus for systematic cross-format comparison, with platform metrics independently and consistently retrieved; longitudinal comparison of framing vocabularies across the 2016, 2019, 2022, and 2025 election cycles; cross-platform analysis extending to Facebook, TikTok, and Twitter/X, where TikTok in particular played a major campaign role (Mendoza, 2022); comparative application of this analytical procedure to other Southeast Asian democracies; large-scale computational analysis of framing vocabulary across a broader video corpus; and creator-focused interviews examining how video producers understand their own political role. Researchers seeking to apply this study's coding framework (Table 2) elsewhere should budget for inter-coder reliability testing from the outset and consider consolidating the sub-dimensions within each category, since this study's three-coder reliability check ($\kappa = .14$) suggests the current sub-dimensions are too conceptually overlapping for coders to apply them consistently, even when they agree on the underlying observation.

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