

Queering Local Governments: LGBTIQ+ Movement Organizations as Strategic Brokers for Sexual Citizenship in Philippine Local Governments

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ABSTRACT

The advocacy for sexual citizenship in the Philippines has been arduous. This manifests in the decades-long assertion of the LGBTIQ+ movement for the passage of the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity or Expression (SOGIE) Equality Bill which penalizes discriminatory acts based on categories of sexuality and gender. But the last decade witnessed success in localizing anti-discrimination legislation through the passage of many city and municipality ordinances. This political phenomenon created another space for LGBTIQ+ organizations to assert sexual citizenship in government policy and decision making. This paper explores how these organizations broker for recognition, inclusion, and acceptance of the LGBTIQ+ community in Quezon City and Manila. Using focused-group interviews with LGBTIQ+ movement organizations and strategic brokerage as an analytical frame, this paper finds that queering local governments observes a process where organizations proactively bridge the gap between communities and governments.

Their roles as strategic brokers start with linking community concerns to state officials, networking with other organizations, translating LGBTIQ+ narratives for local policy making, and transacting with local officials. In the process of brokering, these organizations not only fight for sexual citizenship but maintain the civic space by capacitating local communities to initiate engagement and reminding the government of its responsibilities mandated by the ordinances. Amidst the many challenges in brokering, LGBTIQ+ organizations continue to persist and resist in and beyond these new spaces of contention and collaboration.

Keywords: LGBTIQ+ movement organization, sexual citizenship, strategic brokering, local government, Metro Manila

SEXUAL CITIZENSHIP IN THE PHILIPPINES

Unlike traditional anchors of citizenship rooted in nation states and their geographic territories or cultural communities, sexual citizenship takes after the domains of sexuality, sexual rights, and relations beyond the socially accepted male/female binary (Manalastas & Torre, 2012). It centers on the intimate aspects of a person's life including one's sexual and/or emotional facets and how society recognizes one's unique lived sexual experiences. For those who identify with genders outside the binary, the intertwined nature of one's sexuality and its social acceptance determines their access to and enjoyment of human rights (Manalastas & Torre, 2012). Beyond this, being lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer (LGBTIQ+) also impacts on their legal, political, and civil rights which include civil partnerships, territorial access, and even educational, health, employment, and political opportunities in most regions in the world (UNDP & USAID, 2014; Adihartono & Jocson, 2020; Miranda, 2021).

According to reports during the Asia Pacific Forum in 2010, there are still nations where identifying as part of the LGBTIQ+ community impacts not just their enjoyment of these rights but also their personal lives, safety, and security. These lived inequalities exist both in formal

and informal systems in the Philippines (Lim, 2013). Although the Philippine Constitution includes provisions on equal rights and the country is a party to many international human rights conventions like the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), among others (UNDP & USAID, 2014), its LGBTIQ+ community is continuously being challenged in attaining equal rights as citizens (Adihartono & Jocson, 2020). Supreme Court decisions until 2012 only consider heterosexual partnerships in marriage and family life (Lim, 2013).

Since the majority of its population practice a religion, sexual citizenship is continuously being shaped and informed by morality politics and, consequently, this impacts national policies and public opinion on gender and sexuality (Cravens, 2015). Hence, these may not be responsive to the experiences and discrimination of the LGBTIQ+ community who face “repressive government apparatuses, societal stigma, religious condemnations, heteronormative society and the general contempt of the public” (Alavado, 2012, p. 18). Many instances of violence on members were recorded in familial, educational, and professional institutions (UNDP & USAID, 2014). This social discrimination affects even their psychosocial welfare as discrimination is associated with high rates of psychiatric disorders and suicide rates (Adihartono & Jocson, 2020). These realities encouraged the community to represent and assert their sexual rights in decision- and policy-making spaces, hence, the emergence of the LGBTIQ+ movement.

Considered as the youngest movement in the Philippines (Alavado, 2012), the LGBTIQ+ movement is affiliated to the global fight for equal recognition in formal and informal systems of politics. In its advocacy to ensure that sexual citizenship is recognized and its members are not discriminated against in both public and private spaces, the movement advocates for the passage of the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity or Expression Equality Bill (SOGIE Equality Bill or Anti-Discrimination Bill). Its arduous legislative process, which has been pending in Congress for two decades as of writing, reflects the power dynamics between several political institutions in the Philippines including the national

executive and legislature, human rights activists, religious organizations, and LGBTIQ+ movement organizations. Since it has been a challenge to pass a national legislation, the movement lobbied for the passage of anti-discrimination ordinances (ADO) in local government units (LGUs).

Several cities and municipalities have practiced their political agency mandated by Republic Act 7160 or the Local Government Code of 1991 in legislating ordinances that provide for spaces of participation for the LGBTIQ+ community. In fact, there are already 31 ADOs around the country as of July 2021 (Miranda, 2021). For instance, Quezon City's Ordinance No. 2357 or the Gender Fair Ordinance of 2014 centers on prohibiting discrimination based on sexuality in public offices and private corporations, and institutionalizing several educational and cultural programs for the community. Meanwhile, Manila's LGBTIQ Ordinance of 2020 created the Manila Gender Sensitivity and Development Council that monitors complaints and reviews existing policies and documents if they are free from any discrimination against the community. These local legislations evidenced the changing roles and functions of LGUs (Cooper & Monro, 2010) and how they become more aware of the demands of these marginalized communities. Cravens (2015) argued that this acceptance of their changing roles through the adoption of LGBTIQ+ policies is a reflection of urbanism and social diversity, and promises more efficient and inclusive governance and service delivery (Leon et al., 2020).

The passage of ADOs in local governments and the active presence of LGBTIQ+ movement organizations in these local legislative and executive spaces manifest the political dynamics surrounding LGBTIQ+ citizens in the Philippines. This paper inquires: How do LGBTIQ+ movement organizations in Quezon City and Manila broker with communities and local governments in spaces for participation provided by anti-discrimination ordinances? I investigated the roles of the LGBTIQ+ movement in maximizing these civic spaces as strategic brokers (Bertone & Gusmano, 2013). Brokering reveals not just the communicative aspects of movements but also their rhetorical potential in asserting sexual citizenship and its related rights to governments and challenging its heteronormative structures. This policy transaction possibly queers LGUs,

and this “queering” of local governments provides a glimpse into the changing role/s of LGUs in reaching out to marginalized sectors like the LGBTIQ+ community.

This study aims to understand the dynamics between LGBTIQ+ organizations and LGUs, and how this partnership determines the rights and services that members of the community receive which remains an underexplored topic in identity politics and public administration in the Philippines (Miranda, 2021) and in the world (Larson, 2021). The significance of this study lies in the evaluation of anti-discrimination ordinances as a policy that democratizes government spaces towards collaboration with nongovernment organizations and, in the process, recognizes and protects the sexual citizenship of LGBTIQ+ citizens. Further, this paper advocates a safe space for everyone no matter the gender identity or sexual expression. Discrimination is against human rights; and local governments, as the closest public office to these individuals, should be cognizant of the issues and how they can best advocate to resolve them.

THE LGBTIQ+ MOVEMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES

Cooper and Monro (2003) observed that decision and policy making on counter-normative agenda, like LGBTIQ+ rights, face blockages in their passage. This is brought about by morality politics which treats anti-discrimination policies not as a matter of rights but as a matter of right or wrong (Cravens, 2015, p. 16). In terms of public opinion, the Pew Research Center recorded a generally favorable attitude towards the LGBTIQ+ community in the Philippines although this acceptance is more likely to be given to those who still express themselves within traditional gender norms (Adia et al., 2019). There is also hierarchy in terms of acceptance, having those in the lower classes and those with feminine features on the receiving end of social discrimination (Ceperiano et al., 2016). These treatment and perspectives of the LGBTIQ+ community as being a “lesser” type of citizen pervade not just our legislative and judicial systems but also our socio-cultural practices and values (GALANG Philippines, Inc., 2013).

While LGBTIQ+ citizens are beginning to gain rights and incorporation in society as full-fledged members, these benefits are still strongly anchored on how political actors (i.e., the state, the legislators, and the public) recognize them (Cooper & Monro, 2003). LGBTIQ+ activism in Southeast Asia, in particular, is guided by the social identity of the community, and also the politics of identification and alliance of heterosexual allies (Manalastas & Torre, 2012). These organizations underscore the essence of the support of political leaders and allies in guaranteeing the rights afforded to their community (Bertone & Gusmano, 2013) because in some countries like the Philippines, freedom of sexual expression, access to education, employment opportunities, and the ability to run for public office are still limited for citizens who identify as LGBTIQ+ (UNDP & USAID, 2014; Adihartono & Jocson, 2020). These inequalities encourage many LGBTIQ+ organizations to continue the fight until they achieve the equal society they envision.

The Philippine LGBTIQ+ movement started during the 1990s. University of the Philippines Babaylan, established in 1992, is hailed as the oldest LGBTIQ+ organization in the country. The decade also witnessed the first demonstration of LGBTIQ+ organizations in pride marches and other political events like the anti-Value Added Tax protests (UNDP & USAID, 2014). ProGay Philippines and Metropolitan Community Church led the first ever Pride March from Quezon Avenue to Quezon City Memorial Circle in June 1994. This repertoire manifested solidarity and sociopolitical awareness of the community and the assertion of sexual rights in public spaces (UNDP & USAID, 2014). During the 2000s, there was an expansion of activities of the movement, significant attention given by the media, and the establishment of Ang Ladlad as a political party. Akbayan Citizens' Action Party helped create an LGBTIQ+ network through the Lesbian and Gay Legislative Advocacy Network (LAGABLAB). This consultation resulted in the creation of the Anti-Discrimination Bill of 2000 which Senator Miriam Defensor-Santiago and Representative Loretta Rosales filed in the Congress (UNDP & USAID, 2014). Twenty years hence, the law is still pending as its opposition argues that LGBTIQ+ citizens already enjoy protection from existing laws and the bill threatens the family as the foundation of Filipino society (Yarcia et al., 2019).

Through the years, LGBTIQ+ organizations have been created with various advocacies; some are focused on health, education, or employment, while others are anchored on religion and social welfare (UNDP & USAID, 2014). These organizations helped the movement become visible in public spaces and local communities (Yarcia et al., 2019). But social recognition did not automatically translate into legal rights and protection. Thus, the fight of the LGBTIQ+ movement continued. These organizations conducted various sustained and organized strategies like education training for the LGBTIQ+ and allies to challenge the status quo (Manalastas & Torre, 2012). On the global stage, Alavado (2012) asserted that international LGBTIQ+ movements have successfully created networks. This allows them to learn from each other's repertoires while also creating a support system for the advocacy. Even so, the LGBTIQ+ movement has yet to be recognized as an official marginalized sector in the country. In 2010, Ang Ladlad was disqualified from participating in the national elections as a representative of the LGBTIQ+ community. The Commission on Elections explained this decision using reasons founded on morality: "that LGBTIQ+ people are, as a whole, indecent and degraded, 'advocate' against moral standards, and therefore violate both the Civil Code and the Revised Penal Code" (Manalastas & Torre, 2012, p. 3) and the party might tolerate immorality which offends religious beliefs (UNDP & USAID, 2014).

In recent years, the number of LGBTIQ+ public officials has been increasing but they are not spared from prejudice and discrimination despite being in positions of power (Gamboa et al., 2020). Especially in local governments where dynastic/oligarchic governance exists, LGBTIQ+ leaders need to strategically position themselves and their leadership identities in a sector that tends to be complicit to heteronormativity even in policy agenda. But the presence of queer public leadership also opened opportunities for inclusion of LGBTIQ+ concerns in the policy agenda of LGUs, especially in passing anti-discrimination ordinances (Gamboa et al., 2020). Miranda (2021) noted that these ADOs serve two complementary functions. They provide legal protection and affirmation of the politico-economic realities of the community. At the same time, ADOs can become entry points for *homoprotectionism* or the utilization

of resources by state agents (i.e., local officials) to protect groups discriminated against based on their gender and/or sexual identities (Miranda, 2021).

As stated, the situation of the movement reflects the ironic realities of Filipino LGBTIQ+ citizens: tolerated but not fully recognized by law. There is, however, a glimmer of hope as LGUs, one by one, are legislating their own ordinances that protect these citizens from any form of discrimination and provide for civic spaces for their engagement. This paper contributes to studies on the intersections of local governments and LGBTIQ+ rights and advocacy, as it extends the research of Miranda (2021) and Gamboa et al. (2020) to nongovernment entities and how they serve as brokers in attaining sexual citizenship especially in local spaces.

BROKERING AS FRAMEWORK: SPACES AND STRATEGIES

Movement organizations, in general, rely on the institutional and legal setup offered by the state (Olesen, 2005) and try to play within this system. In policy making, the participative space given to sectors outside the government provides an operational opening for these movement organizations to assert their rights and also to become both present and visible to the community (Marom, 2013). This shapes the knowledge that is being voiced in these spaces and who has the ability to speak (McKie, 2003). Thus, for social movements which need to continuously fight for their own space to advocate, available spaces to conduct these dialogues become highly essential.

McKie (2003) mentioned how the structure of these civic spaces may encourage or discourage conversations between political actors. She explained that, in the field of health work, spaces offered by governments influence how communities share their knowledge and experiences for policy making (McKie, 2003). These civic spaces transform public affairs into “intermediate public spaces” wherein non-government entities politicize their issues through a dialogue with political authorities (Carty & Barron, 2019). Mountford (2001) also argued that some spaces are gendered, with the interaction between stakeholders

being determined by their gender. For instance, the church's pulpit, devised for traditional rituals performed by the religious hierarchy, gives authority to male figures as "preachers" while relegating females to serve as a listening audience (Mountford, 2001). This creation of gendered civic spaces can also be applied in political spaces, in terms of who gets to speak and what knowledge and experiences they get to speak of (McKie, 2003).

Spaces for participation in the government serve as the middle ground for local governments and social movement organizations. Cooper and Monro (2003) observed that local state officials provide for civic spaces for non-government organizations by creating a framework, through an ordinance, to encourage the participation of marginalized sectors and allow for equality in terms of gender, race, disability, and age. This participatory framework involves "creation of formal standing committees, mini-departments known as units, the appointment of specialist officers, and the construction of internal policy and implementation networks" (Cooper, 2006, p. 926). This framework also requires local governments to share some powers with these groups and create a multi-level and locally designed form of governance founded on the values of redistribution of goods and power and a sense of justice for all (Bertone & Gusmano, 2013).

The most crucial actors in the fight for the recognition of sexual citizenship are the LGBTIQ+ organizations themselves. Their inclusion in government spaces designates them as shared interest groups as they represent the community in the LGUs' decision and policy making. This development is well received by many as issues such as hate crime, bullying, and gender phobia in public spaces are given more attention (Bertone & Gusmano, 2013). However, spaces are only as important as the actions that LGBTIQ+ organizations (can) do within them. Strategic brokering, as a framework, has proven helpful in operationalizing this approach.

Brokering reveals the relational mechanism used by social movements in strategically transacting with more powerful actors like governments. Social movement scholars McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly (2004) define *brokering* as "the linking of two or more currently unconnected social

sites by a unit that mediates their relations with each other and/or with yet another site” (p. 142). This could happen between non-state and state actors (e.g., social movement organizations and governments) or between non-state actors during contentious periods where they interact with one another and build their own identity (McAdam et al., 2004). Consequently, the absence of these brokers lessens the chance of communities and governments to communicate with one another and share their issues and possible solutions (Diani, 2003). Although this is an ideal setup, this space for collaboration requires as much from the local government as it does from LGBTIQ+ organizations. These activists are not just observers or external citizens but they are actively engaged in fostering the networks between the people they represent and the government (Bertone & Gusmano, 2013). Taylor et al. (2012) added that this strategic broker role also demands a more intersectional approach since the LGBTIQ+ community also consists of members who belong to different sectors in terms of age, class, race, or educational attainment. This is why Thoreson (2012) pointed out that LGBTIQ+ organizations are not passive strategic brokers, they are very much agentic and influential in highlighting the issues within the community while not forgetting that there are also individual concerns that should be included in their brokering.

Several studies took note of the positive implication of this partnership both for the LGBTIQ+ community and the LGUs. Leon et al. (2020) recorded that incorporating the stakeholders’ views will greatly impact the effectiveness of health projects. Issues such as HIV and other reproductive health concerns will be streamlined in local government’s awareness; thus, projects on health will address such concerns from the perspective of a specific target community. LGBTIQ+ organizations, as brokers, also share narratives and research on health disparities, poverty, educational opportunities, and service access. That is why their inclusion supplies useful information regarding these local communities (Leon et al., 2020). Further, there seems to be a spillover effect on the positive impact of strategic brokering of movements. Cities and municipalities with an ADO are more likely to legislate other anti-discrimination legislation pertaining to age or race (Taylor et al., 2012).

Cooper (2006) mentioned that having an active broker in support of LGBTIQ+ rights reminds LGUs that there are existing narratives which may not have been considered yet in policy making. This heightened awareness of their plight is an important result of queering local governments since it translates to policy sensitivity. As Cooper and Monro (2003) mentioned, such partnerships between LGUs and LGBTIQ+ organizations also allow for the recognition that the needs of the communities are changing over time, thus local government policies should also adapt to these changes. Monro (2010) added that this strategic partnership between the two political institutions has begun producing more inclusive and effective policies affirming gay identities and needs, addressing homophobic and transphobic violence, and focusing attention on health issues like HIV/AIDS. One of the most evident benefits of queering local governments is the establishment of more LGBTIQ+-friendly public spaces, indicating growing acceptance (Monro, 2010). Evidently, the active brokering of movements does not only structure civic spaces within local governments, but it also results in more inclusive physical spaces. Further, LGBTIQ+ organizations have successfully shaped the policies of LGUs in recognizing homophobia as a hate crime and helped depoliticize the issues surrounding the community (Bertone & Gusmano, 2013).

Ultimately, brokering of LGBTIQ+ rights in government challenges the heteronormative structures of society and introduces an inclusive approach to governance. Thus, while brokering is only a part of attaining sexual citizenship, I argue that this contributes to the process of queering local governments as it actively engages concerned citizens and civil society organizations, making them direct clients of government programs. Cooper and Monro (2003) explained that these assertions in public spaces add a distinctive lens to the state character of governments as they accept the sexuality agenda as an essential part of their work. Lee et al. (2008) added in their article, "Queer(y)ing Public Administration," that a queer state involves acknowledging how these LGBTIQ+ concerns are recognized in every step of the policy-making and decision-making process. Aside from this, queering the government involves changing the identity of the state specifically on "which particular interests, processes, and values are

preferred as well as the ways in which relations with particular populations, sectors, and wider structural processes are constituted” (Cooper & Monro, 2003, 232). Queering local governments also manifests breaking down the hierarchy in these government systems by empowering these organizations to speak on their needs (Cooper & Monro, 2003). These mechanisms reveal the process of queering local governments which is not only symbolic in nature but also procedural and inherent. These sociopolitical changes inside organizations should also be communicated within its own spaces as part of the process of queering (Cooper & Monro, 2003).

This is clearly a relevant development. However, how LGBTIQ+ organizations broker in local spaces—which may eventually queer LGUs—has yet to be fully explored in the Philippines and in the realms of political science (Thoreson, 2012) and public administration (Larson, 2021).

METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

The choice of the LGUs of Quezon City (QC) and Manila for this study acknowledged that these are the two most populous cities in the country where substantial movement actions of LGBTIQ+ organizations have been observed (del Rio, 2019; Mendoza, 2021). To analyze the role/s of the LGBTIQ+ movement in utilizing the civic spaces provided to them by local ADOs and how this possibly queers the local government, two focus group interviews were conducted with seven members of LGBTIQ+ organizations which are active in the two cities mentioned (see Table 1).

This qualitative research method “uses a set of questions deliberately sequenced or focused to move the discussion toward concepts of interest to the researcher” (Lewis-Beck et al., 2004, p. 391) in order to elicit insights from a limited number of homogenous participants discussing a sensitive topic within a permissive and non-threatening environment (Dilshad & Latif, 2013). Purposive and snowball sampling were used in order to select the participants who are active officers in the chosen organizations. The online meeting platform Zoom was used in order to meet the participants and observe distancing protocols amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. The

representatives of these organizations shared their insider experiences, emotions, and privileged insights (Dilshad & Latif, 2013) in brokering with the two local governments starting from advocating for relevant ordinances all the way to policy implementation. The personalness of the narratives and their interaction with one another allowed the researcher-moderator to understand the issues from the viewpoints of the participants. Further, the goal was not to aggregate the experiences but to establish a collective view from their stories of brokering with LGUs and LGBTIQ+ communities (Dilshad & Latif, 2013).

Table 1

List of LGBTIQ+ Movement Organization Participants

Names of organization	Nature of the organization
Bahaghari Center for SOGIE Research, Education and Advocacy, Inc. (Bahaghari Center)	Bahaghari Center promotes initiatives including support, education, advocacy, and celebration for the LGBTIQ+ community. It networks with other LGBTIQ+ organizations, advocates against harmful stereotypes and behaviors, and builds the confidence of the Filipino LGBTIQ+ community (Bahaghari Center, n.d.).
GALANG Philippines, Inc. (GALANG)	“GALANG takes pride in being a lesbian-initiated, lesbian-run feminist human rights organization that works with lesbians, bisexual women, and trans men (LBTs) in urban poor communities” (Lim, 2011, p. 1).
LGBTS Christian Church, Inc. (LGBTS CC)	LGBTS Christian Church is a liberating ecumenical community that conducts spiritual activities for and with LGBTQ+ people (LGBTS Christian Church, n.d.).

Names of organization	Nature of the organization
Metro Manila Pride (MMPrize)	Metro Manila Pride is a “volunteer-managed, non-partisan, not-for-profit organization dedicated to educating, equipping and empowering the Filipino LGBTQIA+ and their communities to work towards a future that recognizes and respects the rights of LGBTQIA+ persons to a dignified life without discrimination and prejudice” (Metro Manila Pride, n.d.).
Pioneer Filipino Transgender Movement (PFTM)	Pioneer FTM is “a community organization that advocates for SOGIESC (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics) and Human Rights education, HIV /AIDS awareness and providing information on medically guided hormone-replacement therapy among Trans Masculine communities in the PH” (Pioneer FTM, n.d.).
Rainbow Rights Philippines (R-Rights)	Rainbow Rights Philippines is “a non-governmental, non-profit, non-partisan organization focused on legal literacy and empowerment with respect to SOGIE and gender-based laws and policies” (Rainbow Rights Philippines, n.d.).
University of the Philippines Babaylan (UP Babaylan)	“Established in 1992, UP Babaylan is the longest-existing duly recognized LGBTQI student organization in the Philippines and in Asia based in UP Diliman” (UP Babaylan, n.d.).

The anti-discrimination ordinances and the transcript of the focus group interviews were analyzed using strategic brokering as a framework. The important role of moderators in ensuring that participants felt safe in the environment was employed in the focus group interviews (Dilshad & Latif, 2013). The analysis focused on the relational mechanism of LGBTIQ+ organizations which reveals the political dynamics between and among the citizens, the local states, and the organization themselves. Queering local governments is effected through the breaking down of hierarchy and patriarchy in these political systems by acknowledging issues specific to these marginalized communities and empowering them to speak of their struggles (Cooper & Monro, 2003). This exercise can only be ensured if LGBTIQ+ organizations continue actively pursuing and maintaining these spaces (Monro, 2006). Indeed, these civic spaces brokered by local LGBTIQ+ organizations provide resource mobilization for a relatively young and controversial movement in which they can assert their rights before more powerful actors like local governments and public officials (Wald et al., 1996).

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

LGBTIQ+ Organizations as Strategic Brokers in Local Governments

This paper explores the relational mechanisms of LGBTIQ+ movement organizations as brokers in newly minted spaces for interaction and contention afforded by local ADOs in two of the biggest urban cities in the country. I recognize that these organizations existed prior to the passage of ADOs, thus their body of work goes beyond the local legislation and the cities involved. This analysis is divided into two parts. The first highlights the civic spaces provided to LGBTIQ+ organizations through the provisions of the ADOs in Quezon City and Manila. Using the narratives and experiences of LGBTIQ+ organizations situated in these cities, the second part of this paper traces their efforts to broker for the rights of citizens starting from building community networks to the implementation of the ordinances. This is an exploration of the processes they employed to ensure that these civic spaces for participation are

sustained. Strategic brokering also reflects how this scale shift, from national government to local government, works towards securing more allies and spaces for the advocacy of sexual rights for the LGBTIQ+ community.

Ordinances as Provision of Space for Brokering

Burbules (2002) underscored the essence of venues for social interaction amongst political actors. In the case of ADOs, their language provides for a communicative structure that can either bring people together or keep them apart (Burbules, 2002) thereby enabling non-state actors to find a place where they can move around and assert their rights. QC has two ordinances mandating safe spaces for LGBTIQ+ citizens. Ordinance Number 1309, S-2003, passed in 2003, focused on eliminating harassment and discrimination in public and private spaces of employment. In 2014, Ordinance No. SP 2357, S-2014 was legislated to provide for an anti-discriminatory policy on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression. More commonly known as the QC Gender Fair Ordinance (QCGFO), this city legislation is deemed one of the most comprehensive policies for the LGBTIQ+ community and has been adapted by many local governments. For its part, Manila passed its anti-discrimination legislation in 2020 which was dubbed as LGBTIQI Protection Ordinance of 2020.

In their rationales, these ordinances verbalized the everyday experiences of the LGBTIQ+ community which required the intervention of the local states. The QCGFO provided statistics on the number of hate crimes that impact its LGBTIQ+ constituents' economic and mental health. It also identified community actors like families and schools, as well as media portrayals, which normalized teasing, bullying, or harassment of LGBTIQ+ individuals. Both ADOs listed down employment, education, delivery of goods, accommodation, public ridicule, verbal and nonverbal harassment, and detention as categories of discrimination. The Manila ordinance extends its protection to online spaces, as it cites social media platforms where anti-LGBTIQ+ commentary should be penalized. Interestingly, the city noted that, as the country's capital, it should serve as a model of inclusive governance.

These ADOs' provisions validate previous studies on the discrimination and stigma of being LGBTIQ+ in the Philippines, thus qualifying this sector for protective legislation (Manalastas & Torre, 2012; Adihartono & Jocson, 2020). Further, Wald, Button, and Rienzo (1996) explain that ADOs are often crafted to resolve issues on urban safety, an issue which definitely impacts LGBTIQ+ members in these two cities.

These ADOs also created specific offices to prioritize the targeted communities. For QC, a separate ordinance constituted the Quezon City Pride Council which is an attached agency of the Office of the Mayor. Its main functions include leading all programs pertaining to the LGBTIQ+ community, spearheading cultural and educational campaigns, and monitoring implementation of the ordinance and complaints of harassment or discrimination. These functions are also present in the Manila ADO, with the Manila Gender Sensitivity and Development Council being designated to assist victims in filing complaints of discriminatory treatment and having these resolved. Both ordinances further delegate these tasks to the barangays. Manila established LGBTIQ+ Assistance Desks while QC assigned the existing Barangay Violence Against Women and Children Desks to include LGBTIQ+ concerns. Both cities give the responsibility of resolving such complaints to their local officials, especially the barangay officers and police. In designating the members of the councils concerned, the QC ADO lists officers of the city, such as the heads of the health, housing, employment, gender relations, and community departments. Moreover, the ordinance underscores the requirement of four representatives from non-government organizations to be members as well. The Manila ADO is more general in describing the membership of its Gender Sensitivity and Development Council. The explicit provision on the space allotted to non-government organizations serves as an assertion of their rights to represent the citizens in these cities.

The presence of such ordinances and the recognition of the plight of the LGBTIQ+ community as victims of discrimination signals an active attempt of local governments to secure protection of their citizens who belong to marginalized groups. This validates the assertions of Adihartono and Jocson (2020), UNDP and USAID (2014), and other scholars that

the community is discriminated in formal and informal systems of the country, on one hand, and local government as a gendered space, on the other. While the passage of these ordinances means that local governments are supportive of this advocacy, this also surfaced the realities and structural challenges faced by the community.

Cooper and Monro (2003) added that these spaces ensured by the state are important for citizens and social movements' advocacy since they depend on the government's recognition to attain maximum impact. Thus, these civic spaces not only allow them to interact with local officials, but also serve as a material space that symbolizes how LGUs are accepting of and responsive to the community (Mountford, 2001). This symbolic act remains relevant in two assertions. First, these LGUs are starting to challenge formal and informal systems of discrimination, which at times, they themselves have perpetuated. Formal systems such as the nation's legislature and judiciary, and informal systems like cultural practices, values, and preferences have maintained preferential treatment in terms of SOGIE (GALANG Philippines, Inc., 2013). Thus, these ordinances are aimed at eliminating these biases, especially on ensuring that LGBTIQ+ citizens can file a complaint in their barangay halls and can access services like health, education, and employment opportunities without bias. Second, the passage of these ordinances verbalizes and publicizes the goals of the local governments and their rhetoric that local states, being the closest to the citizen, are inclusive. Yarcia, de Vela, and Tan (2019) explained that the government's perception of the LGBTIQ+ community shifted from it being "against the values of the family" to focusing on their rights as individuals. This focus on individual rights proves a liberal agenda for local governments—centering on protecting LGBTIQ+ in pursuing their personal relations, living their lives in their personal spaces, and expressing themselves in their personal capacities (Adihartono & Jocson, 2020). These two LGUs communicated, not just to the LGBTIQ+ community, but also to the public that they are a government for the people, especially for those who have been experiencing harassment and discrimination.

Examining the ordinances of the two cities, only the QCGFO explicitly provides for space for nongovernment organizations' representation in policy making and program planning, particularly in the QC Pride Council.

As McKie (2003) puts it, the spaces provided by these legislations allow for dialogues between stakeholders that enhance participation of communities like the LGBTIQ+ community; while the absence of these provisions may in fact limit the movement of political actors in their engagement with local government (Mountford, 2001). Further, such absence shapes and, at times, restricts the information and knowledge that could be shared in these spaces. For Mountford (2001), these legislated civic spaces affect not just the ethos of the local government units in terms of inclusivity but also, the perspectives of LGBTIQ+ members of their rights as citizens and the opportunities they have to engage the government.

Ultimately, the passage of these local ADOs not only provides legal protection and affirms the politico-economic realities of the community (Miranda, 2021) but also, and more importantly, challenges the top-down policy structure that we have in the country especially in our gender legal framework that is still heavily shaped by Spanish civil law traditions (Yarcia et al., 2019). Thus, the recognition of local government units and the presence of these ordinances introduce a bottom-up policy approach that emerges from communities rather than from the national and local governments. The promise of these ordinances to provide for spaces to dialogue between important actors in LGBTIQ+ rights paves the way for more organizations representing the community to step up and advocate for more inclusion until their sexual citizenship is recognized. But French Marxist philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre also noted that further analysis on how actual interaction amongst political actors takes place within these civic spaces is necessary (Mountford, 2001). How do political actors, specifically LGBTIQ+ organizations, maximize these spaces for interaction? How do they, as non-state actors, broker for the community's needs and rights in formal spaces of government?

Working With LGBTIQ+ Communities

Strategic brokering starts when social movement organizations, like LGBTIQ+ groups, link the communities they represent to state authorities—in this case, the LGUs. While the work of such organizations is not anchored on the passage of anti-discrimination ordinances alone and started way before the existence of such legislation, Olesen (2005) stated

that the institutional and legal setup being provided by these local ordinances remains pertinent in shaping these groups' participation in such formal spaces, especially in asserting the political, social, and civil rights of the marginalized communities they represent. Much of the tasks shared by members of LGBTIQ+ organizations center on their community affairs, especially on their roles not just as representatives of these communities in policy making, but also in capacitating them as well.

In their advocacy to be included in political affairs, these organizations also mentioned how significant the values of inclusion and equality are in their own circles. Rainbow Rights Philippines (R-Rights) acknowledges that inclusion started within its own ranks as Atty. Eljay Bernardo, Paralegal Program Coordinator, explained:

We really strive hard, I think in our strategic planning, *gusto rin sana namin*, even our composition is *merong* representative from the spectrum. From the L[esbian], the G[ay], B[isexual], T[ransgender], Q[ueer] +. So *hindi ma-discount ang kahit anong* perspectives. [We really strive hard, I think that in our strategic planning, we want to make sure that the composition is representative of the spectrum. From lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer, so we do not discount any perspective.]

Rev. Crescencio Agbayani, Jr. of LGBTS Christian Church stated that the “S” in the church’s name stands for straight—which reflects that the religious organization welcomes all genders, a specific provision not present in other organizations of the same nature. UP Babaylan, as a student organization, also tries to include students from other UP constituent units and from the provinces in their advocacy. Metro Manila Pride also carries these values as they target sectors like millennials, Gen Zs, professionals, and individuals who are not members of any LGBTIQ+ organizations. Most of these organizations also do not limit themselves to their immediate community or territory as they try to be inclusive in terms of their projects involving communities beyond Metro Manila or their represented sectors. Michael David Tan, Bahaghari Center’s Executive Director and *Outrage Magazine*’s editor-in-chief, shared that this inclusivity also entails the responsibility to not impose the

organization's own language and experiences on other communities as these may have their own way of making sense of being a member of the LGBTIQ+ community.

Moreover, these organizations recognize that, even within the community, there is discrimination as to whose voices get heard. Bahaghari Center, which advocates for community research, states that LGBTIQ+ citizens who are also persons with disabilities, members of indigenous groups, senior citizens, Muslims, and sex workers are still excluded from the discourse on sexual rights, thereby affecting how they access pertinent services like healthcare and employment opportunities. GALANG Philippines' decision to focus on lesbians, bisexual women, and transmen, in urban poor areas mostly in Quezon City was also informed by this internal hierarchy. This is true as well for Pioneer FTM's advocacy to support transgender people and to assert visibility for all its members. As Lim (2013) noted, these assertions, even at non-systemic levels or within their own communities, satisfy a social movements' goal to promote these social changes and recognition.

With these values and issues in mind, these organizations have been conducting various activities that directly respond to the needs of their communities: knowledge production and distribution, peer and organizational support, health concerns, and legal representation. Participant organizations recognize the lack of awareness of LGBTIQ+ citizens and their immediate communities on their specific needs and how to respond to them. These organizations offer focus group discussions and information campaigns on matters such as sexual and health rights, the ADOs, and even the terminologies included in the SOGIE discourse. Capacity-building and information dissemination for families, friends, and allies of the LGBTIQ+ community are also focus areas for advocacy, per GALANG Philippines' Maroz Ramos:

Ang mga communities na pinupuntahan namin ay urban poor communities. Tinulungan namin sila na mag-establish ng sariling organizations na autonomous from GALANG. We provide technical assistance and capacity building to the LBTs in the community para sila mismo ang mag-establish ng organization. [We go to urban poor communities to help them establish their

own LGBTIQ+ organizations not affiliated with our own. We provide technical assistance and capacity building to LBTs in the community to establish their own organization.]

Wald, Button, and Rienzo (1996) acknowledge how community mobilizations spread the information about these rights and serve as support groups within the community. For instance, PFTM provides peer support for transgender men, transmasculine, and nonbinary, especially health guidance for safe transitioning. R-Rights advocates for legal education and improvement of the legal process, and represents LGBTIQ+ who experience discrimination especially in the workplace which remains to be a space where most instances of gender-based violence and discrimination occur (UNDP & USAID, 2014). MMPrize also mentioned how they chose particular communities without an ADO (e.g., Marikina) to host their annual Metro Manila Pride March in order to lobby for the ordinance in these local governments and to aid the advocacy of other LGBTIQ+ organizations.

As these organizations became immersed in the community to offer their services, they also gathered community members' stories and experiences that helped build their capacity to serve as their representatives. UP Babaylan noted how immersion activities allowed them to talk to barangay leaders, LGBTIQ+ members, and interested individuals regarding their concerns. R-Rights' experiences on legal representation enabled them to record the discrimination and struggles of its members. GALANG Philippines added how this community engagement also enabled them to see the impact of their work especially in building local independent organizations of/for LGBTIQ+ citizens. These organizations underscored how the gathering of these narratives from the communities proved essential in asserting sexual citizenship in policy-making spaces. While UP Babaylan mentioned that their participation in policy making involved sharing these narratives to lawmakers, GALANG Philippines asserted that they continued to empower the community to represent themselves in these spaces. Bahaghari Center also focused on producing research output from these narratives in order to include them in important publications on

LGBTIQ+ rights. In fact, Tan of Bahaghari Center and *Outrage Magazine* is the author of *Being LGBTIQ+ in Asia: Philippines Country Report* (UNDP & USAID, 2014). Ultimately, the community engagement of LGBTIQ+ organizations also created civic spaces where citizens can dialogue with organizations that offer them a reprieve from their daily experiences of struggle. This, according to McKie (2003), enhanced their participation in important deliberative venues. In return, Bertone and Gusmano (2013) noted how learning the needs of the citizens builds the capacity and credibility of LGBTIQ+ organizations as they broker for sexual rights. At the same time, the interview participants also shared how personal these stories were for them—especially the narratives of violence and discrimination—since some of them belong to the LGBTIQ+ community, too.

Networking Within the LGBTIQ+ Movement

Engaging with communities as part of strategic brokering also enabled networking and building communication infrastructures within the LGBTIQ+ movement. UP Babaylan noted how working with the community also allowed them to coordinate with other groups not just in their own campus but also with other youth organizations in the country. MMPride provided for these collaborative community-building and learning spaces while PFTM has networks with organizations and communities in Visayas and Mindanao. These networks, according to Bahaghari Center, also established connections with important institutions in addressing and resolving issues on discrimination and violence. Some organizations have capacities and best practices that others do not. More importantly, these organizations highlighted the importance of these networks as a show of support and solidarity, especially when facing challenges such as dissent and invalidation of their work. Amber Quiban of UP Babaylan stated:

I think it's also important to show solidarity in this kind of efforts and initiatives because *nakakapanghina rin minsan makarinig ng dissent. Merong mga cases ng invalidation na nagaganap*. It's really important to show your force going there.
[I think it's also important to show solidarity in this kind of

efforts and initiatives because it is demotivating to listen to dissent. There are experiences of invalidation of the advocacy. It's really important to show your force going there.]

This network also established interactions between and among individuals and groups based on a shared political conflict and collective identity (Lim, 2013). In fact, most of the participants knew each other from having worked in an event or an activity. This creation of civic space, asserted by LGBTIQ+ organizations, manifests Manalastas and Torres' (2012) pathways of activism wherein political actions of organizations are anchored on their representation of the marginalized groups in important public spaces, their commitment to sustain this engagement, and how this advocacy informs the identity not just of their organizations but of themselves too. Diani added that building these alliances increases the brokering credibility of organizations with political authorities (2003).

Even without ADOs, engagement with communities and partnership with other organizations existed and guided their identification, alliance, and political actions in other spaces (Manalastas & Torre, 2012). Evidence of this was seen as these organizations lobbied for other relevant policies that directly affect the community, presented their narratives and represented them before legislative and judicial branches of government, and proactively included these communities in the conversation. Bertone and Gusmano (2013) noted that this engagement also redefines the roles of civil society not as an external entity but "as partners of local governance: from bearers of claims, based upon conflictual political views, to shared interest groups" (p. 264). They supply relevant and often hard to get information for research and policy-making purposes, especially on marginalized communities, which remains an obstacle to participatory governance, according to McKie (2003). As strategic brokers, the organizations in this study facilitated partnerships between the local government and the communities and fostered their advocacy by ensuring that these communities are heard and their needs were demanded (Bertone & Gusmano, 2013). This networking, especially during moments of contention, also allowed these organizations to create a shared identity and a common understanding of their issues in the community (McAdam et al., 2004).

Translating LGBTIQ+ Narratives for Local Governments

Another act of strategic brokering is translating stories, experiences, and needs of the LGBTIQ+ community into comprehensible demands to raise before the local government (Bertone & Gusmano, 2013). Organizations spend a lot of time consulting their communities, translating these demands into policies, and bridging the perceived inequality and power struggle between the people and the government. These processes require them to turn individual truths into a collective demand in the discursive arena provided.

As LGBTIQ+ organizations enter formal policy-making spaces, the local government is transformed into a welfare state and these organizations become formal, and consequently, more empowered entities. But still, the responsibility to maintain this partnership is with the organizations (Bertone & Gusmano, 2013). This means that, while the LGUs provide the space, LGBTIQ+ organizations still manage this partnership and assert their rights by networking with allied organizations and other local officials. They still conduct traditional activism like lobbying, bargaining, and protesting, while they are part of the public space (Wald et al., 1996). In these processes, organizations like GALANG and UP Babaylan underscored how crucial community narratives were in proving their point to local governments. GALANG's Ramos pointed out:

Kung haharap ka sa policy advocacy, haharap ka sa Congress, kailangan lagi kang may ebidensya. May resibo na nangyayari po kasi itong mga ganitong mga diskriminasyon at violence. May narratives at saloobin ng mga LGBTIQ+ sa communities. [If you will represent the advocacy in Congress, there should always be evidence. There are receipts of discrimination and violence—narratives and opinions of the members of LGBTIQ+ in communities.]

But Ramos also mentioned that, while they empowered the community to speak for themselves in these forums, members were not yet ready to present their stories in formal spaces of politics. Even so, these community narratives were essential in the LGBTIQ+ organizations' participation in the creation and passage of these ADOs.

During the deliberations on the ADOs, these organizations participated in the translation of these narratives—from being consulted in terms of the content, language, provisions, and concerned sectors and industries, to monitoring the process of the ordinances’ approval. Some of the organizations were even present in plenary discussions and technical working groups of the LGUs. UP Babaylan shared that one struggle they faced stemmed from the assertion as to why a separate law that protects the community was warranted, and what it means to be discriminated against on the basis of SOGIE. As a student organization, their networks with different universities in Metro Manila helped show solidarity in pushing for the ADOs’ passage. R-Rights reviewed the content of the ordinances to ensure that they contained relevant and complete provisions in comparison to existing SOGIE Equality bills and, as a legal organization, explained the relevance of the ordinance on the bases of the right to freedom and the right to free speech. GALANG played an active part not just in formulating the content, but also in monitoring the deliberations leading to the final passage. Ramos of GALANG also noted how the organization coordinated with barangay councils to ensure that they are aware of the ordinances. MMPride, for its part, proactively collaborates with LGUs around the country to advocate for similar ADOs for those without one, as well as the implementing rules and regulations for such ordinances.

In this process of creating and lobbying for the ordinances, organizations as strategic brokers exhibit their skill as translators—“a continuous process through which individuals transform the knowledge, truths and effects of power each time they encounter them” (Herbert-Cheshire, as cited in Bertone & Gusmano, 2013, p. 264). But in this process, they balance the technical aspects of the advocacy to not be too demanding so as to conflict with the local government. Hence, LGBTIQ+ organizations as brokers are not passive carriers of information from these communities but they serve as agentive and influential mediators in these public spaces. They navigate through different worldviews and knowledge systems, while also not being strangers to these internal and local politics.

Brokering With Local Officials

After the creation and the passage of the QC and Manila ADOs, these LGBTIQ+ organizations were given spaces for participation, albeit in varying degrees. Some, like LGBTS CC and GALANG Philippines, were made co-convenors of the QC Pride Council. These organizations also ensured that the ordinances reached the cities' constituents through information dissemination at the barangay level—a role which, for them, is the primary responsibility of the council. Given that some tasks (e.g., health and employment) were already being fulfilled by other city units, these organizations perceived the council was not as active as they had envisioned it to be. Others noted how they did not have direct contact with the LGUs except during invitations to pride marches in the years before the pandemic. Another concern was the strategic mechanism of recording discrimination cases which, in the organizations' view, was not operationalized. This also impacted the process of filing and hearing these cases. In the absence of the active engagement of the councils and the LGUs, these LGBTIQ+ organizations shared that the burden to reach out to victims of discrimination rested on them, given that the public was largely unaware of the ordinance and its provisions. As MM Pride's Nicky Castillo shared,

Ang laking factor na kailangan ng tao 'yung information. So kailangan 'yung information dissemination ay maganda, kailangan hindi siya nabibinbin sa bulletin board. Kailangan ng active campaign to bring it to smaller barangays—the ones that don't have a lot of resources. [The biggest factor to consider is the need of ordinary people for this information. Information dissemination should be effective and should not be confined to bulletin boards. There needs to be an active campaign to bring this to smaller barangays which do not have enough resources.]

Most of the organizations shared how the local governments tend to be more reactive, rather than proactive as required by the ADOs. Specifically, barangays, which were tasked to receive complaints on

discrimination, were not ready for this responsibility. While there were instances that the barangay and their LGBTIQ+ desks helped resolve citizens' complaints, the organizations were still at the forefront in receiving such complaints from members of the community. Furthermore, these organizations observed that the ADOs had no immediate effect on the awareness of authorities, not only in the local government, but also in the workplace and other relevant spaces. PFTM underlined that local governments, including their health offices, were ill-prepared to include health needs like medical transitioning support for transgender people. Other enforcers of the law continued to apply traditional perspectives of sexuality and gender on enforcement and justice. This active assertion by LGBTIQ+ organizations of sexual citizenship disrupted and challenged the traditional perspective of local governments and their authorities in providing for sexual rights (Cooper, 2006). Participant organizations also underscored the importance of policy evaluation—including the provision of infrastructure and the consistency of implementation.

While this paper focuses on the roles of LGBTIQ+ organizations, literature also suggests that part of their work involves communicating and transacting with government workers and offices established by these ADOs (Cooper, 2006). According to Bertone and Gusmano (2013), in fact, these government offices and their authorities are also strategic brokers—trying to relate the position of their superiors (i.e., the politicians) to the public and the organizations they are collaborating with. The presence of councils in both Quezon City and Manila signals collaboration between the public and the local government. Symbolically, this space offers strong legitimacy to the public, especially to LGBTIQ+ organizations, to transact with local authorities. This strategic partnership reflects a positive outcome towards fighting for sexual citizenship. But the existence of ADOs does not equate to effectiveness, according to LGBTIQ+ organizations, which corresponds with the observation of Gamboa et al. (2021). On the surface level, these organizations highlighted the importance of knowledge within the local government offices themselves. These organizations observed instances where help was requested from the city governments, only to find out that some offices were not aware of their responsibilities with regard to anti-discrimination.

In terms of the impact of passing ADOs on the ethos of LGUs, the organizations noted that the passage of these ordinances allowed these political institutions to assert that they are inclusive and LGBTIQ+-friendly. As Bertone and Gusmano (2013) mentioned, the rhetoric of social justice adds to the credibility of local governments even if they are, in truth, reinstating rights which should be inherent. In fact, the organizations also noted the tokenistic rhetoric of the ADOs' passage—with the intention possibly being overwhelmed by the positive press. Finally, the impact of these ordinances on society might be more difficult to measure since no data is thus far available. A number of positive indications, however, have been noted. Bahaghari Center observed that, in QC, the cash relief distributed during the pandemic included households with same-sex partners. R-Rights' Bernardo also noted the importance of a recourse now being available for LGBTIQ+ citizens: "Comparing without an ordinance, they have recourse. *Mahalaga ang polisiya sa pagbasag ng mga* internal homosexual experiences" [Anti-discrimination policies are important in breaking down internal homosexual experiences].

Issues on and Challenges to Strategic Brokering

LGBTIQ+ organizations also observed that several issues emerged as they continue to seek participation in these spaces. First, they noted that local ADOs heavily depend on domestic politics, specifically on the support of the local executives in the area. Cooper and Monro (2003) argued that the devolution of power to local governments, especially in policymaking, may strengthen the role of local officials as gatekeepers of resources and knowledge formation and distribution. This devolution also requires more effort and visibility for individual champions in the face of local officials in these hetenormative structures (Gamboa et al., 2020; Cooper & Monro, 2003). Moreover, PFTM pointed out that the caveat of local ordinances is that different cities might have different rules and guidelines, thus, a national legislation is still necessary.

Another issue that surfaced was the inequality of infrastructures. While some organizations laud the presence of LGBTIQ+ desks in barangay halls, others shared how some barangays do not have the

structural capacity to host one. Ownership of or identification with the ordinance was also important. Bahaghari Center asserts that invitations for non-government organizations to participate in these consultations was not only a recognition of the needs of the LGBTIQ+ community but also established co-ownership of the resulting legislation. The participant organizations also pushed for direct communication between the local government's LGBTIQ+ councils and the organizations representing the community in order to be updated on the needs, demands, and situations of the community.

The interview participants also noticed how some organizations can be closer to LGUs than others—which could give rise to issues on equal participation and representation among organizations. Further, some provisions in the ADOs passed were found to not reflect the realities of the community. For instance, the organizations noted that the punishment for discriminatory acts or situations tends to be too light and therefore, in their view, not sufficient to discourage such discrimination. They believe that these ordinances also need provisions on evaluation and revision, to allow for updates responsive to the changing situation of the LGBTIQ+ community. Ultimately, these organizations highlighted the need for communities to be included in and informed on the implementation of the ADOs. When asked whether the LGBTIQ+ citizens they talked to are aware of the ordinances, these organizations mentioned that, while they do inform them about the provisions, it is still necessary for the local governments to engage local communities to increase their sense of ownership towards the ADOs as well.

QUEERING LOCAL GOVERNMENTS?

Being LGBTIQ+ in the Philippines, especially in urban areas like Metro Manila, impacts one's economic, social, and political opportunities (Ceperiano et al., 2016). Gamboa et al. (2021) suggest that the country's structural marginalization of the LGBTIQ+ community resulted in its fragmentation and disengagement. This political environment relegates the LGBTIQ+ population to the status of gender minorities, which affects their access to and enjoyment of citizens' rights and political legitimacy

(Lister, 2002). Thus, the LGBTIQ+ movement, through various movement organizations, has been asserting sexual citizenship in new spaces like local government units—resulting in the passage of anti-discrimination ordinances in recent years.

These ordinances have created civic spaces which enable LGBTIQ+ organizations to participate in different activities of the LGUs such as consultations during the legislative process, collaboration in several events, and communication in times of need. These are a reflection of the growing recognition of the rights and status of the community (Cooper, 2006) and the critical collaboration between the LGUs and LGBTIQ+ organizations. However, despite the mandate in the ordinances requiring certain offices to spearhead their implementation, LGBTIQ+ activities are still primarily driven by movement organizations. These organizations continue to perform relevant tasks like (1) linking LGBTIQ+ communities to LGUs, (2) networking and collaborating within the movement, (3) translating the needs of the community into comprehensible policies, and (4) transacting with local government officials. These acts reflect strategic brokering in the form of asserting sexual citizenship in important policy-making spaces (Bertone & Gusmano, 2013). While this study is exploratory in nature, it also documents a process for other LGBTIQ+ organizations on the best practices and possible ongoing efforts to assert sexual citizenship in civic spaces provided by LGUs.

This continuing strategic brokering by LGBTIQ+ organizations enables queering of the traditional top-down approach practiced by local governments. The roles of these organizations as strategic brokers are necessary to redefine the political agenda especially amidst the “troubling normality in public administration” (Lee et al., 2008). The role of LGBTIQ+ organizations in reminding the LGUs of their roles and commitments following the passage of an anti-discrimination ordinance is a vital and proactive step as strategic brokers. The persuasiveness of LGBTIQ+ organizations in asserting stories from communities exemplifies how these non-state actors sustain a civic space in government and also transform the LGBTIQ+ sector into not only a passive recipient of government measures, but as an active contributor to their local states (Lee et al., 2008). In sustaining these spaces, these strategic brokers are conscious

that they need to empower communities to assert themselves as well. They further recognize that, once the ADOs are legislated, the burden of implementation should not fall on civil society but on the local government and its officials.

The role of movement organizations in asserting sexual rights in local governments opens the possibility of queering these public institutions. If queering local governments means that policies and programs to protect the sexual citizenship of LGBTIQ+ communities are automatically streamlined in the government's policy and decision making, the passage of ADOs did not necessarily lead to this outcome. The LGBTIQ+ organizations in this study wish for more active participation and commitment of the local governments in mainstreaming and communicating the ADOs to different communities and implementing their provisions in a consistent and broad manner. Ultimately, the most important impact of queering local governments is the empowerment of LGBTIQ+ communities and enabling their members' voices to be heard and included in governmental affairs (Bertone & Gusmano, 2013). The spaces recently provided by local governments, like that of Quezon City and Manila, are empirical evidence that LGUs are beginning to include the specific needs of the community in their policy and decision making. This breakthrough can only be ensured, however, if LGBTIQ+ organizations continue to actively pursue and maintain these spaces (Monro, 2006) and to demarcate "location within, and relationship to, wider social processes, including the 'multiple circuits of power' that operate" (Cooper & Monro, 2003, p. 233).

When asked if anti-discrimination ordinances could collectively impact on the passage of the SOGIE Equality Bill, MMPrize's Castillo asserted that these local legislations, which should have been stopgap measures, are not a substitute for a national legislation that promotes recognition of the rights of gender minorities. As such, while these LGBTIQ+ organizations are brokering for sexual citizenship in local governments, they continue to advocate for civic spaces of inclusion, equality, and sexual rights in policy making spaces at the national level.

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