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Raining on Rainbows: A Comparative Study of LGBT Anti-Discrimination Ordinances Between the Local Governments of Marikina, Manila, and Mandaluyong in the Philippines

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ABSTRACT

The study is drawn from the challenges and experiences of the LGBT individuals in the country experiencing discrimination and harassment due to marginalization which remained to create barriers to equality for LGBT people. The passing of Anti-Discrimination Ordinances in selected cities in Metro Manila is a triumph for many LGBT groups. The study shed light on comparison of Anti-Discrimination Ordinances and the existing LGBT ordinances between the selected local governments of Metro Manila in terms of its implementation and effects. It identified which among the local government units (LGUS) initiatives suits to be the best that may serve as model for other local governments in their future legislation of their own Anti-Discrimination Ordinance. The study utilized the Principal-Agent Theory to contextualize a situation in which local governments are involved. A qualitative comparative analysis that used key informant interviews and surveys is utilized in the study. Results presented that despite having the same composition and provisions when it comes to its enactment, Marikina, Manila, and Mandaluyong differ in ways and use of systems in terms of enforcement. Thus, the three LGUs may further establish mechanisms to monitor complaints of gender-based violence and provide guidelines in handling LGBT victims and may incorporate awareness-raising campaigns.

Keywords: LGBT rights, LGBT policy, anti-discrimination ordinances

ABSTRAK

Studi ini diambil dari tantangan dan pengalaman individu LGBT di negara tersebut yang mengalami diskriminasi dan pelecehan karena marginalisasi yang tetap menciptakan hambatan kesetaraan bagi orang-orang LGBT. Pengesahan Undang-Undang Anti-Diskriminasi di kota-kota terpilih di Metro Manila adalah kemenangan bagi banyak kelompok LGBT. Studi ini menjelaskan perbandingan Undang-Undang Anti-Diskriminasi dan peraturan LGBT yang ada antara pemerintah daerah Metro Manila yang dipilih dalam hal implementasi dan efeknya. Ini mengidentifikasi inisiatif mana di antara unit pemerintah daerah (LGUS) yang cocok untuk menjadi yang terbaik yang dapat berfungsi sebagai model bagi pemerintah daerah lainnya dalam undang-undang masa depan mereka tentang Undang-Undang Anti-Diskriminasi mereka sendiri. Penelitian ini menggunakan Teori Principal-Agent untuk mengontekstualisasikan situasi di mana pemerintah daerah terlibat. Analisis komparatif kualitatif yang menggunakan wawancara dan survei informan kunci digunakan dalam penelitian ini. Results mempresentasikan bahwa meskipun memiliki komposisi dan ketentuan yang sama dalam hal pemberlakuannya, Marikina, Manila, dan Mandaluyong berbeda dalam cara dan penggunaan sistem dalam hal penegakan hukum. Dengan demikian, ketiga LGUS tersebut selanjutnya dapat membangun mekanisme untuk memantau pengaduan kekerasan berbasis gender dan memberikan panduan dalam menangani korban LGBT dan dapat menggabungkan kampanye peningkatan kesadaran.

Kata kunci: Hak LGBT, kebijakan LGBT, peraturan anti-diskriminasi

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INTRODUCTION

Historically, people classified as homosexual have been despised by the public due to numerous factors. These factors, notwithstanding, lead to the actual idea of homosexuality that stands against the standards of conventional sexual orientation and culture. The discussion regarding homosexuals is currently considered a point of discussion due to extrinsic ramifications and ensuing struggles which emerge as LGBTQ individuals and communities look for social unification (Jocson & Adihartono, 2020). Whereas, in the past few years' discrimination in relation to gender and sexual identity has increased extensively, mainly because of the fight for fairness, equality, and acceptance took the limelight. Globally, members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, and other sexual minorities often experience being criminalized by the law, come across violence and discrimination, lack of legal acknowledgement, and being restrained of freedom to express. This can be seen in the growing body of research shows that LGBTQ individuals have worse academic attainment because of discrimination, violence, and harassment. They also have higher unemployment rates and less access to decent housing, health care, and financial services. Therefore, it is possible that LGBTQ individuals are overrepresented in the poorest 40% of the population. According to a World Bank report, LGBTQ individuals in Serbia, for instance, had the worse socioeconomic performance as a result of discrimination, with the at-risk-of-poverty rate rising from 16% to 20% for such individuals.

Currently, 67 countries still have laws that prohibit homosexuality and LGBTQ individuals still experience a lot of discrimination: between 11% and 28% of LGBTQ employees say they were rejected a promotion due to their sexual orientation, and 27% of transgender employees say they were fired, turned down for a job, or denied a promotion in the previous year. According to data from Center of American Progress or CAP's survey of the LGBTQ community, 25.2% of respondents who identify as LGBT have faced discrimination in the last year due of their sexual orientation or gender identity. The January 2017 study reveals that, despite advancements, prejudice continued to pose a serious danger to the economic, physical, and psychological security of LGBTQ individuals in 2016 (Singh & Durso, 2021). Unrelentingly, women repeatedly demand the right to be seen equally with men, and in the same way, the LGBTQI community strive for the same equity (Sears & Mallory, 2015).

The devastating state and exclusionary attitude against the LGBTQ community around the globe can be dependent and explained by where people live in. A survey conducted by Poushter & Kent (2020) revealed that those who live in Western Europe and in the Americas has a more generally accepting attitude towards LGBTQ individuals compared to those people who live in other regions i.e., Eastern Europe, Russia, Ukraine, the Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa, and Asia-Pacific. This phenomenon can be associated with the

slow response of most Southeast Asian states regarding LGBTQ rights in their own countries. Anthony Langlois in his book entitled "Sexuality and Gender Diversity Rights in Southeast Asia" examined some of the factors related to the lack and slow process of LGBTQ policies. Langlois (2022) argued that the Southeast Asian region has recently taken active strides in democracy and human rights yet still lacks tangible action toward LGBT discrimination and violence. Most countries in the region (i.e., the Philippines) see gender identity issues as importation from the West, which in turn may threaten one's culture and tradition - the so-called "Asian values". A paradigmatic example of this is the case of Malaysia where their leaders such as Former Prime Minister Mahathir tagged homosexuality and human rights as only Western practices, which Malaysians should immediately reject. The Malaysian government extremely encourages its citizens to embrace its religious public culture and practice Islam rather than pushing for rights and moralities.

Furthermore, religion also has a stronghold in terms of the slow progress of establishing LGBT rights. For example, the Philippines maintains the notion that it is a Christian nation and that allowing LGBT people the same rights afforded to cisgender, heteronormative couples is tantamount to attacking the Filipino population's moral sensibilities. Cornelio and Dagle (2019) refer to this phenomenon as the weaponization of religious freedom and the assertion of the militant character of Christianity. Subsequently, Pinsof & Haselton (2016) states these people contradict same-sex marriage out of dread that it will degenerate the establishment of marriage. Other Southeast Asian countries as well live through the same narrative such as Brunei, an Islamic state, infamous for its harsh laws towards LGBTQ individuals. Up until today, under Brunei's Shariah law, LGBTQ individuals and activities are yet to be decriminalized as they continue to uphold its conservative Islamic traditions (Black, 2019).

The LGBTQ community in the Philippines is not strange to this experience and has long been braving the currents towards rights and recognition against state and religion. It has been twenty years since the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression Equality (SOGIE) bill, which intended to legitimize anti-discrimination, was first introduced to the Philippine political body. The discussion on the passing of SOGIE bill has reached twenty years with no end in sight. Indeed, majority of legislators and members of the civil society passionately talk against the LGBTs very existence (Masilungan & Golfo-Barcelona, 2020). Undoubtedly, to guarantee that Philippine society acknowledges homosexuality can likewise be deluding. The subject of the study is drawn from the issues, conflicts, and experiences of the LGBT individuals in the country which up to this day still experience discrimination, harassment, and even brutality due to bigotry and marginalization which remained to create barriers to equality for LGBT people.

As indicated in a study led by the INQUIRER in 2019, 1 in each 10 Filipino LGBT had been assaulted or had been threatened with brutality. Moreover, the Philippine LGBT Hate Crime Watch expressed that starting around 1996, 164 cases have been recorded in which members of the LGBT community have been murdered. Having a glimpse of the different facets of reality that the LGBT sectors have gone through; this paper wants to shed light and raise awareness on their experiences as a member of the LGBT community. Furthermore, this will also give a better understanding in terms of the status of LGBT individuals in the selected local governments of Metro Manila, and how were they able to give assistance to the community. It is certain that LGBT culture exists and is part of the Philippine society. The fact is LGBT culture exists and is part of Philippine society. They will not cease to exist despite society's refusal to accept them nor the government's inaction and delay addressing their grievances.

LGBTQ Rights in the Local Context

Globally, LGBTQ rights have been a matter of question and a critical theme in some of political agendas. A lot of LGBTQ individuals are fighting for social liberties, equity and equality in Congress, higher courts and in the streets. Not to mention, several notable personalities are now looking into their sexual direction out in the open. Correspondingly, there are existing cases of gender-based violence that are visible in the country wherein some of which are high profiled personalities. For instance, in 2014 US Marine Lance Corporal Joseph Scott Pemberton was reported to have killed Jennifer Laude, a transgender woman (Cornelio & Dagle, 2019). In general, there are several cases in which LGBTQ individuals are hassled, abused, and executed in the streets due to their identity. Now and then, aggression towards the LGBTQ community is believed to be fed by the very government that should be enacting laws and policies to protect their rights and making them feel secured. Despite the lobbying and the large body of work available to support the LGBTQ community, the current framework of the country still fails to accommodate and respond to the needs of the community. Hence, there is a need to amend existing laws and enact policies in which it should include the LGBTQ community in their implementation. It has extended to incorporate significant issues, such as, "violence committed at home, discrimination in the workplace, and harassment inside school premises" (Bilon & De Leon, 2018).

Framework of the Study

To have an overview and understanding of the process between local governments, ordinances, and its target constituents, the researchers will be using the Principal Agent Theory model patterned for government and citizens by Twinomurinzi & Ghartey-Tagoe (2011) as shown in Figure 1 below. The illustration shows that there is a two-way process

between the principal and the agent - the government being the agent, performs its duties towards the citizen's needs or wants, and in return the citizens (principal) also abide by the duties set by the government. It can also be noted that the model showcases and acknowledges that there might be hindrances in the exchanging of information between the two variables and would contribute to the determination of effectiveness of the ordinances in each locality.

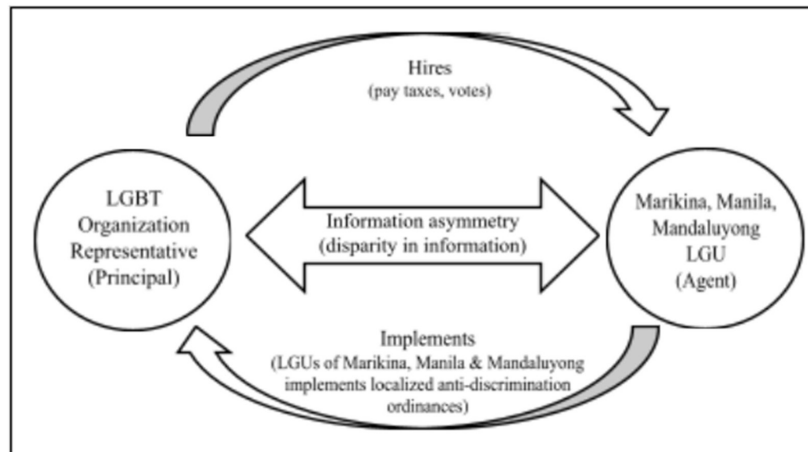


Figure 1. Principal Agent Theory Adapted for Government/Citizens (Twinomurizi & Gharthey-Tagoe, 2011)

In this framework, it highlights and emphasizes the significance to be in contact with the study and have interactions; to which this paper aims to perceive or identify differences and/or the effectiveness of the localized anti-discrimination ordinance within the respective locality of Marikina, Manila and Mandaluyong in how they intend to assist in terms of addressing the welfare of LGBT individuals. Consequently, the local government unit of Marikina, Manila and Mandaluyong plays a crucial role in this process for they are the local authority that may adopt the results of this study as a foundation for the creation of a program and/or another policy. In general, this paper will follow the process illustrated in this framework.

RESEARCH METHOD

The study was conducted with key informant interviews, as well as data available from the local government units involved such as public documents and reports, and surveys. This study was conducted from April 2021 to May 2022.

Research Design

Researchers who use qualitative data in their study often use subjective and in-depth information presented in the form of words. Additionally, the results in qualitative research are based on the narratives consisting of descriptions, experiences, and reports that will contribute to the overall understanding of the phenomenon. With this, the researchers utilized case study as their research design as this allows them to closely examine the data in a particular setting. Moreover, the said technique chooses a little geographical zone and an extremely predetermined number of people as subjects of the study.

Participants and Respondents of the Study

The participants and respondents involved in the study include incumbent government officials from the cities of Manila, Marikina, and Mandaluyong, and those who are experts in the field of gender such as department directors from the Gender and Development (GAD) Office, and officers from different LGBTQ+ Organizations which are located within the three cities. It is important to note that the study has been conducted from the onset of the pandemic up until the months prior to the elections, as a result of this, some participants from the local government of Marikina have declined to be interviewed due to conflicting schedules and priorities.

For the survey conducted for the study, the respondents were chosen through the following criteria: at least 18 years of age, must be a resident of any of the three cities, and identifies themselves as a part of the LGBTQ+ community. Since the study is conducted in cities with big populations, the researchers utilized the Cochran's Formula which allows the study to have an ideal sample size with a desired level of precision, desired confidence level, and the estimated proportion of the attribute present in the population.

Research Instruments

The researchers gathered data from the narratives of local government officials and LGBTQ+ organizations about the distinction and efficacy of their localized Anti-Discrimination Ordinances. The interviews conducted gave focus on the implementation of the Anti-Discrimination Ordinances and how it was able to provide assistance in terms of stigma and discrimination among LGBTQ members.

Table 1. Tabularize Form of Indicators and Their Definitions

Indicators	Definitions
Inclusivity	guarantees that diverse individuals are not only present but valued in such a way that it provides equal access to opportunities for the marginalized and acted upon in a significant manner that goes beyond performative actions (Irfan et al., 2020)
Consistency	the degree to which the uniformity of government strategies is constant and consistent over the long run between the top to the bottom level partners (Van Engen et al., 2019)
Progressiveness	looking for new social, political, and economic constructions, instead of simply attempting to improve results based on existing ones (Rowson, 2015)
Responsiveness	capacity to respond intentionally and within a suitable timescale to demands or changes in the society, to bring about solutions (Holweg, 2005)
Organized and Systematic	it is organized with explicit steps to be taken in a predetermined sequence in accordance with the well-defined set of rules (Bist, 2014)
Accessibility	individuals have access to services, and it permits them to partake in the social and economic activities for which they have been designed (Duggin, 2016)
Accountability	the ability to hold a person accountable, give an explanation or justification to others for one's actions and judgments when fittingly called upon to do as such (Bivins, 2012)

Aside from this, the researchers provided several indicators which are listed in Table 1 above, these are as follows: accessibility, responsiveness, progressiveness, consistency, inclusivity, organization, and accountability. These indicators provide a reliable means to measure the scope and assess the actual progress of a study, policy or intervention. As such, it had to an increasing extent been applied in the context of research evaluation for various purposes (Aksnes et al., 2019). Through these indicators, the researchers will be able to determine the effectiveness of the said ordinance and who among the localities of Manila, Marikina, and Mandaluyong has the best suitable scheme that benefits the welfare of the LGBTQ community.

Locale of the Study



Figure 2. Map of the National Capital Region Highlighting Selected LGUs in Metro Manila

The study was conducted in the Local Government Units of Manila, Marikina, and Mandaluyong which are all located within the National Capital Region as shown in Figure 2 above. The three cities were chosen due to their similarities: all are first-class highly urbanized cities, have relatively young Anti-Discrimination Ordinances in the locality, and has participated in various LGBTQ+ initiatives and activities.

Manila

In the LGU of the City of Manila's efforts to realize inclusivity within its locality, it has issued Ordinance No. 8695 or the Manila LGBTQI Protection Ordinance of 2020. This mandates the placement of LGBTQI Desks in every barangay which are tasked to "receive and attend to complaints, safeguard the rights and interests of the aggrieved members of the LGBTQI community, and document any incidents of physical, emotional, or psychological abuse." It has also ordered the formation of a Manila Gender Sensitivity and Development Council (MGSDC) that is to be made up of a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, an executive director, and 10 members of the board. The ordinance penalizes physical and/or verbal harassment based on their SOGIE with imprisonment for one year. It shall also cover the prohibition of organizing discriminatory groups and/or activities, denying/limiting access to employees (i.e., promotion, opportunities, transfer,

training, schooling, employment) based on actual or perceived gender identity and sexual orientation.

Marikina

The local government of Marikina has expressed its dedication to maintaining the locality's reputation as a sustainable and livable highly urbanized city. They are also known to display commendable efforts in providing a higher quality of life for their constituents by means of implementing social policies and programs that preserve and develop the city's physical and human resources. One such policy is the establishment of a local ADO that ensures the provision of equal opportunities for all locals, regardless of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. City Ordinance No. 065 was signed into law by Mayor Marcelino Teodoro during the 2019 Metro Manila Pride March and Festival on June 29. This practice has been confirmed to be part of the convenient public and safe spaces present in the City of Marikina (Javier, Macaranas, & Manalo, 2020)

Mandaluyong

Due to the continuing absence of a national law that will secure the basic human rights of LGBT Filipinos (to a great extent - the past years due to a weak political assistance from the Philippine Senate) localized anti-discrimination efforts are again a matter in question. This time around, the city of Mandaluyong passed Ordinance 698, S-2018, which looks to "safeguard the rights of all Filipinos particularly those who experience discrimination based on their sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SOGIE)." With this, it is now "the policy of the Mandaluyong City government to provide equal protection for the LGBT sector as ensured by our Constitution and to make lawful authoritative measures on this point" (Dela Cruz, 2018).

Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers conducted interviews with incumbent city officials of the three cities. Moreover, to validate the data, the researchers also conducted interviews with various LGBTQ+ Organizations which are based and located in the aforementioned cities. The researchers also gathered answers of 388 respondents for the survey - 124 respondents from Marikina, 133 respondents from Mandaluyong, and 131 from Manila. The data gathered from the questionnaires would determine the effectiveness of the different Anti-Discrimination Ordinances of the selected LGUs in Metro Manila. To rationalize the respondents in the study, ethical considerations were included with the discretion of the respondents to participate in the survey or not as well as the latest population of the combined three LGUs. Slovin's Formula was utilized with a 5% margin of error resulting

to 388 respondents based from the total number of population from the combined LGUs. Moreover, the availability of the respondents was also considered which resulted to unequal distribution of respondents. Google Forms, online interviews through Zoom and Google Meet were done for the participants and respondents since the COVID-19 Pandemic is still on-going during the conduct of this study and to protect the researchers from the said virus.

RESULTS, DISCUSSION, AND ANALYSIS

Evidently, the lack of legal protection provided for LGBTQ individuals is founded on mere myth and bigotry. Hence, in response to the growing need for the recognition and preservation of the rights of the gender minority, former Akbayan Representative Etta Rosales filed the very first version of the Anti-Discrimination Bill (ADB) or House Bill 09095 on January 26, 2000. It sought to provide legal protection for any person discriminated against based on their sexual orientation and gender identity. Various versions of the ADB have been filed and refiled across every session of congress for the past two decades until it evolved into the current version that is more popularly known as the Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression (SOGIE) Equality Bill. It has expanded to include crucial issues such as “lack of acceptance and violence in the home, discrimination in the workplace, and bullying in schools” (Bilon& De Leon, 2018).

Due to the continued absence of national antidiscrimination law, gender advocacy organizations, such as the LAGABLAB LGBT Network, have been pushing local government units (LGUs) to establish ordinances that will ensure the safeguarding of human rights for the entirety of its jurisdiction.

Nevertheless, the passing of Anti-Discrimination Ordinances in selected local governments in Metro Manila is a triumph for many LGBT groups, who are pushing for more local ADOs and policies to be passed as it is more doable than national law. Despite the fact that we still intensely anticipate the establishment of the Anti-Discrimination Bill in the Philippines, this development for Filipino LGBTs is absolutely a milestone triumph.

This section contains the data gathered from the case study methodology conducted to provide for the following research objectives: to determine if there are any differences on how the local ordinances of Marikina, Manila and Mandaluyong provide assistance (in terms of stigma or discrimination) to LGBT individuals; to determine the effectiveness of these present local ordinances in the LGUs of Marikina, Manila and Mandaluyong that cover the welfare of LGBT sector; and lastly, to determine which among the three LGUs of Metro Manila offers the best suitable scheme for LGBT individuals. The data description and discussion for each objective will be presented and divided into categorized themes - containing data gathered from key informants, as well as the specified indicators (refer to Table 1) for effectiveness in determining the best possible scheme for the LGBT

sector. Moreover, this will also be supplemented by a survey to validate the narratives from the interviews.

Disparity in Directives and Approaches of each LGU's Anti-Discrimination Ordinance (ADO)

In the Philippines, the SOGIE Bill also known as the Anti-Discrimination Bill has long been set aside, passed over, and have experienced numerous times of refiling for decades in different PH Congresses. Despite its loud lobbying from various authorities, public figures, and advocate groups, a national legislation catering to the protection and welfare of the LGBT sector continues to be absent. There remains limited legal rectification for the bigotry experiences of LGBT members in terms of employment, education and basic goods and services (Barrow, 2020). With this, gender advocacy networks such as LAGABLAB have been petitioning at the local level to provide a similar policy within their local government unit. As a result, various LGUs all over the Philippines have implemented a local version of the proposed bill. Various local government officials from Marikina, Manila and Mandaluyong, who have been interviewed by the researchers have identical descriptions of their own Anti-Discrimination Ordinance. Themes such as protection, promotion of economic rights, and grievance committee all showed up as recurring accounts when asked to describe their city's policy. Although protections through laws, order, and ordinances are not sufficient to eliminate discrimination and prejudice, laws are necessary foundations to attain equality (Meyer, 2016).

Provision of Statutory Representation for the LGBTQ Community

Despite passing the same ordinance and having the same objectives for the welfare of the LGBTQ sector, the cities of Manila, Marikina, and Mandaluyong still differ when it comes to their ordinance's basic features, its implementations, and other regulations. One of the provisions of the three localities is their free legal assistance for those who have filed discriminatory cases. For the city of Manila, they have allotted five lawyers from the City Legal Office to conduct free legal services every Thursday and Friday. One participant reiterated that even before the ADO, they have already established free legal services catering to gender-based violence under their Gender and Development Plan. As for Mandaluyong, their free legal assistance for LGBT individuals will only be given once a case is filed in the court. In line with this, they have a grievance committee under their ADO who will be the one assisting the complainants in the process of filing their cases and other necessary procedures. One of the participants from Mandaluyong said that their ordinance is not yet fully implemented because its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) is still in the works, but this does not hinder them in giving legal assistance and other features provided in their ADO. Same goes through with the local government

of Marikina, their lack of IRR does impede in providing legal services and assistance for LGBT individuals promulgated by the ADO. However, in an interview, the city mayor himself assured that Marikina will always have a safe and inclusive environment for people of all gender orientations and preferences (Santos, 2019).

Along with the localities' legal services, the various ADOs of the local governments also mentioned the delivery of counseling and psychological assistance. In Manila, this proposed part of the policy has been put into halt as the local government's focus is still with its COVID-19 response. As of the moment, there is still no allotted psychological program that will cater for LGBT individuals who have or will experience discrimination. One key official of Manila stated that once the pandemic dies down, its free psychological assistance and other services such as emergency hotlines will be given focus. On the contrary, Marikina and Mandaluyong's psychological assistance is functional and currently operating which the LGBT sector can have access to. In Marikina, they have set up a team composed of officers from their Health Office and Gender and Development (GAD) Office in partnership with their City Social Welfare and Development Office (CSWDO). While for Mandaluyong, their psychological assistance program relies on the National Care for Mental Health (NCMH) which is also located in the city. Under their ADO, LGBT individuals who are victims of discrimination may seek services from the NCMH such as basic counseling and psychological first aid - which are all available through their "E-konsultasyon" program because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

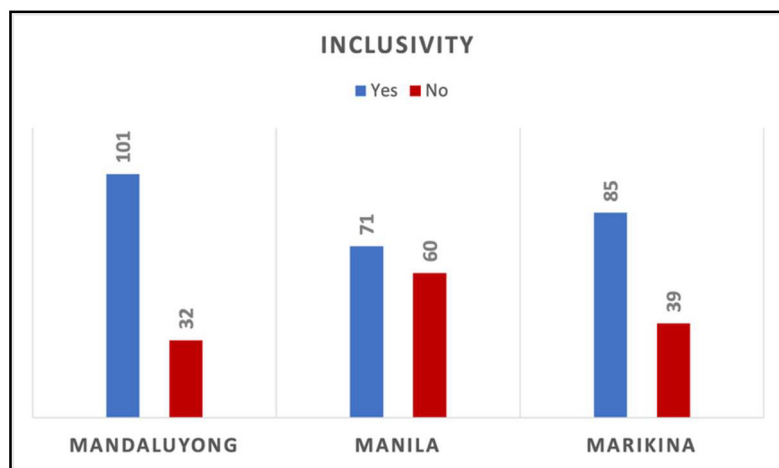


Figure 3. Inclusivity of Programs under The ADO

From the data gathered from the key informants, this also resembles the perspective of most respondents from all three localities. In a survey conducted, as shown in Figure 3, most respondents answered that they find their respective localities inclusive when it

comes to delivering certain programs such as the legal and psychological services provided in the city. They felt that they get the same treatment and equal footing that their heterosexual counterparts experience through the presence of the ADO and its programs and services.

Establishment of Gender-Neutral Restrooms

Another feature of the Anti-Discrimination Ordinances is the establishment of gender-neutral restrooms. There are numerous cases of discriminatory and violent acts against LGBT individuals in the country, particularly against transgenders when using restrooms in public spaces. A paradigmatic example of this case is the incident where Gretchen Diez, a transgender, was blocked in using the women's restroom in a mall. She suffered from physical and verbal abuse and got arrested after the said commotion. The ADO of Marikina, Manila and Mandaluyong tries to prevent such occurrences by installing gender-neutral restrooms in both private and public sector.

The city of Manila has already established their gender-neutral restrooms having only the ADO in effect for more than a year. Despite this, participants from Manila stated that the number of available gender-neutral restrooms is not yet enough. To advocate and further inclusivity, the local government of Manila under its ADO made the creation of gender-neutral bathrooms mandatory both in the public and private sector. To expound this, participant from Manila mentioned that together with the Gender and Development Focal Point System, the ADO will be monitoring those who have provided gender-neutral restrooms already, and those who have not yet adhere to this provision will not be able to renew its license in the city. Since it has only been a year since Manila ADO's enactment and the threats of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic continues, the LGU temporarily discontinued this and provide leeway for both private and public sectors in creating gender-neutral restrooms for the LGBT sector.

In the case of Mandaluyong, there is a slight difference in their provision of gender-neutral restrooms in the city. Mandaluyong's creations of gender-neutral bathrooms are more likely to be permissive and not mandatory as they have considered that most of the buildings and establishments are already built prior to the ADO. City officials of Mandaluyong stated that creating gender-neutral bathrooms in said infrastructures might be difficult. Moreover, a participant from the same locality reiterated that if only the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) were to be passed, then gender-neutral bathrooms will now be mandatory to private sectors. Since the IRR is still in the works, mandatory creation of gender-neutral bathrooms and its sanctions if not adhered to cannot yet be imposed. Those establishments who went out of their way to advocate for the welfare of the LGBT by creating gender-neutral restrooms are given incentives by the LGU of Mandaluyong. Notwithstanding the lack of IRR, there are still gender-neutral

bathrooms in Mandaluyong's City Hall Complex and other public offices while for the private sector and other establishments; they helped the ordinance through turning to creative solutions such as installation of portable toilets.

While for the city of Marikina, they are also going through the same challenges in terms of the creation of gender-neutral restrooms in the public and private sector. With the pending IRR, they cannot require and obligate establishments to build new gender-neutral restrooms. Despite this, LGBT individuals can still access these services as the LGU have already set up gender-neutral restrooms within the city which are mostly found in their public spaces such as parks, museums, and other leisure facilities.

Despite the lack of IRR, all three cities have still managed to advance the campaign of their ADOs through the creation of gender-neutral restrooms all over their localities, most especially in their public offices and public spaces. As shown in Figure 3, most respondents from Marikina, Manila, and Mandaluyong find such programs very inclusive – furthering the promotion of equality in their communities. It is seen as a steppingstone towards the full force operation of the ordinance and alleviating the negative experiences of the LGBTQ sector despite only having gender-neutral restrooms in public spaces. According to Bovens & Marcoci (2020), trans and other gender-nonconforming individuals are being violated and assaulted in gender-separated bathrooms), if in any case a company offers only gendered washrooms, it may cause unpleasant feeling to its employees to feel as though they are not being recognized. But a workplace that has gender-neutral bathrooms creates an inclusive environment that shows the organization's perception about diversity. Furthermore, it shows that an organization does not simply tolerate laborers' differences, yet attests them (Lobell, 2019). Moreover, several studies have proposed that supportive workplace and environment arrangements can assist with advancing an inclusive environment for all workers which can lead to a more positive treatment of LGBT individuals. Despite the benefits of having this feature implemented in business establishments and other private sectors within the cities, the focus of the different local governments towards its COVID-19 response hinders this progress and at the same time the passing of the ordinance's IRR.

Challenged Information Dissemination

In the implementation of any ordinance, the local government's role is to educate, raise awareness, and properly disseminate information about the new policy to its constituents may it be through traditional media, social media websites, or on-site seminars and workshops. This is also needed immediately after the ADO was passed as the public still lacks SOGIE education.

In the local government of Manila, all participants have given the same answer when asked about their information campaign for the ADO. They stated that they still need to launch a massive education campaign regarding their Anti-Discrimination Ordinance which includes gender equality and sensitive training. This is because the challenges of COVID-19 pandemic have halted their progress and momentum in enforcing the ADO. Currently, their information and education campaigns are limited to various government offices in the locality as the pandemic only allows the accommodation of few individuals when it comes to face-to-face activities. With the pandemic's continuous threat to the public, it can be assumed that Manila's information campaign will only recommence once the virus subsides.

Moving on to Mandaluyong City's information campaign, it may seem that they are a step ahead of Manila as their own ADO was signed a year ahead of the latter. A participant stated that their information campaign happened right after the ordinance was signed. This was echoed in by another participant's statement that in her best of knowledge, the Pink Mandaluyong, which is the LGBTQ organization in the city was able to conduct series of seminars to raise awareness and disseminate necessary information. They even conducted workshops and went to the province of Pangasinan for a leadership training and briefing on the SOGIE bill and the Anti-Discrimination Ordinance that the locality also has. Aside from this, Mandaluyong also allocated budget to their public information office to highlight these kinds of projects in relation to the city's ADO information dissemination. They were also able to actively participate in various LGBTQ events nationwide that comes along with information dissemination, participated in the gay pride whenever they had the opportunity, and with the gay pride, they normally conduct various SOGIE and gender-sensitivity talks and discussion. Unfortunately, their progress was put on hold, and they have not fully completed the campaign because of the 2019 elections and due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As for the information dissemination of the city of Marikina, it can be said that it is ahead compared to the progress that the city of Manila has already enforced. Given that this is not the first time the city has shown its support for the LGBTQ community. Marikina's municipal council has been a vocal supporter of the rainbow flag, particularly since hosting the city's inaugural Pride March in 2017. Whereas on June 24, the city's clock tower was illuminated in rainbow hues in commemoration of Pride (Acosta, 2019). Similar to Mandaluyong, Marikina has passed the ADO earlier compared to the city of Manila which can be the reason the two aforementioned cities have a head start when it comes to their information dissemination campaign as major challenges like COVID-19 have not been on the table just yet. Marikina's information campaign started at the barangay level through its information dissemination and education campaign with various barangay chairpersons which later began with residents of the barangays. Aside

from this, Marikina’s information campaign utilized different social media platforms to disseminate information regarding the ADO. They have also requested the news of the passage of the ordinance be published in media outlets. To strengthen the enforcement of the ADO, the information dissemination campaign of Marikina has extended not only to its barangays but more so with the institutions within the locality such as schools and businesses. Lastly, they also met with their LGBTQ sector to have a discussion on what covers the LGBT Anti-Discrimination Ordinance of the locality.

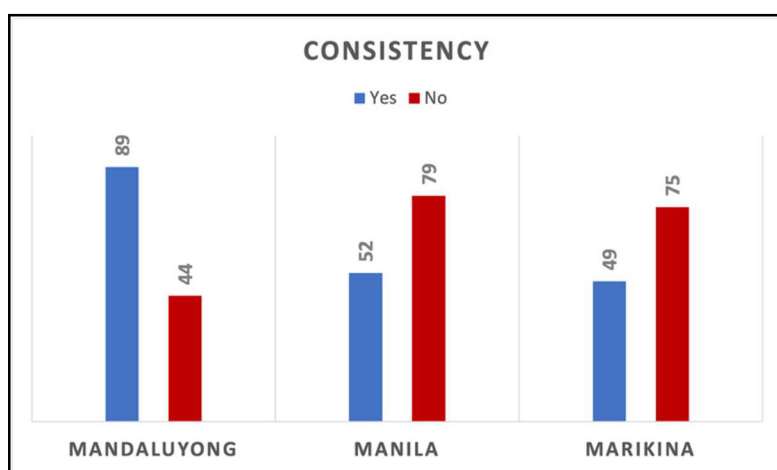


Figure 4. Consistency of Programs, and Other Activities under The ADO

From the information provided by key officials and various gender experts from the three localities with regards to their information dissemination campaign, this can be deemed similar to the perspective of most respondents from the survey. As shown in Figure 4, most respondents from Manila and Marikina find the programs under their respective ADOs inconsistent, particularly the information dissemination campaign. For Manila, this may be influenced by the fact that the pandemic halted the full enforcement of its awareness campaign and has yet to be felt by its residents. Meanwhile, for Marikina, their information campaign seems to only be observed in the early periods after its enactment and since then it has only offered a minimum level of information dissemination through requiring offices and establishments to have a copy of the ordinance. As per Mandaluyong, almost all the respondents deemed the information campaign and other programs of their ADO as very consistent. From the data coming from key officials and LGBTQ organizations, one of them stated that they have provided certain budget for their public information office to be able to disseminate information and raise awareness regarding the ordinance. This allowed the local government of Mandaluyong to continuously educate its residents regarding LGBTQ rights and gender information even after the early periods after the passage of the ordinance.

Diverse Representation of the ADO Council as an Executive Body

These various programs and initiatives under the ADO catering to the security, protection, and welfare of the LGBT sector is said to be monitored by a council mandated by the ordinance itself. From the discussion on the subsections above, it is established that all selected local governments have yet to pass their Implementing Rules and Regulations for their Anti-Discrimination Ordinance. With this, there are some provisions under the ordinance that are not yet fully enforced – one of which is the creation of the Anti-Discrimination Council that is supposed to monitor the progress of the ordinance and amend or revise certain provisions if deemed necessary.

Currently, the city of Manila has not created a council specialized for the ADO but when asked about the composition of the council, all participants from Manila provided similar answers. The proposed council will be composed of the mayor, vice mayor, and the city administrator. They will also be inviting different stakeholders from the barangays, police, and health department. Furthermore, the council will also be including advocate groups, and non-governmental organizations to ensure diversity and representation for the LGBTQ sector.

Similarly, this is also the case for Marikina. They are still in the process of finalizing and determining who shall make up the council for their ADO. One participant stated that they are really putting forward the best people who will represent and embody the objectives of the ordinance and who will make sure that the rights of the LGBTQ sector will be given importance. The composition of Marikina's ADO Council is not far apart when compared to what the local government of Manila is working on. As such, these have also been reiterated in an interview conducted by Hallare (2019) with the city mayor in which it has been stated that the creation of its council also includes the city mayor and other government officials coming from other departments such as Gender and Development Office, Legal, Health, Labor Relation and Public Employment, and even academic institutions. To truly represent the purpose of the ordinance, they will allot seats for LGBTQ representatives coming from the private sector and non-governmental organizations.

In contrast to this, the absence of IRR for Mandaluyong's ADO did not hinder them in devising a temporary council. The Pink Mandaluyong is the local government's sole LGBT organization that was established even before the ADO was signed - which for the meantime acts as their ADO Council. Participants from the said locality have said that once the IRR is accomplished a permanent council mandated by the ordinance will consist of the 12 elected councilors, ex-official members, representatives of the Sangguniang Kabataan, representatives of the barangays, ten board members, and a technical working group. In addition to this, participants stated that they will also allot seats in the council

for LGBTQ associations as they would want to make sure that not just all sectors of the government are present but much so the representation of the beneficiaries of the ordinance.

Training and Livelihood Programs Still Under Development

Hence, the absence of policies and ordinances as a legal basis to address these biased practices leaves the LGBT members with no response for a change and with that, continued violations towards them are evident. Thus, selected Local Government Units of Metro Manila showed its support to these LGBT individuals through the implementation of the Anti-Discrimination Ordinance and its strategic approach, which are manifested in several ways. The City of Manila only signed the ordinance late October of last year in the middle of the pandemic, therefore, is new to this in terms of implementation and was not able to execute its plan of action. Although, prior to the signing of the ADO, Manila was able to have a rainbow pedestrian lane along Roxas Blvd. to strengthen the locality's information dissemination among the residents of the City of Manila. Not to mention, their plan to bring back the Pride March in Manila as well as organize a Manila Summer Pride, wherein all members of the LGBTQI will be invited. Nonetheless, the pandemic had impeded the course of action that the City of Manila intended to do for its LGBT members.

Whereas, unlike in Manila, the City of Mandaluyong through continuous petition and campaign for the passage of local ADOs it was able to enact the Anti-Discrimination Ordinance in the year 2018, prior to the pandemic. Thus, the local government of Mandaluyong was able to have programs, specifically for the LGBT sector which are inclusive and is integrated for everyone. Some of which are gardening programs, wellness and adolescence hub, sports training and competitions, and capability building seminars. On the other hand, the City Government of Marikina have the Gender and Development Office and recently supported webinars about legal laws, laws about LGBT rights and were able to conduct behavioral health needs for the members of the LGBT during the pandemic. Moreover, the city mayor himself have stated that he felt the LGBTQ community should have the same equal opportunities as everyone, free of injustice and discrimination based on gender (Santos, 2019). It can be presumed that despite the perceived threat of the pandemic that led to each respective locality's programs being put on hold, progressiveness is still evident in terms of creating inclusive programs and seminars for the LGBT sector. This can be seen through the survey as shown in Figure 5, in which most respondents from all localities see their units as advocates for LGBT programs. However, the case is different with Manila, in spite of drafting several programs for the LGBTQ community, since its ADO was passed in the midst of the pandemic therefore, its plan of action was not able to be carried out. Hence, this is to note that although most

respondents coming from Manila answered that their LGU is progressive, the number of those who disagreed is quite close to the number of those who agreed.

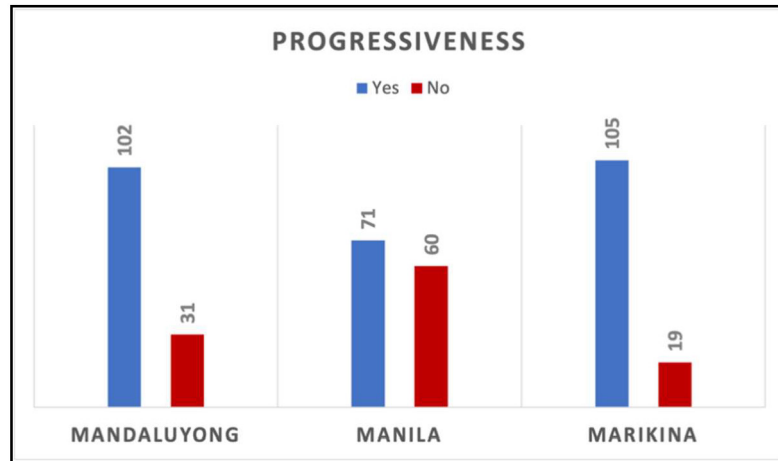


Figure 5. Progressiveness through the Creation of Programs, Seminars, and Activities in Various Institutions of Society

Moreover, each locality was not able to pass the ordinance all at the same time, not to mention the existing threat of the pandemic, making the focus of each locality contain the spread of the virus. However, individually they were able to draft a proposed programs, seminars, and activities intended for the LGBT community. Although, prior to the pandemic two of the localities were able to carry out some of these programs, altogether they cannot really proceed with the enforcement for the reason that they needed to interrupt the implementation of these proposed programs to prioritize attending to the needs of those affected by the pandemic.

Lack of Interventions and Partnerships from NGOs and Private Sector in The Enforcement of the ADO

Apart from the local governments initiatives to show its support and progressiveness through the different strategic approach in conducting programs and projects, the city government seems to be lacking in terms of its information dissemination with regards to the Anti-Discrimination Ordinance and its coordination with NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) and national agencies. Evidently, the pandemic has a massive effect on the local governments within the Metro that made their initiatives to be forestalled. Such as the case of Manila's information and dissemination, they are still trying to reach out with the different NGOs. Although they intend to have partnerships with NGOs and national agencies, but seeing the effect of the pandemic, Manila have not shed light on giving information and asking NGOs and national agencies for support because they do

not have the data yet. All of which are still in progress, they were not able to test the effectiveness of these NGOs and national agencies in terms of supporting and aiding the members of LGBT community in its locality due to the global crisis that the country is currently facing.

Contrarily, the City of Mandaluyong was able to provide and give certain organizations that was able to coordinate with them. Some of which are the Love Yourself Movement, the Engender Rights, who conducts seminars on the barangay level to capacitate the frontliners and to educate the members of the LGBT on how to legally address violence and harassment issues. Lastly, there are five active LGBT Organizations along with local churches and the DSWD that coordinated with the Marikina local government therefore, they were able to form the Marikina Pride. However, other than that they also seem to be lacking partnerships with other NGOs.

Executive Role of the ADO Council

One of the manifestations of insufficiency in the City of Manila's strategic approach towards its LGBT members is the absence of its council or committee which will formulate policy and programs for the LGBT community. Although, the local government of Manila, recently created a gender focal point system in which it ensures that programs, services, projects and activities are all gender responsive, it is undeniably not enough to make up for the missing implementing rules and regulations (IRR) that will be utilized to create such programs for the LGBT individuals. Notwithstanding the absence of implementing rules and regulations (IRR) for the formulation of council, still the City of Manila affirmed the role of the council in which it will focus on monitoring the offenses that would be committed against LGBT members.

The same goes in Marikina, with the missing IRR they have not devise a council yet, however they will be discussing this together with the Gender and Development (GAD) officers and will be coordinating with the barangay Violence Against Women and their Children (VAWC). Desks to monitor the cases and directly report it to the GAD Office. In contrast, Mandaluyong reiterated the role of its council which is on monitoring, formulation, information dissemination, evaluation, and coordination. Nonetheless, while waiting for the IRR, the city of Mandaluyong will have the Pink Mandaluyong as its Pink Council by which members will also be the people who will be instituted in the pride council. In devising a council, the IRR does not have much effect on it for the basis of the council is the ordinance itself while the IRR is needed for any legal proceedings such as apprehension and other charges.

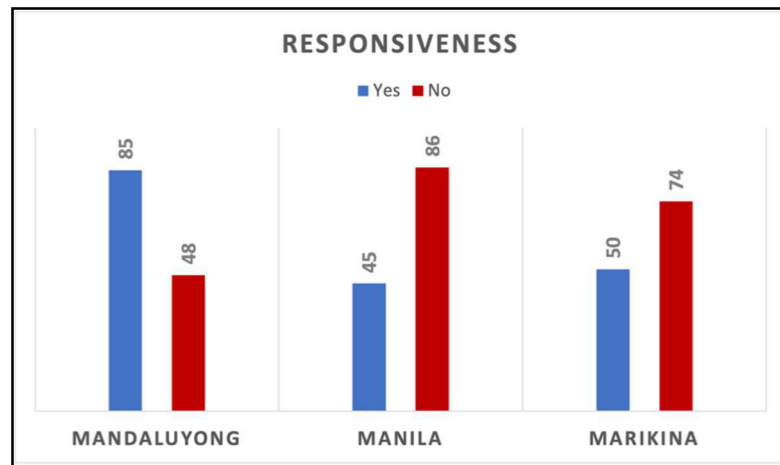


Figure 6. Responsiveness of the Anti-Discrimination Council

Looking at Figure 6, among the three selected localities within Metro Manila, through key interviews coming from key officials and LGBTQ representatives, it turns out only the City of Mandaluyong seems to have devised a council that is responsive to addressing the reported cases of LGBTQ members. Whereas respondents from the two localities (Manila and Marikina) confirmed that as of the moment there is an absence of an anti-discrimination council specifically for the LGBTQ community in their respective locales. This is due to the missing implementing rules and regulations which are necessary to make the ordinance more detailed and comprehensive. Although there is an absence of IRR among the three localities, it has not affected the creation of the council in Mandaluyong. Similarly, all three localities recognize the role of the council which is to be responsive in attending to the needs of the LGBT sector.

Eliminating discrimination and inequity based on SOGIE will address difference in treatment that stems from sexual orientation predispositions that safeguard individuals who stick to the patriarchal concept of male and female and victimize the people who do not fit in the socially constructed norms of what is a man and a woman. Notwithstanding, the 1987 Philippine Constitution ensures the right of everyone for equal protection, without discrimination or injustices, the laws securing human rights are not being similarly applied particularly to people with diverse SOGI. In the legal battle for gender equality, there have been cases that were ruled in favor of LGBTs such as when the Supreme Court favored the Ang Ladlad Party list, proclaiming that the LGBT sector has the right to take part in the system of the party-list on similar premises as other marginalized and under-represented sectors.

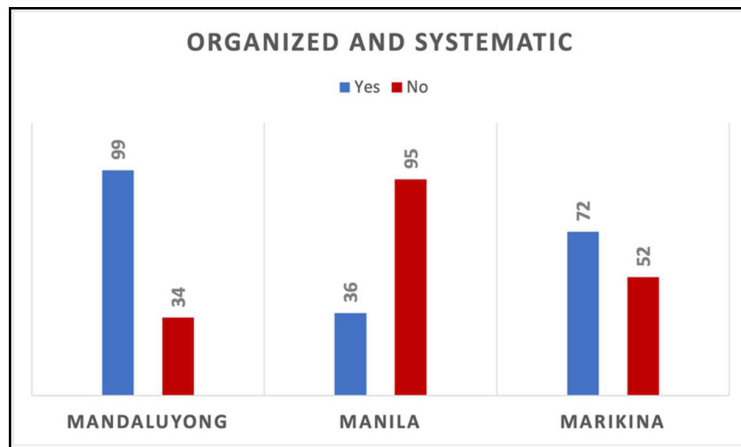


Figure 7. Organized and Systematic in Following Protocols in Responding to LGBT Cases

The respective locality of Marikina and Mandaluyong was able to pass the Anti-Discrimination Ordinance prior to the threat of the pandemic. This explains why the survey in Figure 7 above shows that respondents from Marikina and Mandaluyong firmly believe that their respective locality follows a protocol in responding to and deliberating LGBT discrimination cases despite not having much-reported cases of discrimination against the LGBT community due to the existing threat of the pandemic. Consequently, through the years these two localities were able to create mechanisms to mandate their officers-in-charge on how to respond to reported cases in which LGBT discrimination is involved. Whereas Manila passed the ADO last 2020, in which there is a surge of reported coronavirus cases, therefore key interviews coming from the locality have recognized the lack of protocols in responding to LGBT cases.

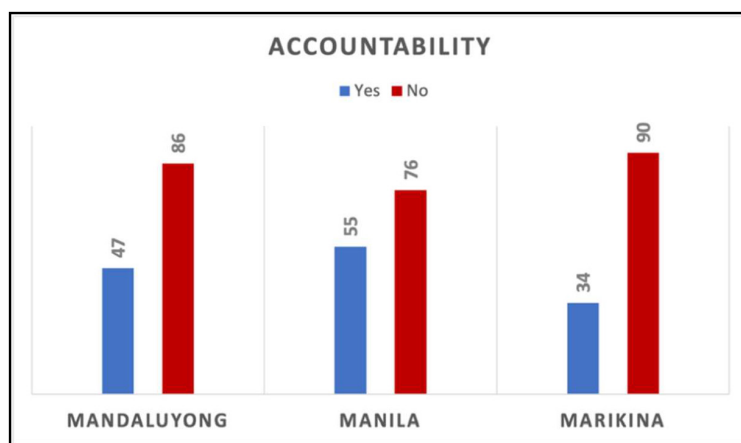


Figure 8. Violators are being Held Accountable and Penalized by-rights and Fair

In relation to the lack of council in the localities of Manila and Marikina, whereas Mandaluyong utilizing only a temporary one – key interviews coming from the three localities find the accountability aspect of the ordinance extremely low as seen in Figure 8 above. This is also to note that key informants in the study have said there are no reported cases yet of discrimination and the ordinance is yet to be used in sanctioning people for violating the said policy. With these set of facts, it appears to be that key officials from each locality find it hard to determine the violators and how these offenders will be held responsible for their actions as there are no official council installed who will be monitoring and deliberating the cases. Furthermore, the lack of cases may be deemed ambiguous in the perspective of the key officials as the current events experienced by the country hinders such observance to occur and that there might be many unreported cases going on.

Existence of Help Desks Specific to the LGBTQ Sector

LGBT members are becoming targets of discrimination, harassment and violence which affect their economic and social well-being. Despite this, there is an absence of mechanisms and intervention from the government which are directed to monitor, let alone address such incidents, not to mention violence against Filipino LGBT community. Thus, prior to the implementation of the Anti-Discrimination Ordinance, it was stated in the draft proposal that LGBT help desks are included in which it seeks to act on cases involving sexual harassment, violence and abuses committed against the LGBTs within the locality. In the meantime, the City of Manila does not have an LGBT help desks due to the missing implementing rules and regulation (IRR). Although, if the IRR is finalized, they plan to have an LGBT help desks per barangay to monitor if there would be any form of discrimination that would have happened in their respective locality or authority.

On the contrary, Mandaluyong have the normal or general help desk where anyone can report or file cases. For instance, there are senior citizens, pregnant women, abused women and children – they only add this to the duties or task of their barangay help desk same goes with issues of the LGBT sector. Similar to Manila’s sentiments regarding LGBT help desk, if the government of Mandaluyong are able to put up help desks intended only for complaints from the members of the LGBT community, the City of Mandaluyong plan to designate these help desks at every barangay as well. On the other hand, in Marikina the desks are included in the Women’s Desks. Therefore, they can reach out in the Women’s Desk when they experience gender-based violence or any complains in terms of the Anti-Discrimination Ordinance. And these women’s desks are designated per barangay. However, if it is in the level of criminal case, they are redirected to the VAWC desks of their police stations. Furthermore, after years of criticism for their apparent inactivity, the PNP of the city of Marikina started rolling out “LGBT desks” throughout

its district offices in 2018. These desks are manned by highly trained officers who give focused assistance to persons facing assault and abuse. However, campaigners for transgender rights think that recent occurrences have exposed the PNP's persistent inability to protect one of the country's most vulnerable communities (Redfern, 2021).

The survey in Figure 9 shows that respondents from only one among the three localities have answered that members of the LGBTQ community can access their respective locality's help desks. Despite not being a help desk specifically for the LGBT community due to the missing implementing rules and regulations (IRR), however, there are still general help desks such as the VAWC desk and Women's Desk in every barangay that will serve as a substitute for the missing LGBT help desk.

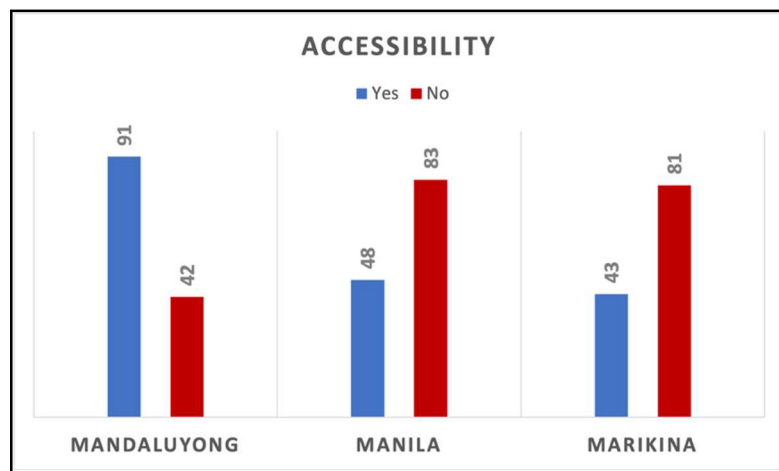


Figure 9. Accessibility of LGBT Help Desks in Selected Local Government in Metro Manila

The local government unit of Manila admitted that they still lack in the implementation of policy and programs as its strategic approach towards the enactment of the Anti-Discrimination Ordinance. The pandemic happened and Manila was greatly affected, therefore, they had to stop everything in order to focus on addressing and giving a solution to this pandemic. Which as we all know, is every local government's objective. In comparison to the City of Mandaluyong, who had the opportunity to enact the ordinance and implement its programs prior to the pandemic, therefore, had a lot of chance for it to be able to put its objectives into actions. Whereas, Marikina may not have LGBT help desks for now but complains of LGBT members regarding discrimination or any actions that violates them will be under the supremacies of the Women's desk.

Pre-existing Supplemental Policies to the ADO

To determine the LGU offering the best scheme to LGBT individuals, the researchers also considered the pre-existing policies, programs, and initiatives that are similar to the ADO. In Manila, there are multiple ordinances ensuring the protection of all genders from catcalling and sexual harassment. One participant mentioned the existence of Anti-Catcalling Ordinance, strengthened by a national legislation through the Anti-Sexual Harassment or the Safe Spaces Act. Aside from this, other participants added the presence of the Gender and Development Code of Manila which conducts gender sensitivity training programs and caters to the needs of all its constituents regardless of orientation and identity. Initiatives such as the observance of International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, and Pride Month have also been present in the said LGU.

As for the city of Mandaluyong, the informant stated that they also have implemented the Gender and Development Code and “there are some similar initiatives catering to the LGBT, but it is more on cultural programs and not on uplifting or addressing issues of the said minority sector. The programs before were not specifically addressed to LGBT issues.” On the other hand, a participant coming from the same locality stated that if it is specifically about violence and injustice that the LGBTQ community is facing daily, it was not until the ADO was passed that it was directly addressed in a policy in the city. Thus, prior to the implementation of ADO, the local government of Mandaluyong’s initiatives and programs are more on health projects. Nevertheless, another participant believes that all their ordinances within the city are gender-inclusive and protect all the members of society. The same participant further reiterated that whenever the local government of Mandaluyong proposes projects and programs, the LGBTQ community are always included.

While on the contrary, in Marikina there are organizations that even before the ADO have been doing programs, sharing, where people like them gathered and be themselves, to provide support and safe space. Whereas another participant from the city mentioned that they have programs under the GAD Office that covers not only the LGBTQ sector but in general, inclusive of everyone. And they are also given the platform to highlight their skills and advocacies. However, there is no written ordinance yet although the same participant stated that the past years the LGBTQ sector are given the platform to express their concerns, issues, and advocacies.

CONCLUSION

The past few years’ discrimination in relation to gender and sexual identity has increased extensively, mainly because the fight for fairness, equality and acceptance took the limelight. However, the passing of the Anti-discrimination ordinances in selected local government in Metro Manila is a triumph for many LGBT groups in the country, who are pushing for more local ADOs and policies to be passed as it is more doable than

a national anti-discrimination law. Despite having an intense anticipation for the passage of the SOGIE Equality Bill in the Philippines, this development for Filipino LGBTs is absolutely a milestone triumph. Prior to the pandemic, all three localities were able to develop several programs and projects specifically for the LGBT community. But with the existing threat of the pandemic most of each locality's initiatives towards the LGBT sector were forestalled to focus more on those affected by the pandemic.

Thus, with the results and analysis that were done in the study, the three local government unit may further establish mechanisms to monitor, report and record incidents and complaints of gender-based violence, discrimination, and abuse. Moreover, the respective LGUs can also rectify mechanisms to address complaints of acts of discrimination and other forms of harassment towards LGBTs. Second, provide guidelines in handling of LGBTQ victims, arrested and detained LGBTQ for either criminal or civil offense if there are any. Third, there are several ways in raising awareness campaign that can be utilized to convey and spread messages, and to gather support necessary to influence public opinion such as working with the media, public, and private institutions. As well as, giving official statements, briefings, and commentaries; distribution of reports, studies and publications; and if by any chance the situation permits to do so then holding public meetings, workshops, and seminars can also contribute to a wider information campaign. As mentioned earlier, such awareness campaigns can be distributed through several means or tools such as radio, television, video, film, the web, online media, newspapers, bulletins, handouts, poster campaigns and arts. On a state level, the state party should amend legislation that could be a result of discrimination against, prosecution and punishment of an individual because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Furthermore, the study suggests the public to play an active role in upholding LGBTQ rights such as engaging themselves in these awareness campaigns.

The study however was limited to comparing the Anti-Discrimination Ordinances between the local government unit of Marikina, Manila and Mandaluyong. For there are only few studies conducted that gave light to the benefits of implementing policies and ordinances to protect the welfare of the LGBT community. Furthermore, this study does not entail those within the spectrum of business sector, academic institutions, government agencies, and discrimination against LGBTs in the workplace. The study only focuses on the effectiveness of the ordinance and which among the three localities have the best scheme in terms of its projects, programs, and initiatives towards the LGBT sector which other local governments can also adopt. Hence, for future researchers it would be helpful to capture qualitatively the experiences and perspectives of other members of the LGBT community who had a mixed or negative experiences in their respectively locality. Likewise, further research may investigate the (somewhat uncommon) encounters of marginalized and under-represented groups of LGBTs in other localities.

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