Unsheltered rainbows: Meaning of home among homeless and runaway sexual minority

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ABSTRACT. Home is a warm refuge for many individuals; however, some were not gifted and became unsheltered. Various sociopolitical factors include multiple layers of oppression, mental health, and unsatisfactory relationship scaffold rootlessness. The study aimed to explore the meanings of home among seven gay homeless and runaways. They were recruited through homogenous purposive and snowball sampling. It charted the track of interpretative phenomenological qualitative research and employed photovoice, a visual methodology. Participants were 18 and above self-identified gay men who had experienced youth homelessness for over a year. Framework analysis and triangulation were employed for the interpretation and validation. For the results, the cohort's meanings of home are forming a non-normative family (nourishing emotional connection with significant non-relatives and achievement of heteronormative goal), characteristics of a home (physical qualities and experiential qualities), positive and emotional environment, emblem of achievement, and genuine parental acceptance. Findings suggest that birth-home and homelessness experiences contribute to conceptualizing and characterizing home as a physical structure and experience. Thus, diversity and inclusivity are social issues that need to be highlighted.

1.0. Introduction

Homes in the global village have housed various pictures of family situations, from working mothers to children left alone at home to homeless and runaways. In 1.7 million homeless and runaway youth, it is estimated that between 20% and 40% of the youth population identified themselves as members of the sexual minority group (Durso & Gates, 2012). Over a week each year, it is estimated that it is as many as 80,000 non-heterosexual homeless and runaways (National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2012).

Ecker (2016) presented overlapping delineations of homelessness to capture homeless individuals' reality across the globe. It is more than just being away from a birth home or a roof over one's head. It encapsulates the deprivation of physiological comfort, emotional support, privacy, rootedness, optimism, and meaning of life (Somerville, 2013). Youth homelessness is one of the prevalent molds of rootlessness. It denotes the situation or experience of young individuals who opt to live independently but cannot obtain a steady, nonviolent, and consistent abode (Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, 2016, as cited in Côté & Blais, 2021).

Homelessness has different shades of struggles and chapters of chronicles. Sexual minority youth are more at risk of homelessness than straight peers (Tierney & Ward, 2017). Following the same contention route, homeless members of the LGBT are often targets of other threats to psychological welfare (Johnson et al., 2018). The reasons for entry to homelessness were diverse and an interplay of personal, social, political, and cultural factors (Gaetz et al., 2013, as cited in Ecker et al., 2019). Sexual identity explains why LGBTQ adults became homeless (Ecker et al., 2019). Furthermore, an unhealthy and discouraging childhood family environment contributes to the experience of homelessness among members of the sexual minority group (Dempsey et al., 2020). The study validated the pivotal role of homes or families in the emergence of this social phenomenon and a possible looming configuration of a larger scale of discrimination. The family is the first encounter of varying dynamics of recognition and denunciation that may shape understanding of the world and its various social structures. The discrimination experience discouraged the population from being open about their identity while staying in homeless accommodation (Norris & Quilty, 2021). Following the same navigation, utilizing shelters or homelessness agencies is crucial in creating an LGBT-affirmative community, policy, and program. Hafford-Letchfield et al. (2018) discussed the ignorance of sexual identity as reminiscent of tyrannical standpoints that compelled self-censorship and denial of diversity. Côté and Blais (2021) have found that non-heterosexual youth enter shelters for

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survival and basic needs, resist agencies to safeguard them from any victimization associated with sexual identity, and recognize a feeling of acceptance in homelessness agencies utilization.

Being LGBT in the Philippines, though considered in Southeast Asia to be one of the LGBT-friendly countries (Manalastas et al., 2016), covers various chapters of exclusivity, unsafe climate, and rejection. United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (2014) presented a gestalt for protecting the rights of Filipino sexual minority groups. In the academe, LGBT people are the target of discrimination, bullying, and abuse, forcing them to leave school or have poor academic performance. Regarding health, gay men face the challenges of the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). The government response lacks the needed resources and information drive. In the workplace, they experience sexual harassment and acquire weak social status and position. Moreover, the family matters discussion revealed the need for protection for LGBT family members and the desire to build a family in the future. The abovementioned discrimination is exponentially influenced by the conservative culture of the Philippines and its strong devotion to religion. Similarly, the minority group is inaccurately portrayed and represented in the mainstream media. Lastly, the political arena shares a slice of homophobia being tasted by the abovementioned cohort (UNDP & USAID, 2014). Moreover, LGBT student in the Philippines faces numerous problems, such as being significantly threatened by the lack of legal rights, mental health problems, and discrimination in various settings (Tang & Poudel, 2018). Stigma, family unacceptance or unwelcome coming out, unsafe climate, and poor government support were a few of the non-heterosexual individuals' crises. Consequently, these lead to constrained expression of sexual identity and the need to belong- a safe, warm, and hopeful home.

The meaning of home is a debate between a material site and the imaginative and subjective nature that springs from an individual's inner being. It is perceived either as an existential metaphor or a real-world abode. This study follows the vein of the queer subjectivity anchored on the home structure among the homeless and runaway minorities. Bryant (2015) has defined the process of queering a home. It deconstructs home heteronormative belief systems and social paradigms that impede the creation of inclusive spaces for expressing sexual identities. It juggles measurable and symbolic overtones entrenched in the idea of be/longing. The concept "to be" at home reflects the home's physical material, whereas "to long" encapsulates the emotive core of home that weaves into the feeling of being at home in spaces, relationships, and conditions.

Furthermore, Gorman-Murray (2007) recognized that studying home's meaning generated universal and normative meanings. The investigation generated four meanings of home from gays and lesbians. First, home was an avenue or non-judgmental space that enabled the expression of sexual identity. In like manner, these manifestations were weaved with other facets of self-identification through homemaking practices. Thus, the home was an affirmation of one's sexual identity. Second, the meaning of home was affirmative and supportive relationships and socialization. It included sexual minority partnerships and networks. Third, the home had to be private, secured, and controlled. The interconnectedness of these concepts permitted interactions and identity flourishing. Privacy was interlocked with control of activities at home. As a result, a safe, secured, and queer-affirmative home was established. Lastly, an ideal home for the group was a paradise where a community accepted sexual deviations and abodes where sexuality expression was free, open, and not filtered. On the other hand, Matthews et al. (2018) concluded that being comfortable in a heterosexist world is a feeling of home that may enable heteronormative goals such as forming a family.

Family is considered to be the basic building block of society. It is traditionally defined as the father, mother, and children. However, this social structure, whose dynamics and role were shaped by culture, economics, politics, technology, and intellect, has become more varied (Torres, 2015). A more inclusive and unorthodox family structure has emerged in society, such as single and same-sex parents, childless families, and cohabiting couples (Tarroja, 2010). With non-normative families, Filipino psychologists were challenged to reconstruct Filipino families' definitions from a psychological perspective. In like manner, it was claimed that psychological factors such as physical and emotional connection, parental commitment, communication, care, family resilience, and affection are needed to maintain family togetherness. These critical aspects define and differentiate Filipino families amidst social issues (Tarroja, 2010). The family relationship could be established or formed biologically, legally, and emotionally; hence, friends, strangers, and shelter staff are probable non-normative family members. Sharing a space with someone does not define family or home but rather emotional attachment. Non-heterosexual homeless and runaways continue to redefine and reconstruct their families or homes through their experiences of support, care, and emotional connection.

The study scaffolds the vision of change in

LGBT Philippine psychology and ignites awareness of the cohort's double minority label, as mentioned earlier. This investigation would provide a more in-depth understanding of how homeless and runaway sexual minorities interpreted home- the cognitive and affective meanings attached to homes. The society is encouraged to provide a safe and accepting abode to LGBTQ youth. The community's contribution to eradicating the oppressive ideologies of homophobia and trans bias is motivated and sought.

2.0. Methodology

The study charted the qualitative research methodology to explore and understand a specific societal or human predicament (Creswell, 2007). Specifically, interpretative phenomenological qualitative research was employed. Phenomenology aids in comprehending the significance of people's lived experiences.

Participants. Potential Filipino homeless and runaway participants were recruited through homogenous purposive and snowball sampling. The researcher tapped a member of an online group and an officer of an organization that catered to sexual minority groups. The tapped individuals were oriented about the study's purpose and asked if they knew someone who would meet the set inclusion criteria. The participants consisted of seven (7) self-identified gay homeless and runaways. Morse (2000) suggested a range of at least six participants to a maximum of ten for phenomenological studies. The topic's nature, data quality, and study design influenced the number of participants. During the study, the participants ranged from 28 to 31 years of age and experienced homelessness, being a runaway, or deciding to live independently when they were 17 to 26 years of age. The years of homelessness ranged from 2 to 13 years, two (2) unsheltered and five (5) sheltered. For the five (5) sheltered participants, three (3) availed room to rent, one (1) was a couch-surfer, and one (1) built his own bungalow house. One lived in a grandstand for the two (2) unsheltered participants, whereas the other was terminal. Currently, six (6) participants decided to live independently or in adult-established homes, and one (1) returned to a family home.

Measures. Photovoice was the primary data gathering tool. It has been utilized in education, disabilities studies, refugee seekers, and public health (Sutton-Brown, 2014). The participants were tasked to take photograph/s, at least one photo to a maximum of three, which they believed best reflected a home for them. They used their cameras and were given one week to perform the task. Photos were collected and developed in A4 color printed format. However, some participants downloaded pictures over the internet despite the instructions or tasking orientation. A total of 13 photos were shared by the participants, serving as projective stimuli during the interview.

Procedures. The researcher adhered to the ethical considerations in research stipulated in the Philippine Psychology Code of Ethics. Moreover, the study protocol was reviewed by the Saint Louis University-Research Ethics Committee (SLU-REC). After identifying the potential participants, informed consent was provided to safeguard the participants' rights and dignity. An interview schedule was set, considering the participant's convenience and approval. During the face-to-face, dialogical, semi-structured interview, four predetermined open-ended questions for discussion purposes were included to probe the participants' perception of home, emerging emotions and thoughts, associated life experiences, and attributes of a sense of home and non-home. Participants' responses were utilized as a springboard for probing. The interview was audio-recorded, and obtained interview data were transcribed verbatim. The interview's termination phase was steered through summarizing and highlighting the participant's revelations and answers. Moreover, a photo release form was given and explained to the participant. This form reflected the utilization of the photos in the research work. They signified their agreement that the images could be submitted for publication in journals and presented at professional conferences. The interviews lasted for about 30 minutes to an hour. The interviews were conducted in a private room far from bystanders and passersby and followed COVID-19 safety protocols to avoid cross-infection.

Data Analysis. The interview data were obtained in the last quarter of 2021 and underwent the framework analysis (Furber, 2010) to generate

Table 1
Demographic characteristics of the participants

Participant Code Number	Age (During the Study)	Age (during the homelessness or runaway experience)	Homelessness Status	Type of Accommodation	Pseudonym
Home 1A	28	18	Sheltered	Room Rent	Kalimbahin
Home 2B	31	22	Sheltered	Couch-Surfing	Mabaya
Home 3C	28	18	Unsheltered	Terminal	Kahel
Home 4D	29	17	Unsheltered	Granstand	Bughaw
Home 5E	29	24	Sheltered	Room Rent	Kunig
Home 6F	31	23	Sheltered	Own House	Lila
Home 7G	28	26	Sheltered	Room Rent	Luntian

the themes for the meanings of home. The method has five (5) distinct but interwoven phases that form a methodical and rigorous structure. The first stage in framework analysis involved immersion, familiarity, and the development of an impression of the main ideas. Second, ideas from the transcripts kept recurring and collated into similar themes to be systematized into a conceptual framework (Ritchie, 2003, as cited in Furber, 2010). Third, the draft theoretical framework's appropriateness or fit to the transcripts was gauged by identifying a specific portion of the interview data corresponding to a theme. Following the data indexing to categories, the interview data were summarized into one thematic chart. This stage involved the reduction of the original data into discernible texts. Lastly, the charts were reviewed against the original data. Themes and subthemes were compared with each other and merged further if needed. The descriptive summaries were used to explain and clarify the data. Peer review was shepherded for transparency and rigor enhancement (Ezzy, 2002, as cited in Furber, 2010). A schematic diagram was created to reflect the phenomenon (Srivastava & Thomson, 2009).

The validity of the qualitative study, specifically the themes, was established and checked through data and investigator triangulation. The nature and procedure of the photovoice method permitted data triangulation because of the obtained multiple sources (Bignante, 2010, as cited in Glaw et al., 2017). The visual, verbal, and written data provided an avenue for peer review, increasing the investigation's rigor and trustworthiness. On the other hand, investigator triangulation, a collaborative approach, involved two (2) licensed psychologists who reviewed the data and evaluated the validity of the qualitative findings. The investigators re-read the transcriptions, evaluated the themes, and provided recommendations and suggestions. The researcher determined the final emerging themes with the inclusion of the evaluation of other investigators or auditors.

Data Trustworthiness. The credibility of the data was established by conducting a pilot interview. A literature review was also performed to enrich the researcher's knowledge about the target participants. For data dependability, the method or data collection process was described in detail and reviewed. The data and investigator triangulation were employed for confirmability. Lastly, transferability was achieved through purposeful sampling.

3.0. Results and Discussion

The homelessness and family home experiences meaningfully molded the concept of abode among the gay men participants. The framework analysis and triangulation generated five broad or general themes with five subthemes.

Formation of non-normative family. Home for the participants is a place that permits the establishment of genuine emotional connection with significant non-relatives and the achievement of a heteronormative goal.

Figure 1. The door to home

Nourishing emotional connection with significant non-relatives. For the participants, home is a bond or a relationship with workmates and comrades; though non-relative, they have portrayed the roles of family members. It springs from the idea that family is beyond blood relations. Kalimbahin expressed the genuine bond he has with his workmates (Fig. 1).

> …you can build your family even with people with whom you are not related by blood...you can feel the support. If you could feel that you are happy, that you are comfortable, may it be in your real home or in others... (Kalimbahin, personal communication, October 21, 2021)

On the other hand, friends became a company on the most challenging days for the participants. They are a source of bliss, hope, and positivity. Luntian revealed though away from his mother, his friends were the reason he remained positive in life and as encouragement and motivation at work.

Achievement of heteronormative goal. The accomplishment of the heteronormative goal encapsulates the desire to have long-term partners, marriage, and child adoption. Two (2) participants communicated their aspirations to raise their own

families and adopt a child. For Kahel, married life brings incomparable elation. In like manner, he added that the partner's approval and being proud are essential elements in a same-sex relationship.

For Mabaya and Kahel, giving a roof to a child is part of defining home. It signifies relatedness to the norms of the society, as Kahel denoted:

> "…adopting a child is so joyful. It is so fulfilling. You are in a same-sex relationship but there are children and you won't feel that you are different from the rest..." (Kahel, personal communication, October 24, 2021).

Mabaya mentioned that he wanted to adopt an American girl with curly hair. He finds the child endearing and wants her to join international pageants like Miss Universe.

The emergence of non-traditional families is a clear manifestation of queering a home. Bryant (2015) explained that queering home is a process of deconstructing the traditional view of home set by the heteronormative culture that constraints a wider inclusivity and conceptualization of spaces. In like manner, it also refers to the access of queers to physical spaces and succor. However, non-normative families such as same-sex couples experienced discrimination from landlords in rental markets (Lauster & Easterbrook, 2011). It is essential to note that forming a family is a social concept that forwards social relations (Tunåker, 2015). Analogous contention was raised in an earlier study that home is affirmative and empathetic connections and socialization. It included queer partnerships and networks (Gorman-Murray, 2007). Hopkins et al. (2013) presented that the existence of same-sex couples is not labeled as sexual strangers but rather married with children. Consequently, home is a place of security and a vital setting for preserving same-sex relationships (Gorman-Murray et al., 2014).

Characteristics of a home. Home has a multidimensional meaning. It captures both the physical structure and the psychological qualities of a sense of home. It is a space that consents to personalization, designing, and planning the construction of the abode and experience of emotional elements.

Physical qualities. A sense of home is felt when there is control and independence in planning and designing the physical structure of the dwelling. For the participants, aesthetic manipulation is significant and liberating. Furthermore, spatiality is profoundly considered in conceptualizing a home. Thus, it is the expression of interpretations and the conception of

self. Mabaya and Kahel mentioned that designing a house reflects their simple personality and humble living. Kahel emphasized fewer colors that speak simplicity and elegance, whereas Mabaya articulated his dream house with three rooms, a garden, and a kiddie pool.

> I think this one, to have a simple house…three rooms would be fine with me for that would already provide you with a comfortable refuge. Of course, there should be a garden for it gives me good energy in the morning. At the entrance of the house, in the receiving area, it should be okay. The location, I want it to be just on a farm, and we also add a kiddie pool for it is hot here. (Mabaya, personal communication, October 22, 2021)

Experiential qualities. Life events significantly influence the understanding and meaning-making process. For the participants, the experience of privacy, pivotal circumstance, responsibility, openness, support, adequacy, freedom of expression, and equality (PRO-SAFE) impacts a sense of home. The experiential qualities speak about the psychological adventure of the participants. The space of the family house and the desire to bond with friends were reasons why Lila left and decided to live independently. He built his own bungalow house for privacy purposes as well. Some of the participants experienced unsheltered homelessness. They slept in places inappropriate for human habitation, such as a terminal, grandstand, waiting shed, and parks. Bughaw shared his experiences being an unsheltered homeless and took this as a learning or pivotal experience.

Figure 2. Responsibility: Queer homeless as an older sister

> …It's hard. I lived along the roads, in a waiting shed, in (somewhere in Manila), in (place), and the (park) became my home. We get our food from the food waste of hotels. It was not easy, but we were thankful for

those life events, for because of them, it has become easy for me to overcome similar instances... (Bughaw, personal communication, October 24, 2021)

Home is defined by the experience of taking people as a responsibility, as seen in Figure 2. One of the participants realized he had an immediate family in his boarding house and was portrayed as an older sister. Kalimbahin first took care of a former resident from residential care for boys and eventually grew in number. He shared that he had an instant family and siblings to care for.

> … It is like as if I had an instant family because of that boarding. They call me manang.... If someone gets sick, they ask for medicine… If they are not yet around, I would ask if they have already eaten. I could really feel what it takes to have a sibling, for I have my own family in the house. (Kalimbahin, personal communication, October 21, 2021)

Openness for the participants is a conflict resolution and access to the house. Specifically, the latter refers to relatives and significant others being welcomed, while the former is an open discussion of conflicting family issues. Family dinner is a blissful event where members strengthen their bond; however, it is a different case for one of the participants. Mabaya revealed both his aspiration and frustration. During family dinners, relatives' unresolved issues were brought out, causing misunderstanding and spoiling the occasion.

Support from the family was yearned by one of the participants. Kalimbahin wonders why his family does not reach out to him and ask how he is doing despite having no news for three to seven days. On the other hand, adequacy is a fair degree of discipline, love, and trust. The inadequacy and exorbitance adversely shape the meaning of home. Bughaw verbalized:

> ...there are procedures like in cooking which, it should always be exact. Both an excess and a deficit are not good... it should be exact so every home would be happy..." (Bughaw, personal communication, October 24, 2021).

He also mentioned his experience being captured by police officers. Bughaw was not frightened in the presence of authority and even decided to stay in the police station because of decent sleeping quarters and food. Relatedly, adequacy is the right amount of understanding. The latter strengthens the family bond

and makes one caring and emphatic. Lila highlighted the significance of adequate understanding in the family and asserted that the family might end up broken without it. If this prevails, the connection grows and gets fortified.

> …just understand each other. Petty things have easy solutions. Understanding each other is very important because if this prevails, the connection grows and gets fortified. No fights and no hard feelings. And if there is no understanding within a family, maybe it will end up becoming broken, and that is the worst that could happen. Of course, if there is no understanding, there would only be anguish. Verbal pain makes a deeper cut than physical pain. (Lila, personal communication, October 26, 2021)

Freedom of expression is the liberty to move or act based on affectional orientation. It is the manifestation of the socially unrestrained identity and practice of authentic living. Lila spoke of his struggle to keep his identity from his father. After his father's death, he gradually revealed his colors.

> … It is when you feel that you have liberty... You know little about the world around you, but you already know that you belong to the rainbow." (Lila, personal communication, October 26, 2021).

> ...a happy family, all of us have a share. Everyone shares. No one is above...". (Lila, personal communication, October 26, 2021)

The emergence of the subthemes verifies that home is both a physical structure and a symbol of warm relationships (Gorman-Murray et al., 2014). In an earlier study, homeless families capture both the psychological and symbolic features of a home by remodeling the physicality and spatiality of emergency shelters. It is a way of building and experiencing a sense of home, even in temporary accommodation (Datta, 2005). Home is beyond physical structure, enmeshed with affect, meaning, and recollection (Gorman-Murray et al., 2014). Gorman-Murray (2007) explained that the home was private, secured, and controlled. The synergy of these factors enabled interactions and thriving identity. Specifically, privacy was linked with control over home activities, resulting in a safe and secure space. Moreover, the insecurity of accommodation, the inadequacy of food, and constant mobility (Tunåker, 2015) were challenging events that aided in defining

home. Despite destruction and discrimination, the population remained resilient through restructuring or remaking homes (Balgos, 2014). It confirms that the home of the cohort is a pivotal experience, for they were able to overcome the social sphere's prejudices, intrusion, and rejection.

Openness affirms an earlier study that a home is a shared place to amuse acquaintances and relatives (Despres, 1991). It is also integrated into creating inclusive residential care, a home for older LGBT people. Open dialogue was an essential mechanism for identifying assumptions and stereotypes. It was a precondition for change in viewpoints and practice (Hafford-Letchfield et al., 2018). Though the situations of the two cohorts are different, both call for a home that needs openness. Oppositely, responsibility is interpreted as recognizing others as an obligation and the role of being the older sister. It corroborates Sixsmith's (1986) meaning of home: responsibility is an emotional reference point in life. It reflects the accountability of home regardless of its type and the people living.

The subtheme support avows the need for a compassionate household in the process of coming out. Its absence was one of the routes to homelessness (Matthews et al., 2018). In a similar finding, the affectional orientation was embraced outside the family home because it does not have room for non-normative sexuality. Consequently, it pushed LGBT people to move out (Pilkey, 2013). Without a warm biological family to provide support and care, LGBT individuals developed their chosen families (Orel, 2017).

Another experiential quality is adequacy; it validates that parenting and discipline could contribute to the feeling of home. However, excessive interest in children could result in low self-efficacy and alienation (van Ingen et al., 2015). The study's finding supports the contention that perceived association with parents affects psychological well-being (Steele & Mckinney, 2019) and the idea of a home. The participants' experiences with their strict parents substantiate the conclusion of Rezai Niaraki and Rahimi (2013) that children with strict but warm parents had a better quality of life than children with strict and cold parents. The subtheme also corroborates with the idea of Hawkins and Maurer (2011) that commonly, a house can be a home; however, it can be experienced at varying sites such as streets, neighborhoods, and public markets.

Freedom of expression is unconstrained outness. In a former investigation, freedom to behave according to one's identity was tied to the concept of home (Sixsmith, 1986), and it was an opportunity that was judged to be an attribute (Smith, 1994). It contributes to flourishing and optimism (Almario et

al., 2013). Lastly, the home was where individuals and partners could freely embrace affectional orientation (Gorman-Murray, 2007). Home is argued as a place for emotional authenticity compared to other settings where actions and emotions are dictated (Sirriyeh, 2013). On the other hand, equality could be seen in the division of labor, where family members have their respective roles or tasks. Thomson (2007) concluded that children and adolescents judged the division of labor as fair using the equality principle, and caring is also associated with sharing duties and role-playing that could harmonize or disharmonize the household.

Positive and emotional environment. A home filled with bliss is an aspiration for many individuals. For the participants, home is a space characterized by genuine happiness, warmth, and hope. Furthermore, it is the absence of negativity and the cultivation of sharing or giving. It is an abode filled with encouraging feelings and lightheartedness, as reflected in Figure 3. Three participants defined home as a positive and emotional environment and put weight on positivity and optimism. Luntian revealed his mission for his younger siblings that he wanted to exhaust his time and effort for his siblings' dreams.

Figure 3. Encouraging social sphere

For Kahel, the design of the house speaks positivity, while for Bughaw, despite the adversities in life and lack of financial resources, there are basic operations to achieve a harmonious household. Bughaw phrased the formula as:

> …in a home, you add more positive spirit... despite the challenges, they should remain optimistic. In a calculator, there is a formula...in subtraction, remove the wrongdoings... in the family. Multiply the love and divide whatever you have. May it be something big or small, share it with the family. (Bughaw, personal communication, October 24, 2021)

The theme affirms a former study that

the favorable climate generated happiness, an interdependent meaning linked to the concept of home, which means the experience of favorable circumstances and a general feeling of life satisfaction (Sixsmith, 1986). Happiness among LGBTI was predicted most significantly by self-esteem and being in a relationship. Furthermore, self-acceptance and colleague support were essential in achieving or experiencing happiness. Advocacy and collective recognition and support were also significant (de Vries et al., 2020). The synergy of these factors is fundamental in developing happiness among adolescents and unhappy LGBTI people. Moreover, structural stigma and pressure to hide affectional orientation significantly alter life satisfaction among sexual minority groups (Bränström, 2017). In a parallel finding, family support and outness or free expression of one's affectional orientation directly and positively contribute to the psychological well-being of LGBT adults (Roberts & Christens, 2021). However, yielding to social pressure and dissuasion blurs the authentic self, which may significantly affect psychological well-being (Petrocchi et al., 2020). Following the same route, it is a pressing reality that homeless LGBTQ youth experience more symptoms of psychological disorders (Duke & Searby, 2019) and suicidal tendencies (Rhoades et al., 2018) without a supportive social sphere. The portrait of youth homelessness on the sexual minority group radiates helplessness and pounds society for reshaping.

Emblem of achievement. Homelessness and queer identity are hastily judged and unjustly claimed to be vulnerabilities. Consequently, being homeless and a member of the queer community is considered a double-minority label. However, despite unforgiving realities, the participants continue to achieve and dream. For Kunig, it is defined as pride, for it reminds the primary source of living that brought togetherness, as reflected in Figure 4. In addition, home is a sense of accomplishment or triumph. It is a witness to the

Figure 4. Catching the home

fulfillment of goals. Mabaya shared his vision of building a house, and being gay is not a hindrance.

> …you are happy because you have achieved this kind of simple life. You already have enough, and you will not seek for more. You could already be proud of something you have done. Not only as a gay, a part of the LGBT, but you could also build your own house… (Mabaya, personal communication, October 22, 2021)

Overcoming one's painful past is captured in a home as an emblem of achievement. The history of the participants was filled with pictures of struggles, yearning, conflict, and aloneness. Thus, transcending and reconciling with the past is an achievement.

> It is already part of my past. I have overcome it. My rage toward my father has waned. Though it did not vanish totally, the anger is no longer how it used to be every time I think of his name." (Bughaw, personal communication, October 24, 2021).

Lastly, providing light and hope in the lives of members at home is an accomplishment. Luntian shared his achievement of giving hope to his younger siblings.

The elements of the theme emblem of achievement support the early literature review that home is an "acting upon and changing the dwelling" and an abode of free identity expression (Despres, 1991). Similarly, achievement is connected with pride (Roin, 2015), and a home is a place that signifies ownership and significant investment. It is related to freedom of expression, which targets gender fluidity and the design of the physical structure. Personalizing and do-it-yourself house improvement can be an emblem of achievement. Mackay and Perkins (2019) concluded that changing, improving, and renovating the physical structure developed a shared understanding of how the house could look or the ideal home.

Genuine parental acceptance. Some birth homes were not a safe space for the coming out phase in the life of queer individuals. Consequently, home for the participants is an accepting space where parents will unconditionally accept their children's peculiarities and deviation from heteronormative gender cut and segregation. Fear was felt by Kahel, for the community was not tolerant of individuals with queer identities. He decided to keep it first and struggled until he left the house. He was confused and fought for his sexual identity. For Lila, acceptance is like winning a lottery, starting with the mother's approval. He struggled with his siblings' blessing;

however, he was freed when he had his mother's support. Lila felt like a millionaire and communicated his relief after being accepted.

> ...Acceptance is very vital, for it relieves the spirit. It is like winning the lottery. You know that we belong to the LGBT...parents find it hard to accept that someone belongs to the community... But when they accepted me, it was a relief... (Lila, personal communication, October 26, 2021)

Docena (2013) highlighted that parental rejection was feared in disclosing affectional orientation; thus, it was not a topic at home. The theme supports an earlier finding that home was a locus of emotional experience where the participants' cultural activities, perspectives, and feelings were accepted (Despres, 1991). Acceptance may also mean a non-judgmental dwelling place that facilitates the unconfined expression of affectional orientation. It is an unconditional affirmation of queer identity (Gorman-Murray, 2007). The significance of parental acceptance is that it prevents homelessness and cultivates the meaning of home among the participants.

family.

4.0. Conclusion

Coming home is a warm memory and adventure. Home is a multidimensional construct that is beyond the physical structure. It has psychological or emotional elements molded and embellished by the individual. It forwards normative and non-normative concepts and ideas of home. The meanings stemmed from the homeless and runaway sexual minorities' birth-home and homelessness experiences. Thus, meanings are inspired by the cohort's stories. The journey aided them in the experiential conceptualization and characterization of a home. The salient findings redefine the heteronormative and traditional definition of home in the larger social structure. Homeless and runaways with queer identities who have found a sense of home in their current situation may continue cultivating and maintaining attributes that contribute to feeling at home. While those who are still in search, as they learn and pull inspiration from their journey, can define their concept of home and the characteristics that build their sense of home and non-home.

Figure 5. Home in the kaleidoscopic lens of homeless and runaway sexual minorities

Moving away from home is emancipation for LGBT people, for they experienced difficulties within their family homes during their formative years (Pilkey, 2013). Therefore, deprivation potentially leads to conceptualization.

Figure 5 presents the schematic diagram of the meanings of home as molded by the participants' birth-home and homelessness experiences. The image of a house inside a heart symbolizes the cohort under study. It can be pulled into analysis that what was deprived, taken away, or stolen from the homeless and runaway sexual minorities are conceptualized meanings of home. The colorful journey or experience in contemporary society significantly molds and reshapes the abovementioned processes. The challenges and struggles inside and outside of their homes are pieces of evidence that validate their continuous quest to redefine their home. The meanings generated serve as challenges to the traditional or normative definitions of a dwelling or

5.0 Limitations of the Findings

Home, as conceptualized and described by the participants, stemmed from their encounters with discrimination, stigma, and inequality. There are noted limitations of the study, such as the number of participants interviewed was small, and there were seven gay men only. The small sample size may not comprehensively reflect the meanings of home for other affectional orientations. Moreover, all of the participants were residing in one province. Both the sample size and locale may affect the generalizability of the findings. Another limitation is the inclusion criterion of homelessness, which has a physical dimension. The multitude of definitions of homelessness may limit the findings' application and integration into reality.

6.0 Practical Value

As a pragmatic contribution, this scholarly endeavor may open parents' eyes to their accountability to provide and build a home or a space

where their children could safely and creatively grow and express their identity. It may serve as a discerning lens for parents and caretakers on the struggles of homeless and runaway children- an increase in the visibility and voice of the sexual minority group. Parents and the community may view accountability from a more empathetic and inclusive perspective. It may also reduce or eradicate anchored social stigma to homelessness and divergent gender inclination. As a result, authorities may give precedence to LGBT-affirmative care and eventually make it a norm.

7.0. Directions for Future Research

The small sample size and one common affectional orientation are noted limitations. The participants need to be diversified. Different affectional orientations can be considered to widen the target site. A comparative analysis between and among the affectional orientations can be performed to enrich the knowledge about this phenomenon. Likewise, it is suggested to focus on a more homogeneous group, either with experience of homelessness only or currently homeless and runaway. Another limitation is the inclusion criterion of homelessness, which has a physical dimension. It is encouraged to consider psychological homelessness, or lack of relatedness, worth, and meaning could be a criterion for studying the phenomenon because some members of the sexual minority group live in their family homes but may feel homeless. Along the area of data collection, photovoice could be enriched by employing indigenous data collection methods such as *ginabayang talakayan*, *pakikipagkwentuhan*, and *pagtatanong-tanong*. They may also delve into the link of kapwa and loob in the meanings of home. Lastly, the study's locale was in La Union only; thus, future researchers are encouraged to recruit participants in other provinces.

8.0. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

The authors reported no potential conflict of interest.

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