

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Local Capacity Development Framework for Roxas Night Market, Davao City, Philippines

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Abstract: This paper presents the possible merits of a local capacity development framework for the Roxas Night Market in Davao City, Philippines. As a make-shift economic space built in a section of Roxas Avenue, its presence brings to the fore issues revolving around inclusive space, freedoms for street vendors, and power of the local government unit (LGU). These concerns gain extra premium in the night market where space access and use are confined and limited, where vendors struggle to find permanent vending sites, and where the LGU is forced and challenged to do something about the growing number of street vendors. With these concerns, the proposed local capacity development framework underscores the need to re-think inclusivity in the language of space, freedoms, and power. Concerning space, a night market is inclusive when it occasions the productive overlap between the history of vendors and their plans for the future (lived space), the way vendors use their actual and confined space (space as practiced), and the rules of LGU being the planner of the night market (conceived space). About freedoms (Sen), the framework acknowledges the synergy of freedom in terms of economic options, political support, transparency mechanisms, social-welfare opportunities, and protective security. Concerning power (Foucault), the night market can be inclusive if it allows both vendors and the LGU to dialogue in the exercise of their agency.

Keywords: Local capacity development framework, social space, capability, power

The social meaning and development potential of night markets is a largely unexplored phenomenon in the country (Milgram, 2014). Intimating with some of the issues surrounding informal work—such as precarious livelihood spaces as in the case of street vending (International Labor Organization, 2002), and development issues such as the lack of economic opportunities brought about by cycles of conflict and violence in certain areas in the country, and forced migration to urban centers (Bhowmik, 2005)—the night market stands as a social phenomenon, which

intersects with issues that warrant attention, study, and proposed solutions.

As the presence of a night market in urban centers localizes and situates the aforementioned issues, another aspect that needs scrutiny is the role of the local government unit (LGU) in regulating and framing the presence of street vendors in its political vicinity. Are street vendors solely treated as problems that need to be solved? Or, are they considered as allies in reformulating key development issues such as inclusive growth and sustainable forms of development? Or, are

the presence of street vendors and the night market symptomatic of uneven development in a region or the country? From the vantage point of qualitative research, these are queries that need attention to better make sense of the relation of the street vendors, the night market, and the LGU in a given city, locale, or community.

The study on night markets in the country is also limited. Milgram's (2014) study on the Harrison Road Night Market is the sole published article accessible online that provides a substantive glimpse on what it means to subsist in the night market for street vendors and the role that the LGU assumes as it exercises its regulatory functions over such space. An important feature that is not explored in Milgram's (2014) study is the role of the cultural history of the street night market vendors who migrated to city centers like Baguio City for livelihood options and opportunities. The gap begs the question of representation and identity, which may be silenced, reduced, or further marginalized as street night market vendors carve their way into the night market as public and evening economic space. The article also downplays the "night" element in the Harrison Road Night Market in Baguio City. This perhaps stems from the lack of serious security issues in the area. In Mindanao, for instance, where conflict and security problems pose threats to sites where people gather, the night element needs to be dissociated from danger and other forms of insecurities. In the absence of safety and security, creating a night market will not be feasible, as residents of the city would need to be home before evening sets in. This need for security may stand as a requirement for the street night market vendors' over-all sense of social well-being.

With such gaps, the study hopes to provide conceptual and grounded contributions concerning night market studies and propose practical actions—through a local capacity development framework—that can identify and push key features in arranging, re-arranging, and governing night markets as negotiated space in Davao City. Through this development approach, the night market is treated as a nexus of needs and experiences of various stakeholders, and the challenge is to provide a platform where the socio-cultural histories of street night market vendors interface with the power of the LGU, and the street vendors' agency and well-being assertions.

As this paper is part of the dissertation project from 2016-2017, the grounded-exploratory questions

have been dealt with framed after H. Lefebvre's (2014) three notions of space—as lived (history), practiced (application of rules, actual use of space), and conceived (LGU). Key informant interviews, participant observation, and semi-structured group discussions were conducted for 13 calendar months in the area. The ethno-descriptive merits and descriptions of the three spaces (Pavo, 2018, 2019) subsequently conditioned the identification of issues that street vendors deal with as they subsist in the night market.

Acknowledging such results, albeit presented here in broad strokes, this paper presents the proposed local capacity development framework for night markets as part of the practical-conceptual result of the study. It is important to note here that such frame is influenced by A. Sen's (1999) five instrumentalities of freedom—political freedom, transparency freedom, economic facilities, social opportunities, and protective security—are accounted for, and M. Foucault's (1977) power—panopticon and discipline, discontinuities, and technologies of the self—are cultivated, explored, and exercised. As pillars of freedoms and power, the re-reading of the relation of street vendors, night market, and the LGU is somehow given an empowering or capacitating frame. The coupling of these perspectives also shows how both freedoms and power cultivate enabling conditions and spaces when dealing with marginalized sectors such as street vendors in night markets, and magnify the responsibility of the LGU in making its spaces and projects inclusive.

Methods

In this paper, five elements are analytically combined and arranged to form the local capacity development framework of inclusive relation in the Roxas Night Market. These elements include: (a) the three spaces of H. Lefebvre in the night market as lived, conceived, and practiced; (b) the negotiation practices to address some issues in the area itemized as cautious perspective, rule leaning approach, strategic perspective, and the reflexive style; (c) the three elements in Foucault's power as panopticon and discipline, technologies of the self, and discontinuities; (d) Sen's five instrumentalities of freedom as political freedom, economic freedom, transparency freedom, protective security, and social opportunities; and (f) the coupling between the five freedoms of Sen and Foucault's notions on power. With these elements,

local capacity development is formed to help dispose of or enable inclusive relations in the night market. These frameworks are used as each vantage point helps define, check, and corroborate the qualitative parameters of inclusive spatial relations in the night market. Foucault's lens, for instance, informs and can help regulate Sen's take of the five forms of freedoms. Although, Sen's perspective becomes grounded because of Lefebvre's take on social space.

In the next method, after presenting the local capacity development framework of inclusive relation in the night market, the meanings of the arrows that link the elements are explained. With the explanation, the elements' contributions to the framework are elucidated, and the meaning of the framework as a

whole unfolds. Moreover, the possible contribution of the framework on inclusive relations is discussed by presenting an initial assessment of a sample rule in the night market: the three-month rule stipulated by the LGU. This way, practical recommendations in the formulation and analysis of the rules are presented to jump-start the discussion on how the framework fares when gleaned against the three-month rule created by the LGU for vendors to follow.

Results

This is the proposed local capacity framework for the Roxas Night Market:

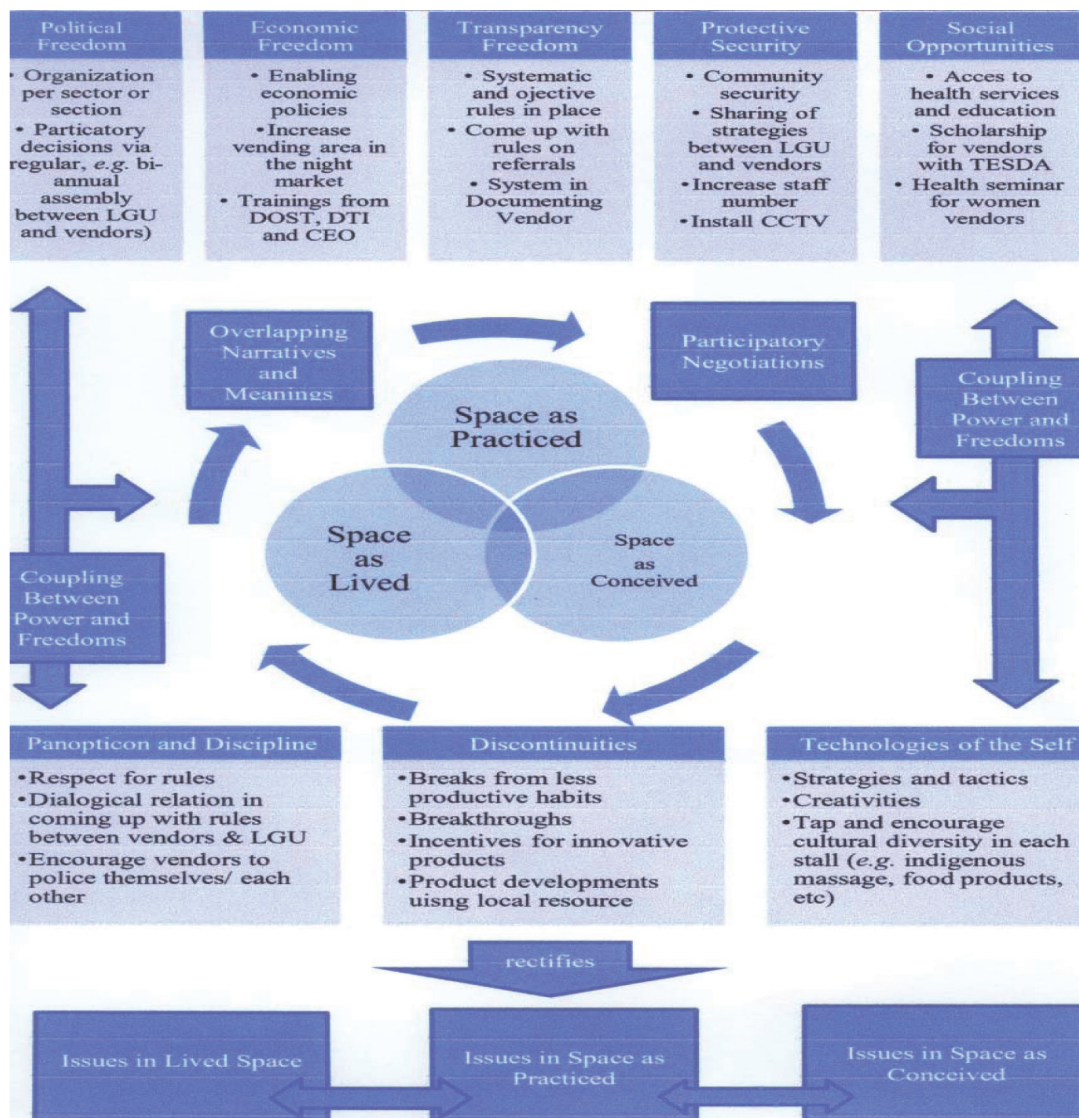


Figure 1. Local capacity framework

In the proposed framework, the five freedoms of Sen (1999) and the three notions of power of Foucault (1977) are linked, which are expected to feed into, influence, or condition the overlapping narratives and meanings of the three spaces. The coupling between freedoms and power is an important feature in the framework because such elements serve as posts in ensuring the night market is permeated and regulated by inclusive forms of relation. With power and resistance affirming the vendors' and the LGU's capacities to invoke and attend to the demand of the five instrumentalities of freedom, the Roxas Night Market is constituted by a capacity-building mechanism and capacitated individuals and sectors who share in this understanding of the meaning of power that can both influence and move beyond currently held habits and practices.

Using Foucault's (1977) language that power is both disciplinary and transcendental, the capacity framework shows that vendors and the LGU have such basic capacities to structure situations and be structured in return. This symbiotic structuring relation means both vendors and the LGU need to acknowledge the latent agency available in the sectors, which have a stake in the running and operation of the night market. An example of this symbiotic structuring relation is the capacity to introduce change in the lives of vendors and in the way the LGU governs the night market. More to the point, both vendors and the LGU are not beholden to their past. Innovations and creativities can always unfold, especially when confronted by different situations. When applied to the night market, if there are no changes in the vendors' productivities and in the kind of services that the LGU offers for vendors, then power and resistance may be peripheral to the night market and imply that the vendors and the LGU need to first acknowledge the disciplining and transcendental power of both sectors. As the backbone to inclusive forms of relation, power has to admit and allow such power to unfold.

Hence, the five forms of freedom build upon the dialogical relation between power and resistance. With vendors and LGU exercising their enabling contributions to the way the night market is governed and unfolds, the five freedoms specify or streamline the directions of development plans for the night market. These five freedoms also need to be fully present because the absence of one means that the other four freedoms are rendered inadequate. For instance, if

political freedom as participatory forms of decision-making between vendors and the LGU is sidelined, this will affect freedom as transparency and protective security in the night market. This is because the lack of participatory or consultative platforms renders the lack of conversation between the LGU and vendors, which can have a direct bearing on the nature of decisions arrived at for the night market.

For every type of freedom, specific capacities need to be cultivated as well. In the case of political freedom, these aspects may be looked into: (a) Organization per sector or section (e.g., organization for *ukay-ukay* [used clothes] vendors, and another for food vendors), and (b) Participatory decisions via regular meetings such as bi-annual assembly between LGU and vendors. With economic freedom, the capacities that can be programmed may pertain to (a) enabling economic policies, (b) increase the vending area in the night market, and (c) training from the Department of Science and Technology, Department of Trade and Industry, and the City Economic Enterprise of the LGU. With this training, more local government agencies are involved and tasked to look for ways to assist the vendors as small-informal entrepreneurs. For freedom as transparency, these capacities can be studied: (a) processes in coming up with systematic and objective rules in place; (b) come up with rules on referrals, especially that more and more vendors are requesting additional spaces in the night market, and the selection process needs to be transparent; and (c) training with the social-scientists on how to systematically document vendors' profile. With freedom as protective security, this means re-framing this perspective according to the stance of community security. This new perspective, hence, entails the development of these capacities: (a) sharing of strategies between LGU and vendors, (b) increase of the number of staff in the night market, and (c) enhancing the safety of the area via the installation of CCTVs. For the fifth type of freedom, social opportunities are disposed of when these aspects are attended to (a) indigent vendors that are given access to health services and education, (b) scholarship for vendors with TESDA that are provided because this training is for free, and (c) health and livelihood seminars for women vendors.

The other feature in the proposed diagram is the overlapping relation among three spaces in the area as lived, practiced, and conceived. When combined, the five freedoms and power-resistance help dispose

of the enabling practices and mechanisms in the night market, which should result in the interfacing relation of the three spaces. This means that the LGU factors in the meanings that vendors attach to the night market that stands for space as lived, which also goes to say that the LGU should not only consider the night market as an economic space. It is also expected to connect the night market to the cultural past of the vendors. If allowed, the night market can develop the vendors' agency connected to their ethnicity, history, and vision of themselves. The vendors will also find a way to influence the products or services that they offer with their cultural backgrounds. In this manner, the night market cultivates inclusive relations because the vendors' unique stories and past are factored in, which can contribute to the local nature of the night market. In the absence of such concern, the night market will reduce unique identities to blanket concepts, which is contrary to the diversity in the city and Mindanao.

The LGU also needs to interface with space as practiced by the vendors to see the creative expressions of vendors as they try to succeed in their economic enterprise. This means that the LGU will not just look at the vendors from the vantage point of rules. It also needs to discover and reflect on the entrepreneurial skills and spirit of the vendors. When the LGU succeeds in seeing the vendor as they subsist in the night market, it may also understand the other issues that vendors deal with. Being part of the informal sector, the LGU also needs to consider other facticity of life such as gender relations, old age, children staying in the vending stall with their parents or grandparents, and the other issues that vendors contend with. If the LGU confines itself to rules and their implementation, it misses the opportunity of really knowing the vendors' conditions within the context of informal work. The gaze of the LGU towards vendors needs to be upgraded and appraised. This is where the LGU can truly claim that "Life is Here" in Davao City. Being part of the marginalized sector, Sen's (1999) five-fold freedoms will demand that the intergenerational poverty in some families of vendors are attended to and interventions are in place.

As the vendors' lived space in the night market overlaps with the LGU's conceived space, the vendor is also challenged to understand the concept and wisdom behind the rules and the opportunities that lie in the night market. An example is the vendors' reflection on their business style or approach and the

responsibilities that they have to their patrons and the city. This introspective route includes the massage therapists' understanding of the nature of their work, how they anticipate their future, including their health and that of their clients. With these considerations, the vendors are encouraged to work with the LGU, to trust in the LGU's capacity to provide enabling conditions, or to assist the LGU to attain its development goals. By organizing themselves and inquiring about the possibility of training such as business plans for the informal sector, the vendors may see the potentials in their work and even not underestimate their capacity for progress. This is the type of freedom that Sen (1994, 1999) aspires for as a measure of inclusive development.

The interface between lived space and space as practiced should not also go unnoticed. As vendors continue their journey in their quest for better working and living conditions, they are in the best position to understand the kind of power and agency that they have developed through time. Against the background of their experiences, the lessons that they have learned, and their vision of the future, the vendors may realize that they have the capacity to make the Roxas Night Market into a symbolic space of progress (Foucault, 1967). In this sense, vendors may realize that they contribute to the kind of night market that the city has. In affirming their capacities and potentials, the image and meaning of the night market may also change.

Thus, the overlapping relation of the three spaces—as lived, conceived, and practiced—means that the Roxas Night Market is a shared experience and platform between vendors and the LGU. This is also the meaning and context of the participatory negotiations in the night market. To be more specific, the negotiation in this respect stands as a platform where the LGU and vendors attempt to dispose of inclusive habits and practices as the three spaces are allowed and encouraged to overlap. In coming up with solutions, for instance, how will the proposed solution set figure within the landscape of the three spaces? What types of power and freedoms are invoked to ensure that the three spaces overlap? Will there still be a place for the cautious approach to negotiation or the one-sided treatment of the rule-leaning approach to negotiation? Here on, solutions to issues reflect the knowledge-expertise of both the LGU and vendors.

The synergistic effort to help rebuild a sense of security in the night market after the bombing incident

is a case in point. When the city was traumatized by the bomb blast, it disturbed the notion that Davao City is a peaceful place. The people were in disbelief that terrorists were able to pass through the tight security measures in the city. Despite the disbelief and trauma, the efforts of the vendors to go back to the night market and the LGU's massive campaign for courage alongside its recourse for military personnel in the area helped confront the debilitating effects of the terrorist attack. This is why today, the memorial marker is not only in memoriam of the victims of the bomb blast, it also stands for the vendors' and the LGU's resolve to rise above the trappings of fear and anxiety with what the unfortunate instance has caused.

With the freedoms, power-resistance, and the overlapping narratives and meanings of the three spaces, these parameters of inclusive relation as the in-between of power and the instrumentalities of freedom, the night market is challenged to improve the four types of negotiations in the area. It can be recalled that such negotiations are attempts to address the issues that unfold in the night market from the vendors' perspective and the LGU's point of view. Given that these negotiations only involve two spaces with four different types of relations, the goal is for the three spaces to overlap so that the narratives in the night market will involve the meanings latent in each of the three spaces. For instance, when the LGU as conceived space overlaps with both spaces as practiced and as lived, the LGU will encourage (through educative platforms) the vendors to incorporate their cultural past in the goods that they sell or in the design of their carts. This will also mean that the practices of the vendors will not only be about business or economic gain. Their stay in the night market will also mean that they are exerting efforts to share unique cultural tones and practices with patrons of the night market. The vendors, in turn, will also do their best to observe the rules set by the LGU and remind the LGU to assess if the rules in the night market have been culture-sensitive. In this way, both the LGU and vendors aspire to think of ways to contribute to the improvement of the night market as a local, cultural, and economic experience of inclusive forms of agency.

Given that the proposed framework, the practical challenge is to apply its elements to possibly influence the spatial relation between LGU and vendors. This is the next practical concern hoping that this framework will help guide the LGU of Davao City

in its governance and conception of the night market, and serve as a model for other LGU's planning to craft a night market in their respective places, and possibly contribute to the DILG's over-all goal in having socially inclusive spaces (Gupta et al., 2015) and systems in the LGU's across the country. Another question, however, is in order: How will the proposed local capacity development framework figure with the three-month rule of the LGU, which vendors are expected to uphold? This is the next question to attend to.

A Test Case

The three-month rule is a game-changer in the lives of many night market vendors. This rule holds that each street vendor can only rent a space for three months in a year. This means that the vendor would need to look for other spaces and areas in the city where his or her vending enterprise can continue. The rule also conditioned other rules, such as the selection process via the raffle draw system, which opened up more street vendors vying for a space in the night market. With the creation of the three-month rule, four batches of vendors emerged, and the exact space assignment of a vendor within a section (e.g., food section) per batch is further raffled. This is when vendors also hope that they will be located along the boundary of the night market facing a premier institution/building such as *Aldevinco* because this is the most accessible and visible for potential buyers or customers. Since the creation of the four batches of vendors, requests for additional spaces from various organizations also started to accumulate. As a response, a few additional spaces were opened. Given the limitations set by the three-month rule and its consequences, the rule and the night market gained other meanings seen through the local capacity development framework of inclusive relations in the night market.

Guided by the proposed framework, the three-month rule falls within the rule leaning perspective as a form of negotiation. In this respect, the LGU somehow imposes the rule to the vendors, and the negotiation feature comes in via the raffle draw system. This is because the raffle draw gives the impression that the process is participatory and that all vendors, especially those who were not part of the night market in the first three years of its operation, are given a chance to have access to space in the area. As the three-month rule upholds a negotiation type that needs to be improved,

the rule of the LGU will have to pass through the four important elements in the local capacity framework, namely: (a) five instrumentalities of freedom, (b) three aspects of power, (c) the coupling between (a) and (b), and the overlapping relation among the three spaces—as lived, conceived, and practiced.

For the five instrumentalities of freedom, the three-month rule is within the ambit of economic freedom. For this type of freedom, the requirement is to enable economic policies. The question, therefore, is if the rule is an enabling economic policy. Recalling the critical appraisal of the three-month rule via Sen's (1999) perspective, it has negative implications for the vendors' well-being because it makes their livelihood situation precarious. After vending for three-months, where does one vend? This was the lingering question raised by the vendors. Regarding political freedom, participatory decisions are recommended. However, the three-month rule was not crafted out of participatory or consultative processes. The rule was suggested, implemented, and followed. Moving on to the three aspects of power, the three-month rule also epitomizes its panopticon side without regard for its dialogical dimension. This is how, as a panopticon, it expresses itself as a disciplinary force. Its regulative presence is the reason why there is an emerging issue with the increasing number of referrals and why some vendors opt to share their space with another vendor to increase their chance of staying within the night market area.

Given that only a few instrumentalities of freedom are recognizable in the three-month rule and one aspect of power is shown, the resulting situation concerning space is that space as conceived is the only domain that is cultivated in the Roxas Night Market. The other two spaces, as lived and as practiced, take a back seat. This means that the meanings that vendors attach to the night market, their historical experiences, and their anticipations of the future are not given weight and consideration. Moreover, the implications of the rule to space as practiced are not yet distinguished. For instance, the decision to share a space with another vendor, although this increases the chance of extending one's stay within the night market, also means that the working area per vendor shrinks.

With the foregoing assessment of the three-month rule using the proposed local capacity development framework of inclusive relation, the result of the analysis is that the three-month rule is incapable of

cultivating inclusive relation in the night market. This means that the capacities of the vendors and other capabilities of the LGU are not cultivated or improved. It also implies that it only showcases the voice of the LGU, and it does not provide enough elbow room so vendors can also speak their minds and hearts. If we are to listen to the side of the LGU, the way it exercised her political freedom via her decision, is conditioned by the number of violations committed by some of the vendors. This is where the incongruity lies because some of the vendors were also at fault in the way the spaces in the night market were misused and abused. Considering the multiplicity of class among vendors, those who belong to the lowest—the indigents—were the ones most affected by the three-month rule. Instead of having the opportunity to earn and even save, the new rule meant having to go back to the kind of vending that they had before the creation of the Roxas Night Market. The point here is that vendors who cloak themselves as indigents have reaped additional money at the expense of small-time vendors. This is the other reality why the three-month rule was enforced.

Conclusion

The proposed local capacity development framework of inclusive relation has three evaluative dimensions:

1. To assess if the rules and policies in the night market dispose of the cultivation of inclusive relation evinced in the productive interfacing of the three spaces (as lived, practiced, and conceived), which can be made transparent through the presence of the five instrumentalities of freedoms, and grounded or enabled by the three senses of power.
2. Participatory forms of negotiations among the three spaces.
3. As a guide in ensuring that the issues in each of the three spaces are corrected or addressed.

To be more specific, the proposed framework itemizes the capacities that can be developed to help prepare programs or structures that can dispose of the LGU and vendors to acquire and value the itemized capacities. In so doing, the framework serves as a guide on what it means to capacitate the stakeholders in Roxas Night Market and its role in allowing inclusive

relation to unfold and regulate the rules, structures, and activities in the area.

The potential of the proposed local capacity development framework is also showcased in the analysis of a three-month rule, which is currently in place or upheld in the night market. Demonstrating the role of the LGU, the rule needs to be modified so that the other spaces in the night market, as lived and practiced, are included. This is the key meaning of inclusive relation wherein due attention and consideration of the other two spaces are valued. This means listening to the experiences and voices of the vendors and letting the vendors understand the regulative roles of the LGU. In admitting the overlap of the three spaces, the proposed development framework also needs to acknowledge the coupling between power (as panopticon and discipline, discontinuities, and technologies of the self) and freedoms (as political freedom, transparency freedom, security, economic facilities, and social opportunities). Therefore, this interface between power and freedom serves as the backbone of inclusive relations. In admitting the interface, the speculative demands of power are concretized (Dovey, 1999) via the five instrumentalities of freedom. If such elements in the framework are not observed or acknowledged, there may be a tendency for an LGU to treat the street vendors as problems to be solved, as constraints to local development, and as a social phenomenon that may be disregarded for its voice to speak about the reality of uneven development in a region, or country.

Declaration of ownership:

This report is our original work.

Conflict of interest:

None.

Ethical clearance:

This study was approved by our institution.

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