



Laro Ng Lahi Through the Lens of Junior High School Students: A Phenomenological Inquiry

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Abstract

Junior high school students' knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of traditional games are crucial to explore, and their integration into curriculum programs can optimize learning and developmental outcomes. This study aimed to understand and explore the lived experiences of junior high school students regarding their attitude and engagement toward *Laro ng Lahi* and its cultural significance. *Laro ng Lahi* has become unfamiliar or is no longer recognized by today's generation. The researcher aimed to emphasize the love for traditional games. Traditional games, such as *Luksong baka*, jump over the person (*baka*) or "cow," without touching, *Patintero* where goal for offensive players without being tagged, *Piko* which hop from section to section without touching the lines and *Tumbang preso*, tossing a slipper at a can object of the game. This study used a qualitative transcendental phenomenological approach. We aimed to examine the lived experiences of 20 junior high school students. The findings revealed that the students initially found the traditional games to be fun, exciting, and deeply memorable, often evoking strong emotions and a sense of nostalgia. We also identified challenges such as varying levels of student engagement and the need for more inclusive strategies to effectively integrate *Laro ng Lahi* into the broader educational framework. Our study strongly advocated for a more nuanced approach to incorporating *Laro ng Lahi* into the curriculum, stressing the need to overcome barriers and leverage these games as a valuable resource for holistic education.

Keywords: *Phenomenological Inquiry, traditional games, lived experiences, emerging themes*

INTRODUCTION

The Filipino traditional games, or *Laro ng Lahi*, hold immense cultural significance and offer multifaceted learning experiences for students (Mozar, 2020). This study seeks to determine the essence of the lived experiences of junior high school students with *Laro ng Lahi*. Therefore, this study aims to understand how these games are taught, their relevance in modern education, and their significance in the curriculum by exploring the experiences and insights of the participants. Additionally, this study aimed to develop a contextualized understanding of how *Laro ng Lahi* can be integrated into the educational curriculum, with a focus on enhancing learning outcomes within the specified educational context. This understanding is intended to inform recommendations for curriculum improvement. That *Laro ng Lahi* has become unfamiliar or is no longer recognized by today's generation.; inclusion of *Laro ng Lahi* in the new curriculum greatly help to the restoration and revival of Filipino cultural heritage, history, and identity. One limitation of the junior high curriculum is the impact of modernization and technology. As digital games become more popular, traditional games may be overlooked, diminishing their role in the curriculum. These games, deeply rooted in tradition, continue to be played in rural areas, contrary to the belief that they have vanished in today's high-tech society. It is crucial to explore junior high school students' knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of these traditional games, as their integration into the educational

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curriculum can optimize learning and developmental outcomes (Parji & Andriani, 2016; Iswinarti & Suminar, 2019; Iasha et al., 2020).

The incorporation of cultural games into physical education has been observed as an instrumental medium in shaping the outlook, cognition, and behaviors of students (Louth & Jamieson-Proctor, 2019). These games, rooted in tradition and cultural essence, offer multifaceted learning experiences, weaving learning with amusement. *Laro ng Lahi*, traditional Filipino game, is a cultural gem that plays a pivotal role in the Philippines' educational framework, offering a kaleidoscope of learning opportunities and experiences to students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Cultural Significance of Traditional Filipino Games

The study by Arcelo (2020) found that traditional games play a crucial role in preserving and transmitting Filipino culture and traditions from one generation to the next. Tioseco (2016) found that participation in traditional games fosters a sense of community and belonging among Filipinos. These games are often played in communal settings to strengthen bonds among participants and reinforce their cultural identity. Traditional Filipino games have demonstrated resilience and adaptability, adapting to different regions and cultural contexts (De Guia, 2018). This adaptability showcases the dynamic nature of the Filipino culture. Traditional games provide valuable character development values (Asrial et al., 2020).

In 2017, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recognized several traditional Filipino games as part of the country's Intangible Cultural Heritage. This acknowledgment underscores their cultural significance and contribution to the nation's identity. A study by the Magna Kultura Foundation in 2012 highlighted the cultural value of these games, emphasizing their role in bridging generational gaps and preserving cultural identity in a modern society increasingly influenced by technology and Western culture (Ferolino & Marasigan, 2022).

In line with this, Tupas revealed that despite the advent of digital and online gaming, most Generation Z still prefer physical activities, including traditional Filipino games, viewing them as fun, enjoyable, and affordable. This preference underscores the game's enduring appeal and the importance of its preservation in modern Filipino society. *Laro ng Lahi* can be maintained by constant participation in the corresponding households and integration of the classroom by considering the usage of local resources (Prestoza et al., 2020).

Casa and del Rosario (2022) stated that it is conceivable that parents want to urge their children to take an interest in recognized Filipino traditional games if they want to witness any kind of development or advancement in their children when they were young. Many Filipino festivals and celebrations incorporate traditional games to connect communities with their cultural roots. For instance, the *Palarong Pambansa*, a national sporting event in the Philippines, often includes conventional games as a highlight (Leyson, 2020). Indigenous games in the Philippines have been observed to encourage comprehensive advantages, especially in the cognitive, socioemotional, and physical areas of development in children (Dizer, 2022).

Integrating Traditional Games into the Physical Education Curriculum

Kwan's (2019) indicated that the inclusion of traditional games in the Physical Education curriculum can enhance students' learning experiences by providing a culturally relevant and enjoyable way to promote physical fitness. Balay-as et al. (2023) found a prevalence of positive viewpoints, underscoring the importance of incorporating indigenous games within educational frameworks. However, it is important to acknowledge that alongside the advantages, there exists a negative perspective due to the ongoing and endangered status of these games.

Incorporating indigenous Philippine games into the K–12 curriculum presents a chance to enhance learning. A request for action from curriculum implementers should reevaluate which aspects of using indigenous games require more attention in spite of the ongoing technological developments that have enabled the creation of contemporary games and even the prioritization of athletic events (Balay-as et al., 2023). Espina and Salvador (2018) suggested that traditional games contribute to students' physical fitness and well-being. They offer an alternative to conventional sports and are particularly beneficial for developing motor skills and physical coordination.

Exploring students' perceptions of the integration of *Laro ng Lahi* can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of this approach and its impact on their physical education experiences (Santos, 2020). Researchers have explored various pedagogical approaches to integrate *Laro ng Lahi* into the curriculum. Some studies have emphasized the importance of incorporating these games as active learning experiences that align with constructivist teaching principles (Mabansag, 2019).

Several investigations have revealed that traditional Filipino games can significantly improve physical health among students. These games are considered excellent forms of exercise that promote cardiovascular fitness and muscular strength (Manalo, 2017). It is recommended that teachers integrate these ideas into their math lessons by using folk games as interesting and culturally appropriate teaching tools. Teachers can preserve and celebrate the *Bicol Partido* cultural legacy while fostering a greater understanding and engagement with mathematics in their pupils by identifying and valuing the mathematical elements in folk games (Abay & Parola, 2024). At the end of the study, it was found that games contribute to the motor, linguistic, cognitive, and social emotional development fields of children and to their self-care to a great extent.

Experiences and Insights of Junior High School Students

Junior high school students may develop a stronger connection to their Filipino culture and heritage by participating in traditional games. These experiences can foster a sense of pride and identity (Barrios & Abella, 2021). Junior high school students often report positive interactions with their peers while playing traditional games. These interactions can enhance social skills and promote teamwork.

Research suggests that *Laro ng Lahi* can have educational benefits beyond physical fitness. For example, games like *Sipa* can improve hand-eye coordination and concentration, contributing to cognitive development (Estrella, 2019). Hazel et al. (n.d.) says that the outcomes of TSG (Traditional Street Games) to children are combination of exercise for the body that makes children to be more flexible and physically healthy, cultural and social learning, positive social values and skill development. Prakash (2012) argued that traditional games bring happiness to the mind and good health; they also help children maintain emotional stability and stay fit and healthy.

Emerging Trends and Future Directions

Some recent studies have explored integrating technology, such as mobile applications, to make traditional games more accessible and engaging for today's tech-savvy students (Lopez & Tan, 2022). Since today's youth are different and spend much of their time on their phones, iPods, and PSPs while sitting in a corner, traditional games are viewed as the finest means of "promoting peace, harmony, goodwill, and camaraderie" in diverse Philippine communities (Booc et al., 2019).

Comparative studies examining Filipino students' experiences engaging with traditional games and students from other cultures participating in conventional games offer insights into the universality of play and cultural preservation (Hsu, 2021). Curriculum Development: There is growing interest in developing comprehensive curricula for integrating traditional games into formal education settings. These materials can provide teachers with structured resources for

effective implementation (Gonzales, 2022).

Casa and del Rosario (2022) concluded that even if online games have taken over children's entertainment and free time, traditional Filipino games will maintain their positive influence on children's growth and development. The outcomes of Kamarudin et al. (2022) indicated that while classic kid's games do not lower stress levels, they might be useful for boosting social skills and decreasing internet use.

The importance of family and community involvement in playing and promoting these games. Future strategies could focus on community-based programs and family-centric events, which would not only encourage playing these games but also strengthen cultural bonds and enhance physical and social well-being.

Traditional Filipino games have long been a crucial part of the Philippines cultural heritage, offering more than entertainment. They embody the country's rich history and traditions and play a significant role in the physical, social, and cultural development of its people. A study by the Magna Kultura Foundation in 2012 highlighted the cultural value of these games, emphasizing their role in bridging generational gaps and preserving cultural identity in a modern society increasingly influenced by technology and Western culture (Ferolino & Marasigan, 2022). In line with this, a 2016 study by Tupas revealed that despite the advent of digital and online gaming, a majority of Generation Z still prefers physical activities, including traditional Filipino games, viewing them as fun, enjoyable, and affordable. This preference underscores the games' enduring appeal and the importance of their preservation in modern Filipino society.

The literature and studies reviewed in this chapter underscore the cultural significance of traditional Filipino games, their integration into the Physical Education curriculum, and the experiences and insights of junior high school students. Traditional Filipino games have long been a crucial part of the Philippines cultural heritage, offering more than entertainment. They embody the country's rich history and traditions and play a significant role in the physical, social, and cultural development of its people. This foundation of knowledge provides a contextual framework for the current research, highlighting the importance of preserving cultural heritage, promoting physical fitness, and enhancing the educational experiences of students through *Laro ng Lahi*. Building on these insights, the subsequent chapters of this study delved into the lived experiences and perceptions of junior high school students, contributing to a deeper understanding of their engagement with traditional Filipino games.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 outlines the framework that describes the structured way to analyze and understand the experiences of junior high school students with *Laro ng Lahi*, with a focus on their insights and how this traditional Filipino game can be integrated into the physical education curriculum.

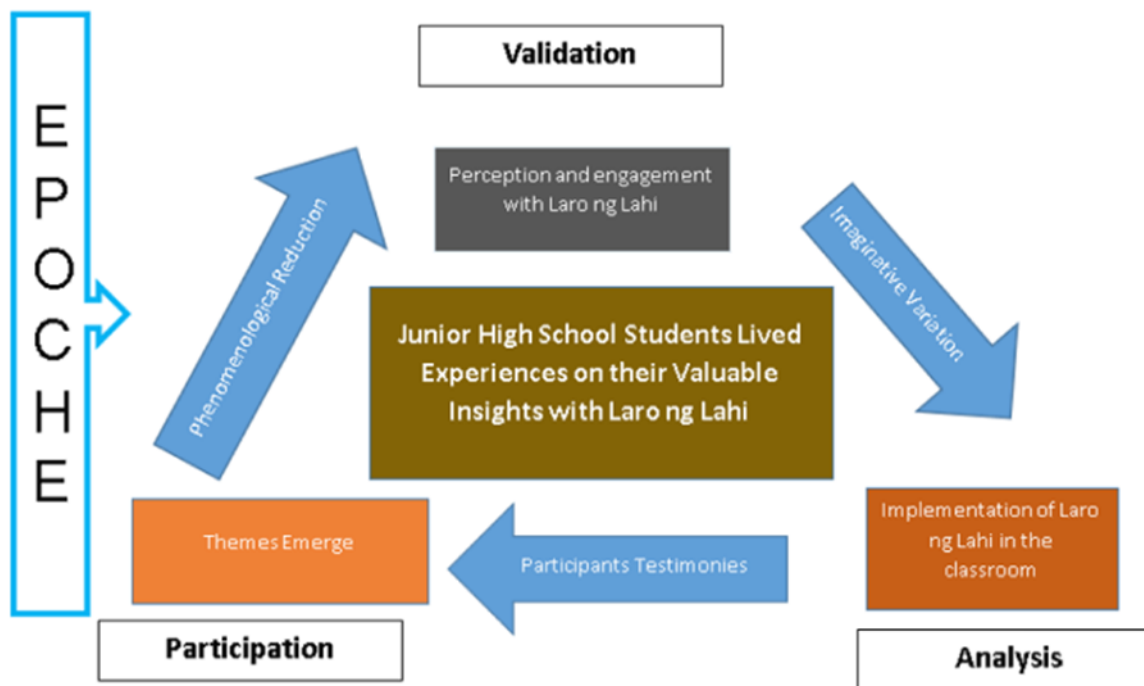


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHOD

This research explores the experiences and perceptions of junior high school students regarding traditional Filipino games, known as *Laro ng Lahi*, using a qualitative, transcendental, phenomenological approach. This study involves a purposive sample of 20 participants with different grade levels. Before their involvement, informed consent was obtained, and participation was voluntary; however, the researchers guaranteed treatment of the data with utmost confidentiality following the Data Privacy Act (DPA). The participants shared their diverse experiences and insights on playing traditional games, highlighting the cultural significance and educational value of *Laro ng Lahi* from their unique perspectives. The research methodology involved in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observations to extract the essence of students' experiences related to *Laro ng Lahi*.

This study adopted a qualitative transcendental phenomenological approach to explore the lived experiences of junior high school students with *Laro ng Lahi*, traditional Filipino game. Transcendental phenomenology, developed by Edmund Husserl, is particularly fitting for this research because it seeks to objectively describe the experiences of individuals, setting aside the researcher's preconceptions and biases. Qualitative data for this study is primarily collected through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observations. The treatment involves transcribing verbal data, organizing observations into coherent descriptions, and coding the data into themes for analysis.

Thematic Clustering: The researcher used thematic clustering to develop the main themes. In this way, invariant components (horizons) are thematize and grouped. These constant elements of the phenomenon are referred to as the "fundamental motifs of the experience" by Moustakas (1994). Thematic analysis was used to analyze qualitative data to determine patterns or themes. Hence, the researcher identified patterns or emerging themes by examining participants' lived experiences on *Laro ng Lahi*.

Participants in this research consisted of junior high school students who actively participated in the Physical Education curriculum, which integrates *Laro ng Lahi*. The participants were also selected purposefully to provide a rich and diverse range of experiences and perspectives.

Participants' information, insight, and experience with *Laro ng Lahi*.

Participant 1, Rosa, is a Grade 10 student who is fond of playing traditional games. She was very engaged during the interview.

Participant 2, Gina, Grade 9 was very enthusiastic when she shared about traditional games.

Participant 3, Ruth, Grade 10 was always excited sharing her experiences with *Laro ng Lahi*.

Participant 4, Joshua, Grade 7, showed confidence in sharing his knowledge and skills on *Laro ng Lahi*.

Participant 5, Noemi, Grade 8, found her experiences with *Laro ng Lahi* both fun and challenging

Participant 6, Akila, Grade 9, though has not had much experience in playing *Laro ng Lahi* has an interest and love for traditional games.

Participant 7, Peter, Grade 10 has shown great interest in *Laro ng Lahi*. The traditional game was fun and exciting.

Participant 8, Sarah, Grade 10 was also fond of traditional games. She always gives it a try if she plays *Laro ng Lahi*.

Participant 9, Eva, Grade 8: It was always a good time for her when she engaged in playing traditional games.

Participant 10, Rebecca, Grade 7, she found playing traditional games enjoyable.

Participant 11, John, Grade 10, he had experience playing different traditional games that he really enjoyed.

Participant 12, Rod, Grade 9: He was very proud to share that his friends and him used to play different *Laro ng Lahi*.

Participant 13, Angela, Grade 7, she admitted that one thing she loved about playing traditional games was that she met many friends.

Participant 14, Jayson, Grade 8, he enjoyed playing traditional games. He always finds playing fun and exciting.

Participant 15, Gloria, Grade 9, shared her experiences with *Laro ng Lahi*. It was worthy to learn such, and she found enjoyment every time she played.

Participants 16, Mariz, Grade 10, she would always love to invite her friends to play *Laro ng Lahi*. She considered playing traditional game to be fun and memorable.

Participant 17, Celia, Grade 9, just like Mariz, Celia also loves to play traditional games with her friends.

Participant 18, Danny, Grade 7, he was always enthusiastic and eager every time he engaged with *Laro ng Lahi*.

Participant 19, Mark, Grade 8: He shared that he loved to play *Tumbang Preso* when he was young.

Participants 20, James, Grade 10, it was always memorable for him when he played *Laro ng Lahi* with his friends.

Table 1. Data Collection Scenario

Types of data collected
Interview, Focus Group Discussion, observation, and open-ended survey questionnaires
Details of data collection procedures
Data Familiarization
Coding
Development of Phenomenological Structure

Details of data collection procedures

Member Checking

Reporting

The start and stop dates of data collectionJanuary 31 to February 11,2024

triangulation of sources/methods (for Qualitative only)

Google Forms-Open -ended Survey Questionnaires

Interview face to face

Observation

modification of procedures in response to evolving study findings (if any)N/A

Description of instruments15 Open-ended survey questionnaires via google forms and repeat the Interview face to face

Description of devices (e.g., audio recorders) used for data collection

Google forms

Audio Recorder

The phenomenological data analysis employed in this study is a rigorous process that involves systematically exploring and interpreting the participants' narratives. The following steps guided the analysis:

Data Familiarization: The researcher immersed herself in the data by reading and rereading transcripts and field notes to gain a deep understanding of the participants' experiences.

Identification of Meaning Units: The researcher identified relevant meaning units within the text, highlighting significant statements or passages that capture the essence of the participants' experiences.

Coding: This is a pivotal step in the process, where segments of data related to participants' interpretations and perceived consequences were systematically categorized and labeled. In this study, the research was observed to involve both open coding, identifying initial themes, and axial coding, connecting themes and categories. Constant comparisons within and across transcripts ensured consistency and validity, examining patterns, similarities, and differences.

Development of Phenomenological Structure: In this study, themes are further refined and organized into a phenomenological structure that articulates the essence of participants' experiences with *Laro ng Lahi*.

Member Checking: To enhance validity, the researcher ensured that participants reviewed the findings to ensure that their experiences were accurately represented.

Reporting: The research findings were presented in a narrative format, accompanied by quotations and verbatim from participants to illustrate key themes and insights. This report provides a rich and comprehensive account of the lived experiences and valuable insights of junior high school students regarding *Laro ng Lahi*.

Thematic Clustering: The researcher used thematic clustering to develop the main themes. In this way, invariant components (horizons) are thematize and grouped. These constant elements of the phenomenon are referred to as the "fundamental motifs of the experience" by Moustakas (1994). Thematic analysis was used to analyze qualitative data to determine patterns or themes. Hence, the researcher identified patterns or emerging themes by examining participants' lived experiences on *Laro ng Lahi*.

The researcher in this study also incorporated a textual description into the framework that explains how the experience occurred. The participants' narratives were written by the researcher, and each narrative included a textual description of "what" happened and a structural description

of "how" it happened. The researcher also listed the units of significance for each participant to establish units of meaning shared by all participants. The researcher put aside any personal assumptions about the phenomena to conduct this phenomenological study, which used a transcend.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The annotated exemplar and thematic analysis of this study are presented in narration format as stated below. Drawing upon the collected testimonies regarding *Laro ng Lahi*, a Filipino traditional game.

Table 2. The clustering of themes from subordinate to superordinate themes.

Subordinate Themes	Superordinate themes
Varied Experiences	
Childhood Encounters and Engagement with Traditional Filipino Games	Varied experiences and engagement with Traditional Games
Dynamic Engagement with Traditional Games	
Simplicity and diversity of the games	
Joyful Engagement and Cultural Appreciation in Playing Traditional Filipino Games	Promoting cultural appreciation and cultural continuity through Traditional Games
Ensuring Cultural Continuity and Enhancing Well-being Through Traditional Filipino Games	
Marked positive changes on the perceptions on Laro ng Lahi	Developed positive attitudes and strong social life skills and values through traditional games
Life Skills and Values Learned Through Traditional Filipino Games	
Finding simple pleasures through games while developing sportsmanship	
Fostering Community, Identity, and Social Bonds Through Traditional Games	

Varied experiences and engagement with Traditional Games

From the participants’ testimonies, this theme reflects how play and games are needed at a child’s early age because by playing, the child acquires a learning experience that contains aspects of cognitive, language, social emotional, and physical. Playing also stimulates the child to develop in general, both thinking, emotional, and socially. Traditional games, as one type of play activity, can be used as a learning resource to meet the needs of children, including cognitive, language, emotional, social, and physical motor. Playing a traditional game aims not only to develop physical

activity but also to improve cognitive and social skills. The participants' engagement with traditional games brought them with significant experiences, memorable and valuable encounter and meaningful engagements, which contributed to their development. The traditional game not only trains the motor, language, cognitive, social, and moral development but also serves as a media for the participants to instill and form cultural values and build their character. From the learning activities experienced by the participants, they benefitted in terms of their personal growth, social skills, and appreciation of the Filipino culture.

The finding is somewhat similar with the study of [Kamaruddin et al. \(2023\)](#) which stated that children learn through several age-appropriate teaching and learning pedagogies. Thus, the significance of using a play-based approach in the early years and the idea that play is a spiral of learning served as the foundation for this investigation.

The personal and emotional depth of experiences participants had while playing traditional Filipino games Danny stated, "A memorable moment I remember is when me and my cousins were playing sato and the stick hit one of my cousins face..." It seems that he enjoyed playing sato, but he was worried about the incident with his cousin.

Promoting Cultural Appreciation and Cultural Continuity through inclusion of traditional games

This theme emphasizes the role of traditional games in fostering community unity and providing a deeper understanding of the Filipino culture. These games serve as a medium for cultural exchange and learning, strengthening the community's cohesion and cultural identity. This also focused on how traditional games contribute to cultural appreciation and continuity, ensuring that the heritage is passed down through generations. It also acknowledges that these activities support learning and personal development.

The theme also implied the inclusion of traditional games in physical education curricula and classes. It is strongly recommended that traditional games be incorporated into school programs and physical activities in the K-12 P.E Curriculum since these games have always been an integral part of Filipino children's lives and Filipino culture, which embody recreational and cultural significance, values, and skills development.

Developed positive attitudes and strong social life skills and values through traditional games

This theme highlights the positive impact of such games on emotional connections and social relationships. This shows that playing these games can lead to shared happiness and stronger emotional bonds within a community, thus enhancing social ties. It also underscores the importance of these games for health and fitness, as well as for the development of various skills and emotional well-being. Participating in these games can be a form of exercise and a way to develop new competencies while also promoting mental health. *Laro ng Lahi* can have varying effects on junior high school students, depending on several factors, such as physical activity, social interaction, cultural awareness, and cognitive skills.

The framework implies that *Laro ng Lahi* is significant in various aspects of life, from building community and cultural understanding to promoting individual health and emotional welfare. Additionally, the study's significance lies in its potential to guide administrators in curriculum enhancement and resource allocation, provide educators with insights to tailor teaching strategies, empower parents to support their children's cultural appreciation, and directly impact the educational journey of junior high school students by making learning more engaging and relevant.

Synthesis of the lived experiences of the Junior High School on their engagement and encounters with *Laro ng Lahi*

This diagram presents a thematic framework centered around the *Laro ng Lahi*, which likely refers to traditional Filipino games.



Figure 2. Thematic Framework

Horizontalization of the Significant Statements of Participants into developed Meanings

This study revealed a predominant sentiment of enjoyment, with many participants recalling their engagement with these games as fun, exciting, and sometimes challenging. A notable theme of nostalgia emerges as individuals reminisce about their childhoods, highlighting the cultural and traditional significance of *Laro ng Lahi*. Socializing emerges as a secondary theme, indicating that these games also served as a platform for interaction and friendship building. The study explores the participants' narratives regarding their first encounters with traditional Filipino games. This study highlights two primary pathways through which individuals were introduced to these games: through childhood friends and outdoor play and during their early school years. The superordinate theme extracted from the responses is "Childhood Encounters and Engagement with Traditional Filipino Games." This theme emphasizes the role of these games in shaping participants' early social experiences and fostering a sense of community from a young age. The personal and emotional depth of experience participants had while playing traditional Filipino games. The narratives collectively underscore the blend of joy, camaraderie, occasional physical pain, and the enduring memories these games create. Key subordinate themes emerge, such as the "Consequence of Enthusiasm," reflecting moments where the zeal for play results in minor injuries or lost items, and "Social Bonding Through Play," highlighting the games as a medium for strengthening friendships and building community.

The subordinate themes highlight the multifaceted emotional impact of these games. Participants describe feelings ranging from the adrenaline rush of competition to happiness derived from playing culturally significant games with friends and family.

The superordinate theme encapsulates the overall sentiment that *Laro ng Lahi* not only serves

as a source of entertainment but also as a vehicle for emotional expression, social bonding, and cultural continuity. The clustering of subordinate themes to superordinate themes was performed by examining the subordinate themes extracted from the developed meanings derived from the participants' significant statements. The researcher grouped similar statements with the same meaning and deleted overlapping ideas. From the fifteen subordinate themes, three superordinate themes emerge.

Subordinate themes are not merely a set of games; they are an essential element of cultural pride, a vessel for passing traditions to younger generations and a means for strengthening community bonds. The superordinate theme encapsulates the multifaceted role these games play in preserving cultural heritage, fostering community values and imparting life lessons, even as modernity introduces shifts in play and social interaction. The subordinate themes provide a vibrant snapshot of the diverse attitudes held by the participants toward traditional Filipino games, revealing a collective sentiment of joy, competitive spirit, and cultural appreciation. The narratives highlight how these games serve as conduits for both entertainment and cultural expression.

A significant superordinate theme emerges, encapsulating the dual aspects of enjoyment and cultural reverence that these games inspire. Subordinate themes such as "Iconic Value of *Tumbang Preso*," "Diversity of Games," and "Teamwork and Collaboration" illustrate the multifaceted appeal of *Laro ng Lahi*. The superordinate theme encapsulates the essence of *Laro ng Lahi* as more than just games. They are a crucial part of the Filipino heritage, reflecting the nation's spirit of unity, creativity, and resilience.

The results also revealed a broad consensus on the positive educational, cultural, and physical health impacts of these traditional Filipino games. Key subordinate themes highlighting the multifaceted benefits of incorporating these games into educational settings. The superordinate theme encapsulates the overall sentiment that *Laro ng Lahi* not only enriches students' knowledge of Filipino culture, contributes to their physical well-being, and fosters a deeper sense of community and cultural pride.

The study illustrates participants' perspectives on how traditional Filipino games contribute to their physical fitness and overall well-being. Participants consistently highlighted the dual benefits of enjoying the cultural aspect of these games while also gaining significant health and fitness advantages. The superordinate theme encompasses the consensus among participants that these games are not only a source of joy and cultural connection but also a valuable means of achieving physical fitness.

This study explores the transformative impact of integrating *Laro ng Lahi* into the Physical Education (PE) curriculum on students' perceptions of physical education. The narratives reveal a spectrum of reactions, ranging from nostalgic excitement and increased popularity among peers to a newfound appreciation for the simplicity and cultural significance of traditional games. Key subordinate themes indicating a positive shift in how physical education is perceived and experienced. The superordinate theme underscores the significant role these traditional games play in reshaping students' PE attitudes.

It reveals how *Laro ng Lahi* transcends mere play, embodying deeper lessons in social skills, sportsmanship, strength, resilience, fairness, mental and physical well-being, and importantly, cultural preservation. The subordinate themes reflect the diverse yet unified ways in which these games contribute to personal development and societal values. Furthermore, "Assertiveness and Cultural Preservation" highlights the participants' awareness of their role in keeping their cultural heritage alive through engagement with these games. The superordinate theme encapsulates the intrinsic role *Laro ng Lahi* plays in the transmission of cultural values, fostering a sense of community, and nurturing essential life skills among Filipinos.

The profound life lessons participants have gleaned from playing *Laro ng Lahi*, a traditional

Filipino game. These narratives illuminate how such games transcend mere entertainment, embedding the vital skills and values of players that are essential for personal growth and societal harmony. The subordinate themes showcase the diversity of lessons learned, from enhancing social skills and resilience to fostering fairness and grace in competition.

A notable superordinate theme encapsulates the broad spectrum of the developmental and cultural benefits of *Laro ng Lahi*. The subordinate themes highlight these games' multifaceted benefits, from promoting fitness and fun to ensuring the transmission of cultural values and heritage. A prominent superordinate theme captures the overarching belief that *Laro ng Lahi* is vital in maintaining cultural identity, history, and continuity. The horizontalization of Participants' narration on how playing *Laro ng Lahi* with their peers affected their sense of belonging and camaraderie, highlighting the profound impact of playing *Laro ng Lahi* on fostering a sense of belonging and camaraderie among peers. The narratives reveal how these games serve as powerful instruments for social integration, inclusivity, and the building of harmonious relationships.

The subordinate themes illustrate the crucial role these games play in bringing people together and promoting an inclusive environment where everyone is welcome to participate. The superordinate theme encapsulates the collective sentiment that *Laro ng Lahi* is more than just a set of games. This shows the horizontalization of the participants' narration on how various-grade levels perceive and engage with these games' values and traditions. It reveals that while younger students display heightened enthusiasm for these games, older students tend to approach them with a more laid-back attitude, often driven by nostalgic feelings for their cultural and educational value. Subordinate themes highlight how students of different ages connect with traditional games.

The superordinate theme reflects a changing landscape in which external factors like digital technology, pose challenges to traditional play. Yet the enduring appeal of these games across age groups underscores their significance in fostering cultural identity, educational engagement and community cohesion. Promoting cultural appreciation and continuity through the inclusion of Traditional Games came from their cultural appreciation and desire for cultural continuity, particularly with *Laro ng Lahi*, which they actually wanted to extend to future generations.

The integration of *Laro ng Lahi* into the Physical Education curriculum is a significant educational initiative in the Philippines. The literature provides insights into the following aspects:

- Curricular Enhancement: Research indicates that the inclusion of traditional games in the Physical Education curriculum can enhance students' learning experiences by providing a culturally relevant and enjoyable way to promote physical fitness (Kwan, 2019).
- Physical Fitness: Studies have suggested that traditional games contribute to students' physical fitness and well-being. They offer an alternative to conventional sports and are particularly beneficial for developing motor skills and physical coordination (Espina & Salvador, 2018).
- Perceptions of Students: Exploring students' perceptions of the integration of *Laro ng Lahi* can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of this approach and its impact on their physical education experiences (Santos, 2020).
- Pedagogical Approaches: Researchers have explored various pedagogical approaches to effectively integrate *Laro ng Lahi* into the curriculum. Some studies have emphasized the importance of incorporating these games as active learning experiences, which aligns with constructivist teaching principles (Mabansag, 2019).
- Impact on Physical Health: Several investigations have shown that traditional Filipino games can significantly improve physical health among students. These games are considered excellent forms of exercise that promote cardiovascular fitness and muscular strength (Manalo, 2017).

- Cultural Competence: Integrating traditional games promotes cultural competence in education. By engaging students with their cultural heritage, schools can contribute to a more inclusive and culturally sensitive learning environment (Tejada, 2016).

Issues and Implications

The study's findings on the integration of *Laro ng Lahi* into the Physical Education curriculum for junior high school students highlight several key issues and implications for educational practices, cultural preservation, and student engagement.

1. Despite the positive reception by many, there is an underlying issue of cultural disconnection among some students. The modern digital age has shifted interests away from traditional games, risking the gradual erosion of cultural heritage. Some contemporary games that are well-liked by junior high school children and may capture their attention include Fortnite, a battle royale game that blends strategy, combat, and building, and Among Us, in which players cooperate on a spaceship while simultaneously having to spot the impostor.
2. The current structure of the Physical Education curriculum may not adequately accommodate or value the inclusion of traditional games, thus limiting their potential impact on student development.
3. Implementing *Laro ng Lahi* effectively requires resources, including materials, space, and trained personnel, which may not be readily available in all educational settings.
4. Traditional games offer a more comprehensive approach to education, emphasizing physical health, social skills, teamwork, and cultural awareness. This aligns with contemporary educational goals of developing well-rounded individuals.
5. *Laro ng Lahi* can strengthen community bonds among students, educators, and the wider community. Shared cultural experiences can foster a sense of belonging and collective identity.
6. This study underscores the need for educational policy makers and curriculum developers to reconsider the value of traditional games in modern education. There is an opportunity to innovate the Physical Education curriculum to make it more inclusive and culturally relevant.
7. That *Laro ng Lahi* has become unfamiliar or is no longer recognized by today's generation; inclusion of *Laro ng Lahi* in the new curriculum greatly help to the restoration and revival of Filipino cultural heritage, history, and identity.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings revealed that students described their initial encounters with these traditional Filipino games as fun, exciting, and deeply memorable, often associated with strong emotions and a sense of nostalgia. These games not only enhanced students' physical well-being but also played a critical role in deepening their connection to Filipino culture and heritage. From the findings of the study, three main themes emerged: varied experiences and engagement with Traditional Games; promoting cultural appreciation and cultural continuity through inclusion of Traditional Games and Developed positive attitudes, strong social life skills, discipline and values through traditional games.

Varied experiences and engagement with traditional games emerged from the varied experiences and engagement of the participants with *Laro ng Lahi* since childhood and their encounters in their classes. Promoting cultural appreciation and cultural continuity through inclusion of traditional games, which originated from their cultural appreciation and desire for cultural continuity, particularly with *Laro ng Lahi*, which they actually wanted to extend to future generations.

Developed positive attitudes and strong social life skills and values through traditional games, the theme was developed from their testimonies on the positive changes brought by their engagement with *Laro ng Lahi*. They also learned life skills and values through traditional Filipino

Games and fostered social bonds with fellow members and their communities.

Recommendation

1. Educational policymakers may revise curriculum guidelines to explicitly include *Laro ng Lahi* and other traditional games. *Laro ng Lahi* in every region may be integrated into the physical education curriculum. It can start at the local level to help students understand their own *Laro ng Lahi*. This integration may highlight not only the physical benefits but also the cultural, social, and historical values that these games offer.
2. Curriculum planners may develop digital platforms, apps, or online communities to document *Laro ng Lahi* rules, histories, and tutorials. This strategy may help bridge the gap between traditional practices and modern interests, making these games more accessible to the digital-native generation.
3. School administrators may develop teacher training programs to incorporate modules on the significance, rules, and effective teaching strategies for *Laro ng Lahi*. This training may equip educators with the knowledge and skills to effectively facilitate these games, ensuring that their educational potential is fully realized.
4. Schools may strengthen their partnerships with local communities or parental groups to support the practice of *Laro ng Lahi* within and outside school settings. Community events or family days may serve as platforms for showcasing and celebrating these games, thus enhancing communal bonds and cultural appreciation.
5. School heads may encourage teachers to integrate *Laro ng Lahi* across different subject areas to create a more interdisciplinary learning experience. For example, history lessons could cover the origins of these games, while art classes could explore traditional Filipino sports equipment.
6. Teachers may encourage students to lead in organizing *Laro ng Lahi* events or clubs. This approach promotes leadership skills, increases student engagement, and ensures that initiatives are tailored to student interests.

LIMITATION AND FURTHER RESEARCH

This qualitative phenomenological research is comprehensive in its approach, focusing on exploring the lived experiences and perceptions of junior high school students regarding traditional Filipino games, specifically *Laro ng Lahi*. The study employed a range of methods, including in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observations, to extract rich insights. This study was conducted within specific geographic and educational parameters to inform curriculum improvement recommendations. This empowerment of educators affirms their capability and effectiveness in shaping the learning experiences of their students. This study is intentionally bounded by specific geographic and educational parameters. The study explores junior high school students' experiences within a particular locale and educational context. The aim was not to uncover the underlying meanings, themes, and patterns that emerged from the participants' narratives.

Future researchers may conduct longitudinal research to assess the long-term impacts of *Laro ng Lahi* integration on various aspects of student development, including physical health, social skills, and cultural identity. This evidence base can guide future enhancements of educational policies and practices.

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Attachment:**Clustering Subordinate Themes to Superordinate Themes**

Table 1 shows the clustering of themes from subordinate to superordinate themes. Based on the subordinated themes, three superordinate themes emerged from clustering. Varied experiences and engagement with traditional games emerged from the varied experiences and engagement of the participants with *Laro ng Lahi* since childhood and their encounters in their classes.

Table 1. Clustering subordinate themes to superordinate themes

Subordinate Themes	Superordinate themes
<i>Varied Experiences Childhood Encounters and Engagement with Traditional Filipino Games Dynamic Engagement with Traditional Games Simplicity and diversity of the games</i>	<i>Varied experiences and engagement with Traditional Games</i>
<i>Joyful Engagement and Cultural Appreciation in Playing Traditional Filipino Games Ensuring Cultural Continuity and Enhancing Well-being Through Traditional Filipino Games</i>	<i>Promoting cultural appreciation and cultural continuity through Traditional Games</i>
<i>Marked positive changes in the perceptions of Laro ng Lahi Life Skills and Values Learned Through Traditional Filipino Games Finding simple pleasures through games while developing sportsmanship Fostering Community, Identity, and Social Bonds Through Traditional Games</i>	<i>Developed positive attitudes and solid social life skills and values through traditional games</i>