

Senior High School Level of Awareness on Traditional Games Towards Designing Larong Atin Recreational Opportunities (LARO)

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ABSTRACT

Traditional Filipino games provide opportunities for physical activity, cultural learning, and collaborative participation, yet many games are becoming less familiar to younger learners. This study assessed senior high school students' level of awareness of traditional Filipino games, described their engagement when the games were incorporated into Physical Education, examined the reported relationship between game awareness and engagement, and developed Larong Atin Recreational Opportunities (LARO). A quantitative descriptive-correlational design was used. The respondents were 310 senior high school students from five public secondary schools in Ramon, Isabela, selected through purposive stratified sampling. Data were gathered using an adapted questionnaire and analyzed using

frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and regression summary statistics. Students were generally aware of traditional games ($M = 2.91$), indicating prior exposure but a need for refresher instruction on rules and mechanics. Engagement was rated fully aware or highly favorable overall ($M = 3.27$), particularly for enjoyment, active participation, collaboration, and motivation. The reported regression model showed a low positive relationship between awareness and engagement ($R = .263$, $R^2 = .069$), suggesting that game awareness explained 6.9% of the variation in engagement. The findings support regular, structured integration of traditional Filipino games into Physical Education through teacher training, demonstrations, community involvement, and school-based recreational activities. The proposed LARO program offers a culturally responsive strategy for strengthening awareness, participation, and appreciation of Filipino heritage.

Keywords: *cultural heritage, Larong Atin, Physical Education, senior high school students, student engagement, traditional Filipino games*

INTRODUCTION

Traditional Filipino games are culturally rooted recreational activities that use simple rules, accessible materials, movement, cooperation, and shared participation. Games such as patintero, tumbang preso, luksong tinik, sipa, and sungka are more than leisure activities. They transmit community values, support social interaction, and provide opportunities for physical, cognitive, and emotional development. In Physical Education (PE), these games offer culturally responsive alternatives to standardized sports and sedentary digital recreation.

The increasing influence of gadgets, online entertainment, and changing lifestyles has reduced opportunities for spontaneous outdoor play and intergenerational transmission of traditional games. Earlier studies described the declining visibility of Philippine indigenous games among younger learners and emphasized the importance of organized school-based preservation initiatives (Booc et al., 2019; Dizer et al., 2022; Tindowen et al., 2019). This

concern is educational as well as cultural because active play contributes to physical fitness, cooperation, and learner engagement (Bailey et al., 2009; World Health Organization, 2020).

Traditional games can be integrated into PE as experiential and culturally responsive learning activities. Constructivist and social-constructivist perspectives emphasize that learners build knowledge through active experience, interaction, and shared meaning-making (Vygotsky, 1978). Culturally responsive teaching likewise recognizes that learners become more connected to educational activities when their cultural experiences and identities are reflected in instruction (Gay, 2018).

This study assessed the awareness of senior high school students in selected public secondary schools in Ramon, Isabela regarding Filipino traditional games. It also described student engagement when traditional games were incorporated into PE, examined the reported relationship between awareness and engagement, and used the findings as the basis for designing the Larong Atin Recreational Opportunities (LARO) program.

Literature Review

Traditional Games as Cultural Heritage

Traditional games preserve cultural practices through repeated participation, observation, and intergenerational transmission. They embody local creativity, community identity, and shared values. Studies in the Philippine context have highlighted the cultural significance of Laro ng Lahi and the need to preserve traditional games as digital entertainment becomes more dominant (Balay-As et al., 2023; Booc et al., 2019; Dizer et al., 2022). When schools provide opportunities to learn and play these games, they support cultural continuity while exposing learners to indigenous forms of recreation.

Traditional Games in Physical Education

Traditional games are compatible with the goals of PE because they combine movement, coordination, teamwork, strategic thinking, and enjoyment. Bailey et al. (2009) emphasized the educational benefits of physical activity and school sport, while Azlan et al. (2020) identified traditional games as practical activities for promoting physical activity during PE lessons. More recent studies also reported positive effects on motivation, learning outcomes, social skills, and learner cooperation when traditional games are incorporated into educational activities (Aliriad et al., 2024; Amrullah et al., 2023; Hartanto et al., 2021).

Student Engagement and Culturally Responsive Learning

Student engagement includes behavioral, emotional, and cognitive dimensions shaped by instructional practices, relationships, motivation, and learning environments (Fredricks et al., 2004). Traditional games can promote engagement because they are active, collaborative, and culturally meaningful. Gay (2018) argued that culturally responsive teaching strengthens learner identity, participation, and inclusivity by incorporating students' cultural experiences into instruction. In PE, traditional games create opportunities for participation, cooperation, and shared cultural learning rather than passive reception of information.

Need for Structured School-Based Preservation

Awareness alone may not ensure cultural continuity. Students may recognize familiar games but lack knowledge of rules and mechanics for less visible games. Schools therefore play an important role in providing regular demonstrations, opportunities for practice, teacher preparation, and community-based activities. Structured programs can transform occasional cultural exposure into sustained participation and heritage appreciation (Belano & Perez, 2024; Pacadaljen, 2024; Tanucan, 2023).

METHODS

Research Design

The study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design. The descriptive component assessed students' awareness of traditional games and their reported engagement when traditional games were incorporated into PE. The correlational component summarized the reported relationship between awareness and engagement using the regression-model statistics provided in the source manuscript.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in five public secondary schools in Ramon District, Isabela: San Sebastian Integrated School, San Miguel Integrated School, Ramon National High School, Raniag High School, and Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo National High School.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The study involved 310 senior high school students drawn from a reported population of 1,580 learners. Purposive stratified sampling was used to represent the participating schools. The reported sample allocation was 36 students from San Sebastian Integrated School, 39 from San Miguel Integrated School, 64 from Ramon National High School, 142 from Raniag High School, and 29 from Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo National High School.

Research Instrument

Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire adapted and revised from Rosanes (2024) and a traditional Filipino street-games resource identified in the source manuscript. The instrument measured awareness of 25 traditional games and students' engagement when traditional games were integrated into PE. A four-point scale was used. For awareness, scores of 3.26-4.00 indicated full awareness, 2.51-3.25 awareness, 1.76-2.50 lack of awareness, and 1.00-1.75 full lack of awareness.

Data Gathering Procedure

Permission was requested from the principals of the participating public secondary schools. After approval, the questionnaire was administered to the selected senior high school students. Responses were collected, tallied, and analyzed to determine awareness and engagement levels.

Data Analysis

Frequency and percentage were used to describe the demographic profile. Weighted mean was used to summarize awareness of traditional games and engagement during PE activities. The reported regression summary was used to describe the relationship between awareness and student engagement. Because the visible source table did not provide regression coefficients, a significance test, or a separate cultural-awareness model, no unsupported inferential claim was added.

Ethical Consideration

Informed consent was obtained from participants. The study explained its purpose, protected confidentiality through secure data handling and participant identifiers, recognized the right to withdraw, and indicated that ethical approval was sought from the university ethics committee.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Profile

The sample included 310 senior high school students. Females comprised 52.58% of the respondents and males comprised 47.42%. Most respondents were reported as 17 years old, followed by those aged 16 and 18 years. The source age table contains an internal discrepancy: its reported age frequencies sum to 311 although the stated sample size is 310. The age distribution is therefore reproduced with a verification note rather than silently corrected.

Table 1. *Respondent Profile as Reported in the Source Manuscript*

Profile Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	15 years old	1	0.32%
Age	16 years old	82	26.45%
Age	17 years old	138	44.51%
Age	18 years old	76	24.51%
Age	19 years old	9	2.90%
Age	20 years old	5	1.61%
Sex	Female	163	52.58%
Sex	Male	147	47.42%

Note. The sex frequencies sum to the stated sample of 310. The age frequencies, as reported in the source, sum to 311 and should be verified against the original dataset before final submission.

Awareness of Traditional Filipino Games

Students were generally aware of traditional Filipino games ($M = 2.91$). This indicates that many respondents had played traditional games but needed refresher instruction on the rules and mechanics. Tagu-taguan ($M = 3.59$), Jack 'N' Poy ($M = 3.57$), tumbang preso ($M = 3.54$), langit lupa ($M = 3.48$), and Jack Stone ($M = 3.45$) were among the most familiar games. In contrast, palosebo ($M = 1.51$), araw lilim ($M = 1.53$), and bati cobra ($M = 1.56$) were the least familiar. The variation suggests that games sustained through peer interaction and community exposure remain visible, while less frequently played games require intentional school-based reintroduction.

Table 2. *Selected Awareness Ratings for Traditional Filipino Games*

Traditional Game	Weighted Mean	Awareness Level	Instructional Implication
Tagu-taguan (Hide and Seek)	3.59	Fully aware	Sustain through regular play
Jack 'N' Poy	3.57	Fully aware	Use as familiar entry activity
Tumbang preso	3.54	Fully aware	Integrate in PE rotations
Langit lupa	3.48	Fully aware	Reinforce rules and teamwork
Jack Stone	3.45	Fully aware	Use for coordination activities
Overall awareness	2.91	Aware	Provide refresher on rules and mechanics
Piko	2.14	Not aware	Demonstrate and provide guided practice
Tsato	2.12	Not aware	Reintroduce through structured activities
Bati cobra	1.56	Fully not aware	Prioritize demonstration and documentation
Araw lilim	1.53	Fully not aware	Prioritize demonstration and documentation
Palosebo	1.51	Fully not aware	Prioritize demonstration and safe adaptation

These findings are consistent with studies noting that modernization and digital entertainment have reduced opportunities for spontaneous traditional play (Booc et al., 2019; Dizer et al., 2022). From a social-constructivist perspective, familiarity grows when learners observe, play, and discuss games with peers and adults. Schools can restore these opportunities through demonstrations and repeated participation.

Student Engagement in Traditional Games

Students reported favorable engagement when traditional games were incorporated into PE ($M = 3.27$). The strongest indicator was active participation because the games were enjoyable and engaging ($M = 3.41$), followed by interaction and collaboration with classmates ($M = 3.40$) and increased motivation and excitement ($M = 3.37$).

Preference for traditional games over modern sports or other recreational activities received the lowest rating ($M = 2.92$), indicating that traditional games should complement rather than replace other PE activities.

Table 3. *Student Engagement When Traditional Games Are Integrated into PE*

Engagement Indicator	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Actively participates because the games are enjoyable and engaging	3.41	Fully aware / strongly agree
Interacts and collaborates with classmates	3.40	Fully aware / strongly agree
Feels more motivated and excited to participate	3.37	Fully aware / strongly agree
Feels more physically active and energetic	3.34	Fully aware / strongly agree
Is challenged to improve skills and abilities	3.27	Fully aware / strongly agree
Develops problem-solving and strategic-thinking skills	3.20	Aware / agree
Prefers traditional games over modern sports or recreational activities	2.92	Aware / agree
Overall engagement	3.27	Fully aware / strongly agree

The result supports the use of culturally responsive, cooperative, and experiential activities in PE. Traditional games encourage movement, communication, teamwork, and decision-making. These conditions are consistent with student-engagement research emphasizing the value of active participation and supportive peer interaction (Fredricks et al., 2004; Hartanto et al., 2021).

Reported Relationship Between Awareness and Engagement

The reported regression summary showed a low positive relationship between awareness of traditional games and student engagement ($R = .263$). The model explained 6.9% of the variation in engagement ($R^2 = .069$; adjusted $R^2 = .066$). This modest explanatory power indicates that awareness contributes to engagement but does not operate alone. Other factors may include teacher facilitation, accessibility of play spaces and materials, peer dynamics, previous exposure, and learner preferences.

Table 4. *Reported Regression Summary for Traditional-Game Awareness and Student Engagement*

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate	Interpretation
.263	.069	.066	.4033	Low positive relationship; 6.9% of engagement variance explained

Larong Atin Recreational Opportunities (LARO)

The findings support a structured school-based program that refreshes familiar games, reintroduces less familiar games, strengthens PE integration, and involves families and community stakeholders. The proposed LARO program responds directly to the moderate overall awareness level and the strong engagement ratings.

Table 5. *Proposed LARO Implementation Framework*

Period	Activity	Purpose	Key Participants
June 2026	Program launch and teacher training	Orient stakeholders and prepare teachers to facilitate traditional games	School head, PE teachers, students
July-August 2026	Heritage Game Day and team-building rotations	Refresh rules and promote teamwork using familiar games	PE teachers, student leaders

September 2026	Cultural-awareness seminar and demonstrations	Introduce less familiar games such as araw lilim, bati cobra, and palosebo	Teachers, community elders
October-November 2026	Inter-class competition and family-community games day	Strengthen participation, camaraderie, and intergenerational learning	Students, advisers, parents, barangay officials
December 2026-January 2027	Student leadership and inclusive recreation activities	Develop leadership, creativity, and inclusive participation	Students, teachers, community stakeholders
February-March 2027	Palarong Pilipino Festival and program evaluation	Celebrate heritage and evaluate engagement and awareness outcomes	Whole school community

The estimated total program budget of PHP 26,000 for game materials and equipment, advocacy materials, awards, training resources, refreshments, venue preparation, cultural props, and documentation. The school may refine costing according to available Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses and local funds.

CONCLUSION

Senior high school students in the selected public secondary schools in Ramon, Isabela were generally aware of traditional Filipino games, but many needed refresher instructions on rules and mechanics. Familiar games remained visible, while several less frequently played games required intentional reintroduction. Students reported high engagement when traditional games were incorporated into PE, particularly in enjoyment, collaboration, motivation, and physical activity. The reported regression summary indicated a modest positive relationship between awareness and engagement, showing that traditional-game awareness contributes to participation but should be combined with effective teaching, repeated exposure, accessible materials, and community support. The proposed LARO program provides a culturally responsive framework for preserving Filipino games while supporting active and inclusive recreation.

Recommendations

PE teachers may regularly integrate traditional Filipino games into lessons using clear demonstrations, refresher activities, and inclusive adaptations. Schools may implement the LARO program through teacher training, school-based game days, community demonstrations, student-leadership activities, and periodic evaluation. Less familiar games such as araw lilim, bati cobra, palosebo, piko, and tsato should be prioritized for documentation and guided practice. Future researchers may validate the program through pre-test and post-test designs, analyze engagement and cultural-awareness outcomes separately, and verify the source age distribution and full regression output using the original respondent-level dataset.

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