



Filipina Gen Z Women's Determined Impacts on their Ligaw (Courtship) Experiences

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Abstract

Panliligaw the traditional Filipino courtship practice, remains an integral part of Filipino romantic relationships, yet existing studies often focus on the experiences of the man (nanliligaw) rather than the woman (nililigawan) being pursued despite their equally important roles. As a result, there is a lack of existing studies documenting how women experience and interpret panliligaw. Thus, this study seeks to document the lived experiences of single heterosexual Filipino Gen Z women aged 25-27 who have experienced panliligaw and examine its effects on their identity, self-perception, relationships, and societal roles through semi-structured interviews which are then further analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as guided by Prospero Covar's Loob at Labas framework. Findings reveal that women's decisions and actions driven by self-perception and personal values resulted in the following experiences on panliligaw: an increase in self-esteem, a boost in energy levels, openness to new connections, more positive demeanor, and improved interaction within social settings. These findings suggest a shift from traditional courtship structures to a more mutual and reciprocal process where women take on more active and autonomous roles rather than what society dictates. In essence, panliligaw is not solely centered around men proving their worth as society depicts, but also on how women ultimately end up with the final decision over the trajectory of panliligaw. Hence, this study amplifies women's voices in panliligaw by emphasizing their equally significant role in shaping contemporary Filipino romantic relationships.

Keywords: micro-macro perspective; local narrative; relationships; sociological theory; women's voice