

COMPLETION REPORT

University of San Carlos, Cebu City, Philippines

Zona Hildegarde Saniel Amper

【Subject of Research Project】

Perceptions of Japanese Anime among Filipino Gen Z Youth

【Research Summary】

This study explores the perceptions of Generation Z Filipinos in Metro Cebu toward Japanese anime, focusing on what attracts them to it and what they gain from their engagement. Framed within the context of globalization and socio-cultural exchange, the research presents anime not just as entertainment but as a medium for informal learning, identity formation, and cultural appreciation. Growing up in a digital, globally connected era, Gen Z has had broad exposure to international media, with anime emerging as particularly influential. Rather than emphasizing the economic or political effects of globalization, this study centers on its cultural and social impacts, especially among youth who navigate both local and global influences.

A mixed-methods approach was used, combining surveys with 18-to19-year-olds, focus group discussions, online observations of local anime communities, and in-depth interviews with enthusiasts and cosplayers. This combination allowed researchers to identify three key themes: how their interest began, what draws them to anime, and what they learn from it.

Interest in anime typically began in childhood through early exposure to shows on television, often introduced by family members. As they grew older, peer influence and online accessibility deepened their involvement, with friends sharing recommendations and participating in fandom spaces. Participants highlighted anime's emotionally compelling narratives, diverse genres, and complex characters as major attractions. These elements offer emotional resonance, entertainment, and opportunities for personal reflection. Many viewers see characters as symbols of their own values or struggles. Beyond watching, engagement often includes fandom activities such as cosplay, fan art, online discussions, and attending conventions. These outlets gained even more significance during the COVID-19 pandemic, providing connection and community in a time of isolation.

The study also emphasizes anime's role in cultural learning. Respondents noted how anime introduced them to Japanese customs, language, values, and social norms in a relatable way. Themes such as perseverance, empathy, respect, and community closely align with Filipino cultural values like *bayanihan* and *pakikisama*. Anime thus becomes a vehicle for informal education, encouraging global awareness while reinforcing local ideals. Importantly, the study shows that Filipino Gen Z viewers are not passive consumers. They actively interpret anime content and integrate it into their lives, experience becomes a space for creativity, self-expression, and community-building, offering youth a sense of belonging and a means to explore and assert who they are.

In summary, anime plays a meaningful role in the lives of Generation Z Filipinos in Metro Cebu—not only as a form of entertainment but as a tool for learning, identity exploration, and cultural connection in an increasingly interconnected world.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

Date: May 29-30, 2026

Venue: National University of Singapore

Name of Conference: Mechademia 2026 Conference

Theme: Traversing Trans-Asian Imaginaries: Anime, Manga, and Media Cultures

Title of Presentation: Japanese Anime Fandom among Gen Z Youth in the Philippines

Presenter: Zona Hildegarde S. Amper

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

Name of Journal: The Journal of Popular Culture

Date: 2026

Title: The Popularity of Japanese Anime among Gen Z Youth in the Philippines Papers in preparation for submission (by Yiwen Lin and Toru Kiyomiya)

Title: Gender and sustainable practice in disaster contexts: a feminist ethics of care lens.

Target journal: Gender, work and organization

Title: How does the disaster storytelling shape post-disaster community identity?

Target journal: Journal of culture and organization

Title: Gender leadership and sustainable livelihood in post-disaster fishery communities.

Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)

Publisher: USC Publishing House

Date: 2026

Title: Perceptions of Japanese Anime among Gen Z Filipino Youth

Author: Zona Hildegarde S. Amper