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COMPREHENSIVE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE ALTERNATIVE LEARNING SYSTEM (ALS) IN THE DIVISION OF BATANGAS CITY

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Abstract

The study aimed to propose a comprehensive management plan for the Alternative Learning System (ALS) program in the Division of Batangas City. The study used descriptive method of research using a researcher-constructed questionnaire, interview, and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). It involved 30 ALS implementers and 350 ALS graduates from CY 2009 to CY 2013 selected through stratified random sampling. Results showed that among the ALS program offerings, Literacy Volunteer Program and Balik-Paaralan Para sa Out-of-School Adults (BPOSA) were extremely evident. Lecture-demonstration as a teaching strategy was most often utilized by the ALS implementers. The classrooms for ALS instruction and the learning modules were very much adequate for ALS instruction. The paper and pencil test was very much applicable to the type of ALS learners. The data revealed that 221 of the 350 respondents were studying in the different colleges and universities and in TESDA while 129 ALS graduates were already working in the different firms or industries. From the results, the researcher based the output of the study which is a proposed comprehensive management plan that may help strengthen the ALS program in the division and benefit stakeholders such as ALS implementers, Local Government Units, DepEd/school officials, and ALS learners.

Keywords: Alternative Learning System Program Offerings; Teaching Strategies; Learning Facilities and Materials; Evaluation Scheme; Comprehensive Management Plan; Status of ALS Graduates.

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1. Introduction

Education, in its broadest sense may be ranked as equally important as any basic needs of individuals. In the countries where there is a wide gap between the rich and the poor, education is a status symbol. Every person knows that getting a good education is not only his right, but a passport to a better future. It is a vital element of a nation's progress and development because no

society or country has ever achieved substantial growth along its social, cultural, economic, technological and political dimensions without majority of its people, being enlightened and educated members of the citizenry.

Education has long been identified and recognized by nations the world over as a significant partner in the pursuit and attainment of development. It has been equated with development which underscores its significant importance. Education can play a dominant role as an instrument for large-scale achievement and revolution in all spheres of human endeavor. Purposeful education enables the individual to understand and study real life situations and develop confidence. It also provides a strong base for rational value-oriented and nation-building progress.

The Filipino families recognize the importance of acquiring education towards a productive living. This affirmation of fact is evident in the way they give more priority to the provision of resources for the education of their children. It is a common belief of Filipino families that education shall be their strong weapon to combat poverty and uplift their status of living. Thus, everyone enthusiastically tries to acquire education by all means.

The Philippines as an Asian country is never left behind in terms of illiteracy. Studies showed that because of poverty, many children and young people suffer from child labor, child prostitution and human trafficking. Although elementary and high school education is free, still many are not in school because of the lack of other essential needs. Many are forced to do manual labour to help their families. Unable to focus on their studies, most end up being drop-outs and repeaters. The high dropout rate in schools is alarming. DepEd reported that out of 100 Grade One pupils, only 66 finish Grade Six, only 58 of the 66 go on to enrol in first year high school and only 43 finish high school. Of the 43 who finished high school, only 23 enrol in college and only 14 of the 23 graduate from college.

Most of the regions in the country have performance classified as falling further behind or with performance getting lower each year. While substantial investments have been poured into the establishment of basic education facilities, these were not enough to ensure that those who finish elementary and secondary levels complete basic education with satisfactory achievement level. The increasing cost of education has continuously led millions of people particularly those from the rural places to defer pursuit of their education and instead focus their attention for their immediate survival (Lua, 2012).

One of the strategies for poverty alleviation recommended by the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP) is the adoption of the expanded vision of Education for All (EFA) through the eradication of illiteracy and provision of basic education and life skills for out-of-school youth and adults. But this goal of the government for the education of the Filipinos cannot be addressed alone by the formal systems of education.

To achieve development and progress, a nation must have an inspiration that inspires its people to move through the same vision. The said vision should be directed to improve the quality of life for all. The basic education system should be responsive to the differentiated needs of learners where a one-size-fit all or conventional interventions are not enough or will no longer work. For this

reason, the government and nongovernment organizations are working together in an effort to alleviate the living conditions of the people not only in the cities but also in the rural areas.

When educators talk of education, they refer to the educative process including all components may it be formal or nonformal education which makes it a complete educational system. It is a truism that the learning of reading and writing is not sufficient to guarantee continuing literacy. Participants in the literacy program need to be made aware of the channels/avenues open to them for further learning. While the school remains the dominant institution in education, it is no longer the only path that individuals can take to pursue their educational goals. A wide range of educational possibilities has developed outside, and it is expanding rapidly. What an individual learns in his lifetime cannot be acquired through formal education alone.

DepEd Memorandum No. 110, s. 1999 further expands the scope and concerns of nonformal education program. This memorandum provides the target clientele for TESDA skills training programs which directly respond to the issue of unemployment. With various opportunities offered to those who are unable to pursue college education, graduates of nonformal or even formal system of education are able to make themselves productive and useful members of society. The convergence between DepEd and TESDA was made to equip the unemployed and underemployed with vocational and technical skills through short term training programs.

Section 24 of the Education Act of 1982 provides for the inclusion of nonformal as one of the three types of specialized educational services intended to benefit special categories of clientele within the context of the formal education system, the two other services being special education and early childhood education. On September 13, 2004, the office of the President of the Republic of the Philippines renamed the DepEd's Bureau of Nonformal Education to Bureau of Alternative Learning System (BALS) through Executive Order No. 356 signed by the former president, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. The order directs BALS to provide a systematic and flexible approach to reach all types of learners outside the school system.

The development of an Alternative Learning System (ALS) has been a dream of the Philippine government for over twenty years. With the development of ALS, thousands of out-of-school youth and adults from the most impoverished sectors of Filipino society will expectedly have an alternative means to improve their basic education skills and competencies as a pathway to a better tomorrow. The objectives of (ALS) are similar to those of formal education-acquisition of knowledge, development of skills and formation of desirable Filipino values and attitudes. The objectives are as diverse as the needs of individuals but the goal is the development of self-reliant, self-sufficient, and self-disciplined citizens.

The various ALS programs and activities cater to the different learning needs of the out-of-school children, youth, and unemployed/underemployed adults. It is through the ALS that those who are not extended the benefits of formal education can develop their total well-being. They shall be able to learn the basic knowledge and skills that embrace the areas of community living such as functional literacy, civic education, socio-cultural development, sports and physical fitness development, leadership training, vocational and technical skills and economic development. The ALS which is a nonformal education program is a learning system delivered outside the school system. The other component of ALS is informal education (Guerrero, 2007). With the

operationalization of ALS by the DepEd, school dropouts now have other options for learning aside from the formal school system. They may opt to join the more systematic learning program which is nonformal education, or more experiential-type of learning known as informal education. In both options, however, a dropout's prior learning is recognized and may be accredited if so desired. The move to shift the DepEd focus from NFE to ALS is a good decision especially from the point of view of the school dropout.

The curricula of the learning systems make them truly comparable because the competencies in both are parallel and comparable to each other. In other words, their curricula aim to develop competencies of knowledge, attitude, values and skills (K, A, V, S) that equally promote the same goal which is functional literacy. Likewise, different program offerings, teaching strategies, evaluation schemes used and the whole program itself are purposely designed for a different type of learners.

The DepEd, Division of Batangas City has been adopting various educational and intervention programs to raise the literacy level and address the learning needs of all types of learners. It has been constantly implementing different programs and project introduced and endorsed by the regional and central offices. During the last five years (2009-2013) of its implementation, the ALS-Accreditation and Equivalency program has almost achieved its peak for having maintained the first rank of the division in the region in terms of program. However, the alarming reports on the increasing dropout rate every year just reveal that the efforts of the government specifically the Department of Education in the formal school system seems not enough to achieve the desired goal in education.

For so many years, the Philippine government has been trying to realize the Education for All (EFA) Plan of 2015. But as the target year of attainment comes closer, the annual reports on the number of learners dropping out of formal schools reveal that they become bigger and bigger and this scenario conforms with the increasing number of enrollees in the different ALS programs. The objective of the ALS to decrease number of illiterates and gradually eradicate illiteracy by 2015 seems to be impossible because at present times thousands of OSYs are still coming to ALS to avail of the shortened course. From hundreds of learners joining in the program in the past, it now ballooned to thousands of enrollees who are mostly dropouts of the formal schools.

The conduct of this study was inspired by the researcher's personal experiences in the field of nonformal education. He has been assigned as District ALS Coordinator (DALSC) in his respective division and his involvement in the implementation of the different ALS programs served as input and background enough to confirm the findings of the study. It is for this cause why he got interested to pursue the conduct of this study.

Towards this end, this study therefore adheres that ALS needs a continuous evaluation in order to strengthen the implementation of its programs and projects for the benefit of the beneficiaries, the ALS learners. With this in view, the researcher believes that the comprehensive management plan for ALS program will strengthen the program implementation in Batangas City. This study is considered to be very significant because its findings may be useful instruments to a number of entities such as the Schools Division Superintendent, District Supervisors and School Heads, Division ALS Supervisor, Local Government Units, ALS implementers, ALS learners and

future researchers. The null hypothesis was tested in this study: the instruction in ALS has no significant relationship to the status of its graduates.

2. Materials and Methods

The respondents of the study were 380 respondents compressed of 30 ALS implementers in the Division of Batangas City and 350 ALS graduates from calendar year 2009 to calendar year 2013. The number was determined using the Slovin's formula at five percent margin of error. The stratified random sampling was used in the city division in anticipation of the inherent difficulty in retrieving questionnaire since the subject-respondents were stationed in the different far-flung areas.

To gather pertinent information, this research made use of a self-made questionnaire and was complemented by interview, focus group discussion and documentary analysis. The researcher engaged in library research to gather different materials on topics relevant to the study. Books and handbooks on ALS, documents, memorandum circulars, journals and other related studies were reviewed to be able to develop constructs which could be useful for the development of items for the questionnaire. The researcher being involved in the implementation of ALS programs in his division was able to come up with the items relative to ALS implementation. After a series of revisions, the researcher was able to draft an initial copy of the questionnaire which was shown to the adviser for corrections and refinement.

After the adviser had integrated his comments and suggestions and finally approved the draft, the researcher requested the assistance of the experts in the field to validate the questionnaire. Copies of the draft of questionnaire were distributed to six doctors of education from Batangas State University for content validation. All the suggestions of the experts were incorporated. The researcher then made a final copy of the validated questionnaire.

After the validation of the questionnaire, the researcher sought the approval of the Schools Division Superintendent to administer the questionnaire during the meeting of ALS implementers with their Education Program Supervisor. The structured questionnaire which was administered had two parts: Part I focused on the description of the ALS implementers and their responses on the status of ALS programs in the division under study. Part II covered the responses of the ALS learners regarding their present status after finishing the ALS programs.

The data gathered from the respondents were given weights ranging from 1-4 with one as the lowest up to four as the highest value. The responses were given corresponding qualitative descriptions as reflected in the following scale continuum.

Option	Scale Range	Verbal Interpretation
4	4.50-5.00	Extremely Evident/Very Much Adequate/ Most Often Used/Very Much Applicable

3	3.50-4.49	Very Evident/Very Adequate/Often Used/ Sometimes Applicable
2	1.50-2.49	Moderately Evident/Moderately Adequate/ Sometimes Used/Minimally Applicable
1	1.00-1.49	Not Evident (NE)/Not Adequate/ Not Being Used/Not Applicable

After the validation of the questionnaire, the researcher made the final copy and sought the approval of the Schools Division Superintendent to conduct the study and to distribute the questionnaire to the ALS implementers and ALS graduates in the division. The retrieved questionnaires were scored, tallied and were subjected to statistical treatment with the help and assistance of a professional statistician. Interview with some ALS implementers and focus group discussion on the ALS instruction were both conducted to substantiate data gathered.

For the analysis of the collected quantitative data, the following non-parametric or descriptive statistics were utilized to elicit answers to the specified problems of the study: Frequency count was used to show the number of responses in the questionnaire most especially the items pertaining to status of ALS graduates and the problems they encountered. Percentage was used to show the relationship of the frequency count with the whole of the magnitude of an item such as civil status of ALS implementers, age, educational attainment, number of years in the present position and status of ALS graduates. Ranking was used to show the positional importance of the frequency count of the program offerings in ALS, teaching strategies, evaluation scheme, description of ALS instruction and the status of ALS graduates. Weighted mean showed the typicality of responses of the ALS implementers and graduates. This was used in the study to assess the status of implementation of ALS programs and the problems encountered by the ALS graduates. Chi-square was used to test the relationship between the ALS instruction and the present status of the ALS graduates.

3. Results and Discussions

3.1. Description of ALS Implementers

Based on the results of the study, the ALS implementers assessed that the majority of ALS implementers were female, single, adults with units in master’s program and had less than five years work experience as teachers in the Department of Education.

3.2. Description of ALS Instruction

The instruction in ALS was described in this study as to program offering, teaching strategies, learning facilities and materials and evaluation scheme.

Table 1: Assessments of ALS Implementers on ALS Instruction as to Program Offerings

Program Offerings	Composite Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
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1. Accreditation and Equivalency Program	3.81	Extremely Evident	4
2. Basic Literacy Program	3.87	Extremely Evident	3
3. Literacy Volunteer Program	3.90	Extremely Evident	1.5
4. Balik-Paaralan para sa Out-of-school Adults	3.90	Extremely Evident	1.5
5. Learning Support Delivery System	3.67	Extremely Evident	7
6. Literacy Service Contracting Scheme	3.67	Extremely Evident	7
7. Literacy cum Livelihood	3.68	Extremely Evident	5
8. Radio-based Instruction	3.67	Extremely Evident	7
9. Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education	3.52	Extremely Evident	9
10. E-skwela Program	3.41	Very Evident	10

From the table, it can be noted that the ALS implementers had given the highest assessment to Literacy Volunteer Program (LVP) and Balik-Paaralan para sa Out-of-school Adults (BPOSA). Both obtained a composite mean of 3.90 and interpreted as extremely evident. Apparently, the respondents noted that these two programs gave the learners the opportunity to get their diplomas and be able to go to the next level of education or find a job. This infers the learners were able to take an active role in the learning process taking into consideration their needs and interest at their own time and pace. Those findings were similar to Caron's study which revealed that the ALS programs were excellently implemented.

Basic Literacy Program (BLP) ranked third with a composite mean of 3.87. The ALS implementers assessed such program of ALS to be extremely evident. In this program, there is the intensive community-based training program for illiterate out-of-school youth and adults willing to learn basic literacy skills. As assessed, this program was effectively and systematically implemented by the DepEd through the ALS supervisor, District ALS Coordinators and Mobile Teachers. This result finds similarity to Formento's work which revealed that the implementation of ALS especially the Basic Literacy Program was effectively implemented in their region.

As indicated by the ALS implementers, the Learning Support Delivery System (LSDS), Literacy Service Contracting Scheme (LSCS) and Radio-based Instruction (RBI) program offerings of ALS were extremely evident. Each program obtained a composite mean of 3.67. The respondents observed that the programs were able to help out-of-school youth and adults making it possible for them to continue and finish their education. The ALS implementers likewise assessed that the programs aided in the development of basic literacy skills and the radio-based instruction was an alternative delivery mode as a form of distance learning.

Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE) was also extremely evident as rated by the ALS implementers reflected in a composite mean of 3.52. This ranked ninth in the rank order distribution. Apparently, the respondents noted that such program provided Muslim learners with required learning competencies in the Arabic language and enhanced their values which are based on their Islamic culture. This contributed positively in the peace efforts of the government. Least rated by the ALS implementers as expressed in composite mean of 3.41 was on E-skwela program which was assessed to be very evident. Presumably, the respondents noted that the program gave an opportunity to learners to take the A&E examination utilizing ICTs and electronic modules to deliver ALS-A&E instruction. This finding is in conformity with Bacani's statement that the E-skwela project promotes a model that makes optional use of ICT in facilitating access

to educational opportunities for youth and adult learners who have not completed their basic education. However, as it was lowest in assessment, it was not as persistently used by learners presumable because it entails ability to do computer work and acquisition of computers to maximally use in the program.

Table 2: ALS Instruction as to Teaching Strategies

Description	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1.Tutorial Instruction among learners under basic literacy and lower elementary levels to help them cope up with the required learning competencies of the program	3.73	Most Often Used	2
2.Lecture-Demonstration to ALS learners under Accreditation and Equivalency (A&E) Program	3.87	Most Often Used	1
3.Peer-Teaching to help slow ALS learners in their lessons in the ALS program they enrolled in.	3.50	Most Often Used	4
4. A Resource Person who is more knowledgeable and competent on a certain topic in the ALS Learning Strands	3.13	Often Used	5.5
5. Modular Instruction among learners who are unable to avail of the face-to-face mode of instruction in ALS	3.57	Most Often Used	3
6. Reporting to help ALS learners master the topics assigned and develop a sense of responsibility and confidence for better communication	3.10	Often Used	7
7.Interviewing when there are topics in the ALS program that require accurate information from reliable experts in the field	3.13	Often Used	5.5
8. Film Viewing that relates to the topic in ALS so that A&E learners will be able to think and analyze critically based on the movie presented	2.70	Often Used	9
9. Field Trip to expose ALS learners with real life situations/conditions which would be of great help to them in the application of their acquired knowledge and skills	2.40	Sometimes Used	10
10. Hands-on (experiential) most especially during the demonstration or simulation of outputs in the literacy cum livelihood program	3.03	Often Used	8
Composite Mean	3.22	Often Used	

The ALS implementers used lecture-demonstration most often to ALS learners under Accreditation and Equivalency (A&E) program which obtained a weighted mean of 3.87. Least rated by the ALS implementers reflected in weighted mean of 2.40 was field trip which was sometimes used by them.

As shown in the table below, the ALS implementers described most of the learning facilities as very adequate. Topping from the list were classes described as very adequate. This obtained a weighted mean of 3.30 and ranked first. It appears that among ten items, the respondents had very

adequate designated classrooms because learners are taught in the school. Here, ALS implementers discuss varied lessons and develop skills needed by the ALS learners.

Table 3: ALS Instruction As To Learning Facilities

Learning Facilities	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. classroom	3.30	Very Adequate	1
2. barangay hall	2.93	Very Adequate	2
3. multi-purpose hall in a community	2.80	Very Adequate	3.5
4. chapel	2.27	Moderately Adequate	9.5
5. private building/house	2.67	Very Adequate	6
6. open space area (stage, hallway, court)	2.83	Very Adequate	5
7. nipa hut/shed	2.87	Very Adequate	3.5
8. library space	2.37	Moderately Adequate	7
9. laboratory for learning (Computer,Sci.)	2.33	Moderately Adequate	8
10. typical community learning center	2.27	Moderately Adequate	9.5
Composite Mean	2.66	Very Adequate	

As contained in the table, the ALS implementers assessed that learning modules used in ALS instruction were very much adequate as registered by a weighted mean of 3.63. This indicates that the ALS implementers provided the learners with modules which they utilize and follow and even brought them home.

Table 4: ALS Instruction relative to Instructional Materials

Instructional Materials	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Learning Modules	3.63	Very Much Adequate	1
2. Session Guide	3.53	Very Much Adequate	2
3. Core Competencies Guide	3.43	Very Much Adequate	3
4. Journals	2.67	Very Adequate	9
5. Magazines	2.77	Very Adequate	8
6. Newspaper	3.0	Very Adequate	5
7. Pamphlets	3.03	Very Adequate	4
8. Sound/Video Tape Recorder	2.50	Very Adequate	10
9. Multi-Media Devices	2.80	Very Adequate	6.5
10. Indigenous/Teacher-improvised Learning Materials	2.80	Very Adequate	6.5
Composite Mean	3.02	Very Adequate	

Least rated by the ALS implementers as shown in weighted mean of 2.50 pertained to the availability of sound/video tape recorder. This was interpreted as very adequate. This finding implies that such material was available at the time of use at the learning center. The respondents could easily have used the learning device whenever the lessons required its use to arouse the interest of the learners and comprehensively acquire the needed competencies of the lesson presented. However, as it received the lowest assessment, it could mean that such instructional

material was not as extensively used. The composite mean of 3.02 reveals that the ALS implementers described the instructional materials utilized in ALS instruction to be very adequate.

Table 5: ALS Instruction relative to Evaluation Scheme

Description	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Paper and Pencil Test (Objective/Essay)	4.0	Very Much Applicable	1.5
2. Portfolio Assessment	3.80	Very Much Applicable	3
3. Performance Tasks	3.43	Sometimes Applicable	5.5
4. Self-and peer-Evaluation	3.43	Sometimes Applicable	5.5
5. Teacher-created Test (Mock)	3.67	Very Much Applicable	4
. Functional Literacy Test	4.0	Very Much Applicable	1.5
Composite Mean	3.72	Very Much Applicable	

As manifested in the table, the ALS implementers described that paper and pencil test whether objective or essay and Functional Literacy Test were very much applicable in evaluating ALS instruction. It obtained a weighted mean of 4.0 and ranked first. The ALS implementers also assessed that the portfolio assessment and teacher-created test or mock test were very much applicable to evaluate the learners enrolled in the program. These obtained weighted means of 3.80 and 3.67, respectively. The composite mean of 3.72 indicates that the ALS implementers described that the evaluation schemes in ALS were very much applicable. They used the different evaluation tools to objectively measure the concepts and skills learned by the ALS learners.

It could be gleaned from the table below that out of 350 ALS graduate-respondents, most or 221 of them or 63.14 percent were pursuing a course after finishing the ALS program. On the other hand, some 129 ALS graduates or 36.86 percent were able to find jobs after graduating from ALS. The findings revealed that most of the ALS graduates took up a certain course because they have been awarded a certificate or a diploma that they had finished the secondary education. As one of the programs of ALS, Accreditation and Equivalency program provided and awarded a certificate or diploma to the ALS learners. The said certificate of learning is equivalent to secondary level in the formal school system. The diploma or certificate acquired by the ALS graduates may be used to enroll in any universities and colleges. This is one of the objectives of ALS program, to enable the busy learners to achieve high school education without the need of going to classroom instructions on a daily basis just like the formal education system that requires regular attendance of students.

Table 6: Status of ALS Graduates As Regards Admission to Higher Level of Education

Classification of ALS Graduates	Frequency	Percentage	
With Jobs/Employment	129	36.86	
Studying	221	63.14	
Total	350	100	
Course Taken	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
BS Engineering	15	6.77	5
BS Education	26	11.76	3
BS Commerce	8	3.62	7

BS Accountancy	9	4.07	6
BS Computer Science	18	8.14	4
Bachelor of Arts	1	0.45	11.5
BS Psychology	1	0.45	11.5
BS Tourism	3	1.36	10
BS Criminology	5	2.26	9
Hotel and Restaurant Management	6	2.71	8
Two-Year IT Courses	36	16.29	2
TESDA Short Courses	93	42.08	1
Total	221	100	

Based on the responses of the ALS graduates, most or 93 of them or 42.08 percent enrolled at TESDA to take short courses. There were 36 graduates or 16.29 percent who pursued a two-year IT course, 26 of them or 11.76 percent took up BS Education, 18 respondents or 8.14 percent pursued BS Computer Science and 15 graduates or 6.77 percent enrolled in BS Engineering. As revealed by the data, majority of the respondents pursued short-term courses because they wanted to have a job after getting a certification from TESDA. This is because most of them were out-of-school (OSY) and they want to be productive after graduating from ALS and be more employable after being awarded a TESDA certificate.

Table 7: Academic Year Level of ALS Graduates

Year Level	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
One semester only	33	14.93	5
1 st year	50	22.62	2
2 nd year	45	20.36	3
3 rd year	39	17.65	4
4 th year	54	24.43	1
Total	221	100	

As reflected in the table, there were 54 ALS graduates or 24.43 percent who were in fourth year college. Fifty of them or 22.62 percent were in first year, 45 respondents or 20.36 percent were in second year, 39 of them or 17.65 percent, in third year college and 33 graduates or 14.93 percent enrolled in college for one semester only.

Table 8: Status of ALS Graduates As To Nature of Employment

Nature of Employment	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1. Regular Permanent	39	30.23	2
2. Contractual	55	42.64	1
3. Probationary	3	2.33	5
4. Extra/Job Order	21	16.28	3
5. Casual	11	8.53	4
Total	129	100	

As detailed in the table, there were 129 ALS graduates who were employed of whom 55 graduates or 42.64 percent were on contractual status. Thirty-nine respondents or 30.23 percent had regular/permanent item, 21 of them or 16.28 percent had extra/job order work, 11 graduates or 8.53 percent with casual status and three respondents or 2.33 percent were on probationary status.

It appears that most of the graduate-respondents have different positions in the field of work were they are presently connected and are mostly with contractual position.

Table 9: Kinds of Employment of ALS Graduates

Kinds of Employment	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1. Construction Services	11	8.53	6
2. Factory Work	20	15.50	3
3. Service Crew	15	11.63	4
4. Food Industry	5	3.88	8
5. Janitorial Services	8	6.20	7
6. Marketing/Sales Assistant	25	19.38	1
7. Education Industry	3	2.33	10
8. Government Services	13	10.08	5
9. Overseas	23	17.83	2
10. Security Services	2	1.55	11
11. Delivery Services	4	3.10	9
Total	129	100	

As reflected in the table, most or 25 ALS graduates or 19.38 percent were in marketing or were sales assistants. This ranked first among 11 kinds of employment. It is noteworthy that the ALS graduates were good in communication, motivation and promotion of products as revealed by the data. Twenty three respondents or 17.83 percent were overseas contract workers, 20 of them or 15.50 percent were in factories, 15 ALS graduates or 11.63 percent worked as service crew, 13 ALS graduates or 10.08 percent were in government services.

On the other hand, eleven respondents or 8.53 percent worked in construction services, eight of them or 6.20 percent were employed in janitorial services, five respondents or 3.88 percent worked in the food industry, four graduates or 3.10 percent were employed in delivery services, three of them or 2.33 percent worked in the education section and two respondents or 1.55 percent were employed in security services. This only means that for most of the graduates of ALS programs their certification of learning was their passport in order to find a job or earn a living for their families rather than stay where they used to be and remain idle.

Personal and professional satisfaction. The personal and professional satisfaction of the graduates of different programs of ALS was assessed in this study.

During the unstructured interviews conducted by the researcher among the graduates of ALS programs, there were questions on their personal and professional satisfaction regarding ALS. One of the graduates of the ALS-A&E program revealed that she was very satisfied about what she attained in ALS. Since she was already in her late 50s, she was almost hopeless that she could still go back to the education mainstream but having been awarded with a certificate/diploma in high school and having given a chance to wear cap and gown were really a great achievement in her life. According to her, the ALS programs made her life dream come true. Personally, she was very satisfied although she was uncertain if she could still use her diploma in applying for a job since she was already fifty eight years old.

Table 10: Relationship between ALS Instruction and Status of Graduates as to Admission to Higher Level relative to Course Taken

ALS Instruction	X ² c	Decision H ₀	Interpretation
1. Program Offerings	50.266	Reject	Significant
2. Teaching Strategies	24. 093	Accept	Not Significant
3. Learning Facilities	52.584	Reject	Significant
4. Instructional Materials	55.211	Reject	Significant
5. Evaluation Scheme	29.463	Accept	Not Significant
df=33	L=.05		X ² _τ =45.76

It could be seen in the table that program offering, learning facilities and materials significantly relate to the status of ALS graduates as to admission to higher level of education relative to course taken. The obtained chi-square values ranging from 50.266 to 55.211 which were greater than the critical chi-square value of 45.76 at .05 level of significance, and at 33 degree of freedom indicated relationship between ALS instruction and status of ALS graduates. This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis. The results revealed that the program taken by the learners as well as the learning facilities and materials were very relevant and important to the course they have decided to pursue. The obtained chi-square values of 24.093 and 29.463, respectively were less than critical chi-square value of 45.76 at .05 level of significance, and at 33 degree of freedom. The null hypothesis was then accepted. It appears that the strategies and evaluation scheme used by ALS implementers did not affect the course that the learners were taking. This further means that the teaching strategies and evaluation schemes used by the ALS implementers did not necessarily matter in the present employment of ALS graduates.

Table 11: Relationship between ALS Instruction and Status of Graduates as to Nature of Employment

ALS Instruction	X ² c	Decision H ₀	Interpretation
1. Program Offering	25.929	Reject	Significant
2. Teaching Strategies	17.664	Accept	Not Significant
3. Learning Facilities	28.374	Reject	Significant
4. Instructional Materials	26.287	Reject	Significant
5. Evaluation Scheme	15.168	Accept	Not Significant
df=12	L=.05		X ² _τ =21.03

It could be gleaned in the table that the status of ALS graduates as to nature of employment was significantly related to ALS instruction relative to program offering, learning facilities and materials as evidenced in the obtained chi-square (X²) values of 25.929 to 28.374 which were greater than the critical chi-square (X²) value of 21.03, at .05 level of significance, and at 12 degree of freedom. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. The data indicate that the ALS graduates believed that program offering, learning facilities and materials were very important for them to find work and be given a permanent status.

Table 12: Relationship between ALS Instruction and Status of Graduates as to Kind of Employment

ALS Instruction	X ² c	Decision H ₀	Interpretation
1. Program Offering	46.224	Reject	Significant
2. Teaching Strategies	30.829	Accept	Not Significant

3. Learning Facilities	50.977	Reject	Significant
4. Instructional Materials	53.526	Reject	Significant
5. Evaluation Scheme	26.435	Accept	Not Significant

df=30

L=.05

$X^2_{t}=43.77$

As reflected in the table, program offering, learning facilities and materials had significant relationship to the status of ALS graduates as to kind of employment. The obtained chi-square (X^2) values of 46.224 to 53.526 were greater than the critical chi-square value of 43.77 at .05 level of significance and at 30 degree of freedom. This resulted in the rejection of null hypothesis. Apparently, the ALS graduates experienced that the concepts and skills they learned from taking any program of ALS like Literacy Volunteer Program, Accreditation and Equivalency and E-skwela programs became their tools to be effective and efficient workers in the government or as overseas contract workers. This finding is similar to Roque's study which revealed that the ALS programs and projects especially on livelihood projects were found useful by the learners.

Table 13: Problems Encountered by the Graduates of ALS Program (Multiple Response N=221)

Problems	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1. Found difficulty in applying for or getting a good job	83	37.56	4
2. Had a feeling of inferiority of the knowledge/skills gained from the ALS program taken	42	19.0	9
3. Did not meet the age requirement necessary for better job offers	30	13.57	10
4. Failed to adjust/cope up with the lessons and trends in higher education	78	35.29	5
5. Could not afford expenses in college education	190	85.97	1
6. Felt discriminated in school or workplace being an ALS graduate	58	26.24	7.5
7. Lacked self-confidence to pursue higher learning	65	29.41	6
8. Felt the absence of support from government to elevate ALS graduates to the next level of personal development	125	56.56	2
9. Had insufficient knowledge and skills to qualify for the desired field of work	58	26.24	7.5
10. Failed to use education/diploma for self- advancement due to personal obligations.	95	42.99	3
Total	221	100	

Based on the data in the table, it could be noted that 190 ALS graduates or 85.97 percent could not afford expenses in college education. This ranked first among the ten identified problems. This was because most of those who took and enrolled in ALS program were out-of-school youth coming from the low-income family. Thus, some of them had to stop attending formal classes to help their parents earn a living.

On the other hand, there were 125 ALS graduates or 56.56 percent who cited the problem of feeling of absence of support from government to bring ALS graduates to the next level of personal development. Undoubtedly, the ALS graduates experienced difficulty in uplifting their quality of life due to the absence of support from the government. Least rated by 30 ALS graduates or 13.57

percent was the problem that after taking ALS they were not able to meet the age requirement necessary for better job offers. ALS graduates despite the benefits they gained from ALS have problems with the program. One was the feeling of inferiority of taking the program and finding difficulty in finding a job.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that majority of the ALS implementers are female, single, adults with units in master's program and have less than five years work as teachers in DepEd. As assessed by ALS implementers, ALS instruction is described to be extremely evident in Literacy Volunteer Program (LVP) and Balik-Paaralan para sa Out-of-School Adults (BPOSA) Program and learning facilities and instructional materials are very adequate. Most of the ALS learners who graduated from calendar year 2009 to calendar year 2013 are admitted to TESDA and pursue varied courses in Higher Education Institutions. ALS instruction considering program offerings, and learning facilities and materials have significant relationship to the status of the ALS graduates. The problems encountered by ALS graduates are financial matters and absence of support from the government. The proposed comprehensive management plan focuses on the problems encountered by the graduates of the program and the least rated program offerings in ALS instruction which may serve as bases for determining improvement in ALS program implementation.

In the light of the findings of the study, the researcher hereby recommends that the proposed comprehensive management plan be presented to the DepEd Officials for their review and suggestions before it could be applied in the field. Wide implementation of the proposed management plan after its approval in the division is likewise recommended, and a similar study may be conducted tracing the effectiveness of the ALS programs.

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- And above all, to the LORD ALMIGHTY, who bestowed him all the blessings, strengths and wisdom to realize this academic endeavor.

Appendices

Sample Letter of Request:

Republic of the Philippines
BATANGAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Batangas City

August 20, 2014

DR. DONATO G. BUENO, Ed. D.
OIC-Schools Division Superintendent
Division of Batangas City
Batangas City

Thru channel

Sir:

Greetings!

The undersigned is a graduate student of this university and is currently undertaking a study entitled “**COMPREHENSIVE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE ALTERNATIVE LEARNING SYSTEM (ALS) IN THE DIVISION OF BATANGAS CITY**” as a requirement for the completion of the course Doctor of Education major in Educational Management.

In connection to this, may I respectfully seek permission from your good office to allow me administer questionnaires to ALS implementers and ALS-A&E Test passers in the Division of Batangas City.

Attached is a copy of the questionnaires to be administered. It is understood that the administration of questionnaires will be carried out during the convenient time of the respondents.

Knowing your consuming concern and strong advocacy for quality education and teacher’s professional advancement, it is hoped that this request will merit your favorable consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Sgd. MENIANO D. EBORA
Researcher

Noted:

Sgd. ROMEO M. GUILLO Jr, Ed. D.
Dissertation Adviser

Approved:

DONATO G. BUENO, Ed. D.
OIC-Schools Division Superintendent
Focus Group Discussion
Division ALS Center
Brgy. Cuta, Batangas City
November 12, 2014 – 1:00 PM

Participants

ALS Supervisor
Mobile Teachers

Instructional Managers
Graduates of ALS Program

Areas of Concern:

Status of ALS Program Implementation

Objectives:

- 1) Describe the instruction in Alternative Learning System (ALS) relative to:
- 2) Program Offering
- 3) Teaching Strategies
- 4) Learning Facilities and Materials
- 5) Evaluation Scheme
- 6) Status of ALS Graduates
- 7) Problems Met by ALS Graduates

Mechanics:

Considering the present status of Alternative Learning System (ALS), participants are requested to share their observation, assessment and experiences in the implementation of ALS program in the Division of Batangas City. Panelists are likewise requested to make recommendations on how the program implementation can be strengthened.

Guide Questions

- 1) Do you think the program offerings in Alternative Learning System are evident in the present setup of implementation?
- 2) Do the teaching strategies utilized in Alternative Learning System instruction effectively provide learners with knowledge, skills and competencies as what the program requires?
- 3) Do you think the learning facilities and materials used in Alternative Learning instruction are available and sufficient to serve its purpose for the program?
- 4) Do you think the evaluation schemes utilized in ALS are very much applicable for the effective instruction?
- 5) Are all Alternative Learning System (ALS) implementers qualified to teach the ALS learners?
- 6) Do you think the instruction in Alternative Learning System has something to do with the present status of our ALS graduates?
- 7) What areas of Alternative Learning System instruction and curriculum do you think need refinement?
- 8) As graduates of the program, what are the usual problems that you encountered after finishing the secondary course in Alternative Learning System?

Interview Guide

(ALS Implementers)

- 1) Is Alternative Learning System your first teaching assignment in the Department of Education?
- 2) How long have you been serving as ALS implementer in your district/division?

- 3) How are the program offerings in Alternative Learning System evident in your school/district?
- 4) Are the teaching strategies in ALS effectively utilized for the program?
- 5) Are the learning facilities and materials available for use by the ALS learners every learning session?
- 6) What are the usual difficulties do you encounter when it comes to the utilization of learning facilities and materials?
- 7) Which among the evaluation schemes in ALS do you consider very much applicable?
- 8) What are the problems do you commonly trace/hear from your ALS graduates/passers after finishing the program?

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