

“ASSESSING THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF ALTERNATIVE LEARNING SYSTEM (ALS) STUDENTS OF BAROTAC VIEJO, ILOILO: AN IMPLICATION TO REMEDIAL TEACHING”

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Abstract

The study aimed to ascertain the Alternative Learning System (ALS) students' performance when grouped according to demographic profile as the basis for designing a remedial teaching program. Employing the descriptive research design, ninety-two (92) students of ALS-Barotac Viejo, Iloilo, Philippines, were the subjects of the study. The students were categorized according to demographic profiles such as age, gender, civil status, and grade entry point. Secondary data from the ALS Office were gathered, tabulated, computed, and analyzed using appropriate statistical tools such as mean, standard deviation, t-test, and one-way ANOVA. Results showed that ALS students had a “proficient” level of performance as a whole group. When grouped according to age, those below 22 years old had an “advanced” level while those above 22 years old had a “proficient” level. Both single and married were “proficient”. As to grade entry level, 3rd year High School had “advanced” level while the rest had “proficient”. The academic performance of ALS students was not significantly different when grouped according to gender, civil status, and grade entry-level. However, there was a significant difference when grouped according to age. Students who were 22 years old and below performed significantly better than those over 22 years old. Based on the findings, generally, ALS students have “proficient” academic performance. Regardless of gender, civil status, and grade entry-level, their academic performance is generally the same. However, age is a significant factor affecting ALS students' performance. The researcher recommends that in designing remedial teaching among ALS learners, grouping the students by age group should be considered as each group may have different learning interests.

Keywords: Education for all, Alternative learning system

Introduction

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 recognized education as an "indispensable means of unlocking and protecting other human rights by providing the scaffolding that is required to secure good health, liberty, security, economic well-being, and participation in social and political activity" (United Nations, 2013). This landmark declaration paved way to the rights-based discourse of education to be asserted by marginalized groups like children, women, people with special needs, and Indigenous People communities. These marginalized groups when denied access to education are most likely to be left behind and unable to benefit from the gains of globalization. Around 2.85 million children aged 5-15 remain out-of-school. (Unicef.org/phil)

The greater premium for education in a globalizing world provides the impetus for inclusive and more accessible education, especially to the out-of-school youth who stopped schooling due to poverty. The Philippine Governance Act for Basic Education otherwise known as the Republic Act 9155 stipulates the establishment of the Alternative Learning System (ALS) to

provide out-of-school children, youth and adults population with basic education and to establish schools and learning centers as facilities where schoolchildren are able to learn a range of core competencies prescribed for elementary and high school education programs or where the out-of-school youth and adult learners are provided alternative learning programs and receive accreditation for at least the equivalent of a high school education. (<https://depedtambayan.net/republic-act-no-9155/>).

The purpose of this investigation is to ascertain the students' performance in the national ALS assessment as to their demographic profile. This will serve as guide for designing an intervention program particularly remedial teaching to further improve the performance of ALS students in the A & E tests.

Review of Related Literature

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) empowers learners of all ages with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to address the interconnected global challenges we are facing, including climate change, environmental degradation, loss of biodiversity, poverty and inequality. Learning must prepare students and learners of all ages to find solutions for the challenges of today and the future. The Department of Education, with the aim to promote lifelong learning, implemented the ALS Program which uses a contextualized non-formal curriculum which is substantially aligned with the K to 12 Curriculum for Basic Education of the formal school system,

Alternative Learning System is a parallel learning system in the Philippines that provides a practical option to the existing formal instruction. When one does not have or cannot access formal education in schools, ALS is an alternate or substitute. ALS includes both the non-formal and informal sources of knowledge and skills. Many Filipinos do not have a chance to attend and finish formal basic education (Grades 1-6 and Year 1-4) due to many reasons. Some drop out from schools while some do not have schools in their communities. Since every Filipino has a right to free basic education, the Government establishes ALS to provide all Filipinos the chance to have access to and complete basic education in a mode that fits their distinct situations and needs. (<https://www.deped.gov.ph/k-to-12/inclusive-education/about-alternative-learning-system/>). ALS classes are conducted at Community Learning Centers (CLCs) of the city or municipality implementing the program. Students who want to take ALS Accreditation and Equivalency (ALS A&E) are given oral and written test to assess their competency level. If the applicant has not yet attended formal schooling before, they will be enrolled in Basic Literacy Program, where they will be taught basic reading and computing skills before moving them to more advanced classes. ALS A & E classes are divided into categories called learning strands. These include Communication Skills (English Filipino), Problem Solving and Critical Thinking (Science and Mathematics), Sustainable Use of Resources and Productivity, Development of Self, and A Sense of Community/Value of Collaboration, and Expanding One's Own World Vision. (<https://www.courses.com.ph/alternative-learning-system/>).

In 2016, the ALS Program began undergoing reforms as part of strengthening, intensifying, and expanding its implementation. Three years of consultation, review and development of policies, training, and evaluation with partners in the government, local and international non-government agencies, and civil society organizations led to the finalization of the enhanced ALS K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum, the development of the ALS Program 2.0, and the rollout of the five-year development program .(**ALS 2.0 Strategic Roadmap**).

The University of the Philippine Open University (UPOU) aired the 11th episode of OPEN Talk which discussed the Alternative Learning System (ALS) in the Philippines. Titled “Remote Learning para sa SPED at Katutubo, Paano nga ba?,” the discussion focused on the ALS program for children with special needs and the Indigenous Peoples (IP), specifically how educators for these groups deliver their programs during this pandemic. The resource persons shared their challenges, experiences, lessons learned, and best practices for delivering ALS education activities during the pandemic.

(https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=879997229388874).

Completers of ALS who are passers of the A&E Test are given certificates bearing the Department of Education (DepEd) seal, the ALS logo, the Schools Division Office’s logo, dry seal and designated signatories, and the school’s name (if the A&E passer completed ALS under a school or an SBM School for ALS) or the Community Learning Center’s name (if the A&E passer completed ALS under a CLC). This duly signed official document certifies their competencies as comparable graduates of the formal education system. Under DepEd Order No. 27, series 2018 (Amendment to DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2015, or the High School Graduates Who are Eligible to Enrol in Higher Education Institutions in School Year 2016-2017, in Relation to ALS), beginning school year 2018-2019 and for subsequent school years, passers of previous A&E Tests (high school level), and of the November 2017, March 2018, and February and March 2019 A&E Tests (high school level), who are all high school graduates of the old basic education curriculum for ALS, are eligible to: a. Enroll in college/university as First Year students, subject to admission policies and requirements of higher education institutions (HEIs); or b. Take skills development training programs; or c. Enroll in Senior High School at any public school, or private school of their choice (subject to admission requirements). (<https://www.deped.gov.ph/ae-test/>)

Several studies were conducted relevant to the assessment of ALS in the Philippines. Tiongco of DLSU conducted the study titled, “Alternative and Inclusive Learning in the Philippines,” which is an impact evaluation of the effectiveness of ALS on returns to education of learners or the economic returns from obtaining skills from ALS in addition to getting the academic equivalence of a high school diploma. According to Tiongco (2021) the unique analytical output of the study is an important input to the current education policy reform to improve the quality of basic education and to support the government’s ambitious vision of universal functional literacy. (<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/hub/p/how-can-we-improve-learning-philippines>). Furthermore, in the investigation of Mehra et al. (2021), the ALS for out-of-school young people was found to be a valuable investment to benefit poor young people living in slums in Manila. Individuals who has enrolled at ALS and passed the A&E is twice

as likely to get a formal job as someone who has not passed the exam. (<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12962-021-00320-5>).

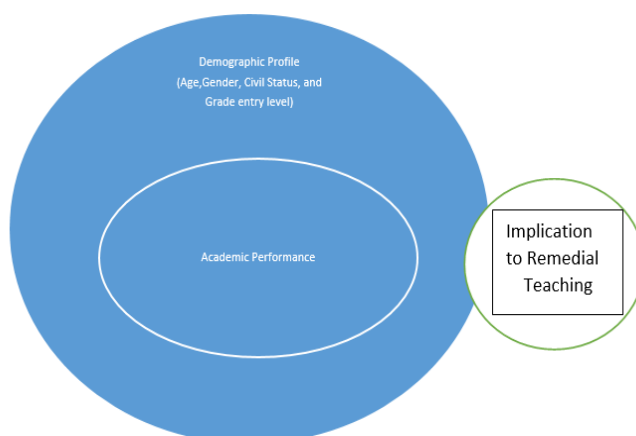
The Problem

This study aimed to ascertain the academic performance of Alternative Learning System (ALS) students of Barotac Viejo during S.Y. 2016-2017 when categorized according to demographic profile.

Specifically, it aimed to answer the following questions:

- 1) What is the academic performance of ALS students as to their demographic profile (age, gender, civil status, and grade entry level).
- 2) Are there significant differences in the academic performance among ALS students when categorized according to their demographic profile (age, gender, civil status, and grade entry level) the conceptual framework is shown in Figure 1

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study



Significance of the Study

The results of this study will provide basic information to the personnel of the School of Education in designing remedial teaching program as one of its extension programs. It will also serve as guide to the faculty in the conduct of remedial teaching especially in choosing appropriate learning methodologies for a specific group of learners. Moreover, it will redound to an effective and efficient implementation of ALS programs and activities in the District of Barotac Viejo which will greatly benefit the ALS learners in general.

Definition of Terms

For clarity of meaning, the following terms were defined:

Academic Performance - is student's assessment is based on the scores or grades achieved in the different study courses during the school and college years.(<https://www.igi->

global.com/dictionary/academic-performance/42383). In this study, it refers to the overall scores in A&E tests.

Alternative Learning System (ALS) - is a parallel learning system in the Philippines that provides opportunities for out-of-school youth and adult (OSYA) learners to develop basic and functional literacy skills, and to access equivalent pathways to complete basic education. (<https://www.deped.gov.ph/k-to-12/inclusive-education>). In this study, it refers to ALS implemented in the District of Barotac Viejo, Iloilo.

ALS students- are students enrolled in Alternative Learning System and took the A&E Test during SY 2016-2017

Remedial teaching- means providing instructional correctives. It is a process of removing the pupil's learning distortion or subject matter difficulties that had crept into the understanding and concept and use of that subject while learning. (<https://www.yogiraj.co.in/remedial-teaching>). In this study, it refers to the review classes conducted to ALS students who will be taking the A&E Test for the purpose of helping them attain a high percentage of passing.

Methodology

This study made use of the descriptive research design. The main purpose of this study is to describe the performance of ALS students when they are categorized according to their demographic profile.

The respondents of this study were the ninety-two (92) ALS students officially enrolled at Alternative Learning System (ALS) Center of Barotac Viejo S.Y. 2016-2017. They were categorized according to: a) age (below the mean, above the mean; b) gender (male , female) ; c) civil status (married, single); and d) grade entry level (Grade VI, 1st year High School, 2nd year High School, and 3rd year High School). The researcher made use of secondary data taken from the ALS Office. The data gathered were summarized, tabulated and computed using appropriate statistical tools such as mean, standard deviation, t-test, and one-way ANOVA.

Table 1: Frequency Distribution of Respondents

Variables		N	%
A. Age	a) Below the mean (22 & below)	56	60.87
	B) Above the mean	36	39.13
B. Gender	a) Male	39	42.39
	b) Female	53	57.61
C. Civil Status	a) Married	29	31.52
	b) Single	63	68.48
C. Grade Entry Level	a) Grade 6	11	11.96
	b) 1 st year	19	20.65
	c) 2 nd year	42	45.65
	d) 3 rd year	20	21.74

Results

Academic Performance of ALS Students

As shown in Table 2, ALS students with ages below 22 yrs. Had “advanced” level of academic performance while those above 22 yrs had “proficient” level with mean ratings of 90.036, and 88.083, respectively.

When grouped according to gender, both the males and the females had “proficient” levels of performance with mean ratings of 88.56 and 89.79, respectively.

When categorized to civil status, both single and married had “proficient” level of academic performance with ratings of 88.483, and 89.635, respectively.

Considering the entry level, students who were Third year level had “advanced” academic performance with mean rating of 90.550; while the rest had “proficient” levels with mean rating of 89.546 for Grade VI, 89.546 for first year, and 88.619 for Second Year.

Table 2: Academic Performance of ALS Students Categorized by Demographic Profile

Variables	N	Mean	Description
A. Age:			
Below the mean (22yrs and below)	56	90.036	Advanced
Above the mean (23 and above)	36	88.083	Proficient
B. Gender			
Male	39	88.56	Proficient
Female	53	89.79	Proficient
B. Civil Status:			
Married	29	88.483	Proficient
Single	63	89.635	Proficient
C. Grade Entry Level:			
Grade VI	11	89.546	Proficient
First Year	19	89.210	Proficient
Second Year	42	88.619	Proficient
Third Year	20	90.550	Advanced

Scale of Means

90- Above

85-89

80-84

75-79

70-74

Description

Advanced

Proficient

Approaching Proficiency

Developing

Beginning

Differences in Academic Performance of Students When Categorized According to Demographic Profile

Results of t-test in Table 3 showed that academic performance significantly differed between students aged 22 yrs and below. And above 22 yrs ($t = .410$; $p = .018$). This means that younger students performed significantly than older ones.

As to gender, there was no significant difference in the academic performance. ($t = -1.507$; $p = .135$). Regardless of gender their performances were the same.

When categorized according to civil status, no significant difference was noted between single and married ($t = -1.325$; $p = .189$).

On the other hand, ANOVA results in Table 4 showed a non-significant difference in the academic performance of ALS students categorized according to Grade entry level. ($F = 1.138$; $p = .338$). This means that regardless of grade level as entry point in ALS program, the students' academic achievements are comparably the same.

Table 3: Results of the Differences in Academic Performance when Categorized According to Age, Gender, Civil Status, and Grade Entry Level

Category	N	Mean	SD	t-value / F-value	Sig. level (2-Tailed)
Age:					
Below the Mean (22 & below)	56	90.04	2.15	2.410*	.018
Above the Mean (23 and above)	36	88.08	5.45		
Gender:					
Male	39	88.56	3.85	-1.507 ^{ns}	.135
Female	53	89.79	3.87		
Civil status:					
Married	29	88.48	5.17	-1.325 ^{ns}	.189
Single	63	89.63	3.12		

*= significant at .05 level ns = not significant at .05 level

Grade Entry Level	N	Mean	SD	F-Value	Sig. level (2-tailed)
Grade 6	11	89.54			.338
1 st year	19	89.21			
2 nd year	42	88.61			
3 rd year	20	90.55	1.60	1.138 ^{NS}	

NS = not significant at .05 level

Findings

The results of the study revealed that the academic performance of ALS students ranged from average to advance. There was no significant difference in academic performance between male and female and when categorized by civil status. Likewise, there was no significant difference in academic performance among ALS students when categorized by grade entry level. However, significant difference existed in the academic performance of ALS students when categorized according to age. Completers of ALS who are passers of the A&E Test are given certificates by the Department of Education (DepEd) and are comparable graduates of the formal education system. This study conforms with the idea of Tiongco, (2021) of DLSU, that assessing the performance of ALS is an important input to the current education policy reform to improve the quality of basic education.

Conclusions

From the findings of the study, it can be concluded that generally, ALS students have “proficient” academic performance. Regardless of gender, civil status and grade entry level, the academic performance of ALS students are the same. Age is a significant factor to affect the performance of ALS students. Those who are 22 years old and above have significantly lower performance than the younger ones. This can be explained by the fact that they have quitted from school for quite a longer period of time before they studied in ALS.

Recommendations

Alternative Learning System students should strive to maintain their high level of academic performance. The local government units and the agencies involved in the implementation of ALS shall continue its support for the ALS program to sustain its viability and further improve the students’ overall performance.

Implication to Remedial Teaching

In designing a remedial teaching program, grouping of students by age group is important. This will facilitate better learning because each age group may have different learning style from the other. Homogeneous grouping is an educational method utilized to differentiate instruction as a way for students to obtain academic achievement.

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