



# TEACHING PERFORMANCE OF ALTERNATIVE LEARNING SYSTEM MOBILE TEACHERS ASSIGNED IN DAVAO CITY COMMUNITY: METHODS AND STRATEGIES IN FOCUS

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## ABSTRACT

*This study aims to discover the teaching performance of the Alternative Learning System Teachers assigned in Davao City community whose teaching methods and strategies are in focus. This study would somehow trace the significant role of ALS teachers in the institution as they communicate knowledge in a specific subject, help students grow to the fullest, develop a proper attitude, and unfold their personality. This notion of teachers is deemed universal and consistent all over the world. This study may help to develop different pedagogies and relationships between ALS teachers and to enhance teacher's competence; achieving school goals to teacher's performance in selected ALS schools in Davao City. This may also serve as the basis for improvement. Moreover, in the Philippine context, the Code of Ethics for Professional Teachers and the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers specifically mandate educators to be equipped with technical and professional competence and possess dignity and reputation with high moral values. In other words, high standards are set for ALS teachers. According to American Educational Research Association (1999) unspoken pressure for them to continually put their best foot forward and maintain a dignified image in society. The criteria for selecting participants were specified and appropriate for this case study. The primary population for this case study originated from the Alternative Learning System teachers. The participants for this study were purposefully selected because, "selecting the right participants and building working relationships with them can make or break a qualitative study.*

**KEYWORDS:** *teaching performance, teachers, methods, strategies, alternative learning*

## INTRODUCTION

For several decades, the importance of alternative teaching methods (Edelson, Gordin, & Pea, 1999; Johnson & Johnson, 1999; Thomas, 2000) and their many advantages in the teaching and learning processes (Gillies, 2016; Kokotsaki, Menzies, & Wiggins, 2016; Lazonder & Harmsen, 2016) have long been known.

Accordingly, Education Ministries around the world, as well as in Israel, recommend the use of alternative teaching methods such as project-based learning, exploratory learning, collaborative learning, and the integration of technologies into teaching 2 (Fisher, 2015; Chu, Reynolds, Tavares, Notari, & Lee, 2017; Clark, Dyson, & Millward, 2018). Despite the increasing awareness of the importance of implementing alternative teaching methods in school, the official encouragement of Education Ministries around the world and in Israel, and the repeated attempts to increase implementation of alternative teaching methods in schools, in practice, the usage rate of alternative teaching methods remains low in Israel and throughout the world (Ratner, Rosiner, Paldi, and Freeman, 2016; Han, Yalvac, Capraro, & Capraro, 2015; Laursen, Hassi, & Hough, 2016).

The purpose of this study is to help understand the causes of the low usage rate of alternative teaching methods in order to find out why the actual usage rate remains low despite the high awareness of the advantages of alternative teaching methods, and despite the many attempts to apply them in schools. For this purpose, the study focuses on the teachers' attitudes toward alternative teaching methods, the teachers' attitudes toward frontal (traditional) teaching,



and the extent of experience with alternative teaching methods during the teacher training. The study uses quantitative means and seeks to identify the factors that influence the extent to which alternative teaching methods are applied by teachers, as well as the hierarchy of importance among these factors, i.e. which of the factors more significantly influence the implementation of alternative teaching methods. This question is of great importance because identifying the factors that have greater influence on implementation of alternative teaching methods by teachers can greatly assist in increasing the usage rate of alternative teaching methods by teachers.

The overwhelming feedback from Alternative Learning System teachers in the Philippines requires an update in teaching methods and more importantly a change in teacher mindsets. To make students and schools ready for the future, teachers need to become lifelong learners themselves (Macha, W., et. al., 2018). Opportunities that can inspire teachers' own education journeys, empowering their autonomy to test and apply unique perspectives in the classroom, also acknowledge the importance of dedicated support systems. And teacher networks in promoting peer learning, and discussed the role that school leadership needs to play in fostering those systems, teachers attending training that they need better tools to create a positive change in the education system.

The main strength of ALS is its design. It provides education to individuals who otherwise would not have access to it. The flexible nature of ALS allows it to serve a diverse set of learners: some just want to know basic literacy, others want to gain a high school certificate, while the rest want to learn skills, they can use to make a living. The ALS program also benefits from being part of the largest bureaucracy in the country. While mobile teachers usually teach alone in various locations, they have the support of organizational structures from the district, division, region and up to the national levels. In many places, public schools are highly supportive of ALS and open their doors to the mobile teachers and learners.

Having an abundant and increasing number of alternative learning system facilities comes with various challenges being faced in their workplaces daily. Working in alternative setting can either have an affirmative or negative impact on the learners depending on their adaptation to it. Such benefits in working in alternative learning system setting include: encouraging their students to have a clear perspective about the importance of education vision, can motivate their students with new curriculum and encourage success by implementing new teaching strategies, their teaching quality improves, and they can tutor diverse groups more successfully and their classroom management will be much better.

However, disadvantages and oppressions are inevitable. Economic differences between schools are perceptible resulting in unequal life opportunities with the learner's place of origin and racial identity (Kirk, 2010). Alternative learning system educators have diversified challenges in the performance of their teaching job. The challenges are brought about by the premise that teaching is a complex human activity.

Educators are guided by the spirit of service. Service pertains to the performance of a task for the benefit of others given voluntarily, by request, or by fulfilling a social need. People look at it as the beginning and end of the teaching profession (Gregorio, 2005). This principle indicates that the ultimate goal of the teaching profession is service, domestically or globally. It is important to note that the Philippine government implements policies based on the geographical-inspected needs of school-age children who are either inside the country's jurisdiction or those who live temporarily overseas (Sapangan, 2013).

In the context of educational practices, Kirk (2010) emphasizes that there is a need to examine the movement of education systems and practices, along with those who work and study in schools and universities, is driven by a globalized education sector that, in turn, places education in the realm of a commodity, something to be exchanged and valued or devalued (Kirk, 2010). This presents difficulties, particularly for school administrators and teachers in all Philippine schools abroad.

Through this, they may structure events, programs, and activities not only to meet Philippine and international standards, but may strongly encourage young learners to cross the threshold of a commitment to learning along with the new reform. Hence, the globalization trend in education has had a profound impact on social, cultural, and economic functioning in ways that were not readily identified or predicted (Suarez-Orozco, 2007). Considering the



rapid and continued growth in technology and the rise of global business, it is no surprise that the field of education has also been swept up in the current tide of globalization.

Given the preceding articles, it is critical to emphasize the importance of assessing educational dogmas and practices through practical and theoretical research involving teachers who are the primary concerns in achieving a quality education of alternative learning system learners. In doing so, this paper aims to address the following questions:

1. What are the challenges encountered by the ALS teachers in their teaching performance?
2. How do ALS teachers cope with the challenges in fulfilling their teaching performance using different methods and strategies?
3. What educational insights can be drawn to improve the teaching performance of ALS teachers in Davao City?

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

The teaching performance of alternative learning system teachers in Davao City will increase expectations of achievement by students mean that teachers have increased responsibility not only for their students' academic success, but also for their own development as teachers. Becoming an ALS teacher now requires more specialized work than in the past, as reflected in the increased requirements for certification and licensing in many societies and regions. The increased requirements are partly a response to the complexities created by the increasing diversity of students and increasing use of technology in classrooms.

The choice of research design was a case study, which involved a onetime focus group interview, individual face-to-face interviews, follow-up interviews via email, face-to-face and reviewing unobtrusive data. This case study design was appropriate for this research study because the case study helped me to gain insight into the participants' personal and first-hand experiences with teachers and also to identify perceived performance of alternative learning system teachers.

### Participants and Sampling

The research problem for this qualitative case study focused on the teaching performance of alternative learning system teachers in Davao City. The review of the literature has indicated that teachers play a vital role in the teaching-learning process. It serves as the backbone of the teaching approaches, strategies, technique, instruction materials, and assessment that we currently use. Teachers involved and engaged in research and utilize research evidence as the basis for instructional and pedagogical choices are leading to having desirable effects on both the teaching and learning process.

### Research Instruments

The researcher made use of researcher-made interview questionnaire to serve as a guide in questioning the participants in the data gathering procedure. The used of interview questionnaire also served as the instrument to focused on the teaching performance of alternative learning system teachers in Davao City.

Qualitative interviews use open-ended questions, which are questions that a researcher poses but does not provide answer options for. Open-ended questions are more demanding of participants than closed-ended questions for they require participants to come up with their own words, phrases, or sentences to respond. There was a onetime focus group interview, individual face-to-face interviews, follow-up interviews via email, face-to-face and reviewing unobtrusive data.

### Data Analysis

The data gathered from the in-depth interview done with the respondents was analyzed one by one. Since the data was gathered with the use of smartphone recorder, it was thoroughly listened and was written in field notes and was then encoded for the filing of the Chapter 3. Answers from the respondents were encoded verbatim and was given connection to the study.



The following tool was used in interpreting the responses and information in this study.

In-depth Interview (IDI): This was used by the researcher to learn the teaching performance of alternative learning system teachers in Davao City.

Thematic Content Analysis. This was used in interpreting the responses made by the key participants in determining the views and insights of the teaching performance of alternative learning system teachers in Davao City.

Their responses were processed and conducted through analyses. Transcripts were coded in considerable detail with the focus shifting back and forth from the key claims of the participants to the researcher's interpretation of the meaning of the responses and subjectively interpreted.

Phases utilized the Positioning Triad as a framework to analyze the data generated from Phase. Slocum & Lagenhove (2004) posits that the positioning triad is an analytical tool that highlights the relationship between the building blocks of meaning, which are constituted by informants' thoughts, informants' experiences, and the conversation experiences.

This is supported by Positioning Theory, a relatively recent approach of (Boxer, 2010) to understand discursive practices, which endeavors to understand people position rather than the roles they assume. By doing so, the dynamics of unfolding story lines and metaphors used to describe situations can unveil what is happening in a given group.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The data from the interviews was analyzed using a process of thematic analysis facilitated by initial coding of the interview transcripts, identifying preliminary categories, second round coding, refining categories, and recognizing emerging themes.

As a result of the analysis, the main themes significance of curriculum mapping, establish rapport with students and foster positive climate atmosphere for learning aligned with the original research questions. Additionally, the data found to answer the questions regarding challenges and benefits emerged primarily within the context of the other themes, thus, these are not addressed separately, but are included within the three main themes as identified in this section. There are sub-themes being identified in the course of analysis which is presented below.

## **FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

Interaction among students and educators in the classroom may become an issue when there are cultural differences regarding expressions, manners of speech, different accents, and differences related to the interpretation of body language. This was probably the case since some ALS students are staying in different part of the city where personal space and physical contact with people may be perceived differently. Teachers stated that communication gaps between educators and students may be due to the use of different expressions and different accents. This was the case of one of the teachers who, despite being a native speaker of English, had some trouble when communicating with her students.

My inquiry aimed at exploring the personal, intercultural and professional issues that a group of faculties experienced while living and teaching and the data analysis highlighted the lessons learned by this group. On a personal level, ALS faculty adapted to new lifestyles, became more independent, matured, and obtained a deeper understanding of themselves.

Apart from this, they expanded their horizons while becoming more tolerant and respectful toward cultural differences. The exposure to a different culture and school system made the participants aware of the similarities and differences between their background and the new setting, which led them to value the diversity. On an intercultural level, ALS faculty gained cross-cultural awareness and became more flexible in terms of diverse cultures. In contrast, these teachers were challenged by the social norms and language barriers they encountered when living and teaching in Davao City.



Professionally, participants took advantage of the sociolinguistic context to improve their English language proficiency. Also, ALS faculty kept abreast of the new trends in methodologies by attending in-service training as well as attaining a graduate degree during the time in the host country. Moreover, they became more reflective teachers. To succeed in the new school setting, they reflected on their methodologies and made the adjustments and changes necessary. The adaptation of teaching strategies assisted the educators in meeting the students' needs as well as in solving the problems associated with differences in language and culture. Apart from all the benefits that came from international teaching opportunities, many of the teachers faced different difficulties from settling down in the new community to adapting to the school system.

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