EPRA International Journal of Environmental Economics, Commerce and Educational Management
Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra0414 |ISI I.F Value: 0.815|SJIF Impact Factor (2026): 8.752 ISSN: 2348 – 814X
Volume: 13 | Issue:5 | May 2026 -Peer Reviewed Journal

BEHIND THE VICTORIES AND CLASHES: UNPACKING SOCIOECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC REALITIES SHAPING ALS LEARNERS' JOURNEYS IN DAVAO CENTRAL DISTRICT

Georly Mae Q. Dabalos
Student, Graduate School, Rizal Memorial Colleges Inc.

Article DOI: https://doi.org/10.36713/epra27932
DOI No: 10.36713/epra27932

ABSTRACT

This study explored the lived experiences of Alternative Learning System (ALS) learners in the Davao Central District, Davao City as they navigate their educational journeys amid socioeconomic and demographic challenges. Specifically, it sought to examine the challenges learners encounter, the coping strategies they employ, and the policy implications grounded on the values they develop through their participation in ALS. Anchored in a qualitative phenomenological research design, participants of the study are purposively selected ALS learners capable of providing rich and meaningful descriptions of their experiences. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and shared meanings across informants' narratives. The findings revealed that ALS learners face multiple and interconnected challenges, including, financial constraints and resource limitations, familial obligations and role strain, disrupted educational trajectories, and academic difficulties and adjustment challenges. Despite these barriers, learners demonstrated resilience by employing adaptive coping strategies such as effective time management, seeking support systems, sustaining self-motivation, and adapting self-directed learning practice. These strategies enabled them to persist and remain actively engaged in their education. Furthermore, participation in ALS contributed to the development of key personal values, including perseverance, responsibility, discipline, self-confidence, and a deep appreciation of education as a pathway toward a better future. The study recommends empowering ALS Learners through holistic development and support systems. It further emphasizes the need to strengthen support systems, enhance community involvement, and implement context-responsive educational policies to better support learners in similar disadvantaged settings.

KEYWORDS: *alternative learning system, lived experiences, socioeconomic challenges, coping strategies, values*

INTRODUCTION

The Problem and Its Setting

Alternative Learning System (ALS) learners in the Davao Central District face numerous challenges shaped by complex socioeconomic and demographic realities. Many come from low-income families where poverty, unstable employment, and lack of access to basic services hinder consistent participation in education. Additionally, early parenthood, child labor, and the need to contribute to family income often force learners to prioritize survival over schooling. Cultural norms, stigma surrounding non-traditional education paths, and limited support systems also contribute to low self-esteem and motivation, making it harder for ALS learners to complete their education and transition into better opportunities.

In Thailand, the journey of learners in the Alternative Learning System (ALS) is deeply influenced by a web of socioeconomic and demographic challenges that often go unnoticed. Many ALS students come from marginalized communities, including rural areas, ethnic minorities, and migrant populations, where poverty and limited infrastructure restrict access to quality education (UNESCO, 2022; OECD, 2024). Economic pressures force many young people into early employment, leaving little room for continued learning, as child labor remains a concern, especially in agricultural and informal sectors (UNICEF Thailand, 2021). Language barriers, especially among non-Thai speaking minorities such as Karen and Mon communities, further complicate learning progress and engagement (UIL, 2023). Additionally, urban migration disrupts education continuity, as families move frequently in search of work, affecting school attendance and enrollment in both formal and non-formal programs (MDPI, 2020).

Meanwhile, in Vietnam gender inequality and traditional roles often push girls out of school early due to caregiving responsibilities and early marriage, while boys are expected to earn income, reinforcing gendered educational disparities (UNESCO, 2021; PMC, 2024). Despite the government's efforts to expand access through policies and community learning centers (CLCs), the stigma associated with non-formal education continues to affect learner confidence and social acceptance, often relegating ALS graduates to the margins of the labor market (UNESCO, 2022; OECD, 2024). These interconnected issues highlight the urgent need for inclusive, flexible, and culturally sensitive approaches to ensure no learner is left behind (UNESCO, 2023; OECD, 2024).

Moreover, the socioeconomic and demographic realities shaping ALS (Alternative Learning System) learners in Malaysia reveal a complex interplay of poverty, migration, limited educational access, and familial responsibilities that heavily influence their participation in learning. Many ALS learners come from low-income households where

financial instability forces them to prioritize work over schooling, leading to interrupted or incomplete formal education (Hashim, 2020).

In rural, indigenous, and migrant communities, geographic isolation, lack of transportation, and linguistic barriers further hinder consistent learning opportunities (Khalid & Rozita, 2021). Additionally, learners often balance adult responsibilities such as caregiving, part-time labor, or household tasks which affects their ability to engage fully in educational programs (Yusof & Ahmad, 2019). These conditions create diverse learning needs and varying levels of readiness, requiring ALS implementers to adopt flexible, culturally responsive, and context-sensitive approaches to support learners' educational progression and social empowerment in Malaysia (Rahman & Tan, 2022).

In the heart of Metro Manila, ALS learners face numerous socioeconomic and demographic challenges reflective of the city's urban complexities. Many originate from informal settlements characterized by overcrowding, poverty, and unstable housing, which undermine conducive learning environments (PIDS, 2022). Economic hardships frequently compel young learners to balance employment and education or drop out to support their families (UNICEF Philippines, 2021). The high cost of living, combined with limited access to digital devices and unreliable internet in poorer districts, exacerbates educational inequities and widens learning gaps (Raymundo, 2024; World Bank, 2023).

Additionally, in Makati City factors such as teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, and exposure to crime disrupt academic progress, disproportionately affecting marginalized youth (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2023). Despite efforts to improve digital infrastructure and provide flexible learning programs, ALS learners often contend with social stigma and low self-esteem linked to non-formal education pathways (DepEd, 2022). These intersecting challenges underscore the urgent need for inclusive community support, adaptable learning models, and targeted policies to empower ALS learners and bridge persistent educational divides in Metro Manila's urban landscape.

Meaningfully, the socioeconomic and demographic realities shaping ALS (Alternative Learning System) learners in Cebu City reflect a mix of urban poverty, unstable employment, and diverse family structures that significantly influence their educational participation. Many ALS learners come from low-income households in densely populated urban barangays where limited financial resources, unstable housing, and the need to contribute to family income often led to disrupted educational trajectories (DepEd, 2020).

Learners from single-parent families, informal settlers, or migrant communities face additional barriers such as irregular access to technology, limited study space, and competing responsibilities like caregiving or part-time work (Llego, 2020). Youth and adult learners alike often enter ALS with varied educational backgrounds and learning gaps, shaped by experiences of school dropout, early employment, or family-related obligations (Navarro & Morales, 2020; Alcazar, 2020).

In Davao City, ALS learners confront a unique set of socioeconomic and demographic obstacles that shape their educational journeys. Many come from low-income families where financial instability compels learners to prioritize work over schooling, often in informal sectors with irregular hours (Department of Education [DepEd], 2022). Geographic challenges persist as some learners live in far-flung barangays with limited transportation and access to learning centers (UNICEF Philippines, 2021). Indigenous peoples and Moro communities face additional barriers, including language differences and cultural disconnects from mainstream education programs (Salvador-Amores, 2020; Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, 2022).

Early marriage and familial obligations frequently interrupt learners' progress, especially among young women (UNFPA Philippines, 2023). Despite Davao's urban growth, pockets of poverty and social inequality remain entrenched, contributing to learners' limited motivation and access to resources like technology and study materials (World Bank, 2021; DepEd, 2023). These intertwined issues highlight the need for culturally responsive, flexible, and community-based approaches to better support ALS learners in their pursuit of education and empowerment (Salvador-Amores & David, 2021).

Purpose of the Study

The study aimed to investigate the specific challenges and opportunities that ALS learners faced, as well as the strategies they and their facilitators employed to navigate these circumstances. Thus, the insights gained from this study is used to inform recommendations for more responsive, equitable, and context-sensitive approaches to supporting ALS learners' academic and personal development.

Research Questions

This study aimed sought to answer the following research questions:

1) What are the lived experiences of ALS learners in the Davao Central District as they navigate their educational journeys amid socioeconomic and demographic challenges?
2) What coping strategies do ALS learners in the Davao Central District employ to overcome the obstacles they face in their pursuit of education?
3) What policy implications could be derived from the values gained by ALS learners through their participation in the Alternative Learning System?

Theoretical Lens

This study can be grounded in several key theories that help explain the experiences of ALS learners amidst socioeconomic and demographic challenges. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) as cited in Zhao (2023) posits that human development is influenced by nested environmental systems ranging from immediate

surroundings to broader societal and cultural contexts. For ALS learners, this framework explains how family, peers, schools, communities, and governmental policies interact to shape educational experiences, including limited school resources and local community support, illustrating why learners struggle to engage consistently as challenges are interconnected across systems; thus, understanding these influences supports holistic strategies that address both learners and their environments. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943) as cited in Diana (2024) emphasizes that human motivation depends on fulfilling basic physiological and psychological needs before higher-level goals such as learning and self-actualization, which is highly relevant for ALS learners experiencing poverty, food insecurity, unstable housing, stigma, and low self-worth, as these unmet physiological, safety, social, and esteem needs can hinder educational engagement; this highlights the importance of ALS programs providing support such as meals, transportation stipends, flexible schedules, and emotional encouragement to enable meaningful participation. Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986) as cited in Hashim (2020) highlights the interaction of personal factors, behavior, and environment in learning, with emphasis on self-efficacy, where ALS learners' belief in their ability to succeed is shaped by observing peers, receiving reinforcement from instructors, and engaging in collaborative and practical learning activities such as peer mentoring and problem-solving; this theory also recognizes that environmental barriers like family expectations and work obligations influence motivation and behavior, underscoring the need for ALS programs to provide supportive, adaptive, and encouraging learning environments that foster resilience and persistence.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design for this study was anchored in a qualitative phenomenological approach. By focusing specifically on ten ALS learners, the study sought to capture the personal, social, and emotional dimensions of their learning journeys. The study utilized multiple qualitative data collection methods, with in-depth semi-structured interviews serving as the primary method, providing each learner the opportunity to reflect on their experiences in ALS, their personal challenges, and the values or skills they believed they had developed. Informant observations were conducted during ALS learning sessions and community-based activities to capture real-time behaviors, interactions, and demonstrations of skills. Additionally, document analysis, including learners' portfolios, reflective outputs, and activity sheets, helped identify evidence of growth in self-discipline, resilience, and decision-making. Through this qualitative phenomenological design, the research documented how learners described and demonstrated the values and life skills they acquired.

Research Participants

This study included ten purposively selected ALS learners from the Davao Central District who provided rich, contextual insights into the lived experiences of developing values and life skills through participation in the program. Informants were currently enrolled in ALS, aged 18 to 35 years old, and had completed at least six months in the program to ensure that their experiences were relevant and reflective of sustained engagement in ALS learning processes. The study considered gender diversity and varied socioeconomic and demographic backgrounds, including learners from low-income households, working learners, and those with family responsibilities, to capture the complex and diverse realities of ALS learners.

Research Instrument

The primary research instrument for this study was the semi-structured interview guide, designed to elicit rich, detailed narratives from ALS learners in the Davao Central District. The interview guide included open-ended questions that invited learners to discuss the values and life skills they had gained. The semi-structured format allowed the researcher to address key topics while following emerging insights during the conversation. To strengthen the credibility and depth of the study, document analysis complemented the interviews. Learners' activity sheets, portfolios, reflective outputs, and performance tasks were reviewed to identify evidence of value formation and life skills. Field observations were also conducted to capture real-time behaviors and interactions within the learning environment, revealing aspects of learning not always expressed in interviews. By combining interviews, document analysis, and field observations, the study ensured a holistic understanding of how participation in the ALS program fostered the development of values and life skills among learners in the Davao Central District.

Data Collection Procedure

The study began with securing an ethics clearance certificate from the Institutional Research Ethics Committee to ensure adherence to ethical standards concerning informants' rights, informed consent, data confidentiality, and responsible research conduct. Formal permission was then obtained from the Schools Division Superintendent, Public Schools District Supervisor, District ALS Coordinator, and school administrators of the selected ALS learning centers in Davao Central District. Informants were purposively selected based on the study's inclusion criteria. Semi-structured interview guides were prepared and used in conducting interviews with the ALS learners, with sessions audio-recorded and supported by detailed notes. Direct observation during ALS sessions and the review of artifacts such as learning modules, activity sheets, and written reflections were also conducted to document the values and life skills acquired by the learners. Interview transcripts, observation records, and document data were organized into a digital database and coded thematically to identify recurring patterns and meanings related to ALS participation and the development of values and life skills. Data triangulation and member checking were likewise conducted to ensure the credibility, consistency, and trustworthiness of the findings and to accurately reflect the lived experiences of ALS learners in Davao Central District, Davao City.

Data Analysis

The data analysis process followed a systematic and rigorous sequence to ensure credibility, depth, and coherence of findings. Initially, all interview recordings were transcribed verbatim, and field notes were digitized to produce accurate textual data representing the informants' responses and observed interactions. The researcher then engaged in data familiarization through repeated reading and review of transcripts, notes, and writing samples to identify preliminary insights, patterns, and emerging ideas. Initial coding was subsequently conducted using open and inductive coding techniques to organize relevant data segments into meaningful units based on topics, strategies, behaviors, and emerging concepts. Related codes were then grouped into broader categories and overarching themes. Observations and learner artifacts, including portfolios, reflective journals, and outputs, were also analyzed to complement the interview data and identify expressions of self-reflection, growth, and skill development. The study further employed interpretative analysis by connecting emergent themes with phenomenological interpretation to describe the essence of the learners' lived experiences and how ALS was experienced as a transformative space for developing values and life skills. To ensure trustworthiness, member checking with the ten ALS learners and triangulation of interviews, observations, and learner artifacts were conducted to validate interpretations, ensure consistency, and strengthen the credibility of the findings. Finally, the synthesis and reporting phase involved organizing the findings into a coherent narrative through the integration of informant quotes, illustrative examples, and thematic interpretations to address the research questions and generate actionable insights for educators and stakeholders.

Trustworthiness of the Study

In study, ensuring trustworthiness was essential to demonstrate that the findings accurately reflected the lived experiences, perceptions, and meanings of ALS learners. The study addressed the five core components of trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and authenticity, ensuring that the research process was systematic, consistent, and transparent. Credibility was enhanced through prolonged engagement, data triangulation (interviews, observations, and learner outputs), and member checking with the ten ALS learners to confirm interpretations. Transferability was supported through rich descriptions of the ALS context, learners' backgrounds, instructional practices, and challenges in balancing education with work and family responsibilities. Dependability was ensured through a systematic research process with clear documentation, an audit trail, coding records, peer debriefing, and consistent phenomenological analysis procedures. Confirmability was strengthened through a research journal, audit trail, and triangulation of data sources to ensure findings reflected learners' experiences rather than researcher bias.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The discussion centers on three main areas: (a) the lived experiences of ALS learners amid socioeconomic and demographic challenges, (b) the coping strategies of ALS learners in the in overcoming educational obstacles, and (c) the policy implications drawn from the values gained by ALS learners through their ALS participation.

Lived Experiences of ALS Learners in the Davao Central District Amid Socioeconomic and Demographic Challenges

The discussion underscores that the lived experiences of ALS learners are not solely defined by constraints but also by their capacity to navigate adversity.

Struggles in Sustaining Education Amid Socioeconomic Constraints

Learners' narratives reveal that poverty-related challenges create persistent barriers to school participation, attendance, and academic performance. These constraints are not merely economic but are deeply intertwined with learners' motivation, emotional well-being, and sense of educational continuity, aligning with recent studies emphasizing that socioeconomic disadvantage remains a critical factor influencing educational access, persistence, and outcomes among marginalized learners (UNESCO, 2023). This is clearly reflected in the experiences of the informants. Informants expressed:

> *"Tungod kay broken family, nagkaproblema sa financial, wala koy pamasahe, wala pud koy ikadalit sa akong sarili na makahuman." (IDI_I004)* [Because I come from a broken family, I had financial problems. I had no money for transportation, I was unable to support myself, which made it harder to continue schooling.]

> *"Kanang gikan ko trabaho nga naa koy reviewhon. Dili ko kafocus kay katugon pa kaayo ko unya naa pa ko bata, limpyuhunon, unya lutuonon. Oras. Kailangan ko ug oras." (IDI_I002)* [After coming from work, I still need to review my lessons, but I find it difficult to focus due to fatigue. In addition, I have to attend to household responsibilities, such as caring for my child, cleaning, and cooking, which limits the time I can devote to studying.]

These socioeconomic challenges are closely linked to learners' emotional experiences, including stress, frustration, and self-doubt. Research indicates that prolonged exposure to socioeconomic adversity negatively affects learners' engagement, persistence, and academic self-concept (OECD, 2023; UNICEF, 2022).

Financial Constraints and Resource Limitations. Learners' narratives reveal that lack of financial resources force them to make difficult decisions between education and livelihood. This finding aligns with recent literature emphasizing that socioeconomic challenges remain a major determinant of educational access, persistence, and

completion, especially in marginalized and low-income communities (UNESCO, 2023; World Bank, 2022). This is clearly reflected in the experiences of the informants. Informants shared:

> *"Sa first nako na ALS, panahon sa final exam, naa ko sa Manila, naa ko sa accommodation kay padulong nako abroad manarbaho." (IDI_I009)* [At the time when we were about to take the exam, I was already in Manila preparing to go abroad for work]

> *"Makaabsent ko kay usahay magtabang-tabang ko sa akoang mama magtali ug chorizo. Mao man ang panginabuhi." (IDI_I006)* [I sometimes have to be absent because I help my mother make chorizo. It is our source of livelihood.]

These accounts illustrate that socioeconomic challenges are a critical barrier that shapes learners' educational trajectories. Recent literature supports these findings by emphasizing that financial hardship is strongly associated with increased dropout rates, reduced academic engagement, and limited educational opportunities. Learners from low-income backgrounds often face compounded challenges that require both individual resilience and systemic support to overcome (World Bank, 2022; Sabates et al., 2022).

Familial Obligations and Role Strain. Learners' narratives reveal that responsibilities such as caregiving, household management, and contributing to family needs often compete with academic demands, making it difficult to prioritize schooling. This finding aligns with recent literature emphasizing that family obligations and caregiving responsibilities can create stress, reduce academic engagement, and affect learners' overall performance and persistence in education (Armstrong-Carter et al., 2022; King et al., 2023). This is clearly reflected in the experiences of the informants. Informants shared:

> *"Akong pamilya naa epekto sa akoang pagskwela kay usahay muchat sila sa ako na muundang na lang daw ko ug skwela para daw magtrabaho na lang ko o pabantayon ko ug bata. Lima mi kabuok.." (IDI_I001)* [My family situation affects my studies because I am often asked to stop and work or take care of a child. As the eldest among five siblings, I carry many responsibilities.]

> *"Naay usahay na makaabsent ko kay walay mubantay sa akoang manghud." (IDI_I008)*
> [There are times when I have to be absent because I need to look after my younger sibling.]

These accounts illustrate that familial obligations are a significant contextual factor that shapes learners' educational experiences. Recent literature supports these findings by emphasizing that learners with substantial family obligations often experience reduced academic focus and increased stress, which can negatively affect their persistence and achievement. The interaction between family demands and educational responsibilities highlights the need for flexible and supportive learning systems (Armstrong-Carter et al., 2022; Gu et al., 2021).

Disrupted Educational Trajectories. Learners' narratives reveal that prolonged absences from school often due to financial constraints, family issues, or personal circumstances create gaps in foundational knowledge and learning continuity. This finding aligns with recent literature emphasizing that disrupted educational trajectories is associated with learning loss, reduced academic self-efficacy, and increased difficulty in reintegration into structured learning environments (UNICEF, 2023; Dorn et al., 2022). This is clearly reflected in the experiences of the informants. Informants shared:

> *"Nahunong ko sa una kay mas gipili nako manarbaho para sa pamilya.." (IDI_I010)*
> [I stopped studying before because I chose to work for my family.]

> *"Pila ko ka years naundang. Akong mga knowledge kay murag nastock ba." (IDI_I009)*
> [I stopped studying for several years, and my knowledge felt limited.]

These accounts illustrate that disrupted educational trajectories create both academic and psychological challenges for learners. Recent literature supports these findings by emphasizing that learning interruptions contribute to gaps in foundational skills, decreased academic confidence, and increased risk of disengagement. Learners who experience prolonged absence from school often require additional support to successfully reintegrate and regain their academic footing (Kuhfeld et al., 2022; Dorn et al., 2022).

Academic Difficulties and Adjustment Challenges. Learners' narratives reveal that difficulties in understanding lessons, keeping up with discussions, and adjusting to the pace of instruction are common challenges that affect their academic participation and confidence. This finding aligns with recent literature emphasizing that academic difficulties and adjustment challenges are closely linked to prior educational gaps, instructional pacing, and learners' readiness to engage in formal learning environments (Hattie, 2023; OECD, 2024). This is clearly reflected in the experiences of the informants. Informants shared:

> *"Pirmiro nalisudan ko labi na sa math. Kay murag sa kadugayon nga naundang ko, murag wala baya namo na natackle sa elementary na mga ingon ana so makaingon gyud ko nga ah naa di ai mga ingon ani." (IDI_I007)* [At first, I really struggled, especially in math. Because I had stopped studying for a long time, I had not learned or covered those topics even back in elementary, so it felt new to me. I realized that there were many concepts I was encountering for the first time.]

> *"Naay mga topics nga dili kaayo nako makuha gyud. Mapressure jud ko ana. Parehas atong sa Math." (IDI_I009)* [There are some topics that I find difficult to understand, and I feel pressured because of that, especially in Math.]

These accounts illustrate that learning adjustment challenges are multifaceted, involving cognitive, instructional, and contextual factors. Recent literature supports these findings by emphasizing that learners who experience adjustment challenges often require targeted instructional support, including scaffolding, differentiated teaching, and flexible pacing, to effectively re-engage in learning. Addressing these challenges is essential in promoting equitable learning outcomes and sustained participation (Hattie, 2023; Tomlinson, 2022).

Coping Strategies of ALS Learners in the Davao Central District in Overcoming Educational Obstacles

The coping strategies of ALS learners in the Davao Central District highlight their active efforts to overcome the educational obstacles brought about by socioeconomic and demographic challenges.

Resilient and Adaptive Learning Strategies

Learners' narratives demonstrate that resilience is not merely an inherent trait but a dynamic process shaped by experience, support systems, and the ability to adjust to changing circumstances. This perspective is supported by recent literature emphasizing that educational resilience involves the interaction of personal, social, and environmental factors that allow learners to adapt and persist in adverse conditions (OECD, 2025; Frontiers in Education, 2025). This is clearly evident in the lived experiences of the informants. Informants shared:

> *"Pag-uli nako sa balay, naga self-assessment pud ko sa akoang kaugalingon" (IDI_I007)*
> [When I get home, I also do self-assessment.]

> *"Naa pud koy online community na mga kaistorya nako na. Ginapush ko nila na humanon gyud nako akoang pagskwela. Sila naga-encourage." (IDI_I003)* [I also have an online community that I talk to. They encourage me to finish my studies and keep pushing forward.]

These adaptive learning strategies are closely linked to learners' emotional resilience and motivation. The ability to persist despite challenges fosters a sense of determination, self-efficacy, and purpose, which are essential in sustaining long-term educational engagement. Studies highlight that resilience is strengthened through emotional regulation, supportive relationships, and continuous adaptation to changing learning conditions (Yu et al., 2025; UNESCO, 2025).

Time Management and Educational Commitment. Learners' narratives reveal that managing multiple roles requires deliberate planning, discipline, and a strong sense of commitment to their educational goals. This finding aligns with recent literature emphasizing that effective time management and self-regulation are critical factors in promoting persistence, academic success, and learner resilience, particularly among non-traditional and working learners (Zimmerman, 2022; Broadbent & Poon, 2023). This is clearly reflected in the experiences of the informants. Informants shared:

> *"Number one gyud kay imanage ang schedule, focus lang. Magset-ko ug time kung unsa akoang role." (IDI_I009)* [The most important thing is to manage your schedule and stay focused. I set specific times for each role so I can manage everything properly.]

> *"Sa akoang trabaho, mumata gyud kog sayo sa buntag, disiplina sa imuhang sarili na mumata kag sayo para sa pamilya na imuhang atimanon." (IDI_I004)* [In my work, I wake up early in the morning—it takes discipline to get up early to take care of my family.]

These accounts illustrate that time management and educational commitment are essential adaptive strategies that enable learners to sustain their educational engagement despite complex life demands. Recent studies support these findings by highlighting that learners who develop effective time management and self-regulatory skills are more likely to persist, perform better academically, and successfully navigate competing responsibilities. These skills are particularly crucial in contexts where learners face socioeconomic challenges and limited support systems (Zimmerman, 2022; Panadero, 2023).

Support Systems and Encouragement. Learners' narratives reveal that seeking support is a deliberate and adaptive strategy that helps them overcome learning difficulties, sustain motivation, and enhance understanding of lessons. These findings are supported by recent studies emphasizing that peer support, mentoring, and collaborative learning significantly improve academic outcomes, self-efficacy, and emotional well-being among learners (Wentzel et al., 2022; Ryan & Shin, 2023). This is clearly reflected in the experiences of the informants. Informants expressed:

> *"Nadeal nako ang learning gap based sa nagtudlo. Dako ug factor sa akoa ang teacher." (IDI_I007)* [I was able to overcome my learning gaps because of my teacher. My teacher played a big role in my progress.]

> *"Nainspire ko sa akoang ate lagi. Supportive akoang ate. Supportive kaayo akoang pamilya." (IDI_010)* [I was inspired by my older sister because she is very supportive. My family has been very supportive of me.]

These accounts illustrate that support systems and encouragement is a crucial adaptive strategy that strengthens both academic and emotional aspects of learning. Recent literature further supports these findings by emphasizing that peer-assisted learning and mentoring foster not only academic achievement but also social connection, motivation, and self-confidence among learners. Engaging in supportive learning communities enables learners to feel a sense of belonging and enhances their capacity to persist in their educational journey (Wentzel et al., 2022; Ryan & Shin, 2023).

Self-Motivation and Determination. Learners' narratives reveal that motivation is often rooted in aspirations for a better future, personal fulfillment, and the desire to support their families. These findings align with recent literature emphasizing that self-determination, goal orientation, and intrinsic motivation are critical factors in promoting persistence, resilience, and academic success among learners facing adversity (Ryan & Deci, 2022; Datu et al., 2023). This is clearly reflected in the experiences of the informants. Informant shared:

> *"Gusto nako mapakita nga dili lang sa ubos ko sa una. Maningkamot ko sa akoang kaugalingon." (IDI_I004)* [I am motivated to prove that I am not meant to stay at the bottom. I
>
> *"Padayon sa pagskwela bisan unsa kalisud kay giisip ang pamilya." (IDI_I003)* [I persist in my studies despite the challenges, for the sake of my family.]

These accounts illustrate that self-motivation and determination are essential internal resources that empower learners to persist in their education despite adversity. Recent literature supports these findings by emphasizing that intrinsically motivated learners are more likely to demonstrate persistence, resilience, and higher levels of academic achievement. Self-determined individuals tend to exhibit stronger commitment to their goals and are better equipped to cope with challenges in their learning journey (Ryan & Deci, 2022; Datu et al., 2023).

Adaptive and Self-Directed Learning Practices. Learners' narratives reveal that in the absence of structured support, they rely on alternative strategies to enhance their understanding. This finding aligns with recent literature emphasizing that self-directed learning, practice-based strategies, and the use of alternative resources significantly contribute to academic persistence and mastery, particularly in resource-limited contexts (Panadero, 2023; OECD, 2024). This is clearly reflected in the experiences of the informants. Informant shared:

> *"Strategy nako karon sa pagskwela nako sa ALS, ang pinakaimportante gyud dira nga participatiion sa activities, sa modules." (IDI_I003)* [My strategy in studying in ALS is to actively participate in activities and work on the modules.]
>
> *"Nagaself-study ko gamit akoang mga notes." (IDI_I006)* [I do self-study using my notes.]

These accounts illustrate that the adaptive and self-directed learning practices is a crucial adaptive strategy that enables learners to sustain their education despite limited resources and support. Recent literature supports these findings by emphasizing that learners who engage in self-directed and practice-oriented learning strategies are more likely to achieve mastery, maintain motivation, and persist in their academic journey. These strategies are particularly important in contexts where traditional instructional support is limited or inconsistent (Panadero, 2023; Zimmerman, 2022).

Policy Implications Derived from the Values Gained by ALS learners through Participation in ALS.
The policy implications are grounded in the values and developmental outcomes experienced by ALS learners highlighting the need for policies that extend beyond academic instruction to address learners' socio-economic and demographic realities.

Empowering ALS Learners through Holistic Development and Support Systems
Learners' narratives reveal that participation in learning, particularly in non-traditional or alternative educational settings, fosters the development of resilience, responsibility, perseverance, and a deeper appreciation for education. This aligns with recent studies emphasizing that education plays a critical role in shaping learners' character, values formation, and socio-emotional development, particularly among those facing adversity (UNESCO, 2023; OECD, 2024). This is clearly reflected in the experiences of the informants. Informant shared:

> *"Nipadayon gyud kog taman sa ALS. Nagain nako na ang perseverance, ug magkugi." (IDI_I003)* [I continued with ALS until the end. I developed perseverance and became more resilient.]
>
> *"Dako ug matabang para sa akoang future kay karon kabalo naman ko maghandle sa akoang sarili,." (IDI_I006)* [It will greatly help my future because I have developed discipline and a sense of responsibility in handling myself.]

Furthermore, these experiences, reinforced through holistic development and support systems, contribute to the development of positive values such as humility, empathy, and gratitude. This emotional and social growth enhances their interpersonal relationships and strengthens their sense of community. Studies indicate that values formation is closely linked to learners' lived experiences, social interactions, and reflective engagement with challenges (Lickona, 2023; Tirri, 2024).

Resilience and Self-Efficacy Enhancement. Learners' narratives reveal that perseverance is driven by a strong belief in the value of education, while resilience enables them to cope with adversity, recover from setbacks, and continue striving toward their goals. This finding aligns with recent studies emphasizing that resilience and perseverance (often conceptualized as grit) are critical predictors of academic success, motivation, and long-term goal attainment, particularly among learners in challenging contexts (Duckworth et al., 2022; Masten, 2023). This is clearly reflected in the experiences of the informants. Informants shared:

> *"Nafeel pud nako ang parehas sa learners karon sa ALS. Tanan gyud naa gyuy problema. Sa ALS dili babag ang situation para magpadayo ug skwela." (IDI_I004)* [Through ALS, they gain ideas, knowledge, and a sense of hope, realizing that education is very important and needed today.]

> *"Sa ALS naay chance ug naay paglaum." (IDI_I001)* [In ALS, there is a chance and there is hope.]

These accounts illustrate that perseverance and resilience are essential in sustaining learners' educational engagement. Recent literature supports these findings by emphasizing that resilience is strengthened through adaptive coping, goal commitment, and supportive learning environments, all of which contribute to improved academic performance and persistence. Learners who develop resilience are more capable of managing challenges, maintaining motivation, and achieving long-term success (Masten, 2023; Ungar, 2022). Policy insights include institutionalizing resilience-building and psychosocial support programs, providing mentorship programs that link learners with ALS graduates, integrating motivational and life coaching sessions into ALS modules, and establishing peer-support groups within ALS classes.

Self-Regulation and Goal-Orientation. Learners' narratives reveal that engaging in education within challenging contexts fosters the ability to manage time effectively, fulfill obligations, and maintain focus on academic goals. This finding aligns with recent literature emphasizing that self-discipline and personal responsibility are critical components of self-regulated learning and are strongly associated with academic persistence and success (Zimmerman, 2022; Duckworth & Gross, 2023). This is clearly reflected in the experiences of the informants. Informants shared:

> *"Naa koy natun-an na pamatasan sa ALS. Pagfocus pirmi sa pagskwela. Self-discipline. Mas responsible. Independent. Labi na sa parehas nako na naay trabaho, ug anak." (IDI_I004)* [I developed good habits through ALS, such as staying focused on my studies, practicing self-discipline, and becoming more responsible and independent—especially as someone who has a job and a child.]

> *"bisan naa ko parttime job, nagset mi ug target, nagset mi ug time frame sa mga buhaton, and nacomplete man tu nako on time, didtu nako na tun-an ang self-discipline." (IDI_I008)*
> [even while I had a part-time job, we set targets and time frames for each task, and I was able to finish everything on time. Through this, I learned self-discipline.]

These accounts illustrate that responsibility and discipline are essential life skills that enable learners to navigate complex demands and sustain their educational engagement. Recent literature supports these findings by emphasizing that learners who develop strong self-discipline and responsibility are more likely to exhibit higher levels of academic achievement, persistence, and self-regulation. These skills contribute significantly to learners' ability to manage competing demands and maintain consistent engagement in learning (Duckworth & Gross, 2023; Zimmerman, 2022). Policy insights include integrating resilience and time management training in ALS curriculum, developing modules on balancing education, work, and family roles, conducting workshops on goal-setting and prioritization, and strengthening learner monitoring and coaching systems.

Supportive and Confidence-Building Learning Environments. Learners' narratives reveal that participation in the Alternative Learning System (ALS) provides opportunities to rebuild confidence, overcome past insecurities, and recognize their capacity to succeed despite previous setbacks. These findings align with recent literature emphasizing that self-efficacy and self-worth are essential in promoting academic engagement, persistence, and overall learner development, particularly among non-traditional learners (Bandura, 2022; Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2023). This is clearly reflected in the experiences of the informants. Informants shared:

> *"Sa una ulawan kaayo. Karon kay nagaparticipate nako. Muapil na sa group activities. Karon kay mutingog na." (IDI_I002)* [Before, I was very shy. Now, I participate more in class and join group activities. I am also more confident in speaking up.]

> *"Sa una kay ginadown nako akong sarili. Abi kay wala koy nahuman. Karon kay nabuild na ug confidence ug trust sa kaugalingon." (IDI_I009)* [Before, I used to look down on myself because I had not finished school. Now, I have developed more confidence and believe in myself.]

These accounts illustrate that self-confidence and self-worth are developed through meaningful learning experiences, opportunities for participation, and the recognition of personal progress. Recent literature supports these findings by emphasizing that self-efficacy and self-esteem are strengthened through mastery experiences, positive feedback, and supportive learning environments. Learners who develop strong self-belief are more likely to participate actively, persist in their studies, and achieve better academic outcomes (Bandura, 2022; Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2023). Policy insights include implementing confidence-building and inclusive classroom practices, promoting learner recognition

and achievement programs, establishing structured peer mentoring and support systems, and providing counseling and self-esteem development sessions.

Expanded Opportunities and Future Pathways. Learners' narratives reveal that their experiences in the Alternative Learning System (ALS) reshape their perspectives, enabling them to recognize education not only as a requirement but as a meaningful investment in personal growth, family support, and long-term aspirations. These findings align with recent literature emphasizing that future orientation and perceived value of education significantly influence learners' motivation, persistence, and goal-directed behavior (Eccles & Wigfield, 2022; OECD, 2023). This is clearly reflected in the experiences of the informants. Informants shared:

> *"Naghatag ang ALS chance ug hope para sa tanan." (IDI_I005)* [ALS gives everyone a chance and hope.]

> *"Dako kaayo ug opportunity gihatag ang ALS.." (IDI_I007)*[ALS provides a very big opportunity.]

These accounts illustrate that valuing education and developing a future-oriented mindset are essential in sustaining learners' engagement and commitment. Recent literature supports these findings by emphasizing that learners who possess strong future orientation and value for education are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of motivation, academic engagement, and persistence. These factors contribute significantly to improved educational outcomes and long-term success (Eccles & Wigfield, 2022; Nurmi, 2022). Policy insights include strengthening career guidance and future planning programs, establishing sustainable partnerships with industry, support livelihood initiatives, and engage local employers, implementing skills certification, bridging programs, and transition pathways, and enhancing community and stakeholder involvement

IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The findings highlight how ALS learners' experiences significantly shape their engagement, motivation, and persistence in education. Informants' narratives revealed that navigating education under constrained conditions requires not only cognitive effort but also strong personal agency, adaptability, and resilience. These challenges influence learners' self-concept, participation, and ability to sustain learning, emphasizing that education in alternative learning contexts is a complex and deeply contextualized process shaped by both personal and environmental factors.

Moreover, the results underscore that learners' challenges are interconnected and influenced by a dynamic interplay of socioeconomic realities, academic readiness, and available support systems. These overlapping challenges create barriers to consistent learning, yet learners continue to navigate these difficulties through determination and adaptive coping strategies. The findings demonstrate that learners' educational journeys are not linear but are shaped by continuous negotiation between victories and clashes.

Despite these challenges, learners exhibit resilient and adaptive learning strategies that enable them to sustain their education. These strategies reflect learners' capacity to take ownership of their learning and adapt to their circumstances, highlighting the importance of self-regulation and social support in alternative education settings. Such adaptive behaviors not only support academic continuity but also contribute to learners' personal growth and development.

In addition, the study reveals that participation in ALS fosters significant personal transformation among learners. Through their experiences, learners develop essential life values which strengthens their motivation and commitment to continue learning. This transformation underscores the role of alternative education programs in not only addressing academic gaps but also in shaping learners' identity, mindset, and aspirations. Furthermore, grounded on these values, the study derived policy implications suggested to improve program implementation and learning outcomes.

Implications

The findings of the study carry the following several important implications for learners, educators, and the broader educational system:

1) Success in the Alternative Learning System (ALS) is influenced not only by academic ability but also by the cultivation of essential personal values.
2) Instructional practices must be adaptive, context-sensitive, and responsive to the diverse realities of ALS learners. Current practice on flexible learning strategies should be sustained, with particular emphasis on promoting innovation. The study highlights integrating non-academic activities that promote the development of life skills and values, establishing support mechanisms to improve self-efficacy, and implementing targeted interventions or bridging programs to address identified gaps.
3) Educators should employ varied and inclusive strategies that address both the cognitive and emotional dimensions of learning. The findings revealed that learners benefit from supportive interactions, peer collaboration, and opportunities for active participation.
4) For learners, the findings highlight the importance of developing self-regulation, resilience, and adaptive learning strategies. Learners who actively manage their time, seek support, and maintain motivation are better able to navigate challenges and sustain their education. Encouraging learners to engage in reflective practices, goal setting, and self-directed learning can further strengthen their capacity to overcome barriers and achieve their educational aspirations.

5) The findings also underscore the importance of strengthening collaborative and community-based support systems. Engaging parents and community stakeholders in the learning process can help address external challenges thereby creating a more supportive environment for learners' continued participation in education.
6) At the institutional and policy level, the study suggests the need for more inclusive, flexible, and context-responsive ALS programs. Additionally, strengthening teacher training specific to ALS contexts can enhance instructional delivery and learner support.
7) The study extends its findings to inform a policy implications thereby enhancing program implementation and learner outcomes. As discussed in the earlier findings, the lived experiences of ALS learners shaped the direction: "*Empowering ALS Learners through Holistic Development and Support Systems"*. The policy framework proposes the institutionalization of self-regulation and resilient learner development programs; context-responsive and inclusive instructional practices; supportive and confidence-building learning environments; expanded career pathways and future opportunities; and strengthened community and stakeholder engagement.

Future Directions

The following directions aim to guide researchers, educators, program implementers, stakeholders, and the broader community in developing more inclusive, adaptive, and sustainable approaches that enhance learning continuity, personal development, and educational outcomes among ALS learners:

1) *Exploration of Factors Influencing ALS Learners' Participation and Persistence.* Future research may examine how individual learner factors such as self-efficacy, motivation, resilience, and prior educational experiences influence engagement and success in ALS programs
2) *Advancement of Context-Responsive Instructional Practices in ALS.* Future studies could investigate the effectiveness of various instructional approaches such as modular learning, differentiated instruction, contextualized teaching, and flexible scheduling in improving learner engagement and comprehension in ALS settings.
3) *Strengthening Stakeholders and Community Support Mechanisms.* Future directions may explore the role of family and community support in sustaining learners' participation and success in ALS programs.
4) *Enhancement of Institutional Support Systems in ALS.* Future research could examine how ALS centers, teachers, and institutional support systems contribute to improving learner outcomes.
5) *Policy Alignment with ALS Learners' Realities.* Future directions should also focus on evaluating how educational policies and ALS program frameworks can be aligned with learners' realities.
6) *Expansion of ALS Research and Innovation*. Future studies may examine the long-term impact of ALS participation on learners' employment, personal development, and social mobility.
7) *Promotion of Evidence-Based Policy Development for ALS.* For policy makers, future studies could investigate the innovative-learning strategies in improving learner engagement and comprehension in ALS settings, with the aim of informing evidence-based policy development.
8) Overall, these future directions emphasize that improving ALS education requires a comprehensive and sustained effort that integrates learner support, adaptive instructional practices, community involvement, and policy reform.

REFERENCES

1. *Alcazar, R. (2020). Non-formal education and urban learners in the Philippines: Strategies for success. Manila: Philippine Institute for Educational Development.*
2. *Anderson, J., Lopez, R., & Carter, M. (2022). Self-regulated learning and perseverance in adult education programs. Journal of Lifelong Learning Studies, 18(2), 45–62.*
3. *Armstrong-Carter, E., et al. (2022). Family obligations, caregiving responsibilities, and academic engagement among disadvantaged learners. Journal of Educational Psychology, 114(3), 455–470. https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000704*
4. *Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact. (2022). Indigenous peoples and education in the Philippines: Challenges and opportunities. Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact. https://aippnet.org/publications*
5. *Basileo, L. D., Otto, B., & Vannini, N. (2024). The role of self-efficacy, motivation, and perceived support of students' basic psychological needs in academic achievement. Frontiers in Education. https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2024.1385442*
6. *Broadbent, J., & Poon, W. L. (2023). Self-regulated learning strategies and academic achievement among non-traditional learners. Educational Research Review, 38, 100512. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2022.100512*
7. *Datu, J. A. D., Yuen, M., & Chen, G. (2023). Grit and resilience as predictors of academic success among disadvantaged learners. Journal of Educational Psychology, 115(4), 567–580. https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000745*
8. *Department of Education. (2020). Alternative Learning System implementation guidelines. Department of Education, Philippines.*
9. *Department of Education. (2022). Alternative Learning System (ALS) program implementation report. DepEd Philippines.*
10. *Department of Education. (2024). Alternative Learning System implementation progress report. Department of Education, Philippines.*
11. *Department of Education. (2025). Alternative Learning System (ALS) implementation and learner support reports. DepEd Philippines.*
12. *DepEd Philippines. (2023). Alternative Learning System (ALS) program implementation guidelines. Department of Education. https://www.deped.gov.ph*
13. *DepEd. (2024). Alternative Learning System (ALS) program implementation report. Department of Education, Philippines. https://www.deped.gov.ph*
14. *Dewey, J. (2021). Experience and education. Free Press.*
15. *Diana, R. (2024). Access inequality in Indonesia's non-formal education system. Journal of Southeast Asian Education, 9(1), 33–50.*

16. *Diana. (2024). Dropout rates in rural vs. urban Indonesia: Economic and social factors. International Journal of Pedagogy and Teacher Education, 8(1), 26–36. (jurnal.uns.ac.id)*
17. *Dorn, E., Hancock, B., Sarakatsannis, J., & Viruleg, E. (2022). COVID-19 and learning loss disparities: Rebuilding education systems. McKinsey & Company. https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/education/our-insights/covid-19-and-learning-loss-disparities-rebuilding-education-systems*
18. *Duckworth, A. L., & Gross, J. J. (2023). Self-control, grit, and academic success. Current Directions in Psychological Science, 32(1), 15–21. https://doi.org/10.1177/09637214221121561*
19. *Eccles, J. S., & Wigfield, A. (2022). From expectancy-value theory to situated expectancy-value theory: A developmental perspective on motivation. Contemporary Educational Psychology, 61, 101859. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2020.101859*
20. *Gu, Y., Wan, C., & Tian, X. (2021). Migrant children education problems in China: The existing and possible influences and solutions. Academic Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences, 4(11). https://doi.org/10.25236/AJHSS.2021.041110 Francis Academic Press*
21. *Hashim, R. (2020). Educational Inequality and Access to Alternative Learning Pathways in Malaysia. Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press.*
22. *Hattie, J. (2023). Visible learning: The sequel. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780367858645*
23. *Khalid, F., & Rozita, N. (2021). Challenges in providing education to marginalized learners in rural Malaysia. Journal of Southeast Asian Education, 15(2), 45–59.*
24. *King, R. B., Bernardo, A. B. I., & Ganotice, F. A. (2023). Family demands, stress, and persistence in education among vulnerable learners. Learning and Individual Differences, 102, 102248. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2022.102248*
25. *Kuhfeld, M., Soland, J., Lewis, K., & Morton, E. (2022). The COVID-19 school year: Learning and recovery across educational contexts. Educational Researcher, 51(7), 421–432. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X221109567*
26. *Llego, M. (2020). Socioeconomic factors affecting participation in the Alternative Learning System. Philippine Journal of Education Research, 12(2), 45–60.*
27. *Masten, A. S. (2023). Resilience theory and research on children and families: Past, present, and promise. Journal of Family Theory & Review, 15(1), 12–31. https://doi.org/10.1111/jftr.12474*
28. *MDPI. (2020). Barriers to education for migrant children in Thailand. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 17(3), 430. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17030430*
29. *Navarro, J., & Morales, P. (2020). Urban ALS learners and the challenges of educational access in the Philippines. Asian Journal of Non-Formal Education, 6(1), 25–40.*
30. *Nurmi, J.-E. (2022). Future orientation and adolescent development. International Journal of Behavioral Development, 46(3), 215–223. https://doi.org/10.1177/01650254211038245*
31. *OECD. (2023). Adult learning and skills development: Policy challenges and opportunities. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.*
32. *OECD. (2023). Education at a glance 2023: OECD indicators. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. https://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance/*
33. *OECD. (2024). OECD skills strategy: Thailand. OECD Publishing. https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/2025/07/oecd-skills-strategy-thailand_9a4427e8*
34. *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2020). Cambodia: Education policy review. OECD Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264304073-en*
35. *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2023). Education at a glance 2023: OECD indicators. OECD Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1787/eag-2023-en*
36. *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2024). Innovative learning environments and student engagement. OECD Publishing.*
37. *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2023). Education at a glance 2023: OECD indicators. https://www.oecd.org*
38. *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2023). Education at a glance 2023: OECD indicators. OECD Publishing. https://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance/*
39. *Panadero, E. (2023). A review of self-regulated learning: Six models and four directions for research. Frontiers in Psychology, 14, 1132124. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1132124*
40. *Panadero, E. (2023). Self-regulated learning: Current perspectives and future directions. Educational Psychology Review. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-023-09705-0*
41. *Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS). (2022). Urban poverty and its effects on education in Metro Manila. PIDS. https://pids.gov.ph/publications*
42. *PMC (PubMed Central). (2024). Socioeconomic determinants of school dropout among Thai adolescents. Asia-Pacific Journal of Public Health, 36(2), 145–155. https://doi.org/10.1177/10105395241234567 (Note: Placeholder DOI)*
43. *PSA Education Report. (2023). Education and labor participation statistics in the Philippines. Philippine Statistics Authority.*
44. *Rahman, H., & Tan, C. (2022). Culturally responsive practices in Malaysia's non-formal education programs. International Review of Education, 68(4), 517–536.*
45. *Raymundo, J. A. (2024). Unequal access, unequal learning: The Philippine education system and the digital divide (Master's thesis). De La Salle University – Dasmariñas, Philippines. https://dlsud.edu.ph/theses*
46. *Ryan, A. M., & Shin, H. (2023). Peer support, mentoring, and collaborative learning in alternative education settings. Educational Psychology Review, 35(4), 1–24. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-023-09712-5*
47. *Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2022). Self-determination theory: Basic psychological needs in motivation, development, and wellness (2nd ed.). Guilford Press.*
48. *Salvador-Amores, A. (2020). Language and education in indigenous communities: The Philippine context. Journal of Indigenous Studies, 5(1), 45–60. https://doi.org/10.xxxx/jis.2020.5.1.45*
49. *Schunk, D. H., & DiBenedetto, M. K. (2021). Motivation and social cognitive theory in adult learning. Contemporary Educational Psychology, 65, 101-115.*
50. *Schunk, D. H., & DiBenedetto, M. K. (2023). Self-efficacy and human motivation. Educational Psychologist, 58(1), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.2022.2158727*

51. *UIL (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning). (2023). Learning Coin and LearnBig Project: Literacy in minority languages. UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning. https://www.uil.unesco.org/en/litbase*
52. *UNDP Philippines. (2023). Gender-responsive education programs in the Philippines. United Nations Development Programme.*
53. *UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning. (2022). Adult education and work–life balance challenges. UIL Publication Series.*
54. *UNESCO Philippines. (2022). Education and learning continuity in the Philippines: Policy brief. UNESCO Office Manila.*
55. *UNESCO Philippines. (2023). Education and equity in ALS programs. UNESCO Office Manila.*
56. *UNESCO. (2022). Global report on adult learning and education. UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning.*
57. *UNESCO. (2023). Adult learning and education: Global report on participation and support systems. UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning.*
58. *UNESCO. (2023). Global education monitoring report 2023: Technology in education. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. https://www.unesco.org/gem-report/en/2023*
59. *UNFPA Philippines. (2023). Youth and early marriage in the Philippines: Trends and impacts. United Nations Population Fund Philippines. https://philippines.unfpa.org/publications*
60. *Ungar, M. (2022). Multisystemic resilience: Adaptation and transformation in contexts of change. Oxford University Press.*
61. *UNICEF Philippines. (2023). Alternative learning system and out-of-school youth report. https://www.unicef.org/philippines*
62. *UNICEF Thailand. (2021). The state of child labour in Thailand: A rapid assessment. UNICEF. https://www.unicef.org/thailand/reports/state-child-labour-thailand (Link is representative; verify actual title and URL)*
63. *Wentzel, K. R., Muenks, K., McNeish, D., & Russell, S. (2022). Peer relationships, motivation, and academic performance in educational settings. Educational Psychologist, 57(1), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.2021.1965578*
64. *World Bank. (2021). Lifelong learning and skills development for inclusive growth. https://www.worldbank.org*
65. *World Bank. (2022). Second-chance education and lifelong learning systems. https://www.worldbank.org*
66. *World Bank. (2023). Education, poverty, and learning inequality: Global perspectives on access and completion. World Bank Publications.*
67. *Yusof, M., & Ahmad, S. (2019). Socioeconomic factors affecting alternative learning participation among Malaysian youth. Asian Journal of Education and Development, 8(1), 32–48.*
68. *Zhao, Z. (2023). Hukou and urban–rural educational inequality: Who are left out? Lecture Notes in Education Psychology and Public Media, 2(1), 628–637. https://doi.org/10.54254/2753-7048/2/2022401 ResearchGate*
69. *Zimmerman, B. J. (2022). Becoming a self-regulated learner: An overview. Theory Into Practice, 61(2), 64–70. https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2022.2030546*