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STRATIFIED APPROACH FOR LEARNERS TO ENTICE WITH MADRASAH (SALEM): AN AMPLIFIED STRATEGY TO ENHANCE MUSLIM LEARNERS IN MADRASAH EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The Stratified Approach for Learners to Entice with Madrasah (SALEM) is a comprehensive educational strategy designed to enhance the learning experiences and outcomes of Muslim students in madrasah education. This approach seeks to address the diverse needs of learners by implementing differentiated instruction techniques, culturally responsive teaching, and inclusive curricula that honor Islamic traditions while integrating modern educational practices. SALEM emphasizes the importance of creating a supportive and engaging learning environment that fosters academic excellence, critical thinking, and personal development. By stratifying learners based on their individual abilities, interests, and learning styles, educators can tailor their teaching methods to better meet each student's unique needs. This personalized approach not only helps to improve academic performance but also boosts students' confidence and motivation. Additionally, the strategy promotes the involvement of parents and the community in the educational process, recognizing their crucial role in reinforcing learning and providing a holistic support system. Through professional development programs, teachers are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively implement the stratified approach, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to succeed and thrive in their educational journey.

KEYWORDS: *Stratified Approach, Entice with Madrasah, SALEM, Madrasah Education, Mixed Method Study*

I. INTRODUCTION

Islamic education, or madrasah, is thought to have originated in the Philippines at the same time that Islam began to spread due to Arab missionaries and Malay explorers who landed in western Mindanao and Sulu. According to the Sulu Genealogy, a man named Tuan Mashaika came to Sulu in the 13th century and brought Islam to the locals (Abubakar, 1983). Another Arab missionary, Sayyid Abū Bakr, also called Sharif-ul Hashim, arrived on Jolo Island at the start of the 15th century. By establishing the sultanate as a political structure and becoming its first sultan, Abu Bakr solidified his own authority. During his thirty years in power, madaris (Abubakar) were established and mosques were built.

Madaris are now found all across the country, mostly in Central and Western Mindanao. Between 600 and 1,000 madaris are thought to exist in Mindanao, where there are between 60,000 and 100,000 students enrolled overall. Lanao del Sur, Basilan, and Maguindanao are the provinces that have more than 100 madaris apiece. In addition to madaris, 459 public schools around the country are using madrasah, according to the Department of Education (DepEd). The Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), which has its own regional DepEd and is theoretically autonomous of the national DepEd, is not included in this figure. A comprehensive initiative for the educational advancement of Filipino Muslims, the Road Map for Upgrading Muslim Basic Education, was created by the Philippine government through the Department of Education.

Under DepED Order No. 51, s. 2004, the Department of Education approved and defined the legal framework for the development and institutionalization of Madrasah education, as well as the standard curriculum for primary public schools and private Madaris. Furthermore, Executive Order No. 13-A, Section 2004 This order elevates the Madrasah educational system to the status of a vital component of the national educational system, comparable to the mainstream school system ("Status of Madrasah Education in the Philippines and Its Development and Institutionalization as a Component of the Philippine System of Education," 2006).

The Madrasah Education Program is being undertaken, in response to the demand for worldwide commitment to education for all , as stated in DepED Order No. 57, S.2010. It is guided by a Roadmap for Improving Muslim Basic Education, which includes (1) Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education in Public Schools, (2) Standard Madrasah Curriculum in Private Mandaris (Islamic educational institutions), and (3) Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education for Muslim Out-of-School Youth and Adults. The ALIVE initiative is being implemented in 981 public schools around the country (DepED Order No. 56, Section 2010).

According to Dr. Manaros B. Boransing, a madrasah is a Muslim private school that focuses on Islamic studies and Arabic literacy. These are Mindanao's oldest educational institutions and are widely regarded as the single most essential element in the preservation of Islamic faith and culture in the Philippines. In the Philippines, there are three broad descriptive

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categories of madrasah: traditional or weekend madrasah, developmental or formal madrasah, and standard private madrasah. Traditional Madrasah education is primarily religious in nature. Classes are only held on Saturdays and Sundays; there is no official curriculum; classes are not graded or have multi-age groups; and the professors are graduates of a madrasah or an imam (Muslim priest). The developing madrasah provides structured teaching and sequential learning that is compatible with the official education system. The formal education system is followed, with pupils progressing from Madrasah edadi (pre-school) to Madrasah sanawi (high school).

The curriculum focuses on Islamic religion and culture, as well as certain mathematics and scientific classes, and Arabic is used as the medium of instruction. Because the DepED's standard curriculum is not followed, Madaris students lack competitive skills essential for employment and are ineligible for transfer to normal schools. The Department of Education does not recognize or accredit this sort of program (Boransing, M.B.).

Through the issuing of DepED Order No. 51, s. 2004, the regular private madrasah became a component of the Philippine education system. It follows the Standard Curriculum for Elementary Public Schools and is eligible for government recognition and certification. The enhanced curriculum stipulates the teaching of Arabic language and Islamic principles to Muslim pupils in public schools throughout the country in regions with a Muslim presence. Boransing went on to say that Madrasah pursues a six-point plan to develop its educational system.
These elements are as follows:

1. Development and institutionalization of Madrasah education.
2. upgrading quality secular basic education in formal elementary and secondary schools serving Muslim students.
3. Developing and implementing an alternative learning system for Filipino Muslim Out-of-School Youths.
4. Developing and implementing appropriate livelihood skills education and training for present-day students of private madaris. And Out-of-School youths;
5. Supporting government efforts to provide quality Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Program for Filipino Muslim preschool children; and
6. Creation of a Special Fund for Assistance to Muslim Educational (FAME) by an Act of Congress. Islamic education is an essential component of the Muslim community.

The foundation for the formation of Islamic schools is built on two goals: a religious emphasis and protecting pupils from the undesired behaviors of the dominant population. Parents have stated that they send their children to Islamic schools for three reasons: (a) to provide an Islamic atmosphere; (b) to provide religious instruction; and (c) to preserve their children's faith and identity (Badawi, 2006). The establishment of madrasahs, or Islamic schools, in the Philippines is said to have coincided with the spread of Islam, which was brought about by Arab missionaries and Malay adventurers who landed in Sulu and western Mindanao. According to the Sulu Genealogy, a certain Tuan Mashaika came to Sulu in the 13th century and introduced Islam to the locals (Abubakar, 1983).

Under the current government, DepEd Secretary and Vice President Sara Z. Duterte has stated that the Department of Education (DepEd) is committed to promoting equal access to excellent and inclusive education. She emphasized the need to eradicate the culture of 'othering' that harms persons who are not of social standing or who belong to minority or disadvantaged groups. She also reiterates her commitment to the SDGs, the UNESCO convention against discrimination in education, and the Education 2030 framework for action, which emphasizes inclusion and equity as the cornerstones of great education. VP Sara emphasized that the integration of programs for Muslim learners is also being focused on.

Furthermore, VP Sara assured that the DepEd will prioritize the integration of Arabic Language Islamic Values Education, or the ALIVE program, in which learners will develop their language and literacy skills while gaining a deeper understanding of the Islamic faith and its teachings through the study of Arabic.

There are four schools in DepEd Calamba that provide Madrasah education. Parian Elementary School, Jose Rizal Memorial Elementary School, Crossing Elementary School, Looc Elementary School, and, most recently, Calamba Elementary School are among these schools. Student accomplishment is the extent to which a student has met their short- or long-term educational objectives. Individual disparities in academic achievement are closely connected with personality and IQ differences. According to statistics collected from the SALAM Coordinator, few learners are attending the ALIVE classes over the weekend. In line with the challenges presented, and with the DepEd Mantra and MATATAG flagship by the VP and DepEd Secretary, there should be the heightened inclusivity in education and minorities should be given a chance bring their utmost potentials. Moreover, ALIVE education also embodies the countries cultural, religious, and historical significance as part of the Philippine intangible heritage. In summation, the researchers came up with the idea of having a stratified approach to entice Muslim learners in Madrasah education at Parian Elementary School which is a pilot study in the Schools Division of Calamba City, Philippines.

Research Question

This study aimed to determine the effectiveness of Stratified Approach for Learners to Entice with Madrasah (SALEM): An Amplified Strategy to Enhance Muslim Learners in Madrasah Education Achievement in Parian Elementary School, Schools Division of Calamba City.
Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are the challenges encountered by learners in madrasah education?
2. What are the themes that emerged from the learners' interview?

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3. What was the performance of learners before and after the implementation of the SALEM approach?
4. Based on the results of the study, what improvements may be proposed for the SALEM approach implemented by the school?

This action research aimed to strengthen and improve Muslim learners' achievement in Madrasah education. Based on the report from the Madrasah Coordinator, numerous students were not attending the ALIVE classes. Some of the reasons are the following: learners want to take a rest after regular weekday schooling; some learners are tasked by their parents to do household chores; and some learners are not interested in attending the class at weekend.

In line with the DepEd mantra of inclusivity and with the legal basis of Madrasah education, the researchers are motivated to come up with a proposal that aims to entice the learners who are not interested to attend the weekend Madrasah schooling, likewise motivating the learners who are achievers in Madrasah classes by giving them recognitions at the end of the quarter.

Since this strategy, which is described as stratified refers to approaches which are different for various types of learners. But first, the researchers had profile the learners in terms of socio-economic status and the reasons, challenges, and motivations for attending the weekend classes. As a result, to crafting of stratified approach to entice all learners to attend the ALIVE classes during the weekend. The researchers crafted a framework that become the baseline of the enticement program for Muslim learners with the help of expert in the field of pedagogy, research and Madrasah education. *(Please see the framework at figure 1.)*

II.METHODOLOGY

This research employs a mixed method study where explores both the qualitative data and quantitative data.The study's participants were the 59 Muslims students of Madrasah education at Parian Elementary School and the two (2) Aztatids.

The qualitative data analysis was done through thematic analysis, moreover, for the quantitative data analysis, this research utilized the mean, standard deviation, and t-test to determine the performance of the learners before and after the implementation of the SALEM project at Parian Elementary School. The information collected from the participants remained confidential and used only according to the purpose, as indicated in the research.

III. RESULTS and DISCUSSION

This section specifies the results of data collection and analysis and reports findings concerning the research questions for this study.

On the challenges highlight the complexities faced by learners in Madrasah education and the need for comprehensive support to enhance their educational experiences.

Most of the learners stated that there is a Limited Curriculum Diversity. Madrasah education often focuses predominantly on religious studies, which may limit exposure to other subjects like science, mathematics, and literature.

In addition, there is a challenge in language or so-called as Language Barrier. Madrasahs often teach in Arabic or another specific language, which can be challenging for students whose first language is different. This might hinder comprehension and engagement.

Another thing to consider is the Social Stigma. There can be societal perceptions that Madrasah-educated individuals have limited career prospects or are not equipped for roles outside religious contexts, affecting students' self-esteem (Escalaw, 2022; Escalaw, 2023; Escalaw, 2024) and opportunities (Paynor,2024).

Moreso, the Integration into Mainstream Education. Transitioning from Madrasah to mainstream educational systems or workplaces may pose challenges due to differing curricula, teaching methods, and cultural norms.

Furthermore, as to normal learning centers, a challenge in resources as the so-called Resource Constraints. Madrasahs may lack adequate resources such as modern educational technology, libraries, and qualified teachers, impacting the quality of education and learning outcomes.

Lastly, the aspect of Modern Relevance. Balancing traditional religious teachings with contemporary knowledge and skills required for today's world can be difficult, potentially leaving graduates unprepared for diverse career paths or higher education outside religious studies.

On the themes that emerged from the learners' interview. The themes that emerged from learners' interviews in the context of Madrasah education can vary depending on the specific interviews conducted and the focus of the research. However, some common themes that often emerge include:

The Curriculum and Learning Experience. Learners may discuss the content and structure of the curriculum, including the balance between religious studies and secular subjects, the relevance of what they are taught to their future aspirations, and the teaching methods used (Escalaw, 2022; Escalaw, 2023; Escalaw, 2024a; Escalaw, 2024b; Paynor, 2024; Cuenca & Cuenca, 2024).

The Language and Communication. Issues related to language proficiency, especially when Arabic or another specific language is the medium of instruction, can be a significant theme. Learners may discuss challenges in understanding the material, expressing themselves, or integrating their language skills into broader contexts (Tenzer et al., 2021).

The Identity and Social Integration. Learners may reflect on how their Madrasah education shapes their identity, both religiously and socially. This can include discussions on cultural identity, interactions with peers from different

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backgrounds, and perceptions from broader society about Madrasah-educated individuals (Sali & Marasigan, 2020).

Career and Future Prospects. Discussions often revolve around the perceived impact of Madrasah education on their career options and future prospects. Learners may talk about whether they feel adequately prepared for higher education or entering the workforce outside religious contexts (Glover-Chambers et al., 2024).

The Challenges and Support Systems. Learners may highlight challenges they face within the Madrasah system, such as academic pressure, resource limitations, or the availability of support services. They may also discuss what forms of support—whether academic, emotional, or social—are beneficial or lacking (Johnson et al., 2022).

The Perceptions and Stereotypes. Learners may share their experiences regarding societal perceptions and stereotypes associated with Madrasah education. This can include feelings of discrimination or misunderstandings about the quality and value of their educational experiences (Durante & Fiske, 2017; Escalaw, 2022; Escalaw, 2023; Escalaw, 2024a; Escalaw, 2024b).

Therefore, these themes provide a broad overview of the topics that often arise from interviews with learners in Madrasah education settings. They reflect the complexities and varied experiences within this educational framework, highlighting areas for improvement and potential avenues for further research and support.

On the result of the performance of learners before and after the implementation of the SALEM approach

Table 1. Results of the performance of learners before and after the implementation of the SALEM approach

Grade Level	No. of Students	Pretest Mean	Posttest Mean	p-value	t-value	Remarks
Kinder	6	7.17	13.67	0.004	5.160	Significant
One	9	8.56	12.33	0.006	3.688	Significant
Two	8	6.75	12.13	0.002	4.744	Significant
Three	6	9.00	15.17	0.002	5.723	Significant
Four	10	8.50	14.22	0.001	5.099	Significant
Five	9	8.56	13.78	0.006	3.688	Significant
Six	11	9.64	15.45	<.00001	10.849	Significant

See the larger table 1 on the last page of this research.

The study, titled "Stratified Approach for Learners to Entice with Madrasah (SALEM): An Amplified Strategy to Enhance Muslim Learners in Madrasah Education," conducted multiple statistical tests. Each test yielded significant results with t-values ranging from 3.68 to 10.849 and corresponding p-values ranging from .00615 to < .00001, meeting the significance criterion of $p<.05$.

The consistently low p-values indicate strong evidence against the null hypothesis, suggesting robust statistical significance across all tests. The increasing t-values suggest larger effect sizes or significant differences between groups, highlighting the effectiveness of the SALEM strategy in enhancing educational outcomes for Muslim learners in Madrasahs.

Therefore, these findings underscore the efficacy of the SALEM approach in improving educational experiences and outcomes for Muslim students in Madrasah education. They support the strategy's role in addressing educational challenges and fostering enhanced learning environments within Madrasahs, with implications for educational policy and practice in similar contexts.

Based on the result of mixed method data analysis the following are the recommendations for Improving Madrasah Education.

Strengthen Curriculum Integration. Balanced curriculum in Madrasahs should work towards integrating both religious and secular subjects in their curriculum. This can be achieved by collaborating with education experts, religious scholars, and curriculum developers to create a comprehensive and balanced curriculum that aligns with national educational standards. Regular reviews and updates to the curriculum should be conducted to ensure its relevance and effectiveness.

Enhance Teacher Training and Professional Development. Comprehensive Training Programs. Develop and implement regular training programs for madrasah teachers, focusing on modern teaching methods, classroom management, and subject-specific pedagogy. These programs should be designed to equip teachers with the skills necessary to deliver high-quality instruction. Ongoing Professional Development. Create opportunities for continuous professional development, including workshops, seminars, and conferences. Establishing a certification program for teachers can ensure they meet minimum teaching standards and maintain a high level of competency.

Improve Infrastructure and Resources. Infrastructure Development. Secure funding from government sources, NGOs, and private donors to improve madrasah facilities. Invest in building and upgrading classrooms, libraries, laboratories, and other essential infrastructure to provide a conducive learning environment.

Resource Allocation. Ensure adequate allocation of resources for textbooks, learning materials, and technological tools. Providing modern educational resources will enhance the overall learning experience for students.

Promote Social and Cultural Integration and Extracurricular Activities. Encourage student participation in extracurricular activities that foster cultural exchange and social integration, such as sports, arts, and community service. These activities can help students develop a broader understanding of different cultures and social norms.

Interfaith Dialogues. Organize interfaith dialogues and collaborative projects with students from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds. This can promote mutual understanding and respect among students from different communities.

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Counseling Services. Provide counseling services to support students in adapting to diverse social environments and addressing any integration challenges they may face.

Implement Effective Monitoring and Evaluation. Develop clear and measurable performance indicators to assess the success of the implemented actions. These indicators should cover various aspects of madrasah education, including academic performance, teacher competency, and student integration.

Regular Assessments. Conduct regular assessments and surveys to gather feedback from students, teachers, and parents. Use this feedback to identify areas for improvement and make necessary adjustments to the action plan.

Continuous Improvement. Establish a continuous improvement process to ensure that the recommendations are effectively implemented and lead to sustained enhancements in madrasah education.

By following these recommendations, madrasahs can address the identified challenges and work towards providing a more balanced, high-quality education that prepares learners for both religious and secular success in the school.

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Figure 1. SALEM Framework

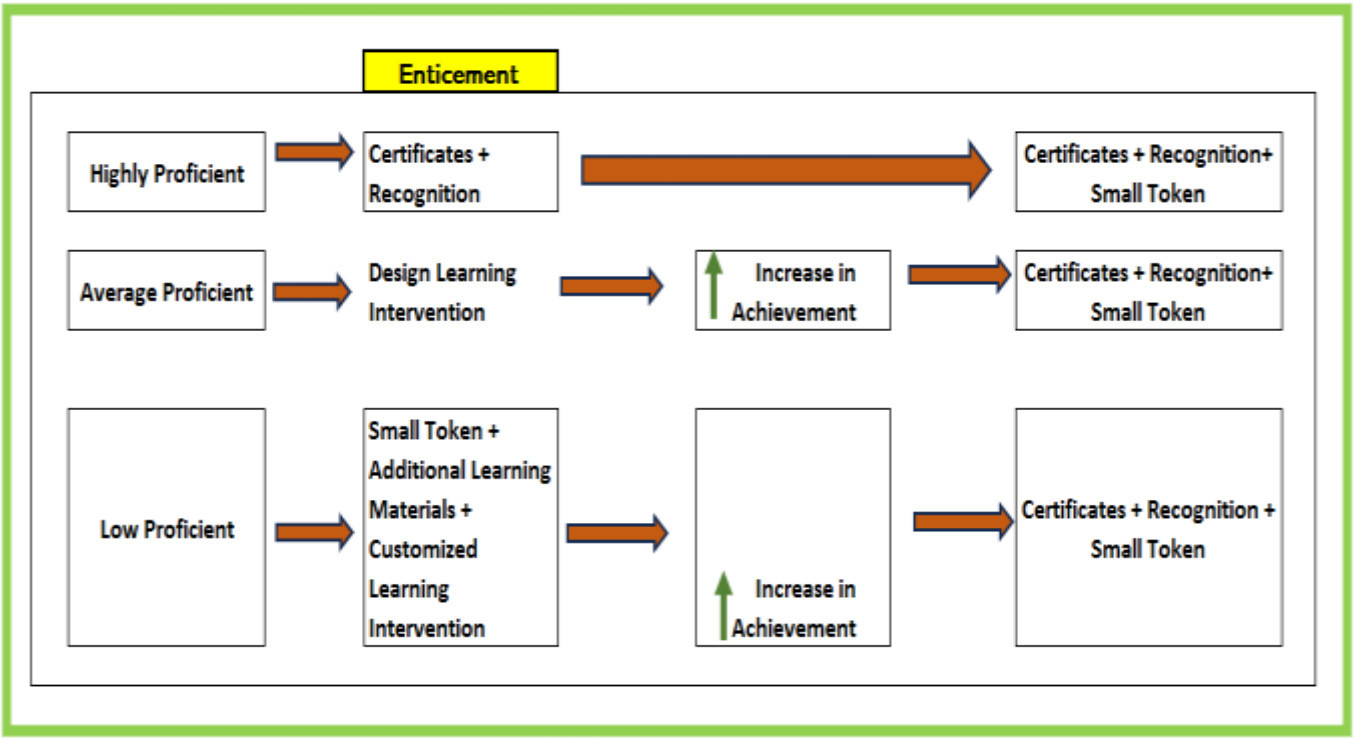


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