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SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL COORDINATORS' SKILLS AND ENGAGEMENT ON THE SUCCESS OF THE DEPED'S ALTERNATIVE LEARNING SYSTEM: A LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT
This study examined the relationship between the skills and engagement of ALS Coordinator in implementing ALS program in the Nabunturan East District. The approach of this research was descriptive correlational design, data collection method was using validated questionnaires, and data analysis performed by mean, Pearson correlation and linear regression. The coordinator skills and engagement were both rated as "Extensive", however for implementation, the rate was "Moderately Extensive" with stakeholder satisfaction on learner development as a key area for improvement. The results from the correlation analysis revealed a statistically negative significant relationship between coordinator skills and implementation success (p = 0.022); however, there was no significant relationship between coordinator engagement and success (p = 0.255), which suggests that coordinator engagement is not enough to overcome systemic barriers. Pedagogical skills was deemed to be extensive while coordinator skills were rated as moderate, indicating that pedagogical skills seemed to be more developed than organizational skills. Finally, the communication skills and engagement in program planning were the most important predictor variables in regression analysis, and their effects were the strongest on program outcomes like achievement and satisfaction of learners. The findings from the study reveal that program effectiveness is essential to have coordinators who are competent; the presence of institutional support with the implementation of the program and the effectiveness of communication of coordinators to the stakeholders is important. Specialized training in participatory planning and communication should be given preference in the development of initiatives to strengthen the impact and long-term sustainability of ALS programs.
KEYWORDS: *Alternative Learning System, Coordinator Skills, Coordinator Engagement, Implementation Success, Communication Skills, Philippines*

INTRODUCTION

Alternative Learning System (ALS) in the Philippines is a parallel learning system that caters to OOSY (out of school youths) and adults. Even with its key contribution to SDG 4 (quality education), ALS implementation is still enduringly beset by challenges such as learners' socio-economic background, limited resources, geographic inaccessibility problems, and low completion rates. These issues are stark in the Nabunturan East District and have serious repercussions on equitable and inclusive education.

Globally, alternative education systems have been successful. In Zambia, Mwansa et al. (2025) also found that the ALS was effective, although they noted that there was a lack of funding and training of facilitators. Homeschooling in the UK – a growth of flexible homeschooling, but with some concerns about quality (Financial Times, 2024). Locally, Cagang (2024) and Caingcoy et al. (2021) indicated that if ALS is implemented by competent implementers, it can greatly improve the 21st century skills of learners. But there were gaps in teacher training and engagement that were identified by Paez (2024).

The ALS Coordinator has a crucial role in connecting the dots between administrative management, teacher involvement, and learner achievement. Studies of the specific skills and engagement dimension that best impact program outcomes are still limited, however. This study will help fill that gap by focusing on organizational, pedagogical, and communication skills, as well as time invested, planning participation, and teacher collaboration, to predict student performance, program completion, and stakeholder satisfaction.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to:

1. Determine the extent of ALS Coordinator skills (organizational, pedagogical, communication) and Coordinator Engagement (time investment, participation in planning, collaboration with teachers).
2. Determine the extent of success of ALS implementation (student performance, program completion rate, stakeholder satisfaction).

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3. Determine the significant relationship between coordinator skills and implementation success.
4. Determine the significant relationship between coordinator engagement and implementation success.
5. Identify which domains of coordinator skills and engagement significantly influence implementation success.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A quantitative, descriptive-correlational research design was used to study the relationships between variables in which there was no manipulation of variables.

Geographical Area

The study was conducted in the Nabunturan East District, Davao de Oro, Philippines, specifically at Mainit National High School and Manat National High School, both offering the ALS Senior High School program.

Sampling Design

The population consisted of 125 teachers from ALS of Manat National High School (MNHS) in Manat and the Mainit National High School (MNHS) in Mainit, Nabunturan East District, Davao de Oro. A simple random sampling technique was applied to obtain 105 teachers from the total population. An a priori power analysis was performed with G*Power software (version 3.1, Faul et al., 2009) to guarantee the statistical rigor. With the parameters of linear multiple regression (medium effect size $f^2 = 0.15$, $\alpha = 0.05$, power = 0.80, and two predictors), the minimum sample size that was required was 68 respondents. This was more than the required sample size of 105 (as calculated with the Slovin formula using a 5% margin of error). A post hoc power analysis showed that a power of 0.93 (93%) was achieved, which is above the accepted power level of 0.80, and a sensitivity analysis indicated that even small-to-medium effects ($f^2 = 0.10$) could be detected with reliability. The inclusion criteria were: regular ALS teachers and willing to participate, with a minimum teaching experience of one to three years. 30 of the non-sample respondents underwent a pilot test.

Statistical Design

A structured five-point likert scale questionnaire based on Northouse (2021), Schaufeli et al (2006) and Stufflebeam (2003) was used to gather data. The instrument was validated by experts with a Cronbach's alpha score ranging from 0.838 to 0.926 for the sub scales and 0.967 overall. Statistical treatments included:

- Descriptive analysis: weighted mean and standard deviation.
- Pearson product-moment correlation on relationship testing.
- A linear regression analysis was conducted using JASP v0.12.20 with alpha = 0.05, for the influence of the variables on the predicted variable.

RESULTS

Extent of Coordinator Skills and Engagement

As indicated in Table 1, skills of the ALS Coordinator were given ratings from Extensive to Moderately Extensive for pedagogical skills and pedagogical/organizational skills, respectively. The overall mean for skills of communication was 3.40 (Extensive). Coordinator involvement in time invested (Mean = 3.57) and in planning (Mean = 3.53) was Extensive, while collaboration with teachers was Moderately Extensive (Mean = 3.30).

Table 1. Summary of Extent of ALS Coordinator Skills and Engagement

Variable/Domain	Overall Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
Coordinator Skills		
Organizational Skills	3.307	Moderately Extensive
Pedagogical Skills	3.49	Extensive
Communication Skills	3.40	Extensive
Coordinator Engagement		
Time Investment	3.57	Extensive
Participation in Planning	3.53	Extensive
Collaboration with Teachers	3.30	Moderately Extensive

Source: Primary Data

Extent of Success of ALS Implementation

The overall success of implementation of ALS was at the Moderately Extensive (Mean range 3.25 – 3.39) level, as indicated in Table 2. Performance of students (Mean = 3.39) and satisfaction of stakeholders (Mean = 3.34) were moderately extensive, as was the rate of program completion (Mean = 3.25). Interestingly, the lowest rating (Mean = 3.09) was for the statement "stakeholders feel that ALS positively impacts academic growth and personal development.

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Table 2. Summary of Success of ALS Implementation

Variable/Domain	Overall Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
Coordinator Skills		
Student Performance	3.39	Moderately Extensive
Program Completion Rate	3.25	Moderately Extensive
Stakeholders' Satisfaction	3.34	Moderately Extensive

Source: Primary Data

Relationship Between Variables

The correlation results are shown in Table 3. There was a significant and weak negative correlation between coordinator skills and implementation success (r = -0.224, p = 0.022). There was no significant correlation between coordinator involvement and implementation success (r = 0.112, p = 0.255).

Table 3. Pearson Correlation Results

Variable Pair	r-value	p-value	Interpretation	Decision
ALS Coordinator Skills vs. ALS Implementation Success	-0.224	0.022	Significant	Reject H_o
ALS Coordinator Engagement vs. ALS Implementation Success	0.112	0.255	Not Significant	Fail to Reject H_o

Source: Primary Data

Regression Analysis: Influence of Skills on Success

Table 4 indicates Communication Skills was the only skill domain that had a significant effect on implementation success (p = 0.010). Organizational (p = 0.105) and Pedagogical skills (p = 0.151) were not significant predictors. The full model explained only 5.6% of the variance (R^2 = 0.056, p = 0.120).

Table 4. Regression Coefficients for Coordinator Skills Domains

Domain	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	Standardized β	t	p-value	Decision
Intercept)	4.558	0.648		7.038	<.001	
Organizational Skills	-0.178	0.109	-0.161	-1.634	0.105	Accept Null
Pedagogical Skills	-0.153	0.105	-0.142	-1.447	0.151	Accept Null
Communication Skills	1.051	0.636	-0.536	-0.374	0.010	Reject Null

Note: Dependent Variable = Success of ALS Implementation; R^2 = 0.056;
F (3,101) = 1.990, p=0.120

Source: Primary Data

Regression Analysis: Influence of Engagement on Success

Table 5 shows that only Participation in Planning was a significant predictor of implementation success (p = 0.041). Time Investment (p = 0.897) and Collaboration with Teachers (p = 0.586) were not significant. The model explained only 2.0% of the variance (R^2 = 0.020, p = 0.560).

Table 5. Regression Coefficients for Coordinator Engagement Domains

Domain	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	Standardized β	t	p-value	Decision
Intercept)	2.454	0.650		3.777	<.001	
Time Investment	0.013	0.135	0.013	0.129	0.897	Accept Null
Participation in Planning	0.158	0.105	0.118	1.178	0.041	Reject Null
Collaboration with Teachers	0.062	0.650	0.059	0.586	0.586	Accept Null

Note: Dependent Variable = Success of ALS Implementation; R^2 = 0.020;
F (3,101) = 0.690, p = 0.560

Source: Primary Data

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DISCUSSION

This finding that communication skills was the only skill domain that was significant, is consistent with Transformational Leadership Theory (Bass, 1985) that argues that visionary communication leads stakeholder buy-in and manifests program success. On the other hand, the lack of significance of the organizational and pedagogical skills indicates that organizational and pedagogical competencies are important but are not directly linked to measurable results unless they are provided by enabling conditions.

The explanatory power of the weak negative correlation between skills and success may be due to a compensatory assignment effect, such that coordinators whose skills are higher are more likely to be assigned to the most challenging ALS sites (those with the lowest funding, facilities, and learner poverty), thus explaining the low success measures at those locations despite the coordinator's skills. This has been supported by Resource Dependence Theory (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978) which states that organizations rely on external resources outside their control.

With the nearly negligible R^2 values (0.020–0.056), and the insignificant relationship between engagement and success, this empirically shows that individual coordinator effort is not enough to overcome exosystem and macrosystem barriers (Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory). These are DepEd budget allocations (only 0.1% of budget for ALS; 0.8% of learners; 2024 PIDS), learner SE status, and community infrastructure.

CONCLUSION

The results showed that the overall organizational, pedagogical, communication, planning, and engagement skills of the ALS Coordinators in the Nabunturan East District were on the moderate to high level. Teacher support, curriculum planning, communication with teachers and learners, instructional leadership and time spent on professional development and collaboration were the strongest areas. The strengths had a positive impact on the student's academic achievement, teacher participation, and overall implementation of the ALS program. Several factors including event organization, structured communication systems, student-centered learning supports, collaborative problem-solving, and operational troubleshooting were rated as moderately extensive, suggesting some inconsistencies in program coordination and supports. The findings support the concepts of Transformational Leadership Theory and Ecological Systems Theory about the importance of good leadership, teamwork, and a connected support system for program success.

It was also determined that the implementation of ALS was generally rated as Moderately Extensive, specifically in terms of the implementation of student performance, program completion, and satisfaction of the stakeholders. Academic attitudes and attainment of learners were satisfactory, but there were difficulties in the areas of engagement, personal development, provision of resources and motivation. While the technical effectiveness of the program was recognized, the perceptions towards holistic learner growth and quality of instructional support were less consistent. The findings suggest that while it was possible for ALS coordinators to reach learning outcomes, resource constraints, structured collaboration, and learner-centered approaches were factors that impacted the overall responsiveness and sustainability of the program. Such findings support the assumptions of Resource Dependence Theory, which emphasizes the need for proper institutional support, resource management and external collaborations for sustaining educational programs.

Overall, the study found that the effectiveness of implementing ALS is not only determined by the individual skills and attitudes/knowledge of ALS Coordinators, it is also influenced by collaboration, resources and systems in the educational context. The results indicate that the effectiveness of the program and the satisfaction of the stakeholders depend on the strengthening of learner support systems, the regular collaboration between the teacher and the coordinator, the use of methods suitable for students' learning and the use of methods suitable for andragogy, in addition to providing enough operational resources. The study concludes with a synthesis of the three theories (Transformational Leadership Theory, Ecological Systems Theory and Resource Dependence Theory) that in order to realize long-term educational outcomes, both competent leadership and robust institutional and community support systems are essential for the sustainable implementation of ALS.

Recommendations

1. **For DepEd Top Management:** Review resource allocation policies to allocate sufficient resources, learning materials and facilities for ALS. Make participatory planning a habit at division and district level.
2. **For Division ALS Focal Persons:** Design professional development activities to strengthen communication and planning skills of coordinators. Conduct regular consultive planning workshops.
3. **For ALS Coordinators:** Make sure communication is open and two-way with stakeholders, and integrate teacher decision-making in a formal way. Shift from administrative management to strategic advocacy.
4. **For Future Researchers:** Explore mediating variables like access to resources, learner's socioeconomic status and support from local government. Use mixed methods designs to collect stakeholders lived experience.

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