

# LIVED EXPERIENCES OF THE ALTERNATIVE LEARNING SYSTEM (ALS) MOBILE TEACHERS

<sup>1</sup>Juville G. Aque, <sup>2</sup>Noel G. Benavides

<sup>1,2</sup>Affiliation: Sorsogon State College

<sup>1</sup>Phone number: +639305397445

<sup>1</sup>Email: [juvilleaque@gmail.com](mailto:juvilleaque@gmail.com), <sup>2</sup>Email: [ssc@sorsogonstatecollege.edu.ph](mailto:ssc@sorsogonstatecollege.edu.ph)

Corresponding author: Juville G. Aque

---

**Abstract:** This study aimed to determine the lived experiences of the Alternative Learning System (ALS) mobile teachers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District of Sorsogon. This paper is a qualitative type of research employing phenomenological research. These aspects of experiences of ALS mobile teachers in their teaching competency cannot easily be measured by using numerical interpretation or any rubric techniques. In this research, the lived experiences of the 18 ALS mobile teachers in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District of Sorsogon were magnified and were given voices so their experiences will be heard.

The study revealed that of the 18 ALS mobile teachers, 8 respondents mentioned that they have traveled 1 to 5 kilometers from home to the community learning centers. There are 3 teachers who said that they traveled 7 to 10 kilometers. Other teachers said that it took 30 minutes to an hour just to reach the station, have traveled at least 30 minutes, it took 2 hours boat ride, and it took 3 hours to reach the station from the house. Meanwhile, the farthest distances mentioned by the 2 respondents are 14 kilometers and 32 kilometers, respectively. In relation to the mode of transportation in going to their station, 7 teachers said that they travel using motorcycle. Then, 3 respondents utilized their motorboat in going to the station. In terms of problems encountered in going to station and intervention, there were 9 teachers who mentioned that the weather conditions always hindered them in going to the station which caused flooding, big waves in the sea, and impedes classes.

As to security, there were eight of the eighteen mobile teachers said that there were instances that their lives were put in danger when they fulfill their duties as ALS mobile teachers. In relation to security while performing their work while in the station, there were seven mobile teachers who affirmed of their safety since during the session, the barangay officials and parents are present. Also, they have established good relationship with the residents and community that is why they felt at home during the entire session.

From the respondents, there were seven of them who received a monthly take home pay within the range of 6,000 to 10,000 pesos while the others exceed 10,000 pesos. Although one teacher said that the money received is just really enough to support the needs. The respondents mentioned about their strategies of mapping and these are: attending barangay sessions, literacy mapping and other community engagement; advocacy and social mobilization, social media and radio; enlightening them that education is only a weapon for their success; seeking help from the barangay officials and BHW; home visitation; and determining school drop outs.

Majority of the ALS mobile teachers claimed that they were highly competent in coordinating with local officials and in the conduct of tutorials. Few learners narrated that the mobile teacher visited them when they are unable to attend their learning sessions. Thus, affirming the findings that the mobile teachers were less efficient in following up the progress of the learners. There were some learners who hesitantly mentioned that their mobile teacher sometimes failed to report to the agreed time and place in the conduct of their learning session. During the

researcher's observation on the conduct of learning sessions the researcher found out that the mobile teachers depended much on the available instructional materials which were already worn out due to the transfer of these materials from one barangay to another barangay.

The respondents narrated the reasons on how their interpersonal relationship is affected by the experiences as mobile teachers, such reasons are the attitude of a good listener that maintains a positive feelings and harmony towards good relationship and establishing positive attitudes among others. Also, the nature of their work is to mingle with different types of people in the community. Through this, it helped a lot to connect easily to others especially during the community mapping and home visitation to the learners. Also, the experiences greatly influenced the socialization to others, most especially during recruitment of possible ALS learners and during dialogues with the community.

**Keywords:** Non-formal Education, Alternative Learning System, Lived Experiences, Learning Opportunity.

---

## 1. INTRODUCTION

It has long been recognized that non – formal education is important because it offers adaptable learning opportunities, new skills, and knowledge to a large percentage of people who are beyond the reach of formal education. Yasunaga (2014) stressed that there is a need to equalize education among individuals, specially to those who are not enrolled in schools, to uphold their right to education.

Its primary goal is providing equal opportunity for educational progress to secure good health, liberty, security, economic well-being, and participation in social and political activity which was reasserted in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights during the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on December 10, 1948. It also aimed to address the alarming number of dropouts, out-of-school youth, and even individuals who do not go to formal schooling.

Recently, Senate Bill 1365, or the proposed Alternative Learning System (ALS) Act, was approved on its 3<sup>rd</sup> and final reading which allowed the expansion and institutionalization of the alternative learning system in every city and municipality around the country. According to Senator Gatchalian, principal author and sponsor of the bill, the very essence of this bill is providing second chances to those who cannot access formal education due to economic, geographic, political, cultural, and social barriers. He further added that the bill aims to give opportunities for a better life to Filipinos who have fallen into hard times.

The approval of this bill was timely and of great necessity. In a statement released by Senator Gatchalian (2019), he said that it would mandate the budget department to create teaching positions for ALS teachers to further expand the program considering that statistical report in 2019 showed that there were only 10, 214 learning facilitators handling more than 738,000 learners around the country. He further added that it is very easy achieving and giving quality education to every Filipino who were deprived of the opportunity to finish their studies since ALS Community Learning Center will be present in all cities or municipalities.

In the Philippines, the Out-of-School Children (OSC), Out-of-School Youth (OSYs) and Out-of-School Adults (OSAs) comprise a huge number of Filipinos who are most affected to this menace due to lack of educational opportunities. As revealed in the Country Profile for the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2008, Education for All 2015, sixteen million two hundred eighty-two thousand three hundred forty-three (16, 282, 343) out-of-school Filipino citizens, who comprised 20% of the 82 million total of the Philippine Population (2004) are Out-of-School youth. The 2004 NSO Report cited "poverty" as the primary contributor to the high growth of OSY.

The Schools Division Office of Sorsogon has increased participation of the delivery of ALS programs. According to Johny So, division ALS coordinator in the province, SDO Sorsogon is ensuring that the Enhanced Alternative Learning System (ALS) 2.0 on the 2019 ALS K to 12 Curriculum as prescribed by DepEd Order No. 13, s. 2019 is properly implemented in the province. He says that their office continuously conducts seminars and trainings to capacitate the ALS coordinators and mobile teachers with the changes brought about by the policy. Hence, there would be an assurance that ALS learners would develop the necessary knowledge and 21st century skills.

Along with the initiatives and measures made that includes the fundamental purpose of ALS, the system faces different difficulties in attaining the goals set in this program. Issues related to late release for transportation allowance, teaching

aid and hazard pay, unavailability of resources and facilities, limited number of mobile teachers, teacher's instructional trainings, and uninterested out – of – school children, youths and adults to the program are few of the visible challenges this modern inclusive education era is facing. Considering the efforts and programs launched to help those who cannot access formal education as the way of alleviating themselves from marginalized sector and its effects to their lives, this study is conceptualized.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

The study determined the lived experiences of the Alternative Learning System (ALS) mobile teachers of the Second Congressional District of Sorsogon for the school year 2019 - 2020.

Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of the mobile teachers along:
  - 1.1 commuting;
  - 1.2 security;
  - 1.3 finances; and
  - 1.4 mapping?
2. How do the lived experiences of the mobile teachers affect their instructional competence along the identified variables?
3. How do the lived experiences of the mobile teachers affect their interpersonal relationship along the identified variables?
4. What could be proposed based on the results of the study?

### **1.2 Purpose of the study**

The focus of the study was about discovering the lived experiences of ALS mobile teachers regarding commuting, security, finances, and mapping. Also, the effect of the lived experiences to their instructional competence and interpersonal relationship. Along with the initiatives and measures made that includes the fundamental purpose of ALS, the system faces different difficulties in attaining the goals set in this program. Issues related to late release for transportation allowance, teaching aid and hazard pay, unavailability of resources and facilities, limited number of mobile teachers, teacher's instructional trainings, and uninterested out – of – school children, youths and adults to the program are few of the visible challenges this modern inclusive education era is facing. Considering the efforts and programs launched to help those who cannot access formal education as the way of alleviating themselves from marginalized sector and its effects to their lives, this study is conceptualized.

## **2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study aimed to determine the lived experiences of the Alternative Learning System (ALS) mobile teachers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District of Sorsogon.

This paper is a qualitative type of research employing phenomenological research. These aspects of experiences of ALS mobile teachers in their teaching competency cannot easily be measured by using numerical interpretation or any rubric techniques. To determine and at the same time describe what on the experience means for those who lived it is the main purpose of Phenomenological research (Creswell, 1998). According to Van Manen (1990), the phenomenology aims to provide descriptions of the basic lived experiences and simultaneously dig out the meaning of the said experiences without the need of giving explanations which are causal or generalizations which are interpretive.

In this research, the lived experiences of the 18 ALS mobile teachers in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District of Sorsogon were magnified and were given voices so their experiences will be heard. Subsequently, phenomenological research is geared to giving voice to the experience being describes (Van Mannen, 1990). It is most fitting method for the purpose of this research, as is the essence of any phenomenological research study is to transform the lived experiences of the participants into textual experience, but also the connotation derived from the experience.

### 3. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In view of the thorough analysis of data, the hereunder findings emerged from this research journey:

1. Of the 18 ALS mobile teachers, 8 respondents mentioned that they have traveled 1 to 5 kilometers from home to the community learning centers. There are 3 teachers who said that they traveled 7 to 10 kilometers. Other teachers said that it took 30 minutes to an hour just to reach the station, have traveled at least 30 minutes, it took 2 hours boat ride, and it took 3 hours to reach the station from the house. Meanwhile, the farthest distances mentioned by the 2 respondents are 14 kilometers and 32 kilometers, respectively. In relation to the mode of transportation in going to their station, 7 teachers said that they travel using motorcycle. Then, 3 respondents utilized their motorboat in going to the station. In terms of problems encountered in going to station and intervention, there were 9 teachers who mentioned that the weather conditions always hindered them in going to the station which caused flooding, big waves in the sea, and impedes classes.

As to security, there were eight of the eighteen mobile teachers said that there were instances that their lives were put in danger when they fulfill their duties as ALS mobile teachers. In relation to security while performing their work while in the station, there were seven mobile teachers who affirmed of their safety since during the session, the barangay officials and parents are present. Also, they have established good relationship with the residents and community that is why they felt at home during the entire session.

From the respondents, there were seven of them who received a monthly take home pay within the range of 6,000 to 10,000 pesos while the others exceed 10,000 pesos. Although one teacher said that the money received is just really enough to support the needs. The respondents mentioned about their strategies of recruitment and these are: attending barangay sessions, literacy mapping and other community engagement; advocacy and social mobilization, social media and radio; enlightening them that education is only a weapon for their success; seeking help from the barangay officials and BHW; home visitation; and determining school drop outs.

2. Majority of the ALS mobile teachers claimed that they were highly competent in coordinating with local officials and in the conduct of tutorials. A few learners narrated that the mobile teacher visited them when they are unable to attend their learning sessions. Thus, affirming the findings that the mobile teachers were less efficient in following up the progress of the learners. There were some learners who hesitantly mentioned that their mobile teacher sometimes failed to report to the agreed time and place in the conduct of their learning session. During the researcher's observation on the conduct of learning sessions the researcher found out that the mobile teachers depended much on the available instructional materials which were already worn out due to the transfer of these materials from one barangay to another barangay.
3. The respondents narrated the reasons on how their interpersonal relationship is affected by the lived experiences as mobile teachers, such reasons are the attitude of a good listener that maintains a positive feelings and harmony towards good relationship and establishing positive attitudes among others. Also, the nature of their work is to mingle with different types of people in the community. Through this, it helped a lot to connect easily to others especially during the community mapping and home visitation to the learners. Also, the experiences greatly influenced the socialization to others, most especially during recruitment of possible ALS learners and during dialogues with the community.
4. An action plan may be designed in order to improve the implementation of ALS program.

### 4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Taking into account the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The lived experiences of the ALS mobile teachers are traveling an average distance of 5 kilometers from their homes to the station, sometimes felt unsecured in carrying out their tasks due to the presence of insurgents, received meager salary just enough to support their needs, and encountered problems in mapping the new learners.
2. The lived experiences of the mobile teachers improved their instructional competence through the regular sessions with the learners and the constant monitoring of the academic performance of the learners.

## International Journal of Novel Research in Computer Science and Software Engineering

Vol. 7, Issue 2, pp: (1-7), Month: May - August 2020, Available at: [www.noveltyjournals.com](http://www.noveltyjournals.com)

3. The interpersonal relationship of the ALS mobile teachers was affected by their lived experiences in dealing with the community and this has been developed through time upon dispensing their tasks.
4. The action plan was designed in order to improve the implementation of ALS program.

### Recommendations

To actualize the results and conclusions of this research journey, the author highly recommends the following:

1. Considering that the mobile teachers were hired without sufficient knowledge about the alternative learning system delivery, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) may offer ALS as one of the mandated subjects in the Teacher Education courses.
2. To reproduce more instructional materials, the mobile teacher may ask the assistance of their school supervisor that a certain amount from the Special Education fund be allotted for that purpose.
3. A linkage with the DepEd and the Sorsogon State College may be initiated for the translation and production of community-based learning materials.
4. The higher competence of the mobile teachers may be sustained by regular in-service training on the andragogy of education and conferences to share the best practices.
5. The public school district supervisor may stick to the assignment of mobile teachers. They should not assign mobile teachers to the formal school due to the high ratio of illiteracy in the province.
6. Another study may be conducted to look into the variables which was not included in this study.

### REFERENCES

#### Books

- [1] Bernard, H.R. 2002. Research methods in anthropology: qualitative and quantitative methods, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Walnut Creek, California: Alta Mira Press
- [2] Creswell, J.W., 2002. Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education
- [3] Speziale, Helen J. and Dona Rinaldi Carpenter (2011). Qualitative Research in Nursing: Advancing the Humanistic Perspective (5<sup>th</sup> Edition). J.B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia.
- [4] Van Manen, M., 1990. Researching Lived Experiences: Human Science of an Action Sensitive Pedagogy. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

#### Published Materials

- [5] Arpilleda, Jondy M. (2018). Problems Encountered by Mobile Teachers Assigned in Tandag City Division, Surigao del Sur: A Case Study. International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences (IJELS), Vol-3, Issue-5, Sept - Oct, 2018, pp. 808-813.
- [6] BANTULO, John S. and EUGENIO S. GUHAO JR., DM (2016). STANDPOINTS OF LEARNERS OF THE ADULT LEARNING SYSTEM: A PHENOMENOLOGY. International Journal of Scientific & Engineering Research, Volume 7, Issue 11, November-2016, pp. 342-362.
- [7] Cheng, Y. C. (2002, November). Fostering local knowledge and wisdom in globalized education: Multiple theories. Presented at the 8th International Conference on Globalization and Localization Enmeshed: Searching for a Balance in Education, Bangkok, Thailand
- [8] Clinchy, E. (2012). Developing an Educational Performance Indicator for New Millennium Students. Journal of Research on Technology in Education, 43(2), (pp. 157-170).
- [9] Creswell, J.W. (2013). *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among the Five Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. (pp. 77-83)

**International Journal of Novel Research in Computer Science and Software Engineering**

 Vol. 7, Issue 2, pp: (1-7), Month: May - August 2020, Available at: [www.noveltyjournals.com](http://www.noveltyjournals.com)

- [10] Fernandez, Raymond M. (2013). TEACHERS' COMPETENCE AND LEARNERS' PERFORMANCE IN THE ALTERNATIVE LEARNING SYSTEM TOWARDS AN ENRICHED INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM. *International Journal of Information Technology and Business Management*, 28th Feb 2013. Vol.22 No.1, pp. 33-46.
- [11] Fullan, M. (2012). *The new meaning of educational change*. 2nd ed. New York: Teacher College Press.
- [12] Given, Lisa, ed. (2008). "Lived Experience". *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*. SAGE Publications. Retrieved 2018-04-02
- [13] Glickman, C. D. (2002). *Leadership for Learning: How to Help Teachers Succeed*. Alexandria, V.A: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. .
- [14] Kassim, Shamir R. (2019). EDUCATORS BEHIND BARS: PHENOMENOLOGY OF THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF TEACHERS IN SAN RAMON PENAL FARM. *Asia Pacific Institute of Advanced Research (APIAR)*, Volume 5, Issue 1.
- [15] Ozmen, F., Dur, C., Akgul, T., 2010. Schools Security Problems and the Ways of Tackling Them. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*. Elazig, Turkey. [Online] Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S187704281000916X> [Accessed December 12, 2017].
- [16] Pilar, John Gerald A. (2015). Education Beyond Borders: Lived Experiences in Teaching Basic English Grammar among ALS Teachers in Bacolod City, Philippines. *Asia Pacific Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, Vol. 3, No. 4, November 2015, pp. 170-178.
- [17] Pinca, Estrellita C. (2015). The Mobile Teachers' Profile, Competencies, Performance And Problems In The Department Of Education, Division Of Northern Samar, Philippines. *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SCIENTIFIC & TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH VOLUME 4, ISSUE 12, DECEMBER 2015 I*, pp. 45-50.
- [18] Tindowen, Darin Jan C. , John Michael Bassig , and Jay-Ar Cagurangan. (2017). Twenty-First-Century Skills of Alternative Learning System Learners. *SAGE Open* July-September 2017: 1–8.
- [19] UNESCO – Education for All (EFA) 2000 Assessment: Technical Guidelines, United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
- [20] Wimms, H. (2008). "An exploratory study of the experiences and perspectives of African-American, Latino/O, Asian-American, and European-American students: "Is one of these things still not like the others?" University of Maryland, Baltimore County: Proquest
- [21] World Bank. 2016. World Bank annual report 2016 : World Bank annual report 2016 : organizational information and lending data appendixes (Arabic). Washington, D.C. : World Bank Group

**Unpublished Materials**

- [22] ABASOLO., Alfonso Jr. C. (2017). DEVELOPING A SCHEME OF ACTION FOR ENHANCED ALTERNATIVE LEARNING SYSTEM. Unpublished Dissertation. CEBU TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY Main Campus, R. Palma Street Cebu City, Philippines.

**Electronic Sources**

- [23] Ambat, GH (2017). DepEd to provide more allowances to ALS teachers. Retrieved from <https://www.manilatimes.net>.
- [24] Andrea Patena (2015). "Mobile Teachers help Dropouts Finish School." <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/209109/mobileteachers-help-dropouts-finish-school>, Cebu daily news
- [25] Chenail, R. J. (2011). Interviewing the investigator: Strategies for addressing instrumentation and researcher bias concerns in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report*, 16(1), 255–262. Retrieved from <http://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/>

- [26] <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/action-plan.html>
- [27] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commuting#:~:text=Commuting%20is%20periodically%20recurring%20travel,even%20when%20not%20work%2Drelated.>
- [28] <https://depedroxi.ph>
- [29] <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/757331468297305021/pdf/AUS14891-WP-PUBLIC-Alternative-and-Inclusive-Learning-in-the-Philippines-has-been-approved-P146307.pdf>
- [30] <https://manilastandard.net/mobile/article/314999>
- [31] <https://news.mb.com.ph/2019/12/14/deped-lauds-als-teachers-for-mentoring-the-last-the-lost-and-the-least/>
- [32] <https://news.mb.com.ph/2018/06/01/deped-eyeing-deployment-of-2000-more-mobile-teachers-to-strengthen-als-program/>
- [33] <http://teachercodes.iiep.unesco.org/teachercodes/codes/Asia/Philippines.pdf>
- [34] <https://www.bbalectures.com/recruitment-definition>
- [35] <https://www.britannica.com/technology/transportation-technology>
- [36] <https://www.coursehero.com/file/p5g8sc8/Definitions-of-Finance-According-to-Paul-G-Hasings-Finance-is-the-management-of/>
- [37] [http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Philippines/Philippines\\_EFA\\_MDA.pdf](http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Philippines/Philippines_EFA_MDA.pdf)
- [38] <https://www.manilatimes.net/2017/06/10/news/latest-stories/deped-provide-allowances-als-teacher>
- [39] <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/2001/08/11/republic-act-no-9155/>
- [40] <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/constitutions/the-1987-constitution-of-the-republic-of-the-philippines/the-1987-constitution-of-the-republic-of-the-philippines-article-xiv/>
- [41] <https://www.rappler.com/nation/208383-world-bank-expert-deped-alternative-learning-system-not-fully-effective>
- [42] <https://www.rappler.com/nation/259887-senate-approve-alternative-learning-system-final-reading>
- [43] <https://www.rappler.com/thought-leaders/237423-analysis-international-youth-day-second-chances>
- [44] [https://www.sciencedaily.com/terms/interpersonal\\_relationship.htm](https://www.sciencedaily.com/terms/interpersonal_relationship.htm)
- [45] <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2002/ECOSOC5999.doc.htm>
- [46] N. Lopez, C. Strawn and C. Lopez. Longitudinal Study of Adult Learning. Portland State University. National Center for Adult Literacy. Retrieved January 8, 2007 from [readers@pdx.edu](mailto:readers@pdx.edu).
- [47] Philippine Education For All 2015: Implementation and Challenges retrieved from:

**Other Sources**

- [48] DepEd Order No. 13 (2019). Policy Guidelines on the Implementation Enhanced Alternative Learning System 2.0
- [49] DepEd Order No. 50 (2017). Amendment and Additional Information to DepEd Order Nos. 58 and 59, s. 2012