



**EXPERIENCES OF LEARNERS AND TEACHERS ON THE
PREPARATION AND CONDUCT OF PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT
FOR ALTERNATIVE LEARNING SYSTEM (ALS): BASES
FOR ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM**

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive-qualitative study determined the experiences of learners and teachers on the preparation and conduct of portfolio assessment for Alternative Learning System (ALS). Based on the results of the in-depth interview with the participants, it was found out that the experiences of learners in the preparation of portfolio assessment for ALS were mixed emotions, fruitful learning and reflection, and hardship. It was also found out that the experiences of teachers in the preparation of portfolio assessment for ALS were time constraints, extensive preparations, financial constraints, need patience, and challenging. The experiences of learners in the conduct of portfolio assessment for ALS were proper guidance, feeling nervous, and confidence. Based also on the results of the in-depth interview with the participants, it was found out that the experiences of teachers in the conduct of portfolio assessment for ALS were manageable, incomplete portfolio content and defense preparation, and overwhelming.

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Keywords: *Experiences, Learners, Teachers, Portfolio Assessment, Alternative Learning System (ALS), Enhancement Program*

INTRODUCTION

With the duty to provide social welfare and social services to its citizens, Article XVI of the Philippine Constitution of 1987 says, "The State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at

all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all."

In consonance with the constitutional mandate, the Schools in the District of Guimbal and Miagao exert efforts to have all the children of school age enroll in school and see to it that no child seeking admission to public elementary and secondary schools is denied entrance.

However, despite the educational programs and projects implemented in these divisions, there are still pupils and students who cannot finish schooling. The Bureau of Alternative Learning System (BALS) is designed to address these prevalent problems.

Alternative Learning System (ALS) in the Schools District of Guimbal and Miagao is the new paradigm of non-formal education. This is an offshoot of the challenge of Education For All (EFA), a global movement formed by an alliance of countries, which sought a consensus on the issues and opportunities in meeting basic education for all.

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For decades, non-formal education has been regarded as one of the learning systems associated with livelihood skills instead of basic and functional literacy, which is its real mandate. There has finally been progress in the long-term goal of making non-formal education an equal partner in basic education, alongside the official learning system. The conceptualization of non-formal education to Alternative Learning System (ALS) provides a pathway of learning from basic literacy to preparation to the field of work and college studies through the various levels of basic education (DepEd Memorandum No. 49, 2004).

As envisioned in the Education For All (EFA), the Alternative Learning System has grown into a realistic alternative to the current system of formal education. It includes both official and informal places to get information and skills, like the home, the church, the media, the environment, and even life itself. It also includes the range of skills from basic to advanced. It is synonymous with non-formal based learning system (EFA, 2005).

Alternative Learning System is spreading and becoming a felt need in the field of education. Likewise, it becomes an organization with wider bases, supports, demands, and implementers.

At present, the implementation of ALS is given to the districts and schools. In the district, the District Supervisor or Principal-In-Charge of the District implements the program through the efforts of the elementary and secondary School Heads, district ALS coordinators, school coordinators, and mobile teachers.

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In the Schools District of Guimbal and Miagao, there were more than hundreds ALS students who were enrolled in the Alternative Learning System Program.

The researcher was encouraged to conduct the study to determine the experiences of learners and teachers on the preparation and conduct of portfolio assessment for Alternative Learning System (ALS) as bases for an enhancement program.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

This chapter presents the research method, research design, participants of the study, data-gathering procedures, research instrument, and data analysis used in this study.

Research Method

The research method utilized in the study was qualitative research using in-depth interviews to gather the data.

Qualitative research entails inquiring about participants' experiences with events in their lives. It allows researchers to gain insights into the subjective aspects of being another person and comprehending the world from another individual's perspective (Austin, 2014).

During the interview, the participants were permitted to sit together at a distance and reflect on a series of questions related to a specific issue. The aim was to extract the essential or

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pertinent perspectives of the participants on a given issue within a social context through the responses of the participants to the questions.

Research Design

The study utilized a phenomenological research design, a philosophical approach within qualitative research. Phenomenology aims to explore individuals' perceptions of the world, investigating possible deviations from commonly held viewpoints. This approach emphasizes comprehending a person's subjective interpretations of their experiences. In practical terms, phenomenology involves conducting interviews with individuals to uncover their impressions and is commonly utilized in fields such as psychology, sociology, and social work.

As per Smith (2013), phenomenology entails the examination of consciousness structures from a first-person perspective. The core element of an experience is its intentionality, indicating its inherent directedness toward something. Essentially, an experience is oriented toward an object through its content or meaning, symbolizing the specified object along with the necessary enabling conditions.

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Participants of the Study

The participants of the study were the eight (8) selected ALS learners and four (4) teachers teaching ALS with the total of twelve (12) participants. These participants were purposely chosen from the Schools District of Guimbal and Miagao during the school year 2022-2023.

Sampling Design

The study employed a purposive sampling design. This was used to select participants from the population according to the purpose of the study.

According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2007), a purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method chosen based on specific characteristics of a population and the study's objectives. This approach is also referred to as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling.

Research Instrument

The study employed a researcher-developed interview schedule as the research instrument.

The schedule consisted of four questions specifically addressing the study's purpose.

Voice and video recorders were also used to collect data and keep records as permitted by the subjects.

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Validity of the Research Instrument

To validate the researcher-created interview schedule, the researcher sought approval from the adviser, the Dean of the Graduate School, and a panel of jurors selected for their expertise in research, testing and assessment, and English. Every question underwent a careful examination for review and possible modifications.

Validity pertains to the appropriateness, importance, precision, and utility of the conclusions drawn by a researcher. In terms of content-related validity evidence, the content and format should align with the defined variables and the intended sample of subjects for measurement. This approach proves advantageous in validating questionnaire items, following the Eight Point criteria outlined by Good and Scates, as mentioned by Fraenkel and Wallen (2007).

The remarks, revisions, and recommendations provided by the panel of validators regarding the interview schedule were taken into account, adhering to the suitable format outlined by Good and Scates (Appendix A).

Data Gathering Procedures

The researcher secured consent from the adviser, Dean of the Graduate School, Office of the District Supervisors, School Heads, and individual participants for the study.

The researcher personally conducted the interviews by visiting the schools, communities, or locations convenient for the participants.

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Prior to conducting interviews, participants were advised by the researcher to sign a waiver or permission regarding the study. The study followed the basic health protocols set by the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) and the Department of Health (DOH) during the pandemic. It also followed the health protocols set by DepEd Orders, Local Government Units, and Barangays, which was ensured throughout the study.

By employing in-depth interviews, the researcher was equipped with both voice and video recorders to comprehensively capture the interviewees' statements. Subsequently, the researcher compiled all the gathered data following a series of interviews.

Data Analyses

The collected information underwent analysis utilizing a thematic approach.

Thematic analysis entails the identification of patterns or themes within qualitative data. As described by Maguire and Delahunt (2017), the aim of thematic analysis is to recognize significant or noteworthy patterns in the data and utilize these themes to address the research question or gain insights into a specific issue. This method involves summarizing, analyzing, and interpreting the collected data to derive meaningful insights.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study determined the experiences of learners and teachers on the preparation and conduct of portfolio assessment for Alternative Learning System (ALS) as bases for an enhancement program in the Schools District of Guimbal and Miagao during the School Year 2022-2023.

The study employed a qualitative research method, utilizing in-depth interviews, and adopted a phenomenological research design.

The participants of the study were the eight (8) selected ALS learners and four (4) teachers teaching ALS with the total of 12 participants. These participants were purposely chosen from the Schools District of Guimbal and Miagao during the school year 2022-2023.

The data collection utilized a researcher-developed interview schedule as the primary instrument.

Voice and video recorders were also used to collect data and keep records, as permitted by the subjects.

The questionnaire underwent content validation by a Panel of Experts, utilizing the criteria outlined by Fraenkel and Wallen (2007) for content validation. The researcher took into account all comments and suggestions pertaining to the tool's validation. Once the questionnaire was deemed valid, permits were obtained to authorize the commencement of in-depth interviews by the researcher.

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Prior to conducting interviews, participants were advised by the researcher to sign a waiver or permission regarding the study. The study followed the basic health protocols set by the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) and the Department of Health (DOH) during the pandemic. It also followed the health protocols set by DepEd Orders, Local Government Units, and Barangays, and was consistently upheld.

After a series of interviews, the researcher compiled all the collected data. The information gathered underwent analysis and interpretation employing a thematic approach. The study's findings include the following:

From the outcomes of in-depth interviews with the participants, it was discovered that the experiences of learners in the preparation of portfolio assessment for Alternative Learning System (ALS) were mixed emotions, fruitful learning and reflection, and hardship.

It was also found out that the experiences of teachers in the preparation of portfolio assessment for Alternative Learning System (ALS) were time constraints, extensive preparations, financial constraints, needs patience, and challenging.

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The experiences of learners in the conduct of portfolio assessment for Alternative Learning System (ALS) were proper guidance, feeling nervous, and confidence.

Based also on the results of the in-depth interview with the participants, it was found out that the experiences of teachers in the conduct of portfolio assessment for Alternative Learning System (ALS) were manageable, incomplete portfolio content and defense preparation, and overwhelming.

Derived from the findings, the following insights were gleaned:

The ALS learners' perseverance and beneficial learning facilitated the preparation of their portfolio assessment.

The inherent good qualities of ALS teachers despite the inadequate resources enable them to supervise the ALS learners in their portfolio assessment preparation effectively.

The ALS learners' preparedness and high self-esteem resulted to their gainful experience during portfolio assessment.

The competent ALS teachers from Guimbal and Miagao easily surpass the portfolio assessment.

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CONCLUSION

Considering the findings and insights gleaned from the study, the following recommendations are put forth:

The ALS learners should be supported with the materials they need for their portfolio to be taken from the budget for Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) of the school or from the Special Education Fund (SEF) and technical assistance to be provided by ALS teachers.

ALS learners should also be provided with an extra monetary allowance so that they will be motivated to work on their portfolio, and they have the money to go back and forth to the school for the preparation of portfolio on time.

Teachers of ALS should be provided with additional allowance and support so that they will not be spending their own money to support the needed materials of the learners for their portfolio. Additional service credits should also be extended to them for the work they have done on Saturdays and Sundays just to be prepared for the portfolio assessment.

Adequate quality time should be provided to ALS teachers with the full support in the preparation of learners' portfolio and during the portfolio assessment so they could check the completeness of the portfolio content and the required signatures.

A copy of the enhancement program should be given to the Schools Division of Iloilo Office, Regional Office, and Central office for them to be aware of the recommended enhancement program and have it approved and implemented if possible.

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If a copy of the recommended enhancement program would not be approved, school heads are encouraged to implement in a local arrangement bases only.

The researcher further recommends to conduct a similar study, taking into account additional variables not utilized in the present study and in wider scope.



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