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Facilitating and Hindering Factors in Completing the Grade 11 Alternative Learning System (ALS) - General Academic Strand In Butuan City

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Abstract

This study explored the facilitating and hindering factors influencing the completion and non-completion of Grade 11 learners in the Alternative Learning System (ALS) in Butuan City, including the support systems received and the educational aspirations of completers and non-completers. Employing a qualitative phenomenological research design, the study examined the lived experiences of purposively selected ALS completers and non-completers who had direct engagement in the program. Data were gathered through a researcher-made interview guide composed of open-ended questions and were analyzed using in-depth interviews, transcription, coding, categorization, and thematic analysis. Findings revealed that ALS completers were motivated by strong personal goals, family encouragement, supportive teachers, flexible learning arrangements, and positive educational environments, which enabled them to overcome socio-economic barriers. Conversely, non-completers experienced financial constraints, family obligations, health-related concerns, discrimination, limited learning resources, and emotional struggles that hindered sustained participation. Both groups recognized education as a pathway toward employment, personal development, and improved family welfare. The study further emphasized the importance of strengthening financial, instructional, psychosocial, and institutional support mechanisms to improve learner retention and completion in ALS programs. These findings underscore the significance of learner-centered interventions and inclusive educational support in sustaining participation among alternative learners.

Keywords: Alternative Learning System, Learner Persistence, Educational Aspirations, Learner Support, Learner Completion

Introduction

Completing an alternative education program means more than just attending classes or participating; it also requires ongoing engagement, persistence through the experience, and overcoming structural, personal, and contextual obstacles. Completion of the Alternative Learning System (ALS) means learners have successfully learned in flexible learning environments while meeting their economic, family, and

social obligations. Meanwhile, as alternative opportunities for learners who do not fit into traditional school populations (i.e., out-of-school youth, working and adult learners) are provided, ALS completion remains a very complex issue that will require much deeper exploration.

Globally, alternative and non-formal education systems have been recognized as critical mechanisms for promoting inclusive and equitable quality education. International organizations emphasize that flexible learning pathways are essential in reaching marginalized populations and advancing lifelong learning (Solehuddin et al., 2024). Studies across developing and developed countries highlight that learner persistence in non-formal programs is influenced by socio-economic conditions, instructional support, community engagement, and psychological motivation (Koh & Askill-Williams, 2021). UNESCO further underscores that while access initiatives have improved enrollment in alternative programs, sustaining learners until completion requires targeted support systems that address both academic and non-academic barriers (Ismail et al., 2024). These global perspectives indicate that understanding both enabling and constraining factors is central to improving program outcomes.

For many adults who are unable to complete school, alternative learning systems (ALS) offer a second chance to receive an education. The DepEd has worked hard to improve the way ALS is taught through curriculum enhancements, greater delivery flexibility, and the establishment of local learning centers (DepEd, 2019). Empirical research suggests that ALS learners are often motivated by their hope to obtain a higher-paying job, grow as an individual, and help their family; however, they also encounter several challenges, such as lack of funds, work, and a restricted learning environment (Catacutan, 2024; Wayas & Dinoro, 2023). According to studies, teacher competency, community collaboration, and learner-centric approaches are critical to improving ALS learners' retention and completion rates (Mpiti et al., 2024; Grunwald et al., 2024). Completion rates for ALS learners are also dependent on the context in which they live.

The constitutional basis for the implementation of ALS (Alternative Learning System) is found in Article XIV, Section 1 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, which guarantees that "All Citizens Have Right to Quality Education." The Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001 (Republic Act 9155) institutionalized alternative delivery modes to provide inclusive access to education. These policies establish the State's obligation to provide flexible learning opportunities for disadvantaged learners. Nevertheless, accessibility does not guarantee completion; therefore, ALS effectiveness should be measured by both enrollment numbers and sustained participation that leads to program completion.

The ALS program provided opportunities for many individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds to participate at least once. Still, they did not qualify to complete the designated level of service for a variety of reasons, including lack of job stability, family responsibilities, difficulty obtaining transportation, health issues, and emotional problems. Not all learners have completed their level of service in the program; however, some have persevered through all these obstacles and completed all requirements for Level 11 through the ALS program. These two groups of learners reflect two sets of supporting factors and two sets of unsupported factors within the local environment, suggesting the need for additional supporting and/or unsupportive factors to enable all learners to participate in the program at any time.

Research on learner involvement and participation in Alternative Learning Systems (ALS) has been conducted at the Butuan City School of Arts and Trade, Bagong Silang National High School, and Los Angeles National High School. However, there has been significant focus on the lived experiences of both completers and non-completers in that area during the 2023-2025 school year. Understanding why certain learners were able to complete the program while others dropped out early due to family problems, financial problems,

health issues, bullying, transportation expenses, scheduling conflicts due to family responsibilities, discrimination, etc.

. By qualitatively analyzing these lived experiences, the study revealed more about task motivation, learning support, personal relationships, and barriers that prevented learners from completing the program.

As a result, this investigation examined both the helping and inhibiting factors in completing the Grade 11 Alternative Learning System program in Butuan City. The investigation examined the perspectives of selected ALS learners who completed their studies and those who did not, and the findings provided contextualized information to inform the development of interventions to improve learner success and enhance the overall effectiveness of the Alternative Learning System.

Related Studies

The Alternative Learning System (ALS) provides alternative learning opportunities for individuals who cannot access formal education. The ALS provides an instructional method that accounts for the realities of underserved populations. ALS provides flexible scheduling and adaptable instruction, allowing students to continue their education while maintaining their responsibilities to family and work. This is necessary for students to continue in school until they have completed their graduation requirements (Resurreccion, 2021). By providing access and flexibility, ALS embodies inclusion of individuals with different backgrounds.

The ALS program serves as a national intervention, providing literacy programs that address gaps among out-of-school youth and adults in the Philippines. The program's key features continue to include flexible delivery modes, community-based learning centers, and local implementation. The program has expanded access to learners; however, there are still challenges in sustaining learners through to completion. More robust monitoring systems and extensive support mechanisms need to be put in place (Department of Education, 2019).

From an international perspective, flexibility and context responsiveness are key components of sustainable educational development within complex adaptive systems in school improvement. A scoping review conducted by Koh and Askell-Williams (2021) on non-formal and alternative education settings and their use across diverse global populations has found that programs that include community support networks, localized materials/resources, and adaptable teaching strategies have reduced dropout rates and increased student persistence. Similarly, in global policy analyses, researchers found that simply expanding access to education is insufficient to ensure students retain or complete their education; instead, both retention and completion require culturally responsive intervention strategies and partnerships between schools and other organizations (Ismail et al., 2024). Overall, these studies highlight the need for ongoing support systems within alternative education settings.

In the context of the Philippines, empirical research shows that both barriers and enablers affect Completion Rates for ALS Learners. Some of the most common reasons why ALS learners withdraw are due to financial hardship, family obligations, and work obligations. On the other hand, having personal motivation, a supportive home environment, and a flexible schedule will promote long-term success (Catacutan, 2024). These studies demonstrate the relationship between structural barriers and enabling conditions in their effects on cumulative completion rates.

Moreover, learner-centered modalities and community-based learning centers have been found to support adult learners in managing competing responsibilities. Qualitative findings indicate that adaptability, instructional relevance, and accessible support systems significantly sustain engagement, particularly when

learners perceive alignment between their life realities and program delivery (Arzadon et al., 2023). Technology-assisted instruction further enhances learners' sense of competence and autonomy; however, inconsistent connectivity and limited digital resources may also hinder completion, as demonstrated in a study on blended ALS learning (Anabo et al., 2024).

Support systems consistently emerge as critical determinants of learner persistence. A qualitative investigation of ALS completers revealed that peer encouragement, parental involvement, and mentoring relationships strengthen accountability and reduce isolation (Ucab & Luzano, 2023). Complementing this, Singh and Ishrat (2024) found that strong social support networks significantly enhance learners' self-efficacy and long-term commitment in alternative education settings. Likewise, cooperative learning and service-based projects have been shown to foster a sense of belonging and accountability, thereby improving completion rates (Amorin et al., 2024). These findings suggest that social connectedness serves as a protective factor against dropout.

Institutional and instructional quality further influence completion outcomes. Strong local leadership, effective resource management, and active community partnerships have been positively associated with improved learner retention (Grunwald et al., 2024). In addition, teacher competence, professional development, and instructional motivation significantly contribute to learner success in flexible education contexts (Mpiti et al., 2024). Teacher adaptability and learner-centered strategies are particularly vital in addressing diverse needs, as inadequate instructional support may indirectly contribute to non-completion (Casingal, 2024).

Financial and structural stability likewise shape program sustainability. Efficient resource allocation and sustained funding contribute to smoother program implementation and higher certification rates (Maki, 2023). Structured monitoring systems and transparent administrative practices also reinforce institutional accountability, thereby supporting completion (Amissah & Addison, 2024). Nevertheless, challenges persist at the community level. Studies reveal that transportation difficulties, financial instability, and competing household responsibilities remain major barriers affecting retention (Catyong et al., 2023). Similar hindering factors, including economic instability and inconsistent attendance, were documented in provincial ALS settings, although flexible scheduling and barangay-level support were found to facilitate re-engagement (Paez, 2024).

Further emphasizing re-engagement strategies, individualized mentorship, counseling, and flexible program design significantly reduce attrition among at-risk learners (Nafuna et al., 2024). Emotional resilience and goal-oriented aspirations also contribute to successful completion, particularly among ALS learners transitioning to higher education (Tabanao, 2024). Participatory and context-driven instructional strategies have similarly been associated with improved attendance and sustained involvement (Singh, 2024). In rural communities, community empowerment initiatives demonstrate that culturally responsive instruction and local ownership strengthen retention and completion (Solehuddin et al., 2024).

A thorough evaluation of the ALS project revealed an increase in ALS availability (i.e., improved access) within the Philippines. In addition, it is currently challenging to determine both whether retention of ALS participants exists across the Philippines and whether retained participants are completing their respective ALS programs. To assist with this, the evaluation recommends conducting additional localized, contextualized research to understand better contextual influences (i.e., those related to local context) on ALS program completion rates (Albert et al., 2024). In doing so, they emphasize that there is a need for qualitative research to be done around the lived experiences (i.e., qualitative research) of both ALS program completers and non-completers from the perspective of local context (specifically, Butuan City).

The review of related literature and studies provides the conceptual and empirical foundation for examining the facilitating and hindering factors influencing completion in the Alternative Learning System (ALS) in Butuan City. The reviewed works highlight how personal motivation, support systems, instructional practices, institutional leadership, and socio-economic conditions shape learner persistence and discontinuation. They also identify effective strategies that promote retention while revealing continuing barriers to completion. Despite existing research on ALS implementation, limited qualitative studies explore the lived experiences of completers and non-completers in specific local contexts. This gap justifies the present study and supports the generation of context-based insights to strengthen ALS completion in Butuan City.

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

This research was based on Self-Determination Theory, developed by Richard Ryan and Edward Deci (1985). Self-Determination Theory is a psychological theory that explains how motivation is influenced and sustained by examining three core psychological needs: competence, relatedness, and autonomy. The theory explained that when these psychological needs were fulfilled within individuals' environments, they tended to remain engaged, resilient, and successful in achieving their goals. Within the field of education, Self-Determination Theory helped explain why some learners continued progressing through educational programs and completed their studies despite barriers. In contrast, others discontinued because their psychological needs were not adequately met.

Volition and self-direction represented autonomy among individuals. The Alternative Learning System (ALS) provided opportunities for learners to demonstrate autonomy by allowing them to choose when to participate, how to engage in learning activities, and what goals they wanted to achieve in their educational journey. When learners perceived that they had many ways to influence their learning experiences, they became more motivated to put in more effort. However, when external factors dominated their learning experiences and limited their options, their motivation diminished, making educational discontinuation more likely.

Competence was defined as learners' sense of personal ability and effectiveness in achieving goals. The clear provision of instructional guidance and constructive feedback within the Learner Advanced Skills Development Program (LASDP) shaped learners' perceptions of competence and their ability to meet academic demands. Learners who felt competent were more likely to persevere and complete their education. In contrast, learners who regularly experienced academic difficulties and insufficient support developed feelings of incompetence, which contributed to withdrawal from the program and to failure to achieve their educational goals.

Alternative learning environments greatly benefited when learners felt connected to others through a sense of belongingness. Positive relationships with teachers, peers, and family members motivated learners and kept them actively engaged in educational programs. Learners who received acceptance, support, and encouragement from significant people in their lives were more likely to remain in educational programs than those who experienced isolation and lacked supportive relationships.

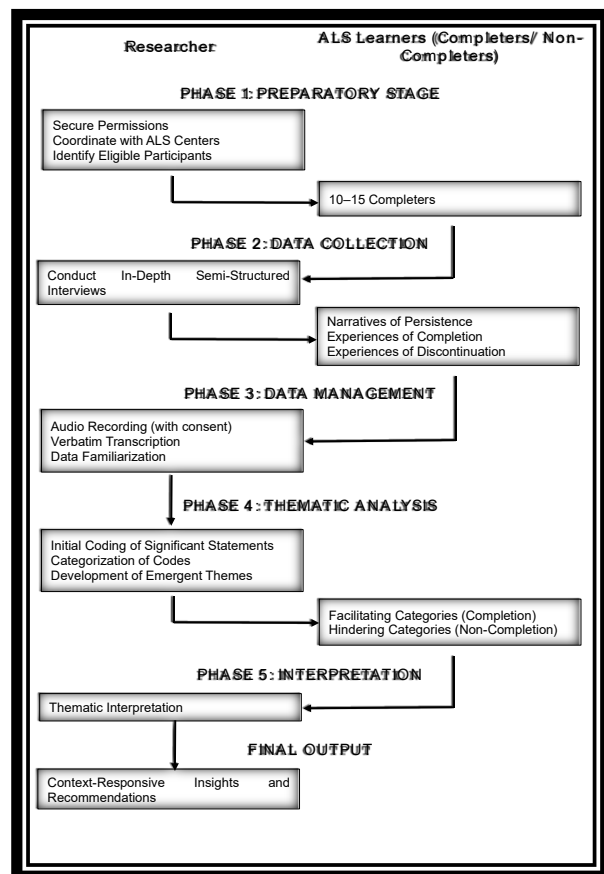
This research used Self-Determination Theory to identify the factors that enabled and constrained learners' participation in ALS programs. An example of an enabling factor included flexible learning options that allowed learners to exercise greater autonomy. Examples of hindering factors included learners' inability to afford learning resources, which limited their autonomy, and a lack of support from peers, teachers, and family members, which undermined learners' sense of competence in their learning environments.

Functionally, Self-Determination Theory provided the interpretive lens through which the lived experiences of Grade 11 ALS completers and non-completers in Butuan City were analyzed. Rather than quantitatively measuring variables, the theory guided the thematic exploration of participants' narratives. Experiences demonstrating sustained motivation, resilience, and persistence were examined in relation to fulfilled psychological needs, while accounts of discontinuation were explored in relation to unmet or frustrated psychological needs. Through this theoretical grounding, the study developed a deeper understanding of how internal motivation and external support systems interacted to shape learners' decisions to complete or discontinue the ALS program.

The prepared illustrations and representations of the qualitative analysis flow were displayed on page 15 using a swim-lane format. The swim-lane flow specifically distinguished the two participant groups and the two experiential paths within the qualitative inquiry. The first phase involved selecting participants, during which the researcher identified and invited two groups: Grade 11 ALS completers and learners who had withdrawn from ALS in Butuan City. This process enabled the researcher to examine the contrasting lived experiences of learners who completed the ALS program and those who discontinued it. The second phase involved gathering qualitative data through semi-structured interviews in which participants described their personal experiences with ALS. The final phase consisted of transcription, coding, and thematic analysis of the qualitative data. During the analysis, two major groupings of themes emerged: facilitating themes from ALS completers and hindering themes from ALS non-completers—the final component involved synthesizing the findings to develop strategies to improve ALS completion in the locality. The swim-lane format effectively illustrated how the experiences of completers and non-completers were compared and interconnected throughout the qualitative analysis process.

The operationalization of Self-Determination Theory within the framework occurred primarily during the thematic analysis interpretation phase. Once facilitating and hindering themes were identified in the coded narratives, they were analyzed through the lens of the three basic psychological needs in Self-Determination Theory: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Facilitating themes were interpreted based on how they supported or satisfied one or more of these needs, such as flexible scheduling representing autonomy, instructional support representing competence, and strong social relationships representing relatedness. Conversely, hindering themes were interpreted as possible outcomes of unmet or frustrated psychological needs, including limited decision-making opportunities, feelings of academic inadequacy, and lack of emotional or social support. Therefore, Self-Determination Theory was not used as a measurement tool but rather served as a theoretical lens that provided deeper insight into the reasons why certain factors enabled completion. In contrast, others hindered participation in the ALS program.

Figure 1. Research Flow of the Study



Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to explore the facilitating and hindering factors influencing the completion of the Grade 11 Alternative Learning System (ALS) in Butuan City during the School Year 2023–2025. Specifically, it sought to: (1) identify the facilitating factors that enabled ALS learners to complete the program successfully; (2) examine the hindering factors that contributed to the non-completion of ALS learners; (3) determine the forms of support received by ALS completers that helped sustain their participation until program completion; (4) explore the aspirations and future goals that motivated ALS learners to pursue or discontinue their participation in the program; and (5) formulate recommendations based on the experiences, support systems, and aspirations of ALS learners to strengthen program completion in Butuan City.

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological research design to explore the facilitating and hindering factors influencing the completion and non-completion of Grade 11 learners in the Alternative Learning System (ALS) in Butuan City during the School Years 2023–2025. The participants consisted of 25 purposively selected ALS completers and non-completers from the Butuan City School of Arts and Trade, Bagong Silang National High School, and Los Angeles National High School, who had direct lived experiences with ALS participation. Data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews using a researcher-made and expert-validated interview guide to elicit participants' experiences regarding support systems, challenges, motivations, and aspirations. Interviews were conducted via face-to-face, virtual, and group chat platforms, depending on participants' accessibility and preferences. All interview responses were transcribed, translated when necessary, coded, and analyzed using thematic analysis to identify emerging patterns and themes. Ethical protocols, including informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, anonymity, and adherence to the Data Privacy Act of 2012, were strictly observed throughout the study. To enhance credibility, participant verification and audit trails were employed. At the same time, Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools were used only to assist with transcript organization and preliminary coding under the researcher's direct supervision.

Results and Discussion

Problem 1. What facilitating factors enabled the ALS learners to complete the program?

Table 1. *Emerging Themes on the Facilitating Factors of the ALS Learners in Completing the Program*

Parti- cipants Codes	Major Themes	Codes	Verbatim Responses	English Translation
P1,P2,P3,P4, P5,P6,P7,P8, P9,P10,P11, P12, P13,P14,P15,	Personal Determination and Perseverance	Determination to Finish Schooling	"Gipaningkamutan jud nako tungod kay determinado ko mahuman."	"I really worked hard because I was determined to finish."
		Refusal to Surrender Despite Hardship Persistence Despite Challenges	"Tungod sa kalisod dili gyud ko mo surrender ug eskwela hantud sa akong paghuman." "Bisan ug lisod usahay nagpabilin gihapon nga lig-on, mapailubonon, ug determinado."	"Because of poverty, I refused to give up on schooling until I finished." "Even though it was difficult, I remained strong, patient, and determined."
P1,P2,P3,P4, P5,P6,P7, P8,	Educational Aspirations and Career Goals	Desire to Finish School	"Gusto ko makahuman ug high school ug gustu pud ko maka graduate sa K to 12."	"I wanted to finish high school and graduate from K to 12."
		Aspiration for Decent Employment Opportunity for College Education	"Makatrabahu na gyud ko ug desenting trabahu." "May chance pa gyud nga makapadayon ko sa college."	"I can now have a decent job." "I also now have a chance to continue to college."
P1,P2,P3,P4P 5,P6	Family Support and Encouragemen t	Emotional Support from Family Family as Inspiration	"Ang emosyonal nga supporta gikan sa akong pamilya." "Akong pamilya mao ni ang akong inspirasyon labi na para sa akong kaugmaon."	"The emotional support from my family." "My family became my inspiration, especially for my future."
		Financial Assistance from Family	"Akong mga igsoon hinatagan ko nila ug pambaon."	"My siblings gave me allowance."

P13,P14,P15,	Teacher Support and Guidance	Encouraging and Supportive Teachers	"Supportive, understanding ug encouraging nga mga teachers."	"Supportive, understanding, and encouraging teachers."
		Guidance and Motivation from Teachers	"Gigiyahan ko sa akong mga magtutudlo, gidasig ko nila nga buhaton ko ang akong best."	"My teachers guided and encouraged me to do my best."
		Inclusive Teaching Practices	"Dili nila ipa feel sa amo nga dili mi belong."	"They never made us feel that we did not belong."
P6,P7,P8,P9 P10,P11,P12, P13,P14,P15,	Flexible Learning Environment	Flexible Schedule	"Nakatabang sab ang flexible nga oras ug schedule."	"The flexible time and schedule also helped."
		Modular Learning Support	"Ginapadad-an pagyud mi ug modules sa among panimalay."	"They even sent modules to our homes."
		Balancing Work and Study	"Puydi raman masabay ang trabahu ug ang pagtuon."	"Work and studies could be balanced."
P1,P2,P3,P4, P5,P6,P7, P8,	Positive Learning Conditions	Clear and Understandable Teaching	"Klaro kaayo mo explain ug hatagan mi ug igo nga oras aron masabtan ang mga leksyon."	"They explained lessons clearly and gave us enough time to understand."
		Comfortable Learning Environment	"Nakabati pod ko ug comfortable ug suportado ang nakapalibot sa akong pagtuon."	"I felt comfortable and supported in my learning environment."
		Group Study and Lesson Review	"Ang pagparticipate sa mga group study ug sa pagbalik-balik sa mga leksyon."	"Participating in group study and repeatedly reviewing lessons."
P1,P2,P3,P4, P5,P6,P7, P8,	Community and Institutional Support	Government Educational Assistance	"Usa ko ka miyembro sa 4Ps. Nakatabang gyud sa ako."	"Being a member of 4Ps greatly helped me."
		Free Education Opportunity	"Ang libre nga pagtuon ug oportunidad nga makaeskwela."	"The free education and opportunity to study."
		ALS as Second Chance Opportunity	"Gi-isip nako nga ang ALS kay second chance."	"I consider ALS as a second chance."

P1,P2,P3,P4, P10,P11,P12, P13,P14,P15	Hope and Self- Confidence	Increased Self- Confidence	“Mas dako pa akong pagsalig sa akong kaugalingon.”	“My self-confidence increased.”
		Hope for Better Future	“Dili pa ulahi ang tanan para ma-achieve nako ang akong mga gusto.”	“It is never too late to achieve my dreams.”
P1,P2,P3,P4, P5,P6,P7, P8,		Becoming an Inspiration to Others	“Mahimong sumbanan sa akong mga liwat.”	“To become an inspiration to my children and future generations.”

Table 1 presents the emerging themes on the facilitating factors of ALS learners in completing the program. Primarily, there are fifteen (15) who answered personal determination, and perseverance emerged as strong facilitating factors among ALS completers in general; respondents mostly express their self-stand for their confidence and trust in embracing success. The responses revealed that learners remained resilient, patient, and committed to finishing their studies despite poverty and personal struggles. Their determination demonstrates the importance of intrinsic motivation in overcoming educational barriers and sustaining participation in the program. This indicates that personal resilience significantly contributes to learner persistence and completion.

This finding supports the study of Wang et al. (2024), which emphasized that personal resilience, perseverance, and intrinsic motivation significantly influence learners’ persistence and successful completion in alternative education programs. The study explained that learners who remain determined despite poverty and personal struggles are more likely to sustain participation and achieve their educational goals.

Regarding learners’ future ambitions, educational aspirations and career goals strongly influenced their motivation to continue schooling. Participants viewed ALS as a pathway to securing decent employment, improving their socioeconomic conditions, and pursuing higher education opportunities such as college. These aspirations encouraged learners to remain focused on their goals despite the hardships they experienced. This suggests that future-oriented aspirations positively strengthen learners’ commitment to education.

According to Delugas et al. (2024), educational aspirations and career ambitions are strong motivators encouraging ALS learners to continue their studies. The researchers highlighted that opportunities for employment, higher education, and financial stability positively influence learners’ commitment toward educational completion, which is consistent with the present findings.

Similarly, family support and encouragement played an essential role in sustaining learners’ participation in ALS. The findings showed that emotional encouragement, inspiration, and financial assistance from family members helped learners remain motivated and emotionally strong. Learners perceived their families as sources of hope and purpose, especially in striving for a better future. This implies that supportive family relationships contribute greatly to educational persistence among ALS learners.

In Pagodpod (2024), family support was identified as an important factor in strengthening learner motivation and educational engagement. The study revealed that emotional encouragement, moral support, and financial assistance from family members positively influence learners’ persistence in ALS, supporting the findings of the present study.

Moreover, teacher support and guidance significantly enhanced learners’ confidence and engagement in the program. Participants appreciated teachers who were understanding, supportive, motivating, and

inclusive in their instructional practices. The responses further revealed that learners felt accepted and valued because teachers fostered a non-discriminatory, encouraging learning environment. This demonstrates that positive teacher-learner relationships foster stronger motivation and commitment toward educational completion.

The present findings align with the study by Moldez et al. (2024), which emphasized that supportive, learner-centered teachers significantly contribute to learners' confidence, motivation, and educational participation. Their study further emphasized that positive teacher-learner relationships foster inclusive learning environments that encourage educational persistence.

Alongside these factors, ALS's flexible learning environment also contributed to learners' successful completion of the program. Flexible schedules, modular learning support, and opportunities to balance work and study enabled learners to continue their education despite personal and economic responsibilities. Such flexibility minimized barriers that could have hindered their participation in formal education. This indicates that accessible, learner-centered instructional approaches are vital to supporting non-traditional learners.

This result corroborates the findings of Adriatico et al. (2023), who highlighted that flexible schedules, modular learning, and adaptive instructional approaches improve learner accessibility and retention in ALS programs. The study explained that flexible learning arrangements help learners balance educational responsibilities with work and family obligations.

Furthermore, positive learning conditions strengthened learners' educational experiences and participation in ALS. Participants valued clear instruction, understandable lessons, supportive classroom environments, and collaborative learning opportunities such as group study and lesson reviews. These positive learning experiences enhanced learners' comprehension, confidence, and motivation to continue studying. This finding suggests that a comfortable and supportive educational environment promotes stronger learner engagement and persistence.

The findings also align with the study by Ambubuyog et al. (2024), which found that supportive learning environments, clear instruction, and collaborative learning opportunities positively affect learner engagement and satisfaction. The researchers noted that positive educational experiences enhance learners' motivation and persistence in school.

In addition, community and institutional support emerged as another important facilitating factor in learners' completion of ALS. Government assistance programs, free educational opportunities, and institutional support helped learners continue schooling despite financial hardships. Participants also viewed ALS as a second chance to improve their lives and achieve personal goals that were previously unattainable. This implies that institutional interventions and educational accessibility significantly influence learner retention and completion.

Similarly, the study of Albert et al. (2023) emphasized that government assistance programs and institutional educational support improve access and completion among marginalized learners. Their findings revealed that free educational opportunities and financial support reduce barriers that hinder learner participation in ALS programs.

Finally, hope and self-confidence became evident among learners who completed the ALS program. The findings revealed that ALS strengthened learners' confidence in their abilities and inspired them to pursue better opportunities for themselves and their families. Learners also expressed their desire to become role models and sources of inspiration for future generations. This demonstrates that ALS contributes not only to educational attainment but also to learners' psychosocial development and empowerment.

Consistent with Lizardo's (2024) findings, ALS participation strengthens learners' self-confidence, optimism, and personal empowerment. The study further revealed that alternative learning programs contribute not only to educational achievement but also to learners' psychosocial development and future aspirations.

Problem 2. What hindering factors contributed to the non-completion of ALS learners in the program?

Table 2. Emerging Themes on the Hindering Factors Contributing to Non-Completion of the ALS Learners'

Parti- cipants Codes	Major Themes	Codes	Verbatim Responses	English Translation
P1,P2,P3,P 4,P5,P6,P7, P8,P9,P10	Financial Difficulties	Lack of Financial Resources	"Mihunong ko sa ALS tungod sa kakulang sa kwarta."	"I stopped attending ALS because of lack of money."
		Transportation Expenses	"Lisod kaayo ang pamasahe kay medyo layo-layo ang balay."	"Transportation fare was very difficult because our house was quite far."
		Insufficient Family Income	"Gamay raman ang suhol sa akong papa igo ra sa kaon usahay makulangan pa."	"My father's salary was very small, only enough for food and sometimes still lacking."
		Poverty and Lack of Money	"Wala man jud mi kwarta."	"We really had no money."
P7,P8,P9,P 10	Family Responsibiliti es	Supporting Children and Family	"Kinahanglan nako'y suportahan ang akong mga anak."	"I needed to support my children."
		Prioritizing Family Needs	"Mas gi-una pa nako akong pamilya para nay ipakaon."	"I prioritized my family first so that there would be food on the table."
		Breadwinner Responsibility	"Walay lain man gyud mo buhi sa akong pamilya."	"There was no one else to support my family."
		Responsibility toward Children's Education	"Kailangan man jud sa akong mga anak nga mo eskwela."	"My children really needed to continue schooling."
P7,P8,P9	Health- Related Challenges	Sacrificing Education for Family Welfare	"Mas giuna pa nako akong pamilya kaysa sa akong pag- eskwela."	"I prioritized my family over my studies."
		Illness and Physical Weakness	"Nasakit ko sakit kaayu akong tiyan."	"I became sick, and my stomach was very painful."
		Health Condition Affecting Schooling	"Naa man tingali koy ulcer atu."	"I might have had an ulcer at that time."

		Physical Illness Affecting Educational Plans	"Daghan man koy bation sab sa lawas."	"I was experiencing many physical illnesses."
P7,P8,P9	Bullying and Discrimination	Bullying Due to Age	"Gi bully ko sa akong edad."	"I was bullied because of my age."
		Discrimination from Peers	"Ginakuhaan ko nila kay tigulang na daw ko."	"They mocked me because they said I was already old."
		Fear of Bullying	"Mabully ko sa akong classmate."	"My classmates might bully me."
P1,P2,P7	Program and Institutional Constraints	Schedule Problems	"Naa pud problema sa iskedyl."	"There were also problems with the schedule."
		Limited Learning Materials	"Limitado ang mga learning materials."	"Learning materials were limited."
		Ineffective Teaching Practices	"Dili halos sila mo tudlo kay igo ra sila mo present ug video."	"They barely taught because they only presented videos."
P1,P3,P4, P5	Negative School Environment	Teacher Humiliation	"Musabay sab ang teacher, pakaulawan ka."	"The teacher would also embarrass you."
		Unsafe Travel Conditions	"Hadlok pa gyud ang among dalan tungod kay walay mga balay halos nimo makita."	"The road was frightening because there were almost no houses nearby."
		Stress at Home and School	"Stress sa balay ug eskwela."	"Stress at home and in school."
P1,P2,P3, P4,P5,P6,P7,P8,P9,	Emotional Struggles and Discouragement	Feeling Unable to Continue	"Kailangan man jud mo hunong ma'am kay dili kaya."	"I really had to stop because I could no longer manage it."
		Fading Educational Aspirations	"Mura gyud ug napawng ang akong pangandoy sa pag eskwela."	"It felt like my dream of studying had faded away."
		Difficulty Continuing without Support	"Tungod sa kakulang sa suporta lisod para nako ang pagpadayon sa ALS."	"Because of lack of support, it was difficult for me to continue ALS."

Table 2 highlights the emerging themes on the hindering factors contributing to the non-completion of ALS learners. Primarily, there are ten (10) participants experiencing financial difficulties, which emerged as one of the strongest barriers affecting learner completion in ALS, as their family needs were not enough to support both work and study. The responses revealed that lack of money, transportation expenses, and insufficient family income made it difficult for learners to manage their time in completing the program. Many participants experienced poverty-related struggles that forced them to prioritize basic survival needs over

schooling. This indicates that economic instability significantly limits educational access and persistence among ALS learners.

This finding supports the study of Albert et al. (2023), which emphasized that poverty, lack of financial resources, and transportation expenses are among the primary barriers affecting learner retention and completion in alternative education programs. The study revealed that economically disadvantaged learners often prioritize survival needs and household expenses over participation in education.

In addition to economic hardships, family responsibilities heavily influenced learners' decisions to discontinue the program. Participants revealed that they needed to support their children, prioritize family welfare, and assume breadwinner responsibilities within the household. Some learners sacrificed their own education to ensure their families' and children's needs were met first. This suggests that competing family obligations reduce learners' capacity to continue participating in ALS.

According to Ortiga (2024), family responsibilities and breadwinner obligations significantly influence learners' decisions to discontinue their education. The study explained that learners who carry heavy household responsibilities often sacrifice their schooling to provide financial and emotional support for their families, consistent with the findings of the present study.

Likewise, health-related challenges became another major hindrance to learner continuation. The findings showed that illnesses, physical weakness, and ongoing health conditions disrupted learners' ability to attend and participate in the program regularly. Participants experienced physical limitations that affected both their motivation and educational plans. This implies that health concerns significantly contribute to educational discontinuation among ALS learners.

In the study of Nuñez (2024), health-related challenges such as illness, physical exhaustion, and medical concerns were identified as major factors affecting educational continuity among ALS learners. The researchers emphasized that physical health problems weaken learners' participation, motivation, and ability to sustain regular attendance in alternative learning programs.

Moreover, bullying and discrimination negatively affected learners' emotional well-being and willingness to continue schooling. Participants experienced mockery and discrimination due to age differences and felt discouraged by the fear of being bullied by classmates. Such experiences created feelings of insecurity, embarrassment, and social exclusion within the learning environment. This demonstrates that negative peer interactions can weaken learners' confidence and motivation to persist in the program.

The present findings align with the study by Acero and Guillena (2024), which highlighted that bullying, discrimination, and negative peer interactions adversely affect learners' emotional well-being and educational persistence. Their study revealed that learners who experience social exclusion and humiliation are more likely to lose confidence and disengage from the learning process.

Alongside these difficulties, program and institutional constraints also contributed to learners' non-completion in ALS. The participants identified schedule conflicts, limited learning materials, and ineffective teaching practices as barriers to their continued participation. Some learners perceived instructional approaches as inadequate and insufficient in supporting meaningful learning engagement. This finding suggests that limitations within program implementation may reduce learners' educational satisfaction and persistence.

This result corroborates the study by Manalastas et al. (2024), which found that program limitations, such as inadequate learning materials, scheduling conflicts, and ineffective instructional delivery, reduce

learner engagement and satisfaction in ALS implementation. The study further emphasized that institutional constraints weaken learners' participation and continuation in the program.

Furthermore, negative school environment conditions intensified learners' struggles within the ALS program. Participants described experiences of teacher humiliation, unsafe travel conditions, and stress resulting from both home and school environments. These negative experiences imposed additional emotional and psychological burdens, discouraging learners from continuing their studies. This indicates that unsafe and unsupportive educational environments adversely affect learner retention and participation.

Similarly, the findings support the study of Ambubuyog et al. (2024), which stressed that unsafe and unsupportive school environments negatively influence learner retention and participation. The study noted that experiences of humiliation, stressful environments, and unsafe conditions create emotional burdens that discourage learners from continuing their education.

Finally, emotional struggles and discouragement significantly influenced learners' decisions to discontinue ALS. The findings revealed that learners experienced feelings of hopelessness, exhaustion, and inability to continue due to the accumulation of personal and social challenges. Some participants felt that their educational aspirations gradually faded because of insufficient support and overwhelming difficulties. This suggests that emotional distress and lack of encouragement can greatly weaken learners' determination to complete the program.

Consistent with Lizardo (2024), emotional struggles, discouragement, and a lack of support significantly affect learners' motivation and persistence in education. The study revealed that prolonged emotional distress and hopelessness weaken learners' determination to continue schooling and may eventually lead to educational discontinuation.

Problem 3. What forms of support did ALS completers receive that helped them persist until program completion?

Table 3. *Emerging Themes on the Forms of Support for Completers*

Participants codes	Major Themes	Codes	Verbatim Responses	English Translation
P1, P2,P3,P4,P5,P6, P7,P8,P9,P10,P11, P12,P13,P14,P15	Teacher Support and Encouragement	Continuous Encouragement from Teachers	"Permi nag encourage ang maong mga teacher sa pagpadayon sa pag-eskwela."	"The teachers constantly encouraged us to continue studying."
		Guidance and Assistance from Teachers	"Gigiyahan ko sa akong mga magtutudlo, gidasig ko nila nga buhaton ko ang akong best."	"My teachers guided me and encouraged me to do my best."
		Teachers as Inspiration	"Nahimo sila nakong engine to continue my journey."	"They became my driving force to continue my journey."

		Teachers' Belief in Learners	"Sila man ang una nga mituo sa akong kakayahan."	"They were the first to believe in my abilities."
P1,P2,P3,P4,P5 P6,P7,P8	Inclusive and Compassionate Teaching	Equal Treatment among Learners	"Ang mga teachers dili gyud nimo mafeel nga lahi ka sa uban estudyante."	"The teachers never made you feel different from other students."
		Relating Lessons to Real Life	"Ilang mga pagtulunan sa klase nga ilang ma-relate sa life?"	"They related classroom lessons to real-life situations."
		Patient and Clear Instruction	"Maayo pagyud mopasabut sa mga leksyon."	"They explained lessons very well."
P1,P2,P10,P11, P12,P13, P14,P15	Family Support and Motivation	Emotional Encouragement from Family	"Ang akong pamilya pirmi naghatag ug kusog sa akong hunahuna."	"My family always gave me strength."
		Family as Source of Inspiration	"Ang akong pamilya mao ni ang akong inspirasyon."	"My family became my inspiration."
		Understanding and Moral Support	"Ang ilang supporta ug pagsabot mao ang akong kusog aron magpadayon."	"Their support and understanding became my strength to continue."
P3,P4,P5,P6 P7,P8	Peer Support and Encouragement	Classmates' Motivation	"Ang ako pud mga classmate, permi mo-encourage sa ako nga dili gyud mu-undang."	"My classmates constantly encouraged me not to stop."
		Respect and Understanding among Peers	"Respeto ug pag sabot sa usag usa ang makadasig sa ako."	"Respect and understanding for one another encouraged me."
		Peer Assistance in School Needs	"Ang akong mga classmate kon walay amoa hatagan sab mi nila ug mga papel ug ballpen."	"Whenever we lacked materials, my classmates gave us paper and ballpens."
P1,P2,P3,P4,P5 P6,P7,P8,P11 P12	Provision of Learning Resources	Distribution of Modules	"Mupadala sila ug modules ug answeranan sa among panimalay."	"They sent modules and answer sheets to our home."
		Free School Supplies	"Ang among mga bond paper sila ang muhatag nga libre."	"They provided bond paper free of charge."

Flexible Learning Support	Availability of Educational Materials	of	"Gihatagan mi ug mga libro ug uban pang gamit."	"We were provided with books and other materials."
	Flexible Schedule for Learners	for	"Kaya nako ibalanse ang akong oras."	"I was able to balance my time."
Community and Institutional Assistance	Work-and-Study Balance		"Kinahanglan nako i-manage ang akong time sa work og sa among session."	"I needed to manage my time between work and class sessions."
	Government Assistance Programs		"Usa ko ka membro sa 4Ps nakatabang gyud sa ako."	"Being a member of 4Ps greatly helped me."
Hope, Confidence, and Motivation	ALS as Inclusive Educational Opportunity		"Edukasyon nga walay gipili."	"Education that does not discriminate."
	Free Educational Opportunity		"Ang libre nga pagtuon ug oportunidad nga makaeskwela."	"The free education and opportunity to study."
	Increased Confidence through Support		"Mas nidako ang akong kompiyansa."	"My confidence increased."
	Feeling of Belongingness	of	"Dili mi ipa feel nga dili mi belong."	"They never made us feel that we did not belong."
	Motivation to Continue despite Hardship	to	"Dili gyud mu surrender bisan lisod."	"Never surrender even if life is difficult."

Table 3 illustrates the emerging themes on the forms of support experienced by ALS completers. To begin with, fifteen (15) participants embraced feelings of happiness because, according to them, not all teachers have the same behavior. It showed that teacher support and encouragement emerged as one of the most influential forms of assistance received by ALS completers, especially since their family always gives a hundred percent (100%) support. The participants emphasized that teachers and their families continuously motivated and guided them and believed in their capabilities, which strengthened their confidence and determination to continue studying. Learners also perceived their teachers as sources of inspiration who encouraged them to strive for academic success despite hardships. This indicates that supportive and motivating teachers play a critical role in promoting learner persistence and completion.

This finding supports the study of Moldez et al. (2024), which emphasized that supportive and motivating teachers significantly influence learner participation, confidence, and persistence in ALS programs. The study highlighted that teachers who provide encouragement and guidance help learners sustain motivation and remain committed to completing their education.

Equally important, inclusive and compassionate teaching significantly enhanced learners' educational experiences in ALS. The responses revealed that teachers treated learners equally, connected lessons to real-life situations, and provided patient, understandable instruction. Such teaching practices helped learners feel respected, valued, and comfortable within the learning environment regardless of their age or background. This suggests that inclusive and learner-centered instruction fosters stronger engagement and participation among ALS learners.

According to Ambubuyog et al. (2024), inclusive and compassionate teaching practices create learner-friendly educational environments that strengthen learner engagement and participation. The researchers stressed that equal treatment, understandable instruction, and supportive classroom interactions positively affect learners' educational experiences and persistence.

Another significant form of assistance came from family support and motivation. Participants described their families as sources of emotional strength, inspiration, and moral encouragement throughout their educational journey. The support and understanding they received from family members motivated them to continue despite personal and financial struggles. This demonstrates that strong family relationships positively reinforce learners' commitment toward educational completion.

In Pagodpod (2024), family support was identified as an important factor influencing learner engagement and continuation in ALS. The study revealed that emotional encouragement, understanding, and moral support from family members strengthen learners' determination to continue schooling despite personal and financial struggles.

Correspondingly, peer support and encouragement also contributed significantly to learners' persistence in ALS. The findings showed that classmates motivated one another, practiced mutual respect, and even shared school materials when needed. These supportive peer relationships fostered a sense of belonging and solidarity among learners in the program. This implies that positive peer interactions strengthen learners' emotional support systems and reduce feelings of isolation.

Similarly, the findings align with those of Acero and Guillena (2024), who found that positive peer relationships and supportive social interactions reduce learners' feelings of isolation and improve their sense of belonging in the learning environment. The study emphasized that peer encouragement contributes significantly to learner persistence and participation.

Beyond interpersonal relationships, the provision of learning resources became an important factor in sustaining learners' participation. Participants appreciated the availability of modules, school supplies, books, and other educational materials provided through the program. Access to these resources reduced financial burdens and enabled learners to continue studying even outside the classroom setting. This finding indicates that adequate instructional resources improve accessibility and continuity of learning among ALS participants.

This result corroborates Albert et al. (2023), who emphasized that access to educational materials and instructional resources improves learners' accessibility and continuity in alternative learning programs. The study further noted that educational support mechanisms help lessen financial burdens among marginalized learners.

At the same time, flexible learning support allowed learners to balance education with work and other responsibilities. Learners emphasized that flexible schedules and adaptable learning arrangements helped them manage their time effectively between employment and school activities. Such flexibility minimized

conflicts between personal obligations and educational participation. This suggests that flexible instructional approaches are essential in addressing the needs of non-traditional learners in ALS.

Consistent with Adriatico et al. (2023), flexible learning arrangements and adaptive instructional delivery improve learner retention and participation in ALS. The researchers explained that flexible schedules enable learners to balance work, family obligations, and educational responsibilities more effectively.

On the institutional side, community and institutional assistance provided learners with additional support that strengthened their continuation in the program. Government assistance programs such as 4Ps, free educational opportunities, and inclusive learning initiatives helped reduce financial and social barriers to education. Participants also recognized ALS as an accessible educational opportunity for individuals previously excluded from formal schooling. This demonstrates that institutional and community support systems significantly contribute to learner retention and educational inclusion.

The present findings are supported by the study of Manalastas et al. (2024), which highlighted that community support systems, inclusive educational opportunities, and institutional assistance strengthen learner participation and educational access among non-traditional learners. Their findings emphasized that learner-centered and accessible educational interventions improve retention in ALS programs.

Ultimately, hope, confidence, and motivation became evident among ALS completers as outcomes of the support they received. The findings revealed that continuous encouragement and acceptance increased learners' self-confidence and strengthened their belief that they could succeed despite life difficulties. Learners also developed a stronger sense of belongingness and determination to pursue their educational goals. This indicates that supportive educational environments positively influence both learners' academic persistence and psychosocial development.

This finding also supports the study of Lizardo (2024), which revealed that ALS participation enhances learners' confidence, self-esteem, motivation, and sense of belongingness. The study emphasized that supportive educational environments contribute significantly to learners' psychosocial development and persistence toward achieving their educational goals.

Table 4. *Emerging Themes on the Forms of Support for Non-Completers*

Participant Codes	Major Themes	Codes	Verbatim Responses	English Translation
P1,P2,P3,P4,P5 P6,P7,P8,P9,P10	Family Support	Emotional Support from Family	"Nakadawat ko ug suporta gikan sa pamilya."	"I received support from my family."
		Encouragement from Children and Relatives	"Akong uban mga anak ug akong uban mga ig-agaw gina supportaan gihapon ko nila nga mo	"My children and cousins still supported me to continue even though I was already old."

			padayon bisan tigulang na."	
		Family Motivation to Return to School	"Na-encourage ko sa akong mga amigo ug pamilya nga mo eskwela'g balik."	"My friends and family encouraged me to return to school."
		Family as Source of Motivation	"Makahuman jud ko ma'am kay mao man jud na akong pangarap."	"I really want to finish because that has always been my dream."
P6,P7,P8,P9,P10	Teacher Support	Understanding and Student-Friendly Teachers	"Ganahan ko sa mga teacher kay kabalo jud sila nga magpa-uyon sa mga estudyante."	"I liked the teachers because they really knew how to understand and adjust to the students."
		Additional Teacher Guidance	"Makatabang unta ang ... dugang giya sa teachers."	"Additional guidance from teachers could have helped."
		Teacher Encouragement and Accommodation	"Kabalo jud sila nga magpa-uyon sa mga estudyante."	"They truly knew how to accommodate students."
		Emotional Encouragement from Teachers	"Nakadawat ko ug suporta gikan sa ... mga magtutudlo."	"I received support from ... teachers."
P1,P2,P3	Government and Community Assistance	Barangay Educational Assistance	"Makadawat ko ug suporta usahay sa governo sama sa mga lapis ug papel nga libre bag gikan sa barangay."	"I sometimes received support from the government such as free pencils and paper from the barangay."
		Financial Assistance Needs	"Makatabang unta ang pinansyal nga tabang."	"Financial assistance could have helped."

P1,P2,P3,P4,P5, P6	Flexible Learning and Accessibility	Provision of Food, Clothing, and Financial Benefits	"Paghatag pud ug benepisyu nga adunay madawat sa mga ALS sama sa food, clothing ug financial aspect."	"Providing benefits such as food, clothing, and financial assistance for ALS learners."
		Community- Based Educational Support	"Makadawat ko ug suporta usahay sa goberno."	"I sometimes received support from the government."
		Flexible Schedule Support	"Makatabang unta ang flexible sa schedule."	"A flexible schedule could have helped."
		Accessible Learning Center	"Ang tulunghaan nga duol sa among panimalay."	"A school near our home."
		Accessibility to Education	"Para sa akoo ang unang suporta nga makaayu ang tulunghaan nga duol sa among panimalay."	"For me, the best support would have been a school closer to our home."
P1,P3,P4,P1,P6	Lack of Support and Educational Discontinuation	Difficulty Continuing without Support	"Tungod sa kakulang sa suporta lisod para nako ang pagpadayon sa ALS."	"Because of lack of support, it was difficult for me to continue ALS."
		Prioritizing Family over Education	"Mas giuna pa nako akong pamilya kaysa sa akong pag- eskwela."	"I prioritized my family over my studies."
		Financial Burden on Family	"Kung mo eskwela pa ko, magkalisod nag suporta dili kaya sa akong bana."	"If I continued schooling, supporting the family would become difficult because my husband could not manage it."

P2,P5,P7,P8,P9	Aspirations despite Challenges	Need to Work for Household Survival	"Kon di ko muondang di ko katabang sa among panimalay."	"If I did not stop, I would not be able to help our household."
		Hope to Return to ALS	"Oo plano nako mubalik sa ALS."	"Yes, I plan to return to ALS."
		Desire for Better Future	"Makaayu sa akong kaugmaon."	"To improve my future."
		Aspiration for Decent Employment	"Gusto na unta ko makasulod ug desenting trabahu."	"I really wanted to obtain a decent job."

Table 4 discusses the emerging themes on the forms of support experienced by ALS non-completers. At the family level, ten (10) participants really need support from relatives and loved ones, which remained evident among ALS non-completers. Participants shared that emotional encouragement from family members, children, relatives, and friends motivated them to continue or return to school despite their age and circumstances. Family members served as important sources of inspiration and emotional strength during difficult situations. This indicates that family support continues to influence learners' educational aspirations even among those who were unable to complete the program.

This finding supports the study of Pagodpod (2024), which emphasized that emotional encouragement and moral support from family members positively influence learners' motivation and educational aspirations in ALS. The study highlighted that family support remains an important source of strength even among learners experiencing educational interruptions and personal difficulties.

From an instructional perspective, teacher support also positively contributed to learners' experiences in ALS. The participants appreciated teachers who were understanding, accommodating, and supportive of their needs as learners. Some respondents further expressed the need for additional guidance and continuous encouragement from teachers to help them persist in the program. This suggests that compassionate and learner-centered teaching practices strengthen learners' motivation and educational engagement.

According to Moldez et al. (2024), supportive and accommodating teachers contribute significantly to learners' motivation, confidence, and participation in alternative learning programs. The study further revealed that compassionate and learner-centered teaching practices strengthen learners' educational engagement and persistence despite challenges.

In terms of external assistance, government and community support emerged as another important source of aid among non-completers. Learners acknowledged receiving educational materials and occasional support from barangay and government programs, while others emphasized the need for stronger financial assistance and necessities such as food and clothing. These responses reveal that institutional interventions helped reduce educational burdens, although some learners still found the support insufficient to sustain

participation. This implies that stronger community and institutional support systems are necessary to improve learner retention in ALS.

The findings align with Albert et al. (2023), who found that government assistance programs and community educational support reduce barriers to educational participation among marginalized learners. However, the study also emphasized that limited financial and material support may still be insufficient to sustain learner retention and completion in ALS programs fully.

Regarding accessibility, flexible learning and accessible educational opportunities were identified as important needs by non-completers. Participants emphasized that flexible schedules and schools located nearer to their homes could have helped them continue their studies. Accessibility issues such as distance and conflicting responsibilities created barriers that affected their educational participation. This finding indicates that learner-friendly, accessible learning arrangements are essential to addressing the needs of ALS learners with personal and family obligations.

Consistent with Adriatico et al. (2023), flexible learning arrangements and accessible educational opportunities improve participation and retention among ALS learners. The researchers stressed that flexible schedules and accessible learning centers help learners manage educational responsibilities alongside work and family obligations.

Despite the available support, lack of support and educational discontinuation remained evident among the participants. Learners disclosed that insufficient financial resources, family responsibilities, and the need to prioritize household survival contributed to their inability to continue schooling. Some participants were forced to prioritize family welfare and livelihood over education due to economic constraints. This demonstrates that inadequate support systems significantly weaken learners' capacity to persist in the ALS program.

Similarly, the findings support the study of Ortiga (2024), which emphasized that inadequate support systems, economic hardship, and competing family responsibilities contribute significantly to learner discontinuation in ALS. The study noted that many learners prioritize household survival and family welfare over continuing their education due to financial constraints.

Nevertheless, despite challenges, aspirations continued to emerge among ALS non-completers. The participants still expressed hope of returning to ALS, improving their future, and securing decent employment opportunities despite their educational interruption. Their responses reveal that discontinuation did not eliminate their educational goals and aspirations. This suggests that ALS learners continue to value education as an important pathway toward personal and socioeconomic improvement even after leaving the program.

On the contrary, the findings differ from the study of Nuñez (2024), which suggested that prolonged educational discontinuation often weakens learners' aspirations to return to school. In the present findings, several non-completers continued to express hope of returning to ALS and pursuing better employment and future opportunities despite their educational interruption.

Problem 4. What aspirations and future goals motivate ALS learners to pursue or discontinue the program?

Table 5. Emerging Themes on the Aspirations and Future Goals for Completers

Participants Codes	Major Themes	Codes	Verbatim Responses	English Translation
P1,P2,P3,P4,P5, P6,P7,P8,P9,P10 P11,P12,P13,P14 , P15	Educational Aspirations	Desire to Finish High School	"Gusto ko makahuman ug high school ug gustu pud ko maka graduate sa K to 12."	"I wanted to finish high school and graduate from K to 12."
		Aspiration for College Education	"May chance pa gyud nga makapadayon ko sa college."	"I now have a chance to continue to college."
		Continuing Education despite Age	"Kini ang chance para sa tanan bisan dako na lang ang edad."	"This is a chance for everyone even if they are already older."
P1,P2,P3,P4,P5,	Career and Employment Goals	Desire for Decent Employment	"Makatrabahu kog tarong."	"I can obtain a decent job."
		Stable Financial Future	"Naay stable nga financial."	"To have financial stability."
		Using Certificate for Employment	"Akong gamiton ang akong certipiko sa pagpangapply ug trabahu."	"I will use my certificate when applying for work."
P1,P2,P3,P4,P5,	Hope and Second Chances	ALS as a Second Chance	"Gi-isip nako ang ALS isip second chance."	"I consider ALS as a second chance."
		Never Losing Hope	"Dili gyud diay magpakawala sa paglaum."	"One should never lose hope."
		It Is Never Too Late	"Dili pa ulahi ang tanan para ma-achieve nako ang akong mga gusto."	"It is never too late to achieve my dreams."
P1,P2,P3,P4,P5,	Self-Improvement and Personal Growth	Becoming a Better Person	"Gi-mold ko into a stronger and better person."	"It molded me into a stronger and better person."
		Increased Self-Confidence	"Mas dako pa akong pagsalig sa akong kaugalingon."	"My self-confidence increased."
		Personal Discipline and Perseverance	"Nagpabilin gihapon nga lig-on, mapailubonon, ug determinado."	"I remained strong, patient, and determined."
P1,P2,P3,P4,P5, P11,P12,P13,P14	Family-Oriented Aspirations	Desire to Help Family	"Makatabang sa akong pamilya."	"To help my family."

P11,P12,P13,P14 , P15	Positive Outlook toward Life	Becoming an Inspiration to Family	"Mahimong sumbanan sa akong mga liwat."	"To become an inspiration to my children and future generations."
		Securing Better Future for Family	"Para sa kaugmaon sa akong pamilya."	"For the future of my family."
		Belief in Success through Hard Work	"Mulampos gyud ko sa akong pag eskwela."	"I will truly succeed in my studies."
		Viewing Education as Opportunity Motivation despite Poverty	"Naka open kini ug daghan mga opportunity." "Tungod sa kalisod dili gyud ko mo surrender."	"This opened many opportunities." "Because of poverty, I refused to surrender."
P11,P12,P13,P14 , P15	Appreciation of ALS Program	ALS as Inclusive Education	"Pag edukar nga patas sa bisan unsang edad."	"Education that is equal regardless of age."
		ALS as Opportunity for Change	"Dakong chance ang kabag-ohan sa imong kinabuhi."	"A great chance to change one's life."
		Gratitude toward ALS and DepEd	"Pasalamatang gyud nako ang DepEd tungod aning ALS program."	"I will truly thank DepEd because of the ALS program."

Table 5 presents the emerging themes on the aspirations and future goals of ALS completers. To start with, fifteen (15) participants expressed gratitude, even though they are married, elderly, and, despite circumstances, still successful. Their educational aspirations strongly motivated ALS completers to persist and finish the program. Participants expressed their desire to complete high school, continue to college, and prove that education remains possible regardless of age. The learners viewed ALS as an avenue that reopened opportunities for educational advancement and lifelong learning. This indicates that strong educational ambitions significantly influence learners' persistence and determination to complete the program.

This finding supports the study of Manalastas et al. (2024), which emphasized that educational aspirations and lifelong learning opportunities strongly influence learner persistence and participation in ALS programs. The study highlighted that alternative education provides learners with renewed opportunities to continue their schooling regardless of age or prior educational interruption.

Closely related to educational goals, career and employment aspirations also shaped learners' motivation to continue studying. The findings revealed that participants associated ALS completion with better employment opportunities, financial stability, and improved quality of life. Learners believed that obtaining educational credentials would help them secure decent jobs and support their future needs. This suggests that economic and career-related goals are strong motivators among ALS completers.

According to Albert et al. (2023), career advancement, employment opportunities, and financial stability are important motivating factors for ALS learners. The researchers explained that learners often associate educational completion with improved socioeconomic conditions and better quality of life.

Beyond career ambitions, hope and second chances emerged as important themes among the participants. Learners perceived ALS as an opportunity to restart and improve their lives despite previous educational interruptions and hardships. The responses reflected optimism, resilience, and the belief that achieving one's dreams is still possible regardless of age or past difficulties. This demonstrates that ALS provides learners with renewed hope and opportunities for personal redemption and growth.

The findings align with the study by Ortiga (2024), which revealed that ALS serves as a second-chance educational opportunity that restores learners' hope and optimism despite prior academic and personal setbacks. The study further emphasized that alternative learning programs help learners regain confidence in achieving their future goals.

At the personal level, self-improvement and personal growth became evident among ALS completers. Participants shared that ALS helped them become stronger, more disciplined, confident, and determined individuals. Their experiences in the program enhanced not only their educational attainment but also their emotional maturity and self-belief. This finding implies that ALS contributes significantly to learners' holistic development and empowerment.

Similarly, the findings support the study of Lizardo (2024), which stressed that ALS participation contributes significantly to learners' personal growth, self-confidence, discipline, and emotional maturity. The study noted that learners develop stronger self-belief and empowerment through their educational experiences in ALS.

Similarly, family-oriented aspirations strongly influenced learners' commitment to education. Participants expressed their desire to help their families, become role models for their children, and secure a better future for their loved ones. Their educational pursuits were deeply connected to their responsibilities and hopes for family improvement. This indicates that family-centered goals strengthen learners' persistence and sense of purpose in completing ALS.

Consistent with Pagodpod (2024), family-centered aspirations and responsibilities positively influence learners' commitment to continuing education. The study emphasized that learners are often motivated by their desire to help their families and secure better opportunities for their loved ones.

Meanwhile, a positive outlook toward life was consistently reflected in the participants' responses. Learners demonstrated strong belief in the value of hard work, perseverance, and education as pathways toward success and better opportunities. Despite poverty and life difficulties, they remained motivated and hopeful in achieving their dreams. This suggests that positive attitudes and resilience enable learners to overcome hardships and remain focused on their goals.

This result corroborates the study of Wang et al. (2025), which highlighted that positive attitudes, perseverance, and resilience strengthen learners' ability to overcome educational and economic hardships. The researchers emphasized that hopeful and motivated learners are more likely to remain focused on achieving their goals despite adversity.

Finally, appreciation of the ALS program emerged as an important theme among completers. Participants recognized ALS as an inclusive educational opportunity that promotes equal access to learning regardless of age or social condition. They also expressed gratitude toward DepEd and the ALS program for

providing them with opportunities to improve their lives and futures. This demonstrates that ALS is perceived not only as an educational program but also as a life-changing opportunity for marginalized learners.

Finally, the findings support the findings of Ambubuyog et al. (2024), which emphasized that ALS promotes inclusive and accessible educational opportunities for marginalized learners, regardless of age or social condition. The study further revealed that learners perceive ALS as a transformative program that creates opportunities for personal and social improvement.

Table 6. *Emerging Themes on the Aspirations and Future Goals for Non-Completers*

Participants Codes	Major Themes	Codes	Verbatim Responses	English Translation
P1,P2,P3,P4,P5, P6,P7,P8,P9, P10	Educational Aspirations	Desire to Finish Schooling	"Ang akong tumong samtang nag ALS ko mao ang makahuman sa pag-eskwela."	"My goal while I was in ALS was to finish my studies."
		Dream of Graduating despite Age	"Gusto ko makahuman jud para maipakita nako sa tao, bisan tigulang na ko, nga makapahuman pa kog eskwela."	"I wanted to finish so I could prove to people that even though I am old, I can still complete my education."
		Aspiration to Return to ALS	"Oo, plano nako mubalik sa ALS."	"Yes, I plan to return to ALS."
P6,P7,P8,P9	Career and Employment Goals	Hope for Educational Continuation	"Magpadayon ko, ma'am, pag mahuman na ang akong mga anak."	"I will continue once my children have finished their studies."
		Aspiration for Decent Employment	"Gusto na unta ko makasulod ug desenting trabahu."	"I really wanted to obtain a decent job."
		Stable Employment before Returning to School	"Mopadayon ako pagmakaluwag-luwag ang panginabuhi nako ug makakita kog stable nga trabaho."	"I will continue once my financial situation improves and I find stable work."
		Education as Means for Better Future	"Makaayu sa akong kaugmaon."	"To improve my future."
P1,P2,P3,P4,P5	Family-Oriented Aspirations	Searching for Other Opportunities	"Mangita ug laing oportunidad aron makahuman sa pag-eskwela."	"I will look for other opportunities to finish my studies."
		Desire to Make Family Proud	"Nindot unta makahumana sa pag-eskwela para naa koy	"It would be good to finish schooling so I

		Responsibility toward Children	mapasigarbo sa akong pamilya.” “Kailangan man jud sa akong mga anak nga mo eskwela.”	could make my family proud.” “My children really needed to continue schooling.”
		Prioritizing Family Welfare	“Mas gi-una pa nako akong pamilya.”	“I prioritized my family first.”
		Desire to Help Household Needs	“Di ko katabang sa among panimalay.”	“I would not be able to help our household.”
P1,P2,P3,P4,P5 P6,	Hope and Second Chances	Continuing Dream despite Challenges	“Makahuman jud ko ma’am kay mao man jud na akong pangarap.”	“I really want to finish because that has always been my dream.”
		Hope to Continue when Circumstances Improve	“Pagmakaluwag-luwag ang panginabuhì nako.”	“Once my financial situation improves.”
		Viewing ALS as Future Opportunity	“Mangita ug laing oportunidad.”	“Look for other opportunities.”
	Financial and Economic Struggles	Poverty and Lack of Money	“Wala man jud mi kwarta.”	“We really had no money.”
		Need to Work for Survival	“Kailangan man jud mo hunong ma’am kay dili kaya.”	“I really had to stop because I could no longer manage it.”
		Household Livelihood Responsibilities	“Pagtanum ug pagbaligya sa mga abot sa uma.”	“Planting and selling farm produce.”
P1,P2,P3	Health-Related Concerns	Physical Illness Affecting Educational Plans	“Daghan man koy bation sab sa lawas.”	“I was experiencing many physical illnesses.”
		Fear of Continuing due to Health Problems	“Maproblema naman sab ko sa akong lawas.”	“I will still face problems with my health.”
P1,P2,P3,P4,P5 P8	Discouragement and Emotional Struggles	Fading Educational Aspirations	“Mura gyud ug napawng ang akong pangandoy sa pag eskwela.”	“It felt like my dream of studying had faded away.”
		Fear of Bullying and Social Judgment	“Mabully ko sa akong classmate.”	“My classmates might bully me.”
		Feeling Unable to Continue	“Dili kaya.”	“I could no longer manage it.”

Table 6 outlines the emerging themes on the aspirations and future goals of ALS non-completers. To begin with, there are ten (10) participants losses hope due to some circumstances happened in their lives that's the reason it will turn into the reality that educational aspirations remained evident among ALS non-completers despite their discontinuation from the program. Participants still expressed strong desires to finish schooling, graduate regardless of age, and eventually return to ALS when circumstances improve. Their responses indicate that educational goals were not completely abandoned even after leaving the program. This suggests that non-completers still recognize the importance of education in achieving personal growth and future success.

This finding supports the study of Manalastas et al. (2024), which revealed that ALS learners continue to value education and lifelong learning opportunities despite educational interruptions and personal challenges. The study emphasized that many learners still aspire to complete their studies and pursue educational advancement, regardless of age or prior discontinuation.

Regarding future livelihood opportunities, career and employment goals strongly influenced learners' aspirations. The participants viewed education as an important pathway toward obtaining decent employment, financial stability, and a better quality of life. Some learners also expressed their willingness to seek alternative opportunities to complete their studies once their economic situation improves. This demonstrates that economic advancement and employment security remain significant motivations among ALS non-completers.

According to Albert et al. (2023), employment opportunities, financial stability, and improved living conditions remain strong motivating factors for ALS learners. The researchers noted that learners often view education as a pathway toward better economic opportunities and future socioeconomic mobility.

Similarly, family-oriented aspirations continued to shape participants' decisions and priorities. Learners desired to make their families proud, support their household needs, and ensure their children's education despite their own educational interruption. However, many participants prioritized family welfare and responsibilities over their personal educational goals. This indicates that strong family obligations greatly influence learners' educational decisions and persistence.

Similarly, the findings align with Pagodpod (2024), which emphasized that family responsibilities and aspirations significantly influence learners' educational decisions and persistence. The study revealed that many ALS learners prioritize household welfare and their children's future over their own educational goals.

Despite the challenges encountered, hope and second chances remained visible in the aspirations of non-completers. Participants continued to express dreams of finishing their education and viewed ALS as an opportunity that they could still pursue in the future. Their responses reflected optimism and the belief that continuing education is still possible once life conditions stabilize. This suggests that ALS continues to provide learners with hope and motivation even after discontinuation.

Consistent with Ortiga (2024), ALS continues to serve as a second-chance educational opportunity that sustains learners' hope and motivation despite temporary discontinuation. The study highlighted that many learners still maintain aspirations to return to school once their life circumstances improve.

On the other hand, financial and economic struggles significantly affected learners' ability to pursue their aspirations. Poverty, lack of financial resources, and the need to work for household survival forced many participants to discontinue schooling. Learners became more focused on immediate economic needs, such as livelihood and family support, rather than on continuing their education. This demonstrates that economic hardships remain major barriers preventing learners from achieving their educational goals.

This result corroborates the findings of Nuñez (2024), which identified poverty, financial instability, and livelihood responsibilities as major barriers to learners' sustained participation in ALS programs. The study further explained that economic hardship often forces learners to prioritize work and family survival over continuing their education.

Alongside financial difficulties, health-related concerns also hindered learners' future educational plans. Participants shared experiences of physical illness and fears that their health conditions would continue to affect their ability to study. These health-related struggles weakened their confidence in continuing the program despite their educational aspirations. This finding implies that physical well-being plays an important role in sustaining learners' participation in ALS.

The findings also support the study of Acero and Guillena (2024), which revealed that physical health concerns and personal well-being significantly affect learner participation and educational continuity. The study emphasized that health-related difficulties weaken learners' ability to maintain consistent engagement in educational programs.

Ultimately, discouragement and emotional struggles emerged as factors that negatively influenced learners' aspirations and persistence. Participants experienced fading educational motivation, fear of bullying, and feelings of helplessness caused by overwhelming personal and social difficulties. Such emotional burdens reduced their confidence and willingness to continue schooling. This indicates that emotional distress and negative social experiences significantly affect the educational continuity of ALS learners.

On the contrary, the findings differ from the study of Ambubuyog et al. (2024), which suggested that supportive and inclusive learning environments generally strengthen learners' confidence and persistence. In the present findings, some participants continued to experience discouragement, fear of bullying, and emotional struggles that negatively affected their willingness to continue schooling despite the presence of educational opportunities.

Problem 5. Based on the findings of this study, what recommendations may be drawn from the experiences, support systems, and aspirations of ALS learners to improve completion in Butuan City?

Title of the Recommendation

Enhanced Learner Support and Retention Program for Alternative Learning System (ALS) Learners in Butuan City

Rationale

The study found that ALS completers were strongly motivated by family encouragement, supportive teachers, flexible learning arrangements, and aspirations for better employment and educational opportunities. In contrast, non-completers experienced financial difficulties, family responsibilities, health concerns, bullying, lack of support systems, and limited accessibility to learning resources, which contributed to their discontinuation in the program. These findings imply the need for strengthened learner support mechanisms, inclusive learning environments, flexible instructional delivery, and community-based interventions to improve ALS learner retention and completion in Butuan City.

Key Findings	Activities	Objectives	Time Frame	Persons Involved	Budgetary Requirements	Expected Outcomes
Many ALS learners discontinued their studies due to financial difficulties and transportation costs.	Provide transportation allowance, school supplies, feeding assistance, and livelihood support programs for ALS learners.	To reduce financial barriers affecting ALS learners' participation and completion.	Whole School Year	ALS Teachers, School Heads, LGU Officials, Barangay Officials, NGO Partners	Php.30,000.00	Increased attendance, participation, and retention of ALS learners.
Learners experienced schedule conflicts due to work and family responsibilities.	Implement flexible learning schedules, modular learning, and weekend- and community-based classes.	To accommodate working learners and learners with family obligations.	Every Semester	ALS Teachers, Instructional Managers, Community Volunteers	Php 30,000.00	Improved accessibility and continuity of learning among ALS learners.
Some learners experienced bullying, discrimination, and discouragement.	Conduct anti-bullying campaigns, peer support activities, and psychosocial support sessions.	To establish a safe, inclusive, and learner-friendly ALS environment.	Quarterly	Guidance Counselors, ALS Teachers, School Administrators, Peer Facilitators	Php.30,000.00	Improved learner confidence, emotional well-being, and sense of belongingness.
Supportive teachers and positive teaching practices motivated completers to persist in ALS.	Conduct capability training and professional development seminars for ALS teachers on inclusive and learner-centered instruction.	To strengthen teachers' competencies in motivating and supporting ALS learners.	Twice a Year	DepEd Supervisors, ALS Coordinators, ALS Teachers	Php.30,000.00	Enhanced instructional practices and stronger teacher-learner relationships.
Family and peer	Organize family orientation,	To strengthen	Quarterly	Parents, ALS Teachers,	Php.30,000.00	Increased emotional

encouragement positively influenced learner persistence.	parent engagement programs, and peer mentoring activities.	family and peer support systems among ALS learners.		Peer Mentors, Community Leaders		and social support for ALS learners.
Learners aspire to finish school, obtain decent jobs, and continue to college.	Conduct career guidance programs, college orientation, and skills/livelihood training.	To strengthen learners' aspirations and prepare them for employment or higher education.	Every End of Semester	Career Advocates, ALS Teachers, TESDA Representatives, College Partners	Php.30,000.00	Increased learner motivation, career readiness, and educational aspirations.
Limited access to nearby learning centers affected some learners' participation.	Establish satellite/community ALS learning hubs in distant barangays.	To improve accessibility of ALS programs for geographically challenged learners.	Annual Implementation	DepEd Officials, LGU Officials, Barangay Officials	Php.30,000.00	Increased enrollment and reduced absenteeism among ALS learners from remote areas.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. ALS completion was strongly influenced by learners' personal determination, perseverance, and educational aspirations. Learners who remained motivated and goal-oriented are more likely to overcome personal and socio-economic challenges and complete the ALS program.
2. Financial difficulties, family responsibilities, health concerns, bullying, and emotional struggles significantly contributed to learners' non-completion in the ALS program. These barriers limited learners' participation, motivation, and ability to sustain their studies.
3. Support systems from teachers, families, peers, communities, and institutions played an important role in strengthening learners' confidence, persistence, and engagement in ALS. Positive relationships and inclusive support mechanisms encouraged learners to continue despite difficulties.
4. Both completers and non-completers viewed education as a pathway toward personal growth, better employment opportunities, and improved family living conditions. Learners' aspirations for a better future continued to influence their educational decisions and goals.

5 Improving ALS conditions in Butuan City requires stronger learner- centered interventions, flexible learning arrangements, financial assistance, inclusive teaching practices, and strengthened institutional and community support systems that address the diverse needs and challenges of ALS learners.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are forwarded:

The Local Government Unit (LGU) offers scholarships to ALS Learners who are financially challenged and need to continue their ALS education.

School Administrators. They may strengthen the implementation of the Alternative Learning System by providing adequate instructional resources, establishing learner-friendly environments, supporting flexible learning arrangements, and intensifying monitoring and intervention programs to improve learner retention and completion.

ALS Teachers. They can continue to use inclusive, compassionate, and learner-centered teaching approaches while providing ongoing motivation, guidance, and emotional support to learners, strengthening their confidence, engagement, and persistence in the program.

ALS Learners. They may remain committed to pursuing their educational goals by developing perseverance, self-confidence, and positive attitudes toward learning while maximizing the support systems and opportunities available through the ALS program.

Community Stakeholders. They may strengthen partnerships and community-based support initiatives by providing financial assistance, learning resources, livelihood opportunities, and accessible educational support programs to help reduce barriers to ALS learners' participation and completion.

Future Researchers. They can conduct further studies focusing on learner retention strategies, instructional innovations, psychosocial support mechanisms, and intervention programs to generate additional evidence to support the continuous improvement of ALS implementation and learner completion.

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