

Intensification of Leadership, Rewards and Recognition through PROJECT SUCCESS (Solving Underserved ALS Completers through Collaboration, Extensive Learning Sessions and Self-Assessment)

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ABSTRACT

This paper offers a qualitative-quantitative descriptive research design involving the schools in the divisions of Agusan del Sur under Alternative Learning System (ALS) Accreditation and Equivalent (A and E) program. An adopted questionnaire from the Blake and Mouton Managerial Grid for Leadership Self-Assessment and a validated questionnaire for Recognition and Rewards was utilized. The respondents of this study were the mobile teachers (MTs) and district ALS coordinators (DALCs), the successful ALS A&E passers, and the division ALS supervisors (DALSSs). To verify and validate the respondents' answers, the researcher conducted an FGD to provide evidences of the implementers and to track if there is an improved quality of education through Project SUCCESS. This study concludes that the teacher implementers show a positive indication that the project was intensified and implemented with conscious effort, given the teachers' understanding of ALS program and competence of how it should be delivered to the learners. Likewise, student learners show a constructive response relative to ALS program. This therefore recommends that education sector can increase the depth and width of the impact assessment of ALS Program under the K to 12 program. Doing so can ensure the quality of the quantity of teachers and students that the education sector is aiming for.

KEYWORDS: Intensification, Leadership, Rewards, Recognition, Alternative Learning System

INTRODUCTION

“Alternative Learning System (ALS) is a subsystem of Department of Education (DepEd) that serves as an option of learners who cannot afford to go in a formal education.”

Talingdan et al., 2018

This connotes literacy of which ALS is the key answer to those who wish to pursue education even at the latter part of individuals age. As emphasized by McMullen of 2004, literacy is fundamental to the achievement of the quality of life of a person. Literacy is more than a basic reading ability, but rather an indication of how adults use written information to function in society.

Thereby, the Department of Education (DepEd) through ALS program serves students at any level, serves suspended or expelled students, serves students

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whose learning styles are better served in an alternative program, or provides individualized programs outside of a standard classroom setting in a caring atmosphere in which students learn the skills necessary to redirect their lives (Mercado, 2015). Through Accreditation and Equivalency Tests (A&E Tests) which is a nationally administered tests that aim to measure the competencies and life skills of those who have not attended or finished the formal elementary or secondary education, these assess the learners to obtain certification of completion at different exits in Basic Education, which may be used to access further education, job promotion, entry to job training, and employment.

Based on this premise, ALS Agusan del Sur worked for better performance to attain DepEd's Vision, Mission and Goals. A project was conceptualized

based on the result of A and E Passers in Elementary for three (3) consecutive years from 2015-2017. It revealed on the result that A & E elementary test passers had low passing rate. Moreover, it was found out during Focused Group Discussion (FGD) among ALS implementers in the division that DALCS and Mobile teachers have not met the exact contact hours with the learners due to the following reasons: learners are workers thus, they miss to attend classes; schedule of classes are not religiously followed due to some interruption of classes. Also, most of their community learning centers are temporary in nature, thus, learning environment are not conducive. Another factor is the learning materials and facilities are not sufficient. Likewise, community linkages are not strengthened thus; less support is very evident. Visibility to the assigned area are less evident as well. And instructional Supervision is less evident.

These reasons and all need intensification on the monitoring system through empowering, mentoring, coaching, benchmarking and rewarding mechanisms. This is based on principle of Leadership Rewards and Recognition. The study of Azardon and Nato's (2015) supports on different issues about ALS, for example, tied up the A&E takers' underperformance in the A&E examination to a problematic ALS system partly due to its usage of non-authentic and localized assessment tools. Pinca (2015), on the other hand, listed community-based instructional tools, delayed release of travel allowance, and lack of instructional tools while Fernandez (2013) took notice of proximity of the Community Learning Centers

(CLCs) to the target clientele as among those that need urgent action.

With these findings, project SUCCESS or "Solving Underserved ALS Completers through Collaboration, Extensive Learning Sessions and Self-Assessment" is conceptualized which aims to increase passing rate by 72% by the year 2020. Part of the approved project is to comprehensively conduct the functional literacy test, to equip DALCs and mobile teachers with appropriate strategies to diverse learners, to closely supervise the DALCs and mobile teachers through the use of monitoring tools and actual observation of ALS classes, to submit periodic accomplishment report monthly with attached self-reflections as part of their portfolio and to closely monitor the attendance of the learners, weekly learning log and learner's record of modules used. Thus, intensification of Project SUCCESS is a must.

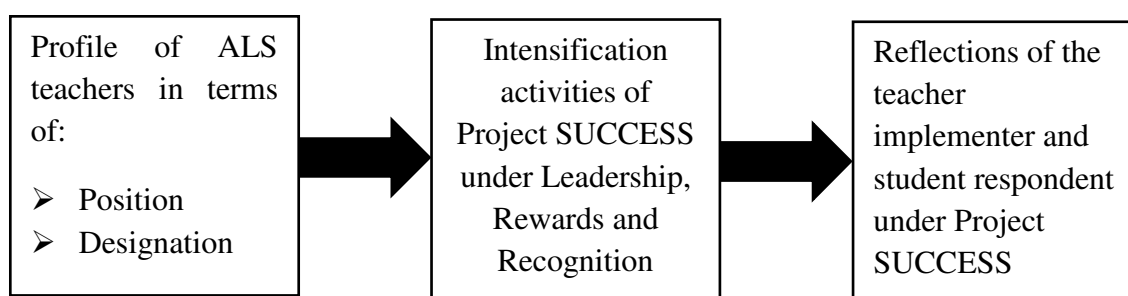
In order to attain the specific objectives of Project SUCCESS, the following action research questions were answered after its implementation:

1. What is the profile of ALS teachers in Agusan del Sur in terms of:
 - 1.1. Position; and
 - 1.2. Designation?
2. What are the intensification activities of Project SUCCESS under Leadership, Rewards and Recognition for teachers and learners?
3. What are the reflections of the teacher implementers and student respondents in the implementation of Project SUCCESS?

Conceptual Framework

This research is anchored on the claim that Project SUCCESS can intensify the ALS program in the division of Agusan del Sur through good leadership, giving of rewards and recognition. This is in response to provision of every individual with access to quality basic education to reduce illiteracy rate as envisioned in the Education for All (EFA) 2015 Philippine Plan of Action. Section 12.1 Rules XII of R.A 9155 stipulates that ALS is a parallel learning system to provide a viable alternative to the existing formal education instruction, encompassing both the non-formal and informal sources of knowledge and skills.

Thus, the following concepts are the roadmap in achieving the end goal of this present study:



Methods

This research study used the qualitative-quantitative descriptive research design involving the schools in the divisions of Agusan del Sur under ALS A&E program. An adopted questionnaire from the Blake and Mouton Managerial Grid for Leadership Self-Assessment and a validated questionnaire for the rewards and recognition

was floated to the respondents with an approved letter from the office of the Schools Division Superintendent. The respondents of this study were the mobile teachers (MTs) and district ALS coordinators (DALCs), the successful ALS A&E passers, and the division ALS supervisors (DALSSs). To verify and validate the respondents' answers, the researcher conducted an FGD to provide evidences of the implementers and to track if there is an improved quality of education through Project SUCCESS.

Results

Profile of ALS teachers and implementers in the division of Agusan del Sur

Table 1 Position

Position	Number of Teachers	Percentage
Teacher I	57	72.15
Teacher II	7	8.86
Teacher III	11	13.92
Master Teacher I	2	2.53
Master Teacher II	1	1.26
Head Teacher	1	1.26
Total	79	100

The table clearly illustrates that majority of ALS teacher are Teacher I with the percentage of 69.86%. This can imply that the teachers designated as ALS implementer should be assessed in terms of years in the service and educational attainment in order to be given reclassification and promotion. These actions are part of Project SUCCESS.

Table 2 Designation

Position	Number of Teachers	Percentage
Mobile Teacher	34	43.03
District ALCS	44	55.70
Division ALCS	1	1.26
Total	79	100

The table connotes that there are more numbers of District ALCS than Mobile Teachers with the percentage of 43.03%.

Intensification activities of Project SUCCESS under Leadership, Rewards and Recognition

Table 3 Leadership

		Mean	Interpretation	Qualifying Statement
1.	Dealing with fellow teachers	2.45	Highly Commendable	Project SUCCESS was attained to the fullest
2.	Dealing with students	2.37	Highly Commendable	Project SUCCESS was attained to the fullest

The results for leadership yield a highly commendable interpretation although it can be inferred that in dealing with students it has only 2.37 mean. This can be attributed to the challenges encountered by the teacher implementer. This negates in the study of Moralista and Delariarte (2014), which uphold that ALS Education is indeed very influential in cultivating cognitive abilities of the employed natives across learning areas among the IPs in Iloilo.

Table 4 Rewards

		Mean	Interpretation	Qualifying Statement
1.	Teachers	2.33	Commendable	Project SUCCESS was halfway attained
2.	Students	2.39	Highly Commendable	Project SUCCESS was attained to the fullest

The results for table 4 is very evident that rewards for teachers has only 2.33 as the mean score which is interpreted as commendable with a qualifying statement of halfway attained. The result can have an intrusion to the Basic Education Governance Act of 1991 defined Alternative Learning System (ALS) as "a parallel learning system to provide a viable alternative to the existing formal education instruction. It encompasses both the non-formal and informal sources of knowledge and skills." Through Executive Order 356, the Bureau of Non-formal Education (BNFE) became Bureau of Alternative Learning System (BALS) and its major purpose is to deliver quality education to the "deprived, depressed, and underserved" Filipinos. This means that they maybe have not fully understood their role as ALS implementer.

Table 5 Recognition

		Mean	Interpretation	Qualifying Statement
1.	Teachers	2.30	Commendable	Project SUCCESS was halfway attained
2.	Students	2.29	Commendable	Project SUCCESS was halfway attained

Based from the results, both teachers and students got 2.30 and 2.29 respectively as the mean score with an interpretation of commendable with a qualifying statement of halfway attained.

This implies that recognition for both groups should be strengthened and intensified.

Reflections of teacher implementers and student respondents in the implementation of Project SUCCESS

Teachers

After conducting an FGD, the following reflections of teachers were gathered:

K1 suggested,

We have to conduct religiously the Individual Learning Agreement (ILA) to determine learning needs and then conducts evaluation to determine the entry and exit level of learners using the functional literacy test and other ALS assessment tools.

K2 added,

We have to conduct technical assistance through coaching, mentoring observation of classes by ALS managers twice a month and submit intervention plan based on result gathered.

K3 emphasized,

We need to capacitate DALCs and mobile teachers on different strategies to diverse learners and conduct intensively Instructional Supervision.

K4 recommended,

We need to intensify the implementation of DEALING in ALS – the Division Banner Project of Advocacy and Social Mobilization is strengthened. It Includes Barangayan Festival, Kumustahansa ALS, Gulayansa ALS.

K6 strongly divulge,

We have to require DALC's and Mobile Teachers to conduct action research as part of their performance indicators.

K7 clinched with very striking reflection,

Teachers on field need motivation through Promotions and rewards based on performance. This will somehow motivate teachers to perform all her/his tasks. The conduct search for BEST ALS Implementers (Teacher and School Head Category) is an elated way to give recognition to all the hard works that the teachers are going through.

Students

Although not all of the learners who successfully passed the A and E test, but these comprehensive result of FGD gave a clear picture of their reflections in the intensification of Project SUCCESS.

K1 shared,

Perseverance is needed when you are in this program especially when you are married and have children. But with the help of my teachers I was able to make it. Salamat kayo!

K2 optimistically opined,

This piece of opportunity provides a rich learning environment for working student like me. It develops that necessary life skills needed to succeed in a continuing education program. One possibility for such working students is to provide alternative pathways so they can advance educationally.

K3 revealed,

The ones who would stand to benefit from the ALS classes and most likely would pass the AE test. But that is not enough, kinahanglan ug kakugi aronmahuman sap pageskwela.

Conclusion

The teacher implementers responses show a positive indication that the project was intensified and implemented with conscious effort, given the teachers' understanding of ALS program and competence of how it should be delivered to the learners. However, the indicators can only reveal what the teachers must do in the implementation, disregarding what they are 'actually' doing, taking into consideration the factors like actual experience on field. Likewise, student learners show a constructive response relative to ALS program.

Recommendations

The education sector can increase the depth and width of the impact assessment of ALS Program under the K to 12 programs. It is highly recommended that these assessments not be objective and focused on the programs alone, but also look into what this program in the grassroots following the standards that the teachers are doing on field. Doing so can ensure the quality of the quantity of teachers and students that the education sector is aiming for. Looking into the

constraints that confront teachers, the Department of Education can look into procedures that aid teachers to execute but not limited to their core function, instruction, by this the teachers might actually give time to perform with quality and efficiency other support functions.

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