

# Graduates of Alternative Learning System (ALS) and its relation to the acceptance rate in tertiary level on Sta. Cruz, Laguna

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## Abstract

Education is crucial for enhancing literacy skills and providing benefits to individuals, especially for those facing issues like gender, poverty, homelessness, disability, and ethnicity. This study aimed to determine the relationship between the readiness and acceptance rates of Alternative Learning System (ALS) graduates in Sta. Cruz Laguna. The study made use of self-made questionnaires. It consists of two parts: the first part is about the profile of the respondents; the second part consists of ten (10) items with a total of twenty (20) questions, wherein it addresses the preparedness rate and acceptance rate of the respondents. The study involved 35 ALS graduates from S.Y 2019–2022 who were, selected through purposive sampling. The results showed that ALS graduates have confidence in their readiness, believing their grades reflect their readiness. Students expressed satisfaction with the timely response to their requests and applications and accepted ALS certificates and other documents as acceptable forms of identification for enrolling in college. The study concluded that there is a significant relationship between readiness and acceptance rate in ALS graduates, indicating that the ALS program works well to prepare students for college and ensure a smooth transition. Educational institutions, such as the Department of Education and Commission on Higher Education, should provide financial assistance to ALS graduates, and teachers should undergo seminars and training to improve their knowledge and skills. Parents should also provide moral support to encourage their children to continue learning and exploring more experiences through the ALS program up to the tertiary level. Future research may explore the benefits of teaching and studying in ALS program and among its graduates.

*Keywords:* Alternative Learning System; graduates; tertiary; college

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## 1. Introduction

Education is more than just passing on knowledge from one person to another. Enhancing literacy skills which happens mostly inside the classroom is important as it provides various benefits to an individual. Learning for youth who struggle with issues like gender, poverty, homelessness, disability, and ethnicity is a major difficulty in the Philippines and other countries. Unfortunately, these children tend to miss out on receiving quality education because of challenges like their families' financial status, long commutes to school, safety concerns, and tendency to work at a very young age.

Everyone has the right to free basic education; the Philippine government intends to provide a proper education for its citizens. A comprehensive plan was made to address the growing concern, especially the out-of-school youth and adults. One of the plans that the Governance Act for Basic Education has developed is the Alternative Learning System a flexible learning system, it is a practical option for students who are unable to pursue their studies, dropouts, and for those who do not have schools in their communities, since the knowledge and skills it offers are based on the formal and non-formal which is beneficial for their learning and growth.

Added by the Philippine Department of Education to expand the ALS program cooperation with non-governmental organizations to serve the purposes of the warranty program; All individuals, particularly natives and marginalized people, have access to quality informal jobs education and skills training. The program resides in the same building as the school. In some circumstances, the government or private non-governmental groups pay for the submission of instructions from trainers in public halls and private venues.

### *1.1. Background of the Study*

Alternative education systems have grown in its significance because they give free education to young people, broaden their knowledge, and increase their capacity to learn a variety of disciplines. Due to budgetary constraints, some students who take advantage of this chance drop out. The challenges this youth frequently experience when independent schools far from home are their parents lack of support financially and emotionally. These youth also experience lack of encouragement and motivation which lead them to spiral down in depression. The Councilor of Binan, Municipality of Barangay Loma in Laguna, supports the effort aimed at preventing youths from becoming "tambay" in their localities or at home. This encourages young people to get proper education and discourages young people from doing drugs, consuming alcohol, smoking, and engaging in other harmful behaviors. Through the Basic Education Governance Act of 2001, the Department of Education (DepEd) incorporates Alternative Learning Systems (ALS) for Out-of-School Youth and Adult Learners. The goal of this act is to safeguard and promote all citizens' rights to a quality basic education, as well as to offer free obligatory elementary education and free high school education to all Filipino children. The program plays a vital role to those people who dreams of getting elementary and high school diplomas they are hoping that it will help to suppress the growing population of out-of-school youth. The Alternative Learning System curriculum serves as the foundation for the teaching and learning procedures and resources.

The Governing Basic Education Act, also known as Republic Act 9155, requires the construction of Alternative Learning Systems (ALS) to offer basic education outside of school for children, youth, and adults of all demographics and/or social and economic standing.

Alternative learning systems are parallel learning systems that provide a viable alternative to current formal education by using both informal and non-formal sources of information and skills (Section 12.1 Regulation XII, R.A. 9155). Informal education attempts to give learning experiences based on people' or groups' common needs and interests, including civic, spiritual, socioeconomic, cultural, recreational, and health elements. In contrast, informal education refers to systematic or organized types of learning that occur outside of the regular school system.

Contrary to the traditional schools in the Philippines, ALS provides greater choice in terms of time, module selection, sequencing, location, content, and learning techniques, according to Bumanglag. ALS provides lessons in Community Learning Centers (CLCs) rather than traditional classrooms. CLCs can be found in any accessible location, such as barangay halls, churches, sports facilities, roadways, and so on.

### *1.2. Statement of the Problem*

This research aims to determine the status of graduated Alternative Learning System (ALS) students after taking the program. Specifically, this study will answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of readiness of Alternative Learning System (ALS) towards tertiary level?
2. What is the acceptance rate of Graduates in ALS at tertiary level?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the level of readiness and acceptance rate of ALS Graduates?

### 1.3. Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to identify the acceptance rate of graduates in Alternative Learning System (ALS) in tertiary level in Sta. Cruz Laguna as well as their readiness when they finished the program. The researchers want to see if the subjects taken in ALS helps the graduates to cope in Tertiary Level.

This study aims to determine the following objectives:

1. To identify readiness of graduates in Alternative Learning System (ALS) towards tertiary level;
2. To determine the acceptance rate of graduates in Alternative Learning System (ALS) as they finished the program;
3. To evaluate if there a significant relationship between the level of readiness and acceptance rate of ALS graduates in tertiary level.

### 1.4. Hypothesis of the Study

This study postulates the given hypothesis:

There is no significant relationship between the readiness of graduates of Alternative Learning System and its Acceptance Rate to Tertiary Level.

### 1.5. Significance of the Study

**Social Action** - Its ability to address inequality in education and foster societal inclusion. Through the examination of ALS programs' effectiveness and impact on marginalized communities, this study can better advise educators and policymakers on how to develop and carry out interventions that meet the needs of a variety of learners. This may result in the creation of more inclusive educational practices and policies, which would empower individuals from underserved populations to access quality education and improve their socio-economic prospects.

**Policy** - This research can guide the crafting of policies aimed at facilitating the transition of ALS graduates into tertiary institutions, including the implementation of bridging programs, provision of financial aid, and enhancement of academic support services. Additionally, analyzing the impact of ALS on acceptance rates in higher education can provide policymakers with insights into the necessity of addressing biases and obstacles that may hinder the admission of ALS graduates to universities. By elucidating the connection between ALS and tertiary acceptance rates within the policy context, this study can enhance decision-making processes and the formulation of policies that foster fairness, diversity, and educational accessibility for all students.

**Practices** - It offers valuable insights into effective teaching methodologies, learner engagement strategies, and program management techniques. By studying ALS practices, educators and policymakers can identify best practices that optimize learning outcomes for non-traditional students, such as out-of-school youth and adult learners. Additionally, this research contributes to the continuous improvement of ALS and supports its mission of providing accessible and inclusive education opportunities for marginalized populations.

### 1.6. Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study focused on the acceptance rate of ALS graduates in Tertiary Level in Six (6)

Barangays of Sta. Cruz, Laguna which are Bagumbayan, Calios, Sto. Anghel Norte, Santisima, Patimbao, and Pagsawitan. There were selected respondents in each ALS Centers: ALS Center Bagumbayan, ALS Center Calios, ALS Center Sto. Anghel Norte, ALS Center Santisima, ALS Center Patimbao and ALS Center Pagsawitan with a total of thirty-five (35) ALS graduates. The ALS graduates for school year 2019 — 2020 and 2021 - 2022 were respondents of this study. Researchers used self-made and standardized questionnaires in data gathering.

### *1.7. Definition of Terms*

**Acceptance Rate.** It is the percentage of students that a school admits to their incoming class based on the total number of students that applied.

**Alternative Learning System (ALS).** The educational system in the Philippines for out-of-school youth and adults (OSYA) that wants to complete their primary and secondary education.

**Dropout.** Students who did not continue finishing their studies.

**Out-of-school youth.** Students who are not enrolled and stopped studying under the K-12 program.

**Readiness.** Is an individual's condition where they were physically, mentally, and emotionally ready.

**Tertiary education.** refers to structures, programs and resources aimed at educating students from an undergraduate to postgraduate level.

## **2. Review of Related Literature and Studies**

Following a careful and in-depth search, all relevant literature and studies are presented in this chapter. The synthesis, theoretical and conceptual framework are also in this chapter.

### *2.1. Implementation of Alternative Learning System*

Education is crucial in practically every country on the globe. Given that each country has its own educational system, most countries share a common notion or equivalent certification. In the Philippines, the law mandates thirteen years of schooling. The K-12 program lasts thirteen years, starting in kindergarten and finishing in grade 12. Students can then select whether to continue their education. However, the number of children who are out of school continues to increase in the Philippines.

Establishing a learning environment that motivates students to remain in school as opposed to dropping out or re-enrolling is a more focused objective. Adaptation, strong behavioral support, self-control, and mental wellness may all be beneficial for ALS students. Students will receive extensive training and remediation to ensure that they achieve institutional and national graduation requirements. It offers students a unique opportunity to meet the same high levels of education as everyone else (F. A. Salendab, 2022).

The ALS program, overseen by the Department of Education (DepEd), seeks to provide underprivileged, depressed, and unserved (DDUs) Filipinos with a basic education (Lua, 2020). The Alternative Learning System (ALS) was established by the Governance Act for Basic Education, commonly referred to as Republic Act 9155, to offer basic education to the population of children, youth, and adults who are not enrolled in school. To maintain the government's commitment to provide its citizens with quality education, one of the Philippine governments sectors that routinely receives the most funding is constituents with the same access to high-quality education (Department of Budget and Management, 2020). Moreover, Executive Order No. 356 states that ALS plays a vital role in helping school dropouts build their human capital, enhance their chances of finding jobs, and achieve better long-term educational achievements. According to the World Bank Group (2018), illiteracy continues to be a significant obstacle to poverty

reduction, and lifetime wages are strongly connected to educational attainment across nations and regions. Secondary school is a critical stage in many students' lives since it prepares them for higher education, technical and vocational training programs, and formal employment. However, half of Filipino pupils do not finish the whole primary school cycle. Currently, only 80% of Filipino pupils finish the sixth grade, and only one-third drop out before their tenth grade. These children frequently lack formal schooling and continue to work in low-wage, low-security professions. Dropout reduction is a primary objective for the Department of Education, but more may be done to improve dropouts' education and career prospects.

President Rodrigo Duterte has signed legislation establishing an alternative education system for disadvantaged out-of-school children and adults. Basic learning is needed for adolescents and school-age children. It also enables chances for lifelong learning based on the ALS K-12 scale. The Bureau of Alternative Education (BAE) was formed under the new law to act as the hub of DepEd's ALS program and to perform micro-certifications for ALS K through 12 subsets of skills.

The main objective of the Alternative Learning System (ALS), according to Bacal (2021), is to eliminate illiteracy among school dropouts, out-of-school children, youths, and adults, as well as among those who are deprived of education, to enable them to complete their elementary and secondary education outside of the regular educational system. One of the goals of ALS, according to a different study, was to provide opportunities to children, teenagers, and adults who, for various reasons, could not profit from formal education. Creating a learning environment that inspires students to pursue their education rather than giving up or re-enrolling dropouts is a more focused objective. Adaptability, strict behavioral support, self-control, and emotional support may be beneficial for ALS students. Students will get extensive training and remediation to help them fulfill institutional and national graduation requirements. It provides kids with a unique opportunity to meet the same high standards of education as everyone else (F. A. Salendab, 2022).

## 2.2. Alternative Learning System (ALS)

DepEd Order 13, Series 2019 (Policy Guidelines for the Implementation of Enhanced Alternative Learning Systems 2.0) mandates that SHS levels be incorporated in ALS programs beginning in 2019. In the context of formal education, it is equivalent to grades 11 and 12. This assures that all ALS students have the necessary skills for work, entrepreneurship, intermediate skills, and higher education. For Filipino students, the Alternative Learning System (ALS) offers a formal education environment. Lifelong learners, or those who have completed high school and meet the qualifications for the ALS program, can now enroll in educational institutions to continue their studies. The Department of Education in the Philippines offers a parallel learning system called the Alternative Learning System (ALS) as an alternative to standard formal education. Its objective is to give Filipino youth and adults who are not in school access to basic education (Estrada C, A, M, et al., 2019). The free tertiary education policy, on the other hand, prepares the way for lifelong learners and other students who desire to continue teaching and studying in higher education. Academic accomplishment, as a measure of gained knowledge, is thus the common denominator of these factors.

The program increased the respondents' quality of life as they continued to investigate the meaning and purpose of life. This demonstrates how children may study and acquire life skills outside of the official education system. It is an opportunity for individuals who wish to better their standard of living and get out of poverty. Different national policies institutionalize alternative systems for awarding credentials.

The Philippine government's response to evaluating students' educational quality is the Alternative Learning System. Its goals were to increase the functional literacy and enrollment rate in schools of the deprived, destitute, and disadvantaged Filipino population (Walag A, M, P, & Fajardo M, T, M., 2020). Governments should give material and financial resources to continue ALS programs as an alternative to the traditional education system. To transition young people from school to school and complete their education, it is necessary to promote stakeholder engagement and, as a result, strengthen governance to improve literacy. Effective program execution necessitates strong stakeholder support and collaboration, as



well as the participation of students and mobile instructors.

The ALS program aims to increase educational possibilities for Filipinos with a wide range of interests, talents, financial means, and social standing, while simultaneously addressing the needs of underprivileged populations. ALS provides a ray of hope to the most fortunate by dramatically lowering the length and cost of high school education. Furthermore, it provides professional development for teaching personnel and coordinators, as well as assistance to students with accreditation tests and equivalents.

In the Philippines, an education program called the Alternative Learning System (ALS) seeks to improve the knowledge and skills of adults and children who are not enrolled in school. Its objective is to support children who have never had the chance to attend school or who have dropped out.

Because of various reasons such as natural calamities and the lack of schools in the community. The learners who are having a hard time attending regular formal education, ALS stands as their choice to reestablish their educational goals in life (Amparado, Ruiz, Pilapil, et.al, 2019). Reforms have been implemented to broaden the program's operations and enhance its efficacy. The redesigned ALS is now part of the K-12 Basic Education Curriculum, and a five-year strategic roadmap to further enhance the program has been developed. Overall, ALS has been effective in giving its members a second opportunity at school and in improving their lives.

According to Guerrero and Pablo (2018), the Alternative Education System in the Philippines is critical because it allows those who are unable to attend regular school to continue their education. It is a distinct type of learning that takes place outside of traditional classrooms. The government intends to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to learn, regardless of where they reside or whether they have completed normal schooling. Students can study whenever they choose under the alternative system.

The learners who are having a hard time attending regular formal education, ALS stands as their choice to reestablish their educational goals in life (Amparado, Ruiz, Pilapil, et.al, 2019).

### 2.3. Readiness

The set of abilities, knowledge, and behaviors that a high school graduate should possess when they start their first year of college is known as college readiness. It all comes down to being able to succeed while attending a higher education institution.

College preparation, according to Wignall (2020), is one of the criteria that define educational quality, curriculum adequacy, and secondary school personnel competency. Alternative education, according to Annabelle Moffat and Stewart Riddle (2021), aids marginalized young people who require additional education and training by providing them with skills, confidence, and attitudes that help generate good chances and outcomes. Assist them in acquiring the necessary skills and qualifications.

It was also discovered that the study's orientation greatly affected and predicted college readiness. They suggest that graduates of ALS should refine and strengthen their methods of studying and thinking. For ALS graduates to improve their college readiness, it is truly an essential skill (Mamba, Tamayao, Vecaldo, et al., 2021). Understanding how alternative school environments, resources, and expectations affect children's preparation is crucial to investigate the extra help and materials needed to ensure a youngster is ready for participation in alternative school programs (Davis-Brown L., 2021). It is also believed that other than the learner's skills and knowledge gained from studying under the ALS program, Affective traits were also developed, which play an essential role so that the students will be prepared not only when it comes to the cognitive domain

(Ravina, 2022). This is the reason why, in pursuit of dreams and their chosen profession, there are ALS learners who believe that attending classes through ALS and complying with the program requirements

may lead them to be ready to achieve their chosen careers (Ruiz, Pilapil, Rule, et. al, 2019).

It would be beneficial to find out more about the connections between various school readiness factors and subsequent student welfare, especially considering the growing emphasis on student wellbeing as a crucial educational outcome. Intervention initiatives that improve mental health, wellbeing, and school preparation in early childhood settings and schools could then be informed by this knowledge. Previous research has shown an association between measures of student wellbeing in later childhood and early indicators of school readiness, such as internalizing/externalizing behaviors, fine and gross motor skills, and language abilities (Chow and Wehby 2018; Green et al. 2019). However, few studies combine multiple indicators of student wellbeing and school readiness in a single study.

To ensure that the learners are ready, ALS implementation requires the help of the teacher to enhance their knowledge and skills. As the learners said, teachers having highly positive teaching and learning management strategies help them successfully understand the lesson (Abad & Galleto, 2020). According to Lancaster and Lundberg (2019) faculty conduct had a major impact on students' learning, with full-time, more experienced faculty members engaging in learning-enhancing activities more often than temporary or less skilled faculty members. Students may be unaware of accessible resources or unwilling to use the resources (Garcia et al., 2019; Moreno, 2019; Schademan & Thompson, 2016). According to research that has switched its focus from university preparedness to learners' readiness, universities must be equipped to meet students' intellectual, social, and emotional needs. This helps students feel better and more like they belong, which makes it easier for them to connect with the college and stick with it through graduation.

In accordance with the study, ALS graduates who are accepted into colleges need assistance in adjusting to the academic rigors of college, as seen by their poor study habits and lack of college preparation. It demonstrates that study orientation is regarded as a reliable indicator of college preparedness in addition to confirming that study orientation is highly connected to readiness for college. Therefore, developing productive study habits and attitudes is a crucial component of preparing for college and achieving future academic success. In addition, the study's findings demonstrate how non-cognitive factors like study orientation complement cognitive skills in making students college ready. DepEd needs to improve ALS students' study habits in this aspect to ensure a smooth transition from basic to higher education (Mamba M, et al, 2021). According to Arciosa, Perfecio, and Cerado (2022), utilizing improved instructional materials for a diverse group of students is essential to meeting the standards when stepping to another level. Additionally, excellent classroom assessment techniques can assist ALS teachers in efficiently checking the learners' understanding in real time (Besmonte, 2023).

#### 2.4. Acceptance Rate

According to the Department of Education (DepEd) (2018), one of the hurdles for ALS graduates is enrolling directly in college. The learners may enroll immediately in any public or private institution if they have completed the A&E Tests HS Level in 2018 and so in the preceding years, including those learners who took the examination in 2019. This establishes whether ALS graduates are entitled to K–12 coverage and must complete senior high school. The guideline also states that they are free to do so if they so desire, since DepEd understands that some ALS students may still wish to complete senior high.

With the implementation of the Alternative Learning System in Basic Education in the Philippines (Republic Act 11510) in December 2020, conflict-affected communities, adults, and out-of-school children will have access to a structured and flexible basic education program. Some students have even graduated from college in one of the districts in Laguna, Philippines, where the Nagcarlan Department of Education has an immense passion for the program.

Researchers discovered that graduate students from alternative education systems who enroll in college had trouble dealing with college instruction. The same is true for ALS alumni who are now attending Philippine Advent College. They struggle because they lack the abilities that informal methods

of learning English lack to communicate effectively in a classroom setting. As a result, the researchers intended to undertake a study to identify and address the issues experienced by Alternative

### *2.5. Learning Systems (ALS) graduates of English Secondary Education (EMI) at private schools.*

The application for tertiary level emerges, which makes the school process admissions thoroughly. The students who are pursuing admission put in more effort to ensure admission. (College Matchpoint, 2023). Additionally, from 2019–2020, an increase in enrollment from public colleges and universities rolled up to 24%, compared to 17% for private institutions (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022). In 2022, the acceptance rate became competitive for students. (Selingo, 2022). And for learners to be accepted at the tertiary level, Canque, Derasin, and Pinatil (2021) believed that pre-college skills and intellectual abilities were required for college students to face challenges.

Republic Act No. 11510, also referred to as the Alternative Learning System Act, ensures that learners have equitable access to education and that they can pursue further education after passing the accreditation and equivalency assessment (Parrocha, 2021). The law ensures that there will be no learners left behind, and the rise in acceptance rate was confirmed because of the improvement of the Presentation Portfolio Assessment (PPA), wherein 71.42 passed the assessment, which makes them qualified to pass another school year level according to DepEd (Malipot, 2022).

### *2.6. Theoretical Framework*

This study is based on the following theories, which form the basis of research:

Law of Learning in Thorndike Theory in discussing law of learning of Thorndike, there are three mains concept; those are Law of Readiness, Law of Exercise, and Law of Effect. Based on Thorndike, there are some conditions that appear in law of readiness such as: first, if there is a preference to act and people want to do it, they will be satisfied. In consequence, they will do not act other behavior, and it will result unsatisfied. Second, if there is inclination to act, but people do want to do that, they will replace with other action to lack of their unsatisfied. And, third if there is no tendency to act, but people are forced to do that, it will result unsatisfied. Law of readiness has an implication that every person acquires changing of behavior, and in its implication of this behavior result a satisfaction, then the association will be strengthened. This theory state that learning is an activity that form association or connection between an impression of five sense and tends to act.

The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) believes that schools should teach students how to become better human beings. They should be guided by values that can help assure that the evolution of humanity will continue. Therefore, the fundamental educational objective of the CTL is the inculcation of the values of integrity, solidarity and creativity. This is an ALS theory which is also related to the campaign of “Education for All” that the ALS gives to the out-of-school youth and adults (OSYA).

This theory was designed to assist individuals with adequate coping mechanisms to adapt to change. As with Conley (2018) this theory emphasizes the individual’s role and the support mechanisms as well as the strategies to succeed. However, an important aspect considered by Schlossberg is to include the type of situation that is being experienced. In relation to this study, this model can be used to understand the transition from high school to a tertiary institution and the mechanisms needed to be adequately prepared, which in turn promotes academic success.

This has a connection between the ALS graduates from the transition of being an ALS student and their readiness/preparedness towards a tertiary institution.



## 2.7. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 depicted the conceptual model showing the relationship between the independent and dependent variables of the study.

The left frame quadrate is the independent variables which include the level of readiness, and the acceptance rate of the graduates in Alternative Learning System (ALS). The right frame quadrate contains the dependent variables, which shows the relationship between readiness and acceptance rate of ALS graduates in tertiary level. Furthermore, it proposed a typology showing the relationship between the two components. This showed the relationship between the readiness and the acceptance rate in tertiary level.

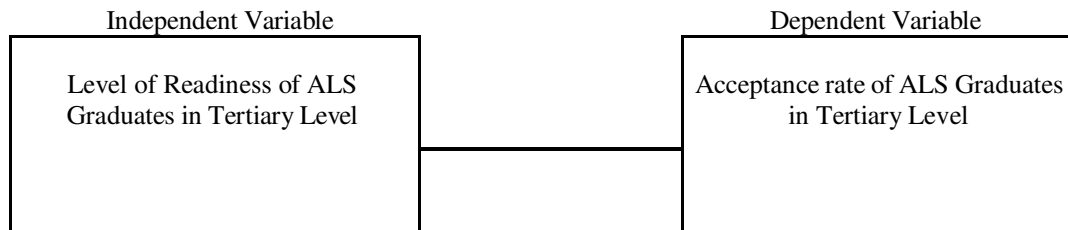


Figure 1. Research Paradigm of the Study

## 2.8. Synthesis

The Alternative Learning System (ALS)'s major goal is to end illiteracy among out-of-school children, youths, and adults who were school dropouts, as well as those who were denied access to education and want to finish their elementary and secondary education outside of the regular school system. They receive targeted support for learning and acting in an appropriate manner as well as for feeling confident in themselves. As they continued to look into the meaning and purpose of life, the program improved the respondents' quality of life. This exemplifies how students can learn and develop life skills outside of the formal educational system. The aim is for them to complete high school, just like everyone else. As they finish the ALS program, those who passed the A&E Tests HS Level are eligible to enroll directly in college in any public or private tertiary institution. However, there still are findings that ALS graduates have negative and weak study orientation and are not college ready. They imply that ALS graduates must improve and enhance their study habits and their way of thinking and was found to strongly influence and predict college preparation. Regarding this, reforms have been implemented to broaden the program's operations and enhance its efficacy. Through this, some ALS graduates are able to receive their college degree as well.

## 3. Research Methodology

This chapter reveals the methods of research employed by the researchers in conducting the study which includes the research design, research locale, population of the study, sampling design, research instruments, data gathering procedure, and treatment of data.

### 3.1. Research Design

For this study, quantitative research design was used. The quantitative approach refers to information that can be expressed as numbers and is easy to understand and quantify (Coldwell and Herbst, 2021)

The researchers utilized the mixed method of research to gather relevant information regarding

on the graduates of Alternative Learning System (ALS) and its relation to the acceptance rate in Tertiary Level in six (6) Barangay at Sta.Cruz, Laguna and use this data to know if there is an effect in terms of the graduate's readiness and challenges.

It is structured in nature and compatible in statistical analysis. The study used descriptive survey design that collects data that are conducted via survey, Voxco (2021). The researcher then describes, analyzes, and interprets the information provided by the graduates in accordance with the objectives of the study.

### 3.2. Research Locale

The research is conducted in six (6) Barangays in Sta.Cruz Laguna namely, Bagumbayan, Calios, Santisima, Sto. Anghel Norte, Patimbao and Pagsawitan. The researchers administered questionnaires to the selected respondents of Alternative Learning System (ALS) graduates during the school year 2019- 2020 and 2021-2022.



**Figure 2. Location of ALS Centers in Sta. Cruz, Laguna**

### 3.3. Population of the Study

In this study 35 respondents who were ALS graduates from the six different learning centers/barangays during A.Y 2019-2020 and A.Y 2021-2022 were picked through purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is a widely used method in research where individuals or groups having knowledge or experience relevant to an investigation are selected. Availability and willingness of potential participants also play important roles in selecting them (Palinkas et al., 2015).

The researchers used quantitative method research to get the population. In this study the Alternative Learning System (ALS) graduates from six (6) Barangays in Sta.cruz namely, Bagumbayan, Calios, Santisima, Sto.Anghel Norte, Patimbao, and Pagsawitan were determined as the population of the study area. The graduates of Alternative Learning System (ALS) analyzed their experiences in applying on the tertiary level from their readiness and challenges after finishing ALS which is needed in this study.

### 3.4. Research Instrument

Each graduate completed two (2) sets of questionnaires as part of the research instrument. Part I included a profile of the respondents; Part II, was consisted of ten (10) items with a total of twenty (20) questions that addressed the (A) preparedness rate and (B) acceptance rate. The first part required responses using a rating scale to determine whether respondents always, sometimes, or never based on the given statements. This self-made survey was reviewed by three (3) validators.

### 3.5. Data Gathering Procedure

Prior to giving out the questionnaires, the researchers wrote a letter of request to the school principal of the Santa Cruz Elementary School where the main office of ALS is located, to seek permission to get the number of graduates in Alternative Learning System (ALS) on the six (6) Barangay in Santa Cruz, Laguna. Furthermore, the researchers also provided consent letter to the teachers of the pupils. The researchers did not include the teachers or students who declined to take part in the study. Teachers and pupils who gave their permission but chose not to participate were not compelled to do so. The researchers gave a detailed explanation to the respondents about the confidentiality of their participation. They can be assured that the information they give will be kept secure and utilized just for the research. For the researchers to be informed about when the students will be in the school learning center, they closely coordinate with the teachers. To achieve a high return percentage of responses, the researchers individually handed the questions to the respondents and immediately gathered the questionnaires after the participants had finished responding. The questionnaires were promptly collected, added up, calculated, analyzed, and evaluated after the respondents had responded to the instrument.

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### 3.6. Treatment of Data

The research used the following statistical treatment to determine the effects of readiness and challenges to the level of acceptance rate of the graduates in six (6) Barangay in Sta. Cruz Laguna using mean and frequency distribution.

1. The researchers used the formula of mean to identify the readiness of the selected graduates in six (6) Barangay in Sta. Cruz Laguna.

Using the Formula:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum fx}{n}$$

$\bar{x}$  = mean ( $\bar{x}$  bar)

$n$  = total number of items in the sample

$x$  = the observed value/value of each item

$f$  = frequency

$\sum$  = summation notation (means the sum of)

2. The researchers used standard deviation to measure the dispersion of a data set relative to its mean.

$$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum (x - \bar{x})^2}{n - 1}}$$

3. Pearson  $r$  was used to test the significant relationship between readiness of the students of ALS and their acceptance rate in tertiary education.

$$r = \frac{n(\sum xy) - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[n \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2][n \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

4. The researchers will also use the formula Spearman  $\rho$  to determine the relationship between the readiness of ALS Graduates and the acceptance rate in tertiary level.

$$r_s = 1 - \frac{6 \sum D^2}{n(n^2 - 1)}$$

#### 4. Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation of Data

This chapter presents the data gathered, the results of the statistical analysis done and interpretation of findings. These are presented in tables following the sequence of the specific research problem regarding the graduates of Alternative Learning System (ALS) and Its Relation to the Acceptance Rate in Tertiary Level on Sta. Cruz, Laguna.

Table 1. Level of Readiness of Graduates in Alternative Learning System

Level of Readiness		
* 4 . 2 0 - 5	Composite Mean	Interpretation
	4.64	Very High

4.20-5.00.00 =Very High, 3.40-4.19 = High, 2.60-3.39 =Average, 1.80-2.59 = Low, 1.00-1.79 = Very Low

The findings from Table 1 revealed a significant level of readiness among graduates of the Alternative Learning System (ALS). With a composite mean of 4.64 and a verbal interpretation of "very high," it is evident that these graduates possess a strong preparedness for tertiary education. This conclusion is supported by the statements extracted from the data. The ALS graduate's expressed confidence in their readiness through statements such as believing that their grades accurately reflect their preparedness and having a distinct desire to succeed in college. Moreover, their belief in performing well in their chosen degree and their conviction in enrolling in the current semester indicates a high level of confidence. The activities, training, and experiences gained from ALS classes further contribute to their ability to adapt successfully to the challenges of tertiary education. Overall, these findings emphasize the effectiveness of the ALS program in cultivating a solid foundation and instilling the necessary skills and mindset for graduates to excel academically at the college level.

Alternative education, according to Annabelle Moffat and Stewart Riddle (2021), aids marginalized young people who require additional education and training by providing them with skills, confidence, and attitudes that help generate good chances and outcomes. Assist them in acquiring necessary skills and qualifications. The Alternative Learning System was established to provide other opportunities to study for out-of-school youth, they help to develop the basic and functional literacy skills of an individual. The objectives of ALS were achieved especially when it comes to literacy skills, and these were confirmed by the respondents themselves. To prove it, a Magna Cum Laude from Katipunan Arakan, Cotabato was interviewed, and stated, "A former teacher persuades her to study again through ALS, and she did everything to complete the modules with the guidance of the teacher" (Guimalon, T. S., Sandigan, D. A., Dinlna, S. G. (2022). ALS implementation requires the help of the teacher to enhance the knowledge and skills of the students for them to be ready in facing the next grade level.

Table 2. Acceptance Rate of the Students of Alternative Learning System

Acceptance Rate	
Composite Mean	Interpretation
4.51	Very High

\*4.20-5.00 =Very High, 3.40-4.19 = High, 2.60-3.39 =Average, 1.80-2.59 = Low, 1.00-1.79 = VeryLow



The acceptance rate of students from the Alternative Learning System (ALS) is detailed in Table 2. The composite mean of 4.51 in the data reflects an extraordinarily high acceptance rate. This observation is supported by a number of data points. Students say they are happy with the way in which they were informed about course modifications and believe that their marks accurately reflect their readiness. They also like the administrative and academic staff's promptness in responding to their inquiries and applications. Additionally, it is seen to be advantageous for students to be knowledgeable about the topic combinations needed for their selected degree programs.

Graduates of ALS believe they have the freedom to select the courses or programs they want and are confident in their ability to adhere to university admission requirements. They also accept ALS certificates and other documents as accepted forms of identification for college enrollment. The claim emphasizing the effect of financial circumstance on admission rates ( $WM = 3.71$ ,  $SD = 1.38$ ) offers the least amount of evidence for the acceptance rate of ALS students.

The results strongly suggest that applicants to higher institutions who have successfully completed the Alternative Learning System (ALS) have a very high acceptance rate. According to the results, ALS successfully prepares students for university study as shown by their sense of preparedness, the accessibility of pertinent material, and the responsiveness of university staff. The acceptance of ALS diplomas and the opportunity to select chosen courses serve as another proof of the graduates of ALS's effective integration into tertiary institutions. The lack of emphasis on how socioeconomic circumstances affect acceptance rates, however, emphasizes the importance of addressing the difficulties experienced by economically disadvantaged students. These results demonstrate the ALS program's success in assisting students' acceptance and easy transfer of its students into higher education institutions.

According to the World Bank Group (2018), a substantial percentage, or an average of 60%, of people who finish ALS and pass the Accreditation and Equivalency (A&E) exam continue to pursue tertiary education.

The Balay Rehabilitation Center acknowledged 26 students from its Alternative Education Center for successfully completing the Department of Education's accreditation and equivalency test for students who have finished the Alternative Education System (ALS) program. 37% of all students presently enrolled in the Balay ALS program passed the exam. Thirty percent of those who graduate continue their education in the formal school system, receive technical education, or seek better jobs.

**Table 3.** Relationship between Readiness and Acceptance Rate of Students of Alternative Learning System (ALS)

		Shapiro- Wilk	p- value	Spearman's rho ( $r_s$ )	p - value	Interpretation	Analysis
Level of	Acceptance	0.932	0.035	0.459	0.006	Moderate	Significant
Readiness	Rate						

\*p – value < 0.05 is significant.

\*The strength of  $r$  is interpreted as follows. 0-0.2 = very weak, 0.2-0.4 = weak, 0.4-0.6 = moderate, 0.6-0.8 = strong, 0.8-1 = very strong.

Table 3 shows the result of the test for bivariate normality. Based on the results, the pairwise distribution of readiness and acceptance rate is not multivariate normal,  $p\text{-value} < 0.05$ . Hence, the non-parametric equivalent of Pearson  $r$  was used to test for the significant relationship between readiness of the students of ALS and their acceptance rate in tertiary education.

Based on the results of the test for significant monotonic relationship between readiness and acceptance rate found in Table 3, there is a significant positive, moderate and monotonic relationship between readiness and acceptance rate of the students of ALS,  $r_s = 0.459$ ,  $p\text{-value} < 0.05$ . This suggests that an increase in the level of readiness of the students of ALS is associated with an increase in the level of acceptance rate of the students of ALS in college. This means that as ALS students become more prepared, their chances of being accepted into college also increase.

Table 1 revealed a high level of readiness among ALS graduates, as evident from their positive statements about preparedness, belief in academic success, and desire to excel in college. Additionally, Table 2 demonstrated a notably high acceptance rate among ALS students, considering factors such as effective communication, faculty responsiveness, and the validity of ALS certificates.

Essentially, these results demonstrate that ALS graduates have a solid foundation and readiness for college. The positive monotonic relationship between readiness and acceptance rate indicates that as ALS students improve their readiness level, they become more likely to be accepted into college. This emphasizes the effectiveness of the ALS program in preparing students for higher education and ensuring a successful transition into college.

The study's orientation was also found to significantly influence and predict college readiness. They imply that ALS graduates must improve and enhance their study habits and their way of thinking. It is really an essential skill needed for ALS graduates to raise their college readiness (Mamba, Tamayao, Vecaldo, et. al, 2021). It is also believed that other than the learner's skills and knowledge gained from studying under the ALS program, Affective traits were also developed, which play an essential role so that the students will be prepared not only when it comes to the cognitive domain (Ravina, 2022). This is the reason, in pursuit of dreams and their chosen profession, there are ALS learners who believe that attending classes through ALS and complying with the program requirements may lead them to be ready to achieve their chosen careers (Ruiz, Pilapil, Rule, et. al, 2019).

## 5. Summary of Findings, Conclusions, Recommendations

This chapter presents the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study, which centered on the graduates of Alternative Learning System and its relation to the acceptance rate in tertiary level in Sta. Cruz, Laguna.

### 5.1. Summary of Findings

The following are the summary for this study.

1. The findings reveal a "very high" significant level of readiness among graduates of the Alternative Learning System (ALS). It is evident that these graduates possess a strong preparedness for tertiary education.

2. The acceptance rate of students from the Alternative Learning System (ALS) in the data reflects an extraordinarily high acceptance rate.

3. Based on the results, the pairwise distribution of readiness and acceptance rate is not multivariate normal. The test for significant monotonic relationship between readiness and acceptance rate was significant positive, moderate and monotonic relationship between readiness and acceptance rate of the students of ALS.

### 5.2. Conclusions

According to the results, the researchers found that ALS graduates exhibit confidence in their readiness through claims such as having a strong desire to succeed in college and thinking that their grades appropriately reflect their readiness level. Students said they were pleased with how they informed of course changes and how they believed that their grades reflected their level of readiness. They also like how quickly the administrative and academic staff respond to their requests and applications. As acceptable forms of identification for enrolling college, they also accept ALS certificates and other documents.

Generally, these results highlight how well the ALS program builds a strong foundation and instills the abilities and mindset required for graduates to succeed academically at the college level. These findings show that ALS graduates have a strong foundation and prepared for college. The positive monotonic connection between readiness and acceptance rate suggests that ALS students' chances of being accepted into college increase as their readiness level rises. It highlights how well the ALS program works to get students ready for college and make sure they have a smooth transition. As a result, we conclude that there is a significant relationship between the readiness of Graduates of the Alternative Learning System and its Acceptance Rate to the Tertiary Level.

### 5.3. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Educational Institutions such as the Department of Education and Commission on Higher Education must provide educational/financial assistance for ALS graduates who are currently enrolled in colleges so that they can support their educational needs.
2. Teachers in ALS Program must undergo seminars and trainings to develop their knowledge and skills in providing quality education for the learners.
3. Regular evaluation and enhancement of the curriculum to ensure that the knowledge gathered by the learners will surely enhance their learning experiences.
4. Parents may give support and encouragement to their children to continue learning and exploring more experiences through the ALS program up to tertiary level.
5. Future researchers may conduct further studies to discover more information about the benefits of teaching and studying in the Alternative Learning System (ALS) program and its graduates.

### Acknowledgements

The work presented in this thesis would not be possible without close association of the following people.

We would like to take this opportunity to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all the individuals who provided valuable assistance and contributed to the success of this study. First and foremost, praise and thanks are given to our Almighty God, our source of wisdom and guidance all throughout this study, we are bringing back the entire honor and glory to you.

To our families, thank you for providing us with the gift of education, the opportunity to learn, and the unwavering encouragement that played a vital role in the completion of this study. It is acknowledged that without our families' financial and emotional support, this study would not have been possible.

To Laguna University, College of Education (COED) and its faculty for providing essential information and knowledge needed to undertake this study in fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED).

To Dr. ROSEMARIE SABADO, Dean of the College of Education, for the unending guidance and

support since the beginning.

To their Research Instructor, Ms. ARLENE L. SANDOVAL, for diligently answering all the concerns and imparting knowledge and expertise. The researchers would like to thank her for her consistent presence, especially when she is needed the most.

To Mr. MARK STEPHEN RAVELAS researcher's thesis adviser, for his exemplary efforts in honing, guiding, and leading in the possible way. Thank you for sharing the ideas, knowledge, comments, and suggestions during the research.

To Ms. ROSE NANNETE J. SAN JUAN, Ms. JOVELLE M. REYES, and Engr. KING LEONARD NOGRADA, our panelist, for their creative insights and helpful suggestions that led us to the proper direction, refinement, and improvement of this study.

To the TEACHERS of Alternative Learning System (ALS), thank you for the generous support, which has played a crucial role in making this study possible.

And lastly, to the respondents- the STUDENTS of Alternative Learning System (ALS) for their valuable time and effort in participating in the survey. Their willingness to share their insights and provide the necessary information has been essential in completing this study.

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