

Lifelong learning for women: An examination of andragogy and Alternative Learning System

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Abstract

Andragogy, the art and science of teaching adults, emphasizes learner-centered approaches of adult learners. In the Philippines, the ALS provides a flexible education program aimed at out-of-school youth and adults, enabling them to complete basic education outside the formal school system. This study examines the role of andragogy and the Alternative Learning System (ALS) in fostering lifelong learning for women, focusing on their motivations, strategies, challenges, and the broader impact on their lives. Employing a case study approach, the experiences of two adult women graduates of ALS, Narcissa and Dahlia, were explored to understand their educational journeys. Key findings reveal that their aspirations for self-improvement, economic advancement, and overcoming past educational gaps motivated their pursuit of education. Flexible learning modalities and robust support systems, including family, community, and teacher guidance, played crucial roles in their success. However, the study identified significant challenges, such as balancing family responsibilities, work, and studies, which were mitigated by effective time management, self-discipline, and emotional resilience. The transformative impact of ALS on their lives included improved career prospects, social mobility, and serving as role models within their communities. The findings emphasize the importance of integrating andragogical principles, such as learner-centered approaches and practical applications, to enhance adult learning experiences. Recommendations include increased classroom interaction, skill-based training, streamlined policies for older learners, and localized support initiatives. This study underscores the potential of andragogy and ALS to empower women through education, not only by equipping them with essential knowledge and skills but also by instilling confidence and inspiring lifelong learning. These findings contribute to the understanding of adult education and its capacity to create pathways for personal and community transformation.

Keywords: Adult learning; alternative learning system (ALS); andragogy; lifelong learning; women's education

1. Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of education, understanding the unique needs and experiences of diverse learners is crucial. This study delves into the intersection of andragogy (adult learning theory), alternative learning systems (ALS), and women's education in the Philippines. By examining the lived experiences of two remarkable women who successfully completed their education through ALS, the researchers aim to shed light on the challenges, processes, and opportunities within this context.

The ALS, established as a parallel education pathway by the Republic Act 9155, caters to out-of-school children, youth, and adults who did not complete formal basic education¹. ALS equips learners with functional literacy skills and prepares them for the Accreditation and Equivalency (A&E) Test, granting a certificate equivalent to a formal elementary or junior high school degree. Despite its importance, ALS currently reaches only about 15% of its target population, leaving millions of prospective learners underserved¹.

Andragogy, rooted in the work of Malcolm Knowles, emphasizes self-directed learning, relevance,

and experience-based education for adults. As our study focuses on women who pursued education later in life, understanding andragogical principles becomes essential. How do these women navigate learning environments designed primarily for younger students? What motivates them to continue their educational journey?

Women's education has made significant strides in the Philippines, yet challenges persist. Gender disparities, societal expectations, and economic factors influence women's access to education.

This study seeks to explore how these factors intersect with ALS participation and completion rates among women. To unravel the complexities of this topic, the researchers conducted in-depth interviews with two women: one who graduated high school through ALS during her prime years and another who completed elementary education through the same system and is now retired. Their narratives provide valuable insights into the lived experience of ALS learners, the role of andragogy, and the status of women's education.

1.1. Literature Review

Women education plays a crucial role in society, contributing to the development of nations and the empowerment of women. Educated women are better equipped to shape the character of future generations, promote gender equality, and eradicate social stigmas like female infanticide and child marriage (Sholihah, 2023; Saeed, 2023). Gender equality, a fundamental aspect of sustainable development, ensures that women have equal opportunities for education, financial independence, and personal growth (Gahan and Nayak, 2024). In India, the government and civil society recognize the significance of women's education in empowering women to challenge traditional roles, reduce inequalities, and improve their status within families (Women empowerment...2023). However, historical setbacks and societal attitudes have hindered women's education progress, leading to disparities and discrimination that organizations like UNESCO and UNICEF aim to address through initiatives promoting gender equality and equitable access to education (Gill, 2023).

Andragogy, a theory developed by Knowles, focuses on facilitating adult learning by involving learners in the educational process, unlike pedagogy which emphasizes content transmission (Abu Bakar, 2013). In Serbia, andragogy has evolved into a resilient and influential scientific discipline, particularly at the University of Belgrade, offering programs at various academic levels and addressing prevalent issues in the field (Popović, 2023). Knowles outlines key elements of andragogical teaching, including creating a conducive learning environment, mutual planning, diagnosing learning needs, setting objectives, designing learning experiences, conducting activities, and evaluating outcomes (Kerwin, 1981). Furthermore, andragogy has been applied effectively in community college settings, challenging traditional teaching methods and emphasizing self-directed learning among students (Jarvis, 1984). Additionally, andragogy has been linked to distance education, with processes like developing learning contracts and promoting learner participation in asynchronous discussions aligning with its principles (Rossman, 2000).

The Alternative Learning System (ALS) is a flexible education program catering to diverse learners, including those in challenging circumstances like jails (Sala, 2024). ALS implementation focuses on 21st-century life skills and effective teaching strategies, with high ratings from senior high school teachers in Region XII (Cagang, 2024). Reasons for enrolling in ALS vary, but there is a significant correlation between these reasons and factors leading to student discontinuation, suggesting the need for innovative delivery methods like Radio-Based Instruction (RBI) to enhance access and engagement (Tomarong and Rañoa, 2024). Reading comprehension skills are crucial for ALS learners, with challenges identified in skill development, emphasizing the importance of specialized sessions to address these challenges effectively (Gregorio, 2024). Research readiness among ALS senior high school students is moderate, with identified challenges in various skill sets, highlighting the need for a research toolkit to enhance their capabilities (Pura and Janer, 2024). Pascual, et. al. (2022), in their study focused on tracing those graduates and learning from them the struggles or obstacles they overcame going to college success and found that education is a way of lifting one's status

in life as a person mature in age, achieve dreams, and raise a family.

1.3. Research Questions

This study sought to explore the lived experience of adult women who graduated basic education through the Alternative Learning System.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the motivations of adult women in gaining education through Alternative Learning System?
2. What strategies and approaches are employed in adult women education in ALS?
3. How do adult women overcome obstacles in managing ALS studies alongside family life and work?
4. What are life's great lessons that can be learned from the experience of adult women who graduated in basic education through ALS?
5. What improvements in elderly education can still be done to enhanced basic education through ALS?
6. How does ALS affect the lives of adult women who graduated in the program?

1.4. Scope and Limitation

The study aimed to explore the lived experiences of two women who graduated through the alternative learning system (ALS) in Laguna, Philippines. Specifically, it focuses on understanding their educational journey, challenges faced, and the impact of andragogy (adult learning principles) on their learning process. The research will be conducted in Lumban and Nagcarlan, Laguna. The time frame for data collection will span 4 months, allowing for in-depth interviews, record transcription, thematic analysis, coding and interpretation. However, inherent limitations include the qualitative-narrative design, which restricts generalizability, and the lack of control over external factors that may influence the findings. Additionally, the study's focus on ALS graduates may not fully represent the broader landscape of women's education in the country.

2. Methodology

2.1. Sampling

The researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with two women: Participant A: A high school graduate who completed her education through ALS. Participant B: A retired woman who graduated from elementary school via ALS.

2.2. Data Collection

This study employed a case study approach. Data collection will be done through semi-structured interviews with the participants to explore their educational journeys, motivations, challenges, and experiences within the ALS framework. Audio recording was primarily used to secure the specificity and completeness of the participants' responses. Audio recordings will be transcribed afterwards.

The researchers will use open-ended questions to allow for rich responses. Here are the guide questions:

1. Can we ask for your personal background? a. Full name b. Age c. Residence d. Name of spouse and children e. Earnings

2. Before you graduated from ALS, what was the last education you completed that you graduated from, which school was it and when was it?
3. Why did you stop your studies?
4. When you stopped studying, what were your high's and low's in your life, successes, trials, and life lessons that formed in your heart at a time when you were not yet enrolled in the Alternative Learning System (ALS)?
5. During those times, what words of wisdom can you women get from your experience when you were not admitted to ALS?
6. What caused, or what motivated you to continue studying under ALS? In which school did you get ALS? From what year did you start attending ALS?
7. How was the process of teaching adults like you?
8. Is there a difference in their ALS process in women and men? Is there a difference in the tasks given?
9. How did you manage to combine your ALS studies with family life, including earning a living? What are the obstacles you encountered and how did you overcome them?
10. In those times, what wisdom can you women get from your experience when you were admitted to ALS?
11. What else can the education agency improve in the aspect of teaching the elderly?
12. In the aspect of teaching women, what else can the education agency improve so that men and women are viewed more equally?
13. Now that you have finished studying under ALS, how do you think it helped you a lot? Are you more ready for life's challenges? Can you use what you learned in ALS there?
14. What advice can you give to the elderly and women who already have a family and a job regarding education?

2.3. Ethical Issues

The ethical aspects that will be secured before, during and after the conduct of this study are the following:

1. Informed consent: Obtaining consent from participants before interviews.
2. Anonymity and confidentiality: Protecting participants' identities and sensitive information.
3. Voluntary participation: Ensuring participants can withdraw at any time.

2.4. Plan for Data Analysis

The researchers will identify recurring themes related to andragogy, lifelong learning, and women's education. Themes may include self-directed learning, barriers faced, and empowerment.

Here are the steps to be undertaken for analyzing interview data:

1. Transcribing the interviews verbatim.
2. Applying thematic analysis to identify recurring themes.
3. Using coding and categorization to organize data.
4. Interpreting findings based on emergent themes.
5. Highlighting the importance of rigor (e.g., inter-coder reliability, member checking).

3. Results and Discussion

Here are the themes and subthemes derived from Narcissa's and Dahlia's responses to the interview questions, categorized according to the six key research questions:

3.1. Motivations of Adult Women in Gaining Education Through ALS

Theme 1: Aspiration for Self-Improvement

- *Subtheme 1.1: Overcoming Past Educational Gaps*

Both Narcissa and Dahlia were motivated by their incomplete formal education and the desire to attain personal fulfillment.

- *Subtheme 1.2: Economic Advancement*

Dahlia wanted to gain better employment opportunities and escape the limitations of being a housemaid. Narcissa aspired to expand her skills for her entrepreneurial ventures.

Theme 2: Inspiration from Others

- *Subtheme 2.1: Family Encouragement*

Dahlia was inspired by her sibling's suggestion to pursue ALS for better career opportunities.

- *Subtheme 2.2: Peer and Community Influence*

Narcissa drew motivation from seeing her employees strive for education.

The study highlights that adult women pursuing education through the Alternative Learning System (ALS) are driven by a profound aspiration for self-improvement, which manifests in various dimensions of their lives. Under the subtheme of Overcoming Past Educational Gaps, women like Narcissa and Dahlia were motivated by their unfulfilled desire to complete formal education, seeking personal fulfillment and a sense of accomplishment that had eluded them in their youth. This yearning to address past educational deficiencies underscores their determination to rewrite their life stories. Meanwhile, the subtheme of Economic Advancement illustrates the practical motivations of women to improve their socio-economic status. Dahlia, for instance, saw ALS as a pathway to better employment opportunities, breaking free from the constraints of low-paying jobs such as domestic work. Similarly, Narcissa leveraged education to enhance her entrepreneurial skills, aspiring to elevate her business and secure a more stable financial future. Together, these subthemes encapsulate the multifaceted drive of adult women to enrich their lives through education, blending personal growth with practical aspirations for a brighter future.

3.2. Strategies and Approaches Employed in Adult Women Education in ALS

Theme 1: Flexible Learning Modalities

- *Subtheme 1.1: Modular Learning*

Both participants relied on modular education, which allowed them to balance other responsibilities.

- *Subtheme 1.2: Limited Classroom Interaction*

Weekly classes provided an opportunity for discussion and clarification.

Theme 2: Support Systems

- *Subtheme 2.1: Assistance from Family and Community*

Narcissa sought help from her secretary to overcome difficulties in the modules.

- *Subtheme 2.2: Teacher Guidance*

Teachers played a significant role in motivating and guiding learners.

The study reveals that the education of adult women in the Alternative Learning System (ALS)

thrives on flexible learning modalities and strong support systems. Under the theme of Flexible Learning Modalities, the subtheme of Modular Learning emerges as a critical strategy, enabling participants like Narcissa and Dahlia to manage their studies while fulfilling responsibilities at home and work. This approach granted them the autonomy to study at their own pace, making education accessible amidst their demanding schedules. Additionally, Limited Classroom Interaction provided opportunities for in-person discussions and clarifications during weekly classes, enriching their learning experience despite the constraints of time. Complementing these strategies, Support Systems play an indispensable role. In the subtheme of Assistance from Family and Community, Narcissa relied on her secretary for help with challenging modules, highlighting the value of interpersonal support in overcoming obstacles. Furthermore, the subtheme of Teacher Guidance underscores the pivotal role of educators in motivating and guiding adult learners, fostering an environment of encouragement and perseverance. Together, these strategies and support systems illustrate a holistic approach to adult women's education in ALS, emphasizing adaptability and collaboration as cornerstones of their success.

3.3. Overcoming Obstacles in Managing ALS Studies Alongside Family Life and Work

Theme 1: Time Management

- *Subtheme 1.1: Balancing Multiple Roles*

Both Narcissa and Dahlia emphasized the importance of strategizing daily tasks to balance work, family, and studies.

Theme 2: Determination and Adaptability

- *Subtheme 2.1: Self-Discipline*

Narcissa and Dahlia persevered despite challenges, driven by their goals.

- *Subtheme 2.2: Emotional Resilience*

Overcoming feelings of inadequacy and stress was essential for their success.

The ability of adult women to successfully manage ALS studies alongside family and work responsibilities is rooted in effective time management and unwavering determination. Under the theme of Time Management, the subtheme of Balancing Multiple Roles highlights the strategic planning required to juggle diverse responsibilities. Both Narcissa and Dahlia adeptly organized their daily tasks, ensuring they could allocate time for studying without neglecting their duties at home and work. Meanwhile, the theme of Determination and Adaptability underscores the personal qualities that empowered them to persist. In the subtheme of Self-Discipline, the participants demonstrated a steadfast commitment to their education, using their aspirations as motivation to persevere despite challenges. Additionally, Emotional Resilience played a crucial role in their journey, as they overcame feelings of stress and inadequacy by focusing on their goals and drawing strength from their personal growth. Together, these themes illustrate how practical strategies and personal fortitude enable adult women to navigate the complexities of lifelong learning through ALS.

3.4. Life's Great Lessons from the Experience of Graduating Through ALS

Theme 1: The Value of Education

- *Subtheme 1.1: Education as a Stepping Stone*

Both participants learned that completing education opens doors to opportunities.

- *Subtheme 1.2: The Importance of Self-Confidence*

Dahlia highlighted how ALS boosted her self-esteem and social skills.

Theme 2: Life Philosophy

- *Subtheme 2.1: Persistence Pays Off*

Narcissa emphasized the importance of continuous learning and seizing opportunities.

- *Subtheme 2.2: Lifelong Learning*

Both participants recognized the value of learning beyond formal education.

The experiences of completing education through ALS taught profound life lessons that extend beyond academics. Under the theme of The Value of Education, the participants highlighted how education serves as a Stepping Stone to opportunities, with Narcissa and Dahlia realizing its transformative potential in improving their personal and professional lives. In addition, the subtheme The Importance of Self-Confidence reflects how ALS boosted Dahlia's self-esteem and enhanced her social skills, enabling her to engage more confidently in her community and workplace. The theme of Life Philosophy underscores broader reflections, as Persistence Pays Off was a key realization for Narcissa, who stressed the importance of seizing opportunities and embracing continuous learning. Both participants also internalized the principle of Lifelong Learning, appreciating how education extends beyond formal systems and contributes to ongoing personal growth. Together, these themes capture the holistic impact of ALS in shaping perspectives and life trajectories.

3.5. Improvements in Elderly Education to Enhance ALS

Theme 1: Enhanced Learning Delivery

- *Subtheme 1.1: Increased Classroom Interaction*

Narcissa suggested daily meetings to improve learning and engagement.

- *Subtheme 1.2: Integration of Skill-Based Learning*

Both participants emphasized the need for ALS to incorporate practical skills training.

Theme 2: Policy Flexibility

- *Subtheme 2.1: Streamlined Enrollment Processes*

Narcissa suggested allowing direct entry to high school ALS for older learners to accelerate their progress.

The study highlighted key areas for enhancing ALS to better serve elderly learners. Under the theme of Enhanced Learning Delivery, the participants emphasized the importance of Increased Classroom Interaction, with Narcissa proposing daily meetings to foster greater engagement and understanding. Additionally, the subtheme Integration of Skill-Based Learning underscored the participants' call for practical, hands-on training within the ALS curriculum to equip learners with competencies relevant to employment and entrepreneurship. The theme of Policy Flexibility brought attention to structural changes, particularly the need for Streamlined Enrollment Processes. Narcissa advocated for older learners to have the option of direct entry into high school ALS programs, enabling them to accelerate their educational progress. These recommendations collectively aim to make ALS more accessible, effective, and aligned with the unique needs of elderly learners.

3.6. Impact of ALS on the Lives of Adult Women Graduates

Theme 1: Empowerment Through Education

- *Subtheme 1.1: Improved Career Prospects*

Dahlia gained confidence in applying for better jobs with her diploma.

- *Subtheme 1.2: Social Mobility*

Narcissa and Dahlia felt better equipped to navigate societal and professional challenges.

Theme 2: Role Model for the Community

- *Subtheme 2.1: Inspiration to Younger Generations*

Both participants became advocates for education within their families and communities.

The study revealed the transformative impact of ALS on the lives of adult women graduates, particularly through Empowerment Through Education. Under this theme, Improved Career Prospects was highlighted, as Dahlia gained the confidence to seek better job opportunities with her diploma. Similarly, Social Mobility emerged as a critical outcome, with both Narcissa and Dahlia feeling more equipped to navigate societal and professional environments effectively. Additionally, the theme Role Model for the Community illustrated their new-found advocacy for education. Through the subtheme Inspiration to Younger Generations, both participants became influential figures within their families and communities, encouraging others to pursue lifelong learning and proving that it is never too late to achieve educational goals.

3.7. Further Discussions

The motivations of adult women in pursuing education through the Alternative Learning System (ALS) underscore a deep desire for self-improvement and economic advancement. For Narcissa and Dahlia, the aspiration to overcome past educational gaps drove them to take action, motivated by the realization that education is essential for personal and professional growth. Dahlia, for instance, was inspired by her sibling's encouragement and the prospect of better job opportunities, while Narcissa sought to enhance her entrepreneurial skills to improve her business. Their journeys highlight how education serves as a stepping stone to greater self-confidence and opportunities, emphasizing the importance of external support systems, such as family, peers, and community, in motivating adult learners to persist despite challenges.

The strategies employed in adult education through ALS reveal the adaptability of the program and the resilience of its learners. The modular learning approach, combined with limited yet focused classroom sessions, allowed women like Narcissa and Dahlia to manage their multiple roles as mothers, workers, and students. Their success hinged on effective time management and unwavering determination, as both participants balanced family life, work, and studies. Despite the challenges posed by modular education and limited class interaction, they found ways to persevere—relying on support systems such as teachers and community members for guidance and clarification. These strategies, coupled with their emotional resilience and self-discipline, enabled them to not only overcome obstacles but also transform their lives, proving that education can truly empower women to reach their full potential.

4. Conclusion, Recommendations and Reflection

4.1. Conclusion

The experiences of Narcissa and Dahlia as adult learners illuminate the transformative potential of lifelong learning, particularly when anchored in the principles of andragogy and delivered through the Alternative Learning System (ALS). Their journeys underscore how adult education, tailored to the unique needs of mature learners, empowers women to bridge past educational gaps, achieve personal growth, and attain economic advancement. By integrating andragogical approaches such as flexibility, learner-centered

methods, and practical applications, ALS enabled them to balance their educational pursuits with family and work responsibilities. The study highlights the importance of fostering motivation, resilience, and strong support systems, while also revealing areas for improvement, including increased classroom interaction, skill-based training, and policy flexibility. Ultimately, the findings emphasize that lifelong learning, grounded in andragogy, is not just a tool for acquiring knowledge but a transformative journey that builds confidence, broadens opportunities, and inspires communities.

4.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance lifelong learning for women through the Alternative Learning System (ALS):

1. For Education Policymakers and Program Developers

The Department of Education (DepEd) and ALS program developers should consider increasing the frequency of classroom interactions to address the limitations of modular learning. Regular, shorter in-person sessions can provide adult learners with opportunities to seek clarification and engage in collaborative learning. Additionally, integrating skill-based training into the ALS curriculum can equip women with practical competencies that enhance their employability and entrepreneurial capabilities. Special consideration should also be given to revising policies to allow more flexibility for older learners, such as enabling direct entry into higher-level programs based on aptitude rather than sequential completion.

2. For ALS Teachers and Facilitators

ALS instructors should continue fostering a supportive and gender-sensitive environment that motivates learners, particularly women balancing family and work responsibilities. Personalized guidance, consistent follow-ups, and encouragement can help learners stay engaged and confident in their educational journey. Teachers can also adopt more hands-on and interactive teaching approaches during limited classroom sessions to ensure learners grasp key concepts effectively.

3. For Local Government Units (LGUs) and Community Leaders

LGUs should collaborate with ALS programs to provide additional resources, such as community-based study centers and access to technology, to facilitate better learning experiences for adult women. Community leaders can also play a vital role in advocating for the importance of education for women and creating localized initiatives to support ALS graduates in finding employment or entrepreneurial opportunities.

4. For Women and Adult Learners in ALS

Women engaged in ALS should be encouraged to advocate for lifelong learning by sharing their success stories within their communities, inspiring others to pursue education regardless of age or life circumstances. They should also be motivated to explore further training opportunities, such as those offered by TESDA, to build on their ALS achievements and gain specialized skills for career growth.

5. Future Researchers

Future researchers are encouraged to explore the long-term impacts of ALS on women's socio-economic status, self-esteem, and family dynamics. Conducting comparative studies on different regions or countries implementing ALS programs may provide valuable insights into best practices and areas for improvement. Researchers should also consider incorporating mixed-method approaches to capture both the quantitative outcomes and the qualitative experiences of ALS learners, ensuring a comprehensive

understanding of the program's effectiveness and its potential to empower women further.

4.3. Reflection

During the conduct of this study, the researchers were deeply moved by the resilience and determination of women who pursued education through the Alternative Learning System (ALS). As they delved into the stories of Narcissa and Dahlia, the researchers not only uncovered the transformative power of lifelong learning but also gained a profound appreciation for the courage it takes to overcome personal and societal barriers. The study illuminated the importance of education as a catalyst for empowerment, inspiring the researchers to view learning as a lifelong endeavor that transcends age and circumstance. This journey reminded the researchers of the value of perseverance and the role of community in fostering success. Beyond academic insights, the experience left an indelible mark on the researchers' perspectives, encouraging them to advocate for more inclusive educational opportunities and to approach future studies with empathy, curiosity, and a deeper commitment to making a meaningful impact.

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Appendix

Biography of Mrs. Narcissa Trillana Noble: A Journey to Lifelong Learning



MRS. NARCISSA TRILLANA NOBLE

Mrs. Narcissa Trillana Noble, born in August 1958, is a testament to resilience and the enduring value of education. At 65, she resides in Brgy. Lewin, Lumban, Laguna, with her husband, Miguel De Lumban Noble, and their three children, aged 45, 39, and 36. Mrs. Noble's life story is one of perseverance, a tale of rising above life's challenges, and a profound journey to self-improvement through the Alternative Learning System (ALS).

Early Life and Challenges

Mrs. Noble's early life was marked by hardship and sacrifice. She grew up in a modest household near a local school. Her formal education was abruptly cut short when she was in Grade 5 due to her mother's illness. At a young age, she became a pillar of support for her family, working as an assistant in a store at Sta. Cruz Market. Days began before dawn, filled with physical labor and responsibility far beyond her years. The death of her mother added to the burden, and as her peers moved forward academically, she felt left behind, her aspirations momentarily put on hold.

Despite the challenges, Mrs. Noble displayed remarkable adaptability. She learned embroidery from a friend's mother and transformed this skill into a means of livelihood. By 1976, her craft earned her P22 per piece—a significant amount for the time. Her work ethic and determination became the foundation of her character, qualities that would later define her educational journey.

Entrepreneurial Spirit

By 1984, Mrs. Noble expanded her skills into sewing, laying the groundwork for her business, FashionNoble, which officially began in 2000. Initially catering to teachers near the local school, her enterprise grew from selling small pieces of fabric to crafting intricate designs like the Filipino barong. Her meticulous attention to detail and commitment to excellence not only earned her loyal clients but also set an example for her children, one of whom followed her passion for clothing design.

Motivation to Continue Education

Years of dedication to her craft and family did not diminish Mrs. Noble's yearning for formal education. The sight of her children pursuing their dreams rekindled her own desire to achieve a milestone she had missed in her youth. Her inspiration to enroll in ALS came from her own employees, whom she had encouraged to complete their education. Witnessing their determination motivated her to embark on the same path. In 2023, she enrolled at Lumban Central Elementary School, determined to graduate despite the demands of running a business and managing family life.

The ALS Journey

Mrs. Noble's experience with ALS was both challenging and transformative. The modular system presented difficulties, particularly in English, though she excelled in Math. She balanced her studies with her responsibilities, often seeking assistance from her secretary and preparing meticulously to manage her time effectively. Attending weekly classes and submitting modules became a disciplined routine. Her resilience shone through obstacles, including the occasional tardiness of fellow learners that disrupted lessons. She advocated for improvements in the ALS program, such as daily classes and a shift away from a modular focus, to better engage learners like herself. Her suggestions highlighted her awareness of the system's potential to transform lives, especially for those juggling multiple roles.

Wisdom and Lessons

Mrs. Noble's journey is a source of inspiration. Her life has taught her that combining work and study is possible with determination and strategic planning. She believes in the importance of self-learning and skill development as stepping stones to success. Her advice to others underscores the significance of education as a gateway to a brighter future, even for those who have already built careers and families.

Advocacy for Education and Gender Equality

Mrs. Noble's experience also provided insights into improving education for older learners. She emphasized the need for tailored teaching methods that accommodate the unique challenges of adult learners. Her advocacy for gender equality in education was simple yet profound: men and women should learn together without bias or distinction in tasks, fostering mutual respect and understanding.

Legacy and Future Aspirations

Having completed ALS in 2024, Mrs. Noble views her achievement as a symbol of hope and a reminder that it is never too late to pursue one's dreams. While she acknowledges the value of skills-based learning, she firmly believes in the power of a diploma to open doors and inspire others. Her story is not just about personal success but also about the ripple effect of determination and education on families and communities. Mrs. Narcissa Trillana Noble's life is a celebration of lifelong learning, resilience, and the unyielding pursuit of growth. Her journey from a young girl who faced insurmountable odds to a successful entrepreneur and ALS graduate serves as a beacon of hope for women and the elderly, proving that with faith, perseverance, and a passion for learning, no dream is out of reach.



Dr. Nilda V. San Miguel, Mrs. Narcissa Trillana Noble, and Dr. Elymar A. Pascual

Biography of Mrs. Dahlia Espiritu Mostoles: A Journey Toward Lifelong Learning



D E. Mostoles
MRS. DAHLIA ESPIRITU MOSTOLES

Mrs. Dahlia Espiritu Mostoles, a remarkable woman of 40 years, hails from Brgy. Poblacion 2, Purok 7, Nagcarlan, Laguna. Married to Albino L. Altamera, she is a proud mother of four children: Prince Edward Fermalino, Princess DM Altamera, Queenie Joy Altamera, and Mariah Solen Altamera, who are pursuing their education at various levels. Dahlia manages her household with diligence, balancing her responsibilities as a homemaker and a small-scale entrepreneur.

Early Life and Educational Challenges

Dahlia completed her elementary education in 1996 at Yukos Elementary School and continued her secondary education at Talangan Integrated National High School, reaching the third year. However, her education was interrupted due to life circumstances. A family vacation in Tarlac led to her decision to stay there, inadvertently derailing her studies. She later sought employment in Manila, taking on various domestic roles, including selling traditional Filipino delicacies and working as a household helper. During this period, Dahlia met her first husband, but their marriage was fraught with challenges due to his gambling addiction. Despite these difficulties, she found joy in supporting her family financially. However, the hardships of her first marriage eventually led her to end the relationship. She later found stability and happiness with her current husband, Albino, who is supportive, hardworking, and free of vices.

Motivation to Pursue ALS

Dahlia's motivation to resume her education came from her experiences working abroad, where her lack of formal qualifications limited her job opportunities. Facing maltreatment as a domestic worker, she decided to return to the Philippines with a renewed determination to improve her prospects. Encouraged by her sibling, who promised to support her culinary training and future career on a cruise ship, Dahlia enrolled in the Alternative Learning System (ALS) program at Crisanto Gusayko Memorial Elementary School.

Balancing Family, Work, and Studies

The path to completing ALS was not easy for Dahlia. She juggled multiple roles—managing her household, running a small store, and caring for her family—while dedicating evenings to studying. The ALS

program, which involved weekly classes and self-paced modules, required rigorous time management. Despite the demands of her daily life, Dahlia's passion for learning and determination to succeed kept her motivated.

Transformative Experience in ALS

Dahlia's ALS journey was transformative. It not only enhanced her self-esteem but also empowered her with the confidence to aspire for a brighter future. The gender-sensitive approach of the ALS program fostered an inclusive environment, allowing her to thrive alongside learners of varying ages and backgrounds. The supportive teaching methods and hands-on guidance provided by her instructor were instrumental in her success.

Achievements and Aspirations

In 2024, Dahlia proudly completed her high school education through ALS. This achievement has opened new doors for her, giving her the credentials needed to explore better job opportunities and pursue further skills training through TESDA. Inspired by her son, who also completed ALS and secured employment, Dahlia envisions a future where her hard work translates into a rewarding career, possibly aboard a cruise ship.

Advocacy and Advice

Dahlia's journey has instilled in her a deep appreciation for lifelong learning. She encourages women, especially those balancing family and work, to prioritize education and pursue their goals with persistence. Her story serves as a testament to the power of resilience, determination, and the belief that it is never too late to chase one's dreams. Mrs. Dahlia Espiritu Mostoles stands as a beacon of hope and inspiration, proving that with perseverance and support, anyone can overcome life's challenges and achieve their aspirations. Her journey through ALS reflects her unwavering commitment to self-improvement and her desire to create a better future for herself and her family.



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