

ALTERNATIVE LEARNING SYSTEM (ALS) PROGRAM GRADUATES AND LEVEL OF READINESS TOWARDS TERTIARY EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The research study was about the alternative learning system (ALS) program graduates and their level of readiness towards tertiary education in the municipality of Kabacan and M'lang, Cotabato, Philippines. The study sought to answer the level of readiness of the graduates' from the Alternative Learning System Program towards tertiary education. A descriptive-correlation method of research was utilized, such as the t-test and correlation bivariate as statistical tools with purposive sampling techniques in identifying the sample of the population. The findings revealed that there was no significant difference between the ALS learning strand/subject and the subjects taken in higher education, and that the ALS graduate was prepared to enter tertiary education. Those whose preparation will depend on their stability, promises, and aims to constitute high perseverance as they face the changing environment are more interested and eager to bind themselves entirely to achieving their intended aims by expending effort and resources to fulfill their objectives.

KEYWORDS

Alternative Learning System, Readiness, Out-of-School Youth, Tertiary Education, Learning Strands

1. INTRODUCTION

It is a well-known truth that education is vital to the development of any country. Education is seen as a critical factor in achieving human superiority, social stability, and economic power [12][17]. Indeed, the Malaysian education system is rarely the subject of foreign comparisons, owing to the fact that Malaysian youngsters are still only required to attend school for six years. With that, a new law, the "Education Act 1996" in Malaysia, will be passed that will require compulsory schooling for eleven years [9]. It is said that neighboring countries have also implemented what is called "K to 12" as called by the Philippines. The said evident was noticed due to Malaysia's low level of performance on recent international tests, which revealed differences between Malaysia and neighboring Singapore, which is widely regarded as having one of the world's best education systems.

For decades, the Philippines has been engaged in a struggle against illiteracy, placing a high value on the improvement of basic education as it pertains to the nation's growth and development [21]. Moreover, during Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's presidency, she emphasized the role of the state in accordance with the Philippine Constitution, stating that the government would provide, establish, and support adequate schooling for all Filipinos, and that such education should be available to all individuals in the state through official and informal channels [20].

Based on Article fourteen, Section one of the Constitution, the government is responsible for maintaining and assisting every individual with appropriate schooling at all levels, as well as making relevant plans to ensure education is available to all.

Moreover, the Alternative Learning System (ALS) is a similar instruction process in the Philippines that gives each learner a chance to be an out-of-school youth or adult (OSYA) who is said to have novice and enhanced primary and active learning skills, and to have related and aligned trails of education to complete the learning requirements of education. This new learning approach was designed to provide pupils who had abandoned their studies as well as those who were unable to attend school due to their age a second opportunity. This chance gives them hope to change their lives for the better. This kind of program from DepEd was life-changing in achieving the goal of helping out-of-school youth and adults. In 2016, the Alternative Learning System program started experiencing reform as a portion of consolidation, increasing, and spreading its operations. Several years of discussion, evaluation, and improvement by non-government and civil society groups, local and international, spearheaded the generalization of the revised Alternative Learning System to the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum, the development of the Alternative Learning System (ALS) program 2.0, and the rollout of the five-year ALS 2.0 Strategic Roadmap.

The ALS K to 12 basic education curricula are crafted in relation to the K to 12 curricula. Yet, it is not the shaving mirror of the formal school curriculum. It is relatively connected but not totally the same. It is understood that the education of its clientele is to replicate the points of practical learning into six interconnected educational positions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Background on the concept and the educator

The term "andragogy" was added to his discussion of Plato's theory of education; as a limited individual, the teacher understood and strengthened the idea of andragogy. For nearly a century, the aforementioned concept has been absent from the mainstream.

Eduard Lindeman and Eugene Rosenstock-Huessy, two of the teachers from the United States, invigorated the term in relation to adult education, and they established the concept of andragogy to define their viewpoint and teaching methods towards adult education.

With the continued evolution of concepts (1913–1997), another professor popularized the term andragogy, and it was credited to Malcolm Knowles. He focused on the science of late adult education in their place [13].

While working with Lindeman, who had just revived the notion of andragogy, Knowles explored it further during his era of bringing in advancements and methodologies as he drove the plans for the YMCA during his almost 20-year tenure as policymaking chief of the full-grown learning group. While working with Lindeman, who had just revived the notion of andragogy, Knowles explored it further during his era of bringing in advancements and methodologies as he drove the plans for the YMCA during his almost 20-year tenure as policymaking chief of the full-grown learning group. During his year as a faculty member, Knowles absorbed progressively on informal adult education, seeking a more comprehensive and detailed approach to adult learning [13].

On the transitory theory of [25], it indicates that pupils who have a kind attitude toward alliances might benefit a pupil by being united into the communal organization faster. Coming from a rustic setting might similarly enable the spirits of separation, since the pupils were the most unfamiliar with the university ethos. Also, students are chosen based on their parents' education, social standing, race, gender, physical ability, and other variables such as skill training, knowledge, and talents, i.e. intellectual and sociological capacities. He added that the longitudinal models of leaving one institution or entering into tertiary education presented are those with opposing factors, including parental education, socio-economic factors, and the number of family members in the student's community [25].

The trait of admission is suggested as the shortest process to influence upon departure, and it has an effect on pupils' aims and vows concerning their greener pastures of education and actions [22][3]. The characters belong to two classes: aims, purposes, and vows; they stipulate the appreciated areas of the pupil: enlightening and work-related, near which actions remain absorbed.

The meanings and objectives imitate equally ambition and opportunities, and intents remain specified in areas that reflect the pupil's expectations for the future and his valuation, created on previous knowledge, of the possible achievement of the objectives [25]. The students' obligations and willingness to put forth effort in order to achieve those goals. Furthermore, students who are more interested and eager to bind themselves entirely to achieving their intended aims by expending effort and resources to fulfill the objectives, as well as people seeking inspiration, may be powerless to face the consequences of achieving their aims and objectives [25].

It is a notification to individuals that gives an emphasis on the inherent rewards as they pursue a course that is not driven by a short-term work-related job. Tinto added that stable promises and aims constitute high perseverance as it faces the changing environment and altering aims, including a high interest in achieving the goals of school culture. This, however, does not guarantee that these pupils will continue their studies. Some students are unable to meet the social and academic expectations of the university environment [25]. He added that "previous characters and qualities" might be the prime and right way toward the removal of actions; nevertheless, additional mass and standing remain in position on the superiority of a pupil's communication through orators and nobles happening on site and the awareness that these interactions satisfy the needs of the students [25].

In the circumstances for successful connections among nobles and society speakers, the entry characteristics gathered by the purposes, vows, and the outside setting were discovered [25]. The character's involvement in the moot and communal schemes, shown by moot and communal incorporation, frequently adapts goals or obligations. The degree to which pupils are combined in the moot scheme can be established by the moot accomplishment of pupils, the worth of the students in dwelling on their studies, and the degree of fulfilment of their course program [14].

According to Malcolm Shepherd Knowles [13], the adult learning theory of andragogy, which uses the term "andragogy," explains that it is synonymous with mature learners. However, the term pedagogy was almost used before ancient times and was popularized by the Greek philosopher Alexander Kapp, also known as the educationalist during his time. The evidence is significant because education entails the philosophy of many intellects and can be added to complete any individual and pluralization. Pluralization means knowledge and skills must be trained in many ways, such as training for people or pupils concerning multiple intelligences.

Likewise, a variety of events and methods are presented and help learning take place and spread to all pupils, thus encouraging them to be clever and think about the subjects from numerous viewpoints, thus expanding their knowledge of that topic [11].

2.2. Alternate Learning Systems

President Rodrigo Duterte of the Philippines adopts legislation to formalize the Alternative Learning System for out-of-school children in special cases and adults in specific circumstances. The law strives to provide enough, timely, and high-quality attention and assistance for out-of-school teenagers and children's fundamental learning requirements. It also encourages lifelong learning opportunities based on the ALS K–12 scale. The Bureau of Alternative Education (BAE) will be established under the new law to act as the focal office for the DepEd's ALS programs, as well as to undertake micro-certification of subsets of skills taken from the ALS K to 12 [19].

In the Philippines, the Education sector or (DepEd) has offered a number of programs aimed at improving its general teaching methods and techniques. The ALS is one of DepEd's most important venues for addressing the scholastic needs of out-of-school Filipinos. It has deployed an upgraded ALS curriculum beginning with the 2019 ALS K-12 school year curriculum [7]. The U.S. Department of Education's 2018 report is out. According to the study, the ALS program has enrolled 823, 301 people [16]. Since ALS' budget has been less than 1% of the total, it has been proposed that the budgetary and operational bottlenecks be alleviated. The diverse geographical and socioeconomic circumstances of ALS students and their motivations for learning are persistent obstacles that demand immediate attention.

In 2013, the Philippines had 4 million out-of-school children and teens [18]. For vulnerable and at-risk individuals in communities, the Department of Education has been advocating for the administration of the Alternative Learning System. The existence of such an informal and non-formal educational system is consistent with numerous philosophers' educational ideals. Because ALS' budget is less than 1% of the overall budget, it has been advocated that the budgetary and operational bottlenecks be removed. Nevertheless, all public and private tertiary institutions must admit ALS student under this directive [1]. Furthermore, the act concerning Alternative Learning Systems in Basic Education for Out-of-School Children in Special Cases and Adults aims to promote lifelong learning opportunities based on the Alternative Learning System (ALS) K–12 Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) that takes a holistic, integrated, and inter-sectoral approach, as well as to provide pathways across modes of learning and demonstrate the competency, material, key phases, and standards for the ALS program [19].

2.3. General Education Curriculum: Holistic Understanding, Intellectual and Civic Competencies (CMO 20s, 2013)

In the pursuit of continuing education reforms, which include the upgrading of the basic education curriculum from K to 12, which has incorporated GE courses from higher education programs into senior high school core courses, thereby offering a window for the modification of the existing GE curriculum [6]. The new GE curriculum intends to expose undergraduate students to many realms of knowledge and ways of interpreting social and natural realities, while also strengthening intellectual abilities and civic capacities in the process [6].

The CMO lays out the structure and justification for the updated GE as a paradigm change and within the context of the K–12 curriculum based on college preparedness criteria. It establishes the objectives, outputs, and competences, as well as the redesigned core courses and electives. It also comprises capacity development for startup and general education components of all degree programs applicable to both private and public higher education institutions.

General education is the element of the curriculum that all undergraduate students, regardless of major, must complete. It exposes students to a variety of subjects of knowledge and techniques of perceiving social and natural realities, resulting in the development of intellectual skills, competencies such as critical, analytical, and creative thinking, as well as multiple forms of expression and civic capacities required of community, country, and world membership. As a result, general education differs from specialized learning. The former introduces pupils to several methods of knowing, whereas the latter concentrates on a certain discipline. General education focuses on broad or broad-ranging understanding, whereas specialized learning focuses on greater theoretical and technical knowledge. As a result, overall instruction serves as the basis for the whole undergraduate education program and cannot be expected to satisfy all of higher education's goals on its own. The alignment of general education's aims with those of higher education is a prerequisite for its success.

2.4. In the Philippines, College Readiness

College preparedness is used differently in secondary and postsecondary institutions. According to [26], college preparedness is one of the factors used to determine excellent education, curricular suitability, and workforce competency in high schools. In contrast, college preparation is a critical factor in high school graduates' admittance to HEIs. Based on these ideas, it raises critical questions about the current state of the Philippine educational system. The recent, revolutionized educational program known as the K-12 curriculum, means Filipino K12 and ALS graduates are fundamentally involved in college preparedness.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

The researcher used a descriptive-correlation research design in which the nature of a scenario as it was at the time of the study was disrupted by the causality of the present, especially the preparedness of graduates from the department of education's alternative learning system program. It refers to the topic given in the alternative learning system under regular education as well as the subject offered in higher education to discover "what is" [24] [27]. Correlation research was used to determine whether or not there is a relationship between variables, or how one variable differs from another [5] [27]. As well as the extent to which variables were related to each other in the population of interest [23] [27], such as a significant relationship between the level of readiness for.

3.2. Respondents and Locale of the Study

Respondents to the study were the graduates of the Alternative Learning System (ALS) Program from Kabacan and M'lang, North Cotabato, Philippines, who have enrolled in tertiary education. As a result, they believe themselves to be responders, and as a result, they have studied in a normal schooling environment in which instruction is delivered. Furthermore, the study's respondents had taken topics from the alternative learning system curriculum as well as subjects from university education. It was conducted in the towns of Kabacan and M'lang in North Cotabato, Philippines, where an Alternative Learning System Program was available.

3.3. Research Procedure and Instrument

In order to collect data, the researcher first spoke with the concerned individual, such as an ALS instructor, coordinator, or a school administrator that offers an ALS program, about the ALS data

and papers that were retrieved from their office. Following a series of interviews and consultations, the researcher performed the study by direct interview, video chat, and messenger to answer the questionnaire questions. Another way was to submit the questionnaire to Google Drive and provide the link to the responder for them to answer. Following that, it was recovered, tabulated, and statistically analyzed. The questionnaire aligned to the work of Lemmens and Juan-Claude [15] to assess students' preparation for university education. It was reworded to match all statements with the purpose, and it was then sent to a validator expert to prevent the contradictions detected in the original questionnaire. Furthermore, before the statement was delivered to the responders, the validator, an expert, displayed corrections and suggestions on its usage with a ten-point scale.

3.4. Statistical Analysis

The researcher described the personal characteristics of the respondents, subjects enrolled in the ALS program and tertiary education, and level of preparation to enroll in higher education using descriptive statistics that included frequency count, percentage, and mean. A T-test with an independent sample was utilized to determine whether there was a significant difference between the ALS individuals and the tertiary education subjects. While a regression analysis was used to determine the relationship between the respondent's readiness and their personal profile, a correlation-bivariate analysis was used to determine the relationship between the respondent's readiness and the subjects taken from ALS and tertiary education. The ten-point scale was distributed into five classes with a verbal description.

| Range | Verbal Description |
|--------------|--------------------|
| 8.20 - 10.00 | Highly ready |
| 6.40 - 8.19 | Ready |
| 4.60 - 6.39 | moderately ready |
| 2.80 - 4.59 | Not ready |
| 1.0 - 2.79 | highly not ready |

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Personal Profile

Table 1 reveals the personal profile of the respondents, and it reveals that the male dominant number was greater than the female, and 100% were single. In terms of income, 46.43% of the respondents have a monthly income of Php1,000.00 to Php5,000.00, and family members with 5 and 8 have 7 respondents, while most of the respondents enter their third year level when they enroll in an alternative learning system program.

Table 1. Personal Profile

| VARIABLE | FREQUENCY (N=28) | PERCENTAGE (%) |
|---------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Gender | | |
| Male | 24 | 85.71 |
| Female | 4 | 41.29 |
| Status | | |
| Single | 28 | 100 |
| Married | 0 | 0 |
| Widow | 0 | 0 |
| Separated | 0 | 0 |

| | | |
|--------------------------------|----|-------|
| Family Income | | |
| 1,000-5,000 | 13 | 46.43 |
| 5,001-10,000 | 9 | 32.14 |
| 10,001-15,000 | 5 | 17.86 |
| 15,001 and above | 1 | 3.57 |
| Member of the Family | | |
| 3 | 3 | 10.71 |
| 4 | 3 | 10.71 |
| 5 | 7 | 25.00 |
| 6 | 5 | 17.86 |
| 7 | 3 | 10.71 |
| 8 | 7 | 25.00 |
| 9 | 0 | 0 |
| 10 and above | 0 | 0 |
| Grade level (ALS Entry) | | |
| Intermediate (1-4) | 0 | 0 |
| Elementary (5-6) | 5 | 17.86 |
| First Year | 4 | 14.29 |
| Second Year | 7 | 25 |
| Third Year | 12 | 42.86 |

4.2. Learning strand/subjects from ALS program and subjects in tertiary education

Table 2 displays data from the respondents' alternative learning systems program learning strands/subjects and tertiary education subjects. It reveals that communication skills (English) mathematics, and problem solving were the subjects where the highest number of students encountered the subject. Out of 28 respondents, 24 learned and passed the communication skills (English), and 21 of the respondents also learned and passed the mathematics and problem solving. It was also discovered that no one checked their digital citizenship while the subjects from tertiary education, it was revealed that understanding the self and literature of the Philippines has a high number of ALS graduate students who encountered the said subject.

Table 2. Learning strand/subjects from ALS program and subject in tertiary education.

| VARIABLE | | FREQUENCY (N=28) | PERCENTAGE (%) |
|--|--|---------------------|-------------------|
| Learning Strand/subjects from ALS program | | | |
| 1 | Communication skills (English) | 24 | 85.71 |
| 2 | Scientific Literacy and Critical Thinking Skills | 12 | 42.86 |
| 3 | Life and Career Skills | 7 | 25.00 |
| 4 | Understanding Self and Society | 16 | 57.14 |
| 5 | Communication Skills (Filipino) | 15 | 53.57 |
| 6 | Mathematics and Problem Solving. | 21 | 75 |
| 7 | Digital Citizenship | 0 | 0 |
| Tertiary Education subjects | | | |
| 1 | Understanding the Self | 24 | 85.71 |
| 2 | The Life and Works of Rizal | 12 | 42.86 |
| 3 | Science, Technology and Society | 18 | 64.29 |
| 4 | Wika at Kultura sa Mapayapang Lipunan | 10 | 35.71 |
| 5 | Arts Appreciation | 14 | 50 |
| 6 | The Contemporary World | 21 | 75 |
| 7 | Mathematics in the Modern World | 15 | 53.57 |

| | | | |
|----|-----------------------------------|----|-------|
| 8 | Literature of the Philippines | 22 | 78.57 |
| 9 | Purposive Communication | 12 | 42.86 |
| 10 | Ethics | 12 | 42.86 |
| 11 | Reading in the Philippine History | 14 | 50 |

4.3. Respondents' level of readiness toward tertiary education

Table 3 shows the result of the respondents and level of readiness towards tertiary education. It revealed that it has an overall mean of 7.94, which is verbally described as "ready." Of 25 statements, respondents replied that "the activities, training, and experiences I earned from ALS classes describe my ability to adjust when enrolled in tertiary education" has the highest mean rating of 8.93, which is verbally described as highly ready. While statement number 7 (I feel that I cannot survive the course/degree program I will enroll in at this university) had the lowest mean rating of 4.54, with a verbal description of "moderately ready." It implies that ALS graduates who pursue tertiary education and pass the difficulty level test have the ability to adjust to college life.

According to the concept of Tinto, stable promises and aims constitute high perseverance as it faces the changing environment and altering aims, including a high interest in achieving the goals of school culture [25]. Furthermore, Tinto's longitudinal model, which departs from one institution and enters tertiary education, presents students with opposing factors such as parental education, social status, number of family members, as well as their family backgrounds race, sex or gender, physical capabilities, personal attributes, and monetary funds.

Table 3. Respondents' level of readiness towards tertiary education

| | STATEMENT | MEAN | VERBAL DESCRIPTION |
|----|---|------|--------------------|
| 1 | I can pass all subjects this first semester | 8.79 | Highly Ready |
| 2 | I believe I made the correct decision by enrolling in this semester | 8.43 | Highly Ready |
| 3 | I know exactly what I want to enroll in this university. | 7.36 | Ready |
| 4 | The knowledge that I have learned from the ALS program is enough for the degree program I will enroll. | 7.43 | Ready |
| 5 | I am convinced that the courses I studied in my ALS program will be relevant to the ones I will study at university. | 6.36 | Moderately Ready |
| 6 | It is important that the training and learning that I got from the ALS program should be aligned with the curricula of my degree program. | 8.25 | Highly Ready |
| 7 | I feel that I can't survive the course/degree program I will enroll in this university. | 4.54 | Not Ready |
| 8 | I feel that I am prepared to enter the tertiary level of education. | 7.43 | Ready |
| 9 | The grades reflected on my card describe that I am prepared. | 7.93 | Ready |
| 10 | I believe I will perform well in my degree of choice | 8.43 | Highly Ready |
| 11 | I believe that getting good grades in tertiary education is mainly derived from previous learning experience. | 7.64 | Ready |
| 12 | The activities, trainings and experiences I earned from ALS classes describe my ability to adjust when enrolled in tertiary education. | 8.93 | Highly Ready |
| 13 | I am quick to grasp new concepts and ideas | 7.68 | Ready |
| 14 | I learned more quickly than others. | 7.61 | Ready |
| 15 | I have enough knowledge about my degree program before I enrolled in the university. | 7.43 | Ready |
| 16 | ALS program provides information about the career possibilities for specific degree program. | 8.21 | Highly Ready |
| 17 | I'm concerned about how I'll pay for my schooling | 8.25 | Highly Ready |
| 18 | My family is a source of inspiration and support for me. | 9.21 | Highly Ready |
| 19 | I discussed my professional objectives with someone who had worked in the sector and was motivated to pursue them. | 8.21 | Highly Ready |

| | | | |
|----------------|--|-------------|--------------|
| 20 | I prefer to do things on my own when given any task. | 8.50 | Highly Ready |
| 21 | I have learned about other people's cultures and ways of life, so I don't worry about entering tertiary education. | 8.39 | Highly Ready |
| 22 | I can interact with people with different race and cultures from mine. | 8.32 | Highly Ready |
| 23 | I was informed about the combination of subjects needed to fulfill the requirements of my degree program. | 8.25 | Highly Ready |
| 24 | My high school grades do not accurately represent my abilities at the university level | 7.86 | Ready |
| 25 | I know how to motivate myself to study when needed. | 9.14 | Highly Ready |
| OVERALL | | 7.94 | Ready |

4.4. Learning strand/subject from ALS program to tertiary education subjects taken

Table 4 shows the result of a significant difference between the learning and subjects from the ALS program and tertiary education subjects taken. There is no significant difference, with a p value of .467 at the 5% level of significance. It implies that it fails to reject the null hypothesis that the learning strand offered by the ALS program is not significantly different to the subjects offered in tertiary education.

Results was supported with the CHED memorandum 20, s 2013 also known as the general education curriculum a reviewed general education curriculum in which it is like the K to 12 laws in such most of the general education subjects are taught in senior high school[6]. In addition, the act concerning Alternative Learning Systems in Basic Education for Out-of-School Children in Special Cases and Adults aims to promote lifelong learning opportunities based on the Alternative Learning System (ALS) K-12 Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) that takes a holistic, integrated, and inter-sectoral approach, as well as to provide pathways across modes of learning and demonstrate the competency, material, key phases, and standards for the ALS program [19].

Table 4. Learning strand/subject from ALS program to tertiary education subjects taken.

| VARIABLE | N | MEAN | S.D. | DF | T | P=VALUE |
|--|----|-------|------|----|-------|--------------------|
| Subject from alternative learning system program | 7 | 13.57 | 8.18 | | | |
| Subject from tertiary education | 11 | 15.82 | 4.71 | 16 | -.744 | .467 ^{ns} |

^{ns}P > 0.05 Level of Significance

4.5. Respondent's levels of readiness towards tertiary education to their personal profile.

At a 5% level of significance, the degree of preparation for postsecondary education reflected in their personal profile has a p-value of .467. It suggests that students' readiness for postsecondary education is not considerably affected by their personal characteristics. By using the regression analysis, it revealed that sex, family income, number of members in the family, and grade level entry do not predict the level of readiness towards tertiary education with an R² of .185, an F-

Value of 1.30, and a probability of .299. It implies that a respondent's level of readiness towards education has no relationship to their personal profile.

The students' obligations and willingness to put forth effort in order to achieve those goals. Furthermore, students who are more interested and eager to bind themselves entirely to achieving their intended aims by expending effort and resources to fulfill the objectives, as well as people seeking inspiration, may be powerless to face the consequences of achieving their aims and objectives [25]. Added to this, Tinto's longitudinal model that leaves from one institution and enters into tertiary education presents those with opposing factors constituting to students' parental education, social status, number of family members, and as well as their family backgrounds race, sex or gender, physical capabilities, personal attributes, and monetary funds.

Table 5. Respondent's levels of readiness towards tertiary education to their personal profile.

| VARIABLE | UNSTANDARDIZED B | STANDARDIZED COEFFICIENT BETA | T-VALUE | P-VALUE |
|---|---------------------|----------------------------------|---------|--------------------|
| SEX | 1.057 | .317 | 1.55 | .134 ^{ns} |
| FAMILY INCOME | .412 | .304 | 1.55 | .135 ^{ns} |
| MEMBER IN THE FAMILY | .184 | .259 | 1.03 | .312 ^{ns} |
| GRADE LEVEL ENTRY | .350 | .339 | 1.39 | .178 ^{ns} |
| R = .430 R ² = .185 F-VALUE = 1.30 PROBABILITY = .299 | | | | |

^{ns}P > 0.05 level of significance

4.6. Respondent's levels of readiness to the learning strand/subject from ALS program and tertiary education subjects taken

Result revealed that the subjects taken from tertiary education does not differ to the respondents' personal profile with a p-value of 0.616 at 5% level of significance while there is a positive relationship between the level of readiness and the number of subjects taken in ALS. This implies that more subjects taken in ALS will increase the level of readiness with a p-value of .035.

The result is supported by the concept excerpt in Republic Act 9155 under Section ten that accreditation and equivalency (AE&) assessment and certification for ALS learners are done on a regular basis as a way of measuring and certifying the competencies of ALS program graduates and other learners who choose to get elementary and secondary level certification [20]. It will also carry out micro-certification of subsets of competences derived from ALS K to 12 BEC. The ALS Accreditation and Equivalency (A&E) Assessment and Certification consists of an exam and other appropriate assessments to measure the competencies attained by ALS learners based on the ALS K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum (BEC)[4].

Table 6. Respondent's level of readiness to learning strand/subjects from ALS program and to tertiary education subjects taken.

| VARIABLE | COEFFICIENT (r) | P=VALUE |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|
| ALS subjects taken | .789 | .035* |
| Subjects taken from tertiary education | .170 | 0.616 ^{ns} |

*P < 0.05 level of significance

^{ns}P > 0.05 level of significance

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings, the following conclusion were formulated that; the majority of the out-of-school youth from Kabacan and M'lang, North Cotabato, Philippines were males, the graduate had learned and experienced the majority of the ALS program's learning strands, the alternative learning system program, led by the DepEd, induces learners to pursue tertiary education, the learning strand of the ALS program has substantial evidence of similarity to general education subjects in tertiary education, income does not guarantee that the students will persist, as school dropouts or school leavers, ALS learners do not gain much competence during their formal school attendance. Further concluded that similarity towards course descriptions was observed, hence the creation of a general education curriculum was implemented, anchored on the Alternative Learning System (ALS) K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum (BEC). With that, it is recommended that ALS mobile teachers give emphasis to the course description and course content so the learner recognizes the differences between each learning strand. Inspire female drop-outs and school leavers to enroll in alternative learning system programs. Increase information dissemination, parent involvement, and career guidance.

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