
Non-formal Education Among Urban Poor Out-of-School-Youth:

Case Studies from the Philippines' Alternative Learning Systems



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ALS	Alternative Learning System
A & E Examination	Accreditation and Equivalency Examination
ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
BALS	Bureau of Alternative Learning Systems
BHM	Banaba House Ministries
DepEd	Department of Education of the Republic of the Philippines
EFA	Education for ALL
GO	Government Organization
IM	Instructional Manager
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NFAE	Non-formal Adult Education
NFE	Non-formal Education
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OSY	Out of School Youth
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

Chapter 1: Introduction



Background

The origins of the Banaba ALS site began only a few years ago when Kuya Gary, an American missionary and current director of BHM, moved to Banaba in 2012 after completing training for Mission Ministries Philippines, a local ministry that serves the urban poor. The idea to start an ALS site came from MMP as they believe that education is an important component of wholistic discipleship among the urban poor. JARCI, a local church in the Banaba community, helped with the development of the ALS program; members of the church went from house to house in the community, asking people if they were interested in joining ALS and telling people more about the educational program. All of the community leaders in the Banaba community were very welcoming and willing to allow Banaba House Ministry to begin the ALS program.

A local preschool was used as the venue for the ALS classes since BHM didn't have the educational center that it does now. The first ALS batch was actually begun mid-year because BHM was unaware that the exam was at the end of the calendar year, giving the instructors a short time to teach all of the material to the students (ALS and orientation now begins in January). The first batch had more than 50 learners and there were only four instructors to teach and manage all the students; the group eventually reduced to fifteen students. Unfortunately only three of the fifteen students in this first batch passed the ALS exam.

Today, Pastor Romy agrees, education is a primary need in the Philippines. In a country with a population of 80% poor people education becomes a primary avenue to combat poverty. It is through education that the poor have the ability to find a job, and escape the grasp of poverty. "Personally, I see education as an inter-generational inheritance. With the poverty we endure we don't have anything to leave our children when we die. We don't have anything tangible. No land, no home. But if we can give them a shot at education, then it is as if we have left them a bountiful inheritance." Education has come to symbolize honor and a good-name. According to Pastor Romy, to have a degree is to accomplish a life goal. In Filipino homes the most important thing is their diplomas, certificates, degrees hanging from the wall. It is common that after a disaster, individuals will

sign up for any sorts of trainings or workshops that might give them a certificate of some kind.

BHM has attempted to maintain retention of ALS students through one-on-one mentoring as well as retreats to create camaraderie among the students, but the organization continues to struggle in retaining students in the program. The majority of the students who begin with each cohort eventually stop going to classes and quit ALS; they lose motivation and are not willing to make the commitment of going to classes 5-6 days each week. Pastor Romy states that the primary goal of BHM is to help the individual. He said, "We worry about ALS attendance because we worry about them." BHM is not concerned about attendance because of tuition fees or the program's reputation, but because the teachers care deeply for the students and want them to have opportunities in life, as well as a personal relationship with Christ.

Research Topic

The focus of this research will be on practices that equips students to pursue education after completing the Alternative Learning System (ALS) program. During this research I will be collecting data by interviewing former out of school youth (OSY) who have finished the ALS program and passed the final high school equivalency examination. Participants will be recruited from five ALS providers implement the program among the urban poor in Metro-Manila, Philippines.

Research Question

The ALS program offers youth within the community a myriad of options for the future, allowing them to escape the perpetual cycle of poverty that has encapsulates their family. One of the many hopes that is offered by the ALS program aside from the possibility of obtaining a job is the option of further education. Encouraging the youth to pursue future education can open up countless options for not only their future, but the future of their families. I am hoping to distinguish certain techniques used in the ALS program the urge students to pursue further education. My research research question is: **What practices are Alternative Learning System providers using to equip out of school youth to pursue further education?**

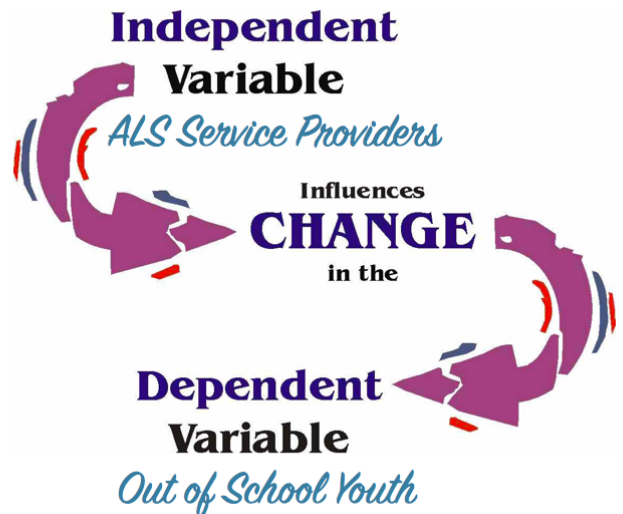
Purpose of Research

The partnering organization for this study is a local nonprofit serving the urban poor in Banaba, San Mateo. They have been ALS providers for the past three years and the leaders there are highly interested in the practices that other ALS providers are implementing alongside the ALS program to ensure students are motivated to pursue education. Potentially this study will allow for an implementation of practices used by other ALS providers into their current ALS program offered in Banaba, San Mateo. This may have direct benefits to the population of persons similar to participants as their participation may lead to changes among service providers.

Variables

All potential research participants come from similar backgrounds, have engaged with curriculum written by the Department of Education, and passed the high school equivalency examination therefore the ALS providers will be the variable in this study. The study is aimed at understanding their role in equipping students to pursue education following the ALS program.

The independent variables in this study are the ALS Service Providers and the dependent variables are the out of school youth. The study seeks to understand to what extent the ALS Service Providers are affecting out of school youth through practices that equip them to pursue further education.



Theological Framework

Education is the primary way to equip a new generation to enter formal society, learn societal values and ethics, and to develop character. However, educational arenas have often been used for the purpose of making disciples. Because education involves a paradigm shift it is feasible to see education as a lifelong wholistic process. Education also provides an opportunity for the marginalized to re-enter society and seek to join formal society. It restores dignity and gives power to the disempowered.

Education is a way to follow Christ, and to show others how to do the same by leading through example. BHM focuses on discipleship, education, and outreach among the urban poor. The organization stresses that education is a major tool in equipping and empowering leaders among the urban poor. They are using the ALS program for the purpose of reaching out-of-school youth (OSY). BHM implements Christ-like values into the ALS curriculum. The goal is for students to understand more than just academics, for them to walk away truly transformed. In an interview with Pastor Romy, BHM's ALS site coordinator he said, "In essence we are introducing and training youth to follow their calling. We, the teachers won't be going to other lands to share the gospel, or to care for the sick, or start a small business. God hasn't called us to translate bibles or to the work he has called these youth to, but we get to play a role in the calling of another person and that is huge. All in all we are feeding back to the great commission." In his perspective, education has been used as a tool for indoctrination, but it can also be used as a tool for transformation, a way to find God's calling. This view of education calls for more than academic learning, it involves character formation, spiritual development, and biblical understanding.

In the *Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life* Palmer argues for the indispensable role of educators in the education process. Palmer is an influential Christian American educator that has been successful in developing a curriculum specifically for teachers. Palmer's aim is to equip educators as they develop their students into critical

thinkers. "To educate is to guide students on an inner journey toward more truthful ways of seeing and being in the world" (Palmer, 2007, Pg. 3).

In the short chapter, *The Role of the Christian School* the author attributes born again teachers as an attribute towards better education, because they might have a higher interest in students and can develop good relationships. In this context education becomes a tool for discipleship. Discipleship, in the same manner as education, takes initiative, commitment, and community. Palmer encourages educators to have initiative, or courage, to teach their students. "Good teaching requires courage—the courage to explore one's ignorance as well as insight, to yield some control in order to empower the group, to evoke other people's lives as well as reveal one's own" (Palmer, 2007, Pg. 2)

The community aspect in discipleship works in contrast to the fragmentation that occurs in secular education, thus Palmer encourages educators to promote connectedness and unity. "Good teachers join self, subject, and students in the fabric of life because they teach from an integral and undivided self; they manifest in their own lives, and evoke in their students, a 'capacity for connectedness' They are able to weave a complex web of connections between themselves, their subjects, and their students, so that students can learn to weave a world for themselves" (Palmer, 2007, Pg. 6). As Christians it is important to move away from a fragmented community, away from individualism and into the body of Christ.

Assumptions & Limitations

The assumptions regarding the study involve the functions of the ALS program and its service providers. In this study I assume that 1. There are ALS providers serving OSY in urban poor context. 2. Students are passing the A & E examination. 3. Following the completion of the ALS program students are pursuing further education 4. The ALS providers are teaching ALS in the way expected by the DepEd. 5. Education is necessary for social mobility and 6. Education fills the gaps that poverty create.

My personal assumptions regarding education derive from my own educational background. I went to public school up until I was given an opportunity to attend private high school on a full scholarship. My undergraduate and postgraduate schooling was then all done in a private school context. Before my time in the Philippines I had no previous experience with nonformal education. I first became interested in nonformal education when I started to hear various similar stories in my host community where disadvantaged youth with no opportunities to pursue education were able to do so through the nonformal avenue.

As a first generation Mexican-American college student I have biases about the role of education in social mobility. I agree that education plays a key role in social mobility, in equipping new generations for future jobs and vocation, and in creating critical thinkers that will contribute to society as a whole.

This research has limitations of space and time but as a researcher I also pose limitations to this study. As an individual attempting to conduct research in a different culture I am faced with cultural and language limitations. I understand the power dynamic at play that limits my interactions with participants. Desai and Potter (2006) emphasizes the reality of this power dynamic between the "researched" and the researcher as he explains all the different types of power clashes that can occur while conducting development research "any research context is riddled and crosscut by relationships of power, from those between the sponsors of the research and the researcher, and between the researcher and the researched, to power relationships within the culture of the research setting, relationships between classes and clans, landholders and landless, educated and illiterate, elders and

juniors, women and men, rich and poor” (Desai & Potter, 2006, Kindle Location 449). According to Desai and Potter the researcher also exists in the framework of power relations. This means that the way the community views me will affect their level of contribution in my research work.

Populations & Locations

ALS Sites

I am interested in five service providers to show a breadth of the types of organizations that choose to be service providers in urban poor communities. Service providers can range from local organizations, NGOs, Churches, or community centers offering the ALS program.

Population

The research participants would include 25 students or five students from five urban poor communities. The participants would be former out of school living in an urban poor community who have completed the Alternative Learning System (ALS) program and passed the A & E examination in Metro-Manila. This would exclude current ALS students or students who have not completed the program. Most of the teens that are a part of the ALS program had to drop-out of school at an early age to work and help support their families. Participants will be contacted through the five ALS providers working among the urban poor in Metro-Manila. ALS providers will inform students who have completed the program and once a participant shows interest in participating the ALS provider will facilitate personal contact through a phone call or email.

Access

I will gain access to different ALS service providers through my research supervisor. Romeo Juan is a Filipino urban poor leader working with Banaba House Ministries, a grassroots nonprofit in Banaba, San Mateo. He has overseen the formation of multiple ALS programs in urban poor communities and has worked directly with other organizations as they form new ALS sites. He also plays a key role in recruiting and training ALS teachers through partnerships with Onesimo and other grassroots organizations in Metro-Manila.

Research Guide

Although I am conversationally adept in Tagalog (the primary language spoken by the target sample demographic) Kimberly Anne Juan Mendoza, my translator, will assist with research collection by translating research materials, participant interviews and collected data to ensure that no important details are lost in translation. She will also help ensure that participants understand the research process, their contribution, the risks and benefits of the study.

Community Relevance

The community where I have been living in has a high drop out rate among the youth due to teenage pregnancy, substance abuse and family financial obligations. This is visibly affecting the next generation as uneducated teenage mothers are ill-equipped to raise their children. A lack of education also limits work and employment options and opportunities for social mobility. The strong link between education attainment and job security excludes those who have not pursued education.

ALS offers a solid partnership between the government and the ALS providers that reaches the target population of out of school youth. The ALS program allows local organizations to plug into an already developed system with ready-to-use tools to serve the community. ALS provides is an opportunity for partnering organizations to reintroduce out of school youth into the formal education system and provide a stepping stone into further vocational training.

However, during the January training at Onesimo, organizations from all over Metro-Manila sent staff to be trained and equipped to set up new ALS sites. During this training, the various staff members from the Bureau of Alternative Learning Systems shared that the ALS program is currently not meeting government goals and there has been conversations of shifting the vehicle of program implementation away from service providers to more government-run centers. Onesimo and the participating organizations want to show that the organizations acting as ALS service providers can offer specific tools for youth that the government can overlook if the program is shifted into the hands of government centers.

Community Benefits

This study can be an opportunity for students to reflect on the past education experience, expressing both concerns and positive experiences. Since the study will be an evaluation of different methods organization might use in partnership with ALS such as forms of mentorship, faith-based approaches, or a highly academic approach to equip students to pursue further education my final findings will help my community organization implement the practices that worked the best or yielded the most students.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Education for All

Attaining Education For All (EFA), one of the goals set forth by the Millennium Development Goals, is the fuel for the implementation of a wide range of educational programs in the Philippines. The global EFA campaign was initially developed in the 1980s and its goal was to eliminate illiteracy around the world. Tuckett (2013) argues that attention to Adult education is necessary to achieve EFA “Few if any of the eight United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) can be fully achieved without investment in adult learning, ...” (Tuckett, 2013, pg. 284). This has shifted the priority in seeking educational programs that provide basic education that can empower the poor to achieving these developmental goals.

The Philippine Constitution also indicates that the Philippines’ Department of Education should provide free elementary and secondary education to all Filipinos as education is a constitutional right for all (Guerrero, 2007, Pg. 8). In 2006, the Philippines Education for All 2015 National Action Plan decided that it wanted to provide ways to make basic education for all Filipinos so that everyone in the country would be functionally literate.

This focus on EFA has contributed significantly to the development of Alternative Learning Systems (ALS), a nonformal education program in the Philippines. Other educational programs range from basic education, literacy programs, and vocational training and are implemented with the notion that education should reach people at all levels of society. However, according to the Department of Education (DepEd) about 45% of the entire Philippines’ population still had not completed basic education in 2008.

Challenges of Attaining EFA

In *The Beautiful Tree*, Tooley (2009) argues that if the central issue is universal free public education then the avenue by which we achieve that should not be as concerning as the destination of arriving there. Different educational avenues can be used to facilitate in education and is not dependent on governments, communities, students. Education for all (EFA) should be approached with a myriad of avenues. Development organizations should be held accountable for understanding all avenues of education, both private and public, formal and non-formal.

Around the world, Tooley consistently observed the same issues affecting the quality of public schools serving the poor. In his findings he describes that most private schools in the slums emerged to fill the gap between the free public education system and the community itself. The growth of private schools serving the poor were often directly influenced by the failings within the public education system. “Schools systems became unable to cope with political, economic, and social realities, and became unable to meet the basic learning needs of children, youths and adults (Torres, 2001)” (Regmi, 2011 pg. 2) Although there is a consensus that the current state of public education is unsatisfactory,



Figure 1: Eight Millennium Development Goals

most argue for the improvement of the free public education system itself while Tooley argues for its shift into the private sector.

Alternative Routes to EFA:

Formal, Non-formal, Informal, & Life Long Learning

Regmi (2011) establishes major distinctions between formal, non-formal, informal, and life long learning. **Formal** education encompasses learning that takes place in education or training institutions which leads to official certification. **Non-formal** learning involves learning outside of school, on the job training, and through other non-formal activities. **Informal** learning is self directed learning that occurs through daily life activities. **Lifelong** learning is “all learning activities undertaken throughout life with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competencies within a personal, civic, social, and/or employment related perspective (Thomas, 2003, p. 4)” (Regmi, 2011, pg. 4). Regmi elaborates on how lifelong learning is a recent 21st century phenomenon which compromises the process of learning from birth to death.

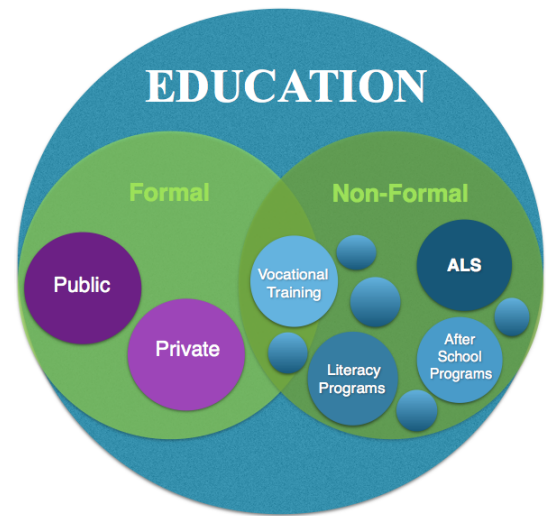


Figure 2: Possible Routes to EFA

Postmodernity & A Shift in Human Capital Theory

Regmi attributes this new acceptance of non-formal education and lifelong learning processes as a result of a shift in human capital theory. This shift is pertinent to the new social reality of postmodernism where there has been a movement away from systematic structures and an acceptance of personal narratives. Firzsimons (1999) argues that this change in educational theory was developed to evaluate education on an economical scale and understood in economic terms. Modern human capital theory states that education is the key to participation in new global economy. Therefore, as quality of education increases so does the opportunities for countries to be involved in the global market economy. Education is now primarily seen as a “determinant of economic performance.” The major critique of this theory is that the motivation to use education as a marker for economy derives mainly from neo-classical economic theory. Neo-classical places a higher emphasize on capital than on humans.

Nonformal Education

Rogers (2005) provides a thorough comparative study of non-formal education at an international level. Rogers initially evaluates the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), a large scale educational program that functions in Botswana, Ghana, Uganda, Nigeria, Swaziland, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, and Namibia. Rogers also took a look at small scale non-formal educational programs in Latin America that were highly localized and specialized. Regmi (2011) also provides a case study of non-formal education in Nepal and traces its inception and development into implementation. Most of these non-formal education programs are created and motivated to expand by the host country’s commitment to EFA. They all equally faced issues of formal education-low retention rates. Through his thorough compilation of literature and case studies of non-formal education Rogers argues that non-formal education is a viable option to meet EFA goals.

In his work Rogers tracks the rise of NGO involvement in pursuing programs that would ensure EFA goals and attempts to describe the framework of replicable non-formal education systems. Piquero (1998) argues that mobilizing local organization allows for the government to still hold authority over the curriculum while local organizations provide the necessary resources and man-power. Rogers agrees that “governments look to non-formal education to fulfill, the escalating costs of education combined with more limited funding, the search for partnerships with civil society, and new educational targets set internationally” (Rogers, 2005, Kindle Locations 2958-2959).

Reaching EFA in The Philippines

Current State of the Philippines

The Philippines’ education system is currently comprised of 10 years of education as opposed to 12 years in the United States. But it is very similar to the Western structure of schooling. The country advocates for both formal and non-formal education, as the non-formal education system involves a number of educational opportunities outside of the

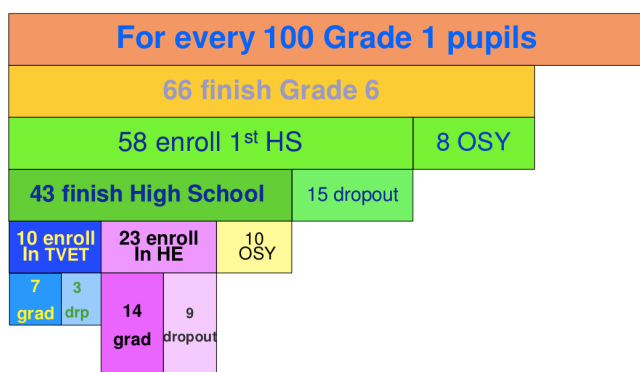


Figure 3: Student Enrollment & Retention

the classroom that help facilitate learning for certain groups such as illiterate adults or out-of-school youths.

The Department of Education (Syjuco, n.d.) reported that approximately 66 out of every 100 students will graduate from Grade 6, and of these students, only 43 will graduate from high school while others will drop out.

Implementation of Non-formal Education

In the early 2000s, the field of non-formal education in the Philippines

dramatically changed, as there was a shift from “non-formal education” to the Alternative Learning System. Development research (UNESCO 2001) highlights how the Asian Development Bank became the first to partner with the governments to promote non-formal education programs. Through these partnerships government offices established government-run non-formal education programs managed by local nonprofits throughout Thailand and the Philippines. A result of this process is the Philippines’ Alternative Learning System (ALS).

Development of Alternative Learning Systems

As the Philippines’ government believes that every Filipino has the right to receive free basic education, ALS was designed to provide an alternative pathway of learning to assess levels of literacy and other learning achievements. ALS is a free non-formal education program in the Philippines that flows into a vocational training track, and is a parallel education system to formal education in the Philippines.

Policies

In 2001, the Republic Act 9155 (Governance Act of Basic Education) was passed, and this law officially recognized ALS as a complement of formal education. The Department of Education’s (DepEd) Bureau of Non-formal Education also became the Bureau of Alternative Learning (BALS) in 2004. It was stated that the function of BALS is to address educational needs of marginalized groups, create more educational opportunities and access for all, and

to promote formal and informal alternative learning programs (Guererro, 2007). BALS is in charge of implementing and developing ALS throughout the country. They are responsible for ALS curriculum and training development, policy formulation, advocacy, and financial administration. BALS is divided into Regional Offices that are located in the main regions of the Philippines. The Division Offices administer ALS exams, implement projects, perform research development, and handle finances for the ALS service providers within their region.

Structure

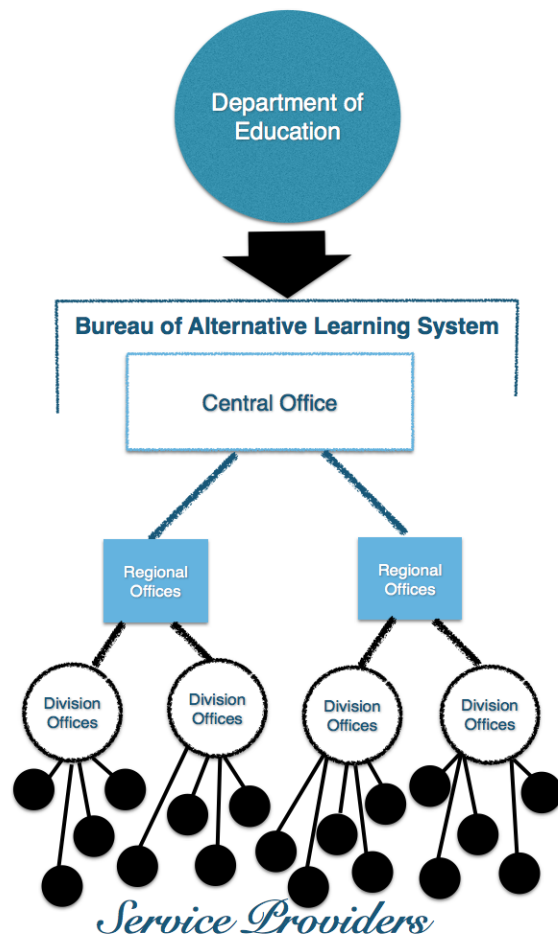
Gonzales & Pijano (1997) describe the structure of the ALS program, as a community-based education program supervised by the Department of Education. Classes are managed by ALS learning facilitators, such as mobile teachers, district ALS Coordinators, instructional managers at an agreed schedule and venue between the learners and facilitators. The biggest proponents of ALS are the NGOs that do most of the ground work using their grassroots networks among poor communities. ALS is different from the formal education system where formally trained teachers teach in a classroom setting. ALS classes are delivered by DepEd ALS coordinators and teachers, or through Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), church-based organizations, Governmental Organizations (GOs), or through voluntary individuals. Classes are often held in community learning center, libraries, homes, or barangay multipurpose halls) and are run by learning facilitators that are trained by staff of the division office.

Program Actors

ALS service providers deliver the ALS program to students in different communities. They need to have a good reputation in the community and be registered with the local government as an official education service provider. ALS service providers ensure that Instructional Managers (IMs) have completed the required training, maintain learners within the program, and equip learners to take the Accreditation and Equivalency exam at the end of the year.

IMs have a multitude of important roles within the ALS program; they are responsible for recruiting learners, monitoring and evaluating the progress of learners, teaching ALS material, as well as providing mentorship, encouragement, and support to learners. ALS students at this site consist predominantly of out of school youth, ages 14-25 (and the occasional older student), who have left formal education due to family and financial problems. Although many students have jobs, they understand that attaining a high school diploma equivalency would allow them more opportunities in the future.

The target population of ALS are out of school youth. A main goal of ALS is their reintegration into formal society through access to education (Guzman, 2002). Rogers (2005) describes how non-formal education programs targeting to serve out of school youth places a high emphasis on developing students



who can “communicate ideas, develop work skills, change attitudes or modify behavior.” Schuller, Preston Hammond, Brassett-Grundy, Bynner, (2004) also notes the potential impact non-formal education can have on the health, family, life and social capital of the OSY. Pellegrino (2012) takes a look at how non-formal education can play a role in equipping the new generation in the work force. Since ALS seeks to be a lifelong learning system it is imperative to understand the first impacts of the program on OSYs and potential trends for later impacts.

Program Evaluation

Guerrero (2007) says that improving ALS requires further assessment of the cost-effectiveness of delivering high quality ALS programs, measurement of the competency of non-formal education, and the creation of more public funds for government and nongovernment providers of ALS programs. The work involved in non-formal education is more challenging than that of traditional, formal classroom settings, but is necessary due to the contexts of many students, who may not have access to formal schooling due to their personal contexts (e.g. financial reasons, living in remote areas). The Department of Education continues to strive to improve the country’s non-formal education system to make education accessible to all.

Gaps in the Research

Rogers (2005, Kindle Edition Location, 1575) highlights a lack of evaluative studies of non-formal education. Since non-formal education systems uses alternative vehicles such as nonprofits, community centers, churches, etc. to deliver the ALS program there is no official evaluation conducted by the department of education in the Philippines. Further, there is no evaluation of the various practices ALS providers use to equip students to pursue education after the ALS program. It is valuable to evaluate the methods that are working and failing to ensure students further engagement with education.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Past Research

In an in-depth evaluative study of non-formal youth development by Walahoski and Menestrel (2012, Pg 16) they describes a multi-tiered staged approach to conducting extensive evaluation of non-formal educational organizations to evaluate their programs and validate impacts. In the study tier one includes a mixed method survey measuring programming; tier two includes case studies that offer in depth analysis of development programming and its impact on individual students; tier three was a longitudinal study that tracks a focus group through a longer period of time. Due to the time frame of my research project I will be using individual case studies, a qualitative method, to evaluate the impact of practices ALS providers are using to serve OSY.

Research Methods

For this study I will be conducting a series of semiformal interviews as a qualitative research method. This method will allow for an inductive approach to the study. Maxwell (2005, Pg. 69) agrees that unstructured approaches are “particularly useful in revealing the processes that led to specific outcomes.”

I will specifically look within five ALS providers to gather a wider sample of participants. According to Maxwell (2005, Pg. 71), by choosing different settings this will allow me to sample “settings, events, and processes” My purposeful sampling selection includes youth from the ages 16-30 to include students who have passed the high school equivalency examination. In the Philippines the high school graduation age is 16 years old, therefore my sample will include 16 and 17 years old.

Although initially I considered conducting focus groups to interact with a wider sample I decided against it as it would not be culturally feasible as a group mentality exists in Filipino culture. Group mentality makes it difficult for individual thoughts or perspectives to be shared since everyone acts in a manner in which they feel or perceive others want them to act. Filipino culture is also a shame-based culture and participants would feel hesitant to answer truthfully to questions that might require them to reveal deeply personal information.

Individual interviews will allow for a more natural atmosphere in which the participants might feel more comfortable sharing their experience. Desai (2013, Kindle Location 2279) states that individual interviews can help the researcher “show’ or ‘demonstrate’ a particular phenomenon or outcome of development intervention” as participants are able to share deeper insights during a slow, one-on-one interview.

Data Analysis Method

Information received from individual interviews will be coded or categorized and organized by major themes and trends. Maxwell (2005, 96) describes coding as the main categorization strategy in qualitative research. Through the coding process, data is organized into three categories: organizational (anticipated data), substantive (descriptive data) and theoretical (secondary data). During the analysis portion of the study repetitive themes or trends among interviews will be categorized using Nvivo, a coding software commonly used for qualitative data analysis.

Major themes in interviews will be organized and analyzed using Nvivo, “a software program that makes analysis process easier through categorization” (Gray, 2014 Kindle Location 171). This software would be highly efficient in labeling major phenomena so I can draw out overarching themes in practices that are at work in the various ALS sites.

In a similar way Tooley (2009) has a structure of using stories to find bigger themes fueling the need for private education I want to use individual stories to piece wider trends among OSY and their experience with ALS. Other examples of this method are: Regmi, K. D (2011), Rogers (2005), and Hoffman (2011).

Ethical Considerations

Relationships with Informants

I would have previous personal relationships with a number of participants from my one year experience of working with a local Alternative Learning System provider. As an educated foreigner interacting with urban poor youth who have had little access to education or financial resources there is an unequal power relationship. Participants might also feel compelled to participate as I have participated in a teacher role within the ALS program. Although this power relationship exists it should be noted that because I have been living in an urban poor community for the past year, I am functionally fluent in the participant language and familiar with the participant’s culture, this unequal power difference is not as great as a westerner who does not have these qualities.

Privacy & Confidentiality

The interviews will be conducted in a secure and comfortable location where participants’ privacy is of priority. Interviews will be conducted at the location of ALS providers, participants homes, and other locations preferred by participants. At the start of the interview the primary investigator and the translator will review the informed consent form which indicates that participants will be given a participant number to ensure their anonymity through the research process.

Following the interview, participant information will be stored on a personal computer protected by a private password only accessible to the Principal Investigator. The data will not be distributed to any unauthorized persons. Consent forms will be kept in a secure location. Paper consent forms will be stored with Romeo Juan while research data will remain with me on a private personal computer. The document linking the participants’ name with their participation number will be kept on a single sheet of paper and will not be input into computer software. This document will be destroyed upon the completion of the research.

Potential Stress or Harm

Participants might experience possible emotional stress caused by answering questions about their education history. Personal education history might include highly personal information such as factors that contributed to dropping out of formal education; ie. teenage pregnancy, broken family, lack of financial resources etc.

Emotional distress would be evident in instances, which the participant hesitates or shows signs of discomfort in their body language. If there are signs of emotional distress the researcher would ask the participant if they would want to move on to another portions of the interview or stop the interview completely. We will remind the participant of their

option to skip any portion of the interview or to leave the study completely. The translator and I would apologize for the discomfort and emotional distress caused by this study.

In case of emotional distress I will connect participants with Mission Ministries Philippines (MMP) office for emotional support and counseling. MMP is a non-profit, Christian organization that targets the poorest communities in Metro Manila by planting holistic churches that meet the spiritual and physical needs of the most marginalized in the least reached slums. One way MMP meets the needs of urban poor communities is through counseling. MMP is equipped to provide emotional support and counseling to participants that might experience distress.

Consent

The consent form will ensure that participants understand the research process, their contribution, the risks and benefits of the study. My translator and I would ensure a thorough review of the consent form and make sure to create various opportunities for the participant to ask questions if they need clarification. Participant would provide a verbal acceptance of participation and sign off on the consent form.

Outcomes

The research product will be submitted as a requirement of the completion of the MATUL program. The compilation of stories that share the efforts of organizations can be used for potential organizational reports, proposals or newsletters. Banaba House Ministries, is interested in entering urban poor communities in Metro-Manila and setting up various ALS learning sites with intentions to create discipleship opportunities for local churches. This research can help BHM implement the best practices.

Validity

In this research I would compare what the organizations say they are doing with what students demonstrate the service providers are doing. Gray (2013) explains that internal validity is demonstrated through “the extent to which the study investigates what it claims to investigate.” Although my efforts are to research organizations that act as service providers I also understand that gaining a student perspective will show the true extent of their effectiveness. By allowing the students to share their experiences they can shine a light on the true impacts service providers can have on students. I am also choosing to go after the student stories as organization leaders or staff can give me a skewed view of their impact of program implementation. It is therefore relevant to look primary at the end product yielded by a certain organization implementing certain practices.

Appendix:

Student Interview Questions

Participant #: _____ ALS Site: _____ Community: _____

1. Can you share a bit about yourself? (current community, age, family, school background, etc.)
 - A. How old are you
 - B. How many siblings do you have?
 - C. Where do you live? Who do you live with?
 - D. Where do you go to school?
2. At what age did you leave formal education?
3. What were some of the reasons you stopped going to school?
4. How did you find out about ALS? Did you join ALS to receive a degree to work or to go to college?
5. Can you share what it was like to prepare for the A & E examination? How many times have you taken the A & E exam?
6. Can you describe your IM's? What role did they play in helping you prepare for the exam? and/or How did an IM positively impact you?
7. Can you tell me a bit about your classmates?
8. What are some of the most important things you learned from being a part of ALS?
9. What are your future goals? What are the challenges in pursuing your goals?
10. Do you feel that ALS really helped you? How did ALS equip (help) you to pursue your goals?
11. In your opinion, how can the ALS program improve?

ALS Provider Interview Questions

Organization : _____

Community: _____

1. What is your name?
2. Do you live in the community that is offering the ALS program?
3. Were you an ALS student?
4. What kind of preparation does your organization offer for ALS facilitators?
5. Do you have a higher education? Where did you go to school?
6. Do many of the students want to pursue higher education or just get a job after the ALS program?
7. What is the organization doing to help students pursue education after the ALS program?
8. Can you explain the various approaches your organization has used to serve OSY?
9. How can ALS be improved in your opinion to push the youth towards a higher education?
10. Is a higher education for all students or do cultural roles shape the immediate needs of the family?
11. How do you encourage the youth to pursue further education?
12. How does ALS impact the community outside this classroom?
13. How do you keep track of student improvement?

Project Timeline

Research Task	Start Date	End Date
Participant Recruitment	May 4, 2015	May 10, 2015
Participant Interviews	May 10, 2015	June 20, 2015
Data Analysis	June 20, 2015	July 15, 2015
Final Draft	July 15, 2015	July 20, 2015
Presentation to local community	July 20, 2015	July 25, 2015
Final Submission	July 20, 2015	
Presentation to APU academics	August 2015	

Participant Recruitment

Participant recruitment will be conducted in a seven day time frame involving the primary investigator and the translator. Recruitment will include visiting the five different organizations and contacting potential participants from five different communities. This process will also include translating document necessary to recruit participants, such as a letter of invitation and a short script to approach participants. This preparation for recruitment should take a total of five hours. Actual visitations and participant recruitment from the five communities would take a total of twenty hours.

Participant Interviews

Participant interviews will be conducted along with the translator. The entire interview process would include setting up the interview, the actual interview, translation and transcribing, as well as commuting to and from the interview location. One entire interview process would take two to three hours each. The 25 planned interviews would result in 75 hours of work.

Data Analysis

Data analysis would be conducted solely by the primary investigator using the coding software NVivo. Analysis per interview would take an average of two hours resulting in 50 hour of data analysis.

Final Draft & Presentation

Preparing the final draft of the project and the presentation back to the community would be exclusively conducted by the primary investigator.

Project Budget

Item	Cost
Internet & Printing Fees	\$50
Research Assistant	\$100
Payments to Research Supervisor	\$50
Supplies	\$20
Equipment: Coding Software	\$60
Transportation	\$20.00
Total	\$300.00

Project Supervisor

23 March 2015


To Whom It May Concern,

My name is **Romero Juan, Vice President of Banaba House Ministries** and I am writing on behalf of **Erika Sanchez** who is conducting research with our agency on **nonformal education in urban poor communities**. She is a graduate student from **Azusa Pacific University** and will be working closely in the communities that we serve in **Metro-Manila, Philippines**. For this research, she will be partnering with our agency who will be supervising and overseeing her fieldwork. When the research is finished, she will then present her findings to **Banaba House Ministries board members** and the local community.

I have reviewed her research plan and the agency and I approve of the proposed course of research.

Sincerely,

Romero Juan



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