



From Participation to Outcomes: Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration in ALS Implementation in Panganiban, Catanduanes

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Abstract

In the municipality of Panganiban, Catanduanes, Philippines, the Alternative Learning System (ALS) serves as a critical mechanism for addressing persistent educational exclusion among out-of-school youth and adults, yet its effectiveness remains closely tied to the quality of stakeholder participation within a resource-constrained, island context. This study examined the levels of stakeholder engagement, stakeholder collaboration, and ALS program effectiveness, as well as the relationships among these constructs. Using a descriptive–correlational design, data were collected from internal and external ALS stakeholders and analyzed through weighted means and Pearson product–moment correlation. Findings indicate high levels of stakeholder engagement (WM = 3.51), collaboration (WM = 3.46), and overall program effectiveness (WM = 3.57). Correlation analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between stakeholder engagement and collaboration ($r = 0.649$), and between stakeholder engagement and program effectiveness ($r = 0.459$), while collaboration alone showed no significant association with effectiveness ($r = 0.141$). These results highlight stakeholder engagement as a key lever for strengthening ALS outcomes and underscore the need for engagement-centered strategies in local ALS implementation.

Keywords: Alternative Learning System (ALS), stakeholder engagement, stakeholder collaboration, program effectiveness, learner outcomes, Panganiban, Catanduanes



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INTRODUCTION

The Alternative Learning System (ALS) plays a vital role in expanding equitable access to education for out-of-school youth and adults, particularly in marginalized, rural, and geographically isolated communities where formal schooling opportunities remain limited (UNESCO, 2016; Hanemann, 2018). As a non-formal education program, ALS effectiveness extends beyond instructional delivery and is deeply shaped by the active participation of multiple stakeholders, including educators, local government units, non-government organizations, and community members who collectively support planning, implementation, and learner retention (Boeren, 2019; Emerson & Nabatchi, 2015). Contemporary scholarship

consistently emphasizes that meaningful stakeholder engagement and collaboration enhance program relevance, sustainability, and responsiveness by aligning educational interventions with local needs and resources (Reed et al., 2018; Bryson et al., 2017). Despite this growing consensus, empirical evidence linking stakeholder dynamics to measurable ALS program outcomes remains limited, particularly within localized Philippine contexts characterized by decentralization and resource constraints (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, 2017).

Existing studies tend to examine stakeholder engagement or collaboration as isolated constructs, often within formal education systems or other public sectors such as

disaster risk reduction and governance, limiting their applicability to non-formal education settings like ALS (Emerson & Nabatchi, 2015; Bryson et al., 2017). Moreover, much of the available literature relies on qualitative or purely descriptive approaches that provide valuable process-oriented insights but offer limited quantitative evidence on how stakeholder engagement and collaboration are statistically associated with indicators of ALS program effectiveness, such as learner completion, assessment performance, and satisfaction (Reed et al., 2018; Boeren, 2019). To address this gap, the present study adopts a descriptive–correlational design to systematically examine the relationships between the levels of stakeholder engagement, the extent of institutional collaboration, and selected indicators of ALS program effectiveness. Correlating these variables is necessary to determine whether variations in stakeholder dynamics are meaningfully associated with differences in program outcomes, thereby moving beyond description toward evidence-based inference while remaining sensitive to the contextual realities of rural and island municipalities such as Panganiban, Catanduanes (Hanemann, 2018).

Statement of the Problem. This study sought to examine the levels of stakeholder engagement, stakeholder collaboration, and the effectiveness of the Alternative Learning System (ALS) program in the municipality of Panganiban. Specifically, it aimed to describe these constructs and determine the relationships among them within the local ALS implementation context.

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the level of engagement among internal and external stakeholders in the ALS program in Panganiban along:
 - 1.1 Involvement in ALS needs assessment;
 - 1.2 Volunteering in ALS activities;
 - 1.3 Provision of support or resources; and
 - 1.4 Feedback and Suggestions?
2. What is the level of collaboration among internal and external stakeholders in the ALS program in Panganiban along:
 - 2.1 Joint Planning and Goal Setting;
 - 2.2 Formalized Partnerships;
 - 2.3 Co-implementation of Activities; and
 - 2.4 Structured Coordination Meetings?
3. What is the level of effectiveness of the ALS program in Panganiban in terms of:
 - 3.1 Completion Rates;
 - 3.2 Assessment Performance;
 - 3.3 Program Satisfaction; and
 - 3.4 Total effectiveness of the ALS program?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the level of stakeholder engagement and the level of collaboration among internal and external stakeholders in the ALS program in Panganiban?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the level of stakeholder engagement and the effectiveness of the ALS program in Panganiban?
6. Is there a significant relationship between the level of collaboration among stakeholders and the effectiveness of the ALS program in Panganiban?

Null Hypotheses. The following null hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance:

H_{01} : There is no significant relationship between the level of stakeholder engagement and the degree of collaboration among internal and external stakeholders in the ALS program in Panganiban.

H_{02} : There is no significant relationship between the level of stakeholder engagement and the level of effectiveness of the ALS program in Panganiban.

H_{03} : There is no significant relationship between the degree of collaboration among stakeholders and the level of effectiveness of the ALS program in Panganiban.

Scope of the Study. This study examined stakeholder engagement, stakeholder collaboration, and program effectiveness within the Alternative Learning System (ALS) in the municipality of Panganiban, Catanduanes. The scope was geographically delimited to the municipality to allow an in-depth and context-specific analysis of ALS implementation within a rural and island setting. The investigation focused on both internal stakeholders, including ALS teachers, school administrators, and Department of Education personnel, and external stakeholders such as local government units, non-government organizations, community-based groups, and partner institutions directly involved in ALS delivery, planning, and support. Learners were treated as indirect participants, with their outcomes reflected through performance-based indicators of program effectiveness.

The scope of the study was further delimited by its reliance on self-reported data gathered primarily through a researcher-made survey questionnaire designed to capture stakeholders' perceptions of engagement and collaboration. As such, the findings are bounded by the respondents' subjective assessments and may not fully represent actual practices or causal relationships. While supplementary sources were considered to contextualize program outcomes, the study did not include direct classroom observations or experimental manipulation of variables. The investigation covered the school years 2022 to 2025 and was confined to selected ALS learning centers and partner institutions within the municipality, thereby limiting the generalizability of the findings to other ALS contexts with different structural, geographic, or administrative conditions.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework. This study holistically examines the roles of stakeholder engagement and stakeholder collaboration in shaping the effectiveness of the Alternative Learning System (ALS) program in Panganiban, drawing on Stakeholder Theory, Social Capital Theory, and the Theory of Change as its theoretical anchors. First, Stakeholder

Theory underscores the value of inclusivity by emphasizing the involvement of diverse actors, including education personnel, local government units, NGOs, and community members, to promote participatory planning, contextualized solutions, and shared program ownership (Freeman, 1984, as cited in Harrison et al., 2019). In parallel, Social Capital Theory highlights how trust, dense social networks, and norms of reciprocity facilitate coordination, volunteerism, and long-term program sustainability (Bourdieu, 1986; Putnam, 2000, as cited in Aldrich & Meyer, 2015). Complementing these perspectives, the Theory of Change provides a structured framework for linking stakeholder inputs and activities to measurable outcomes, supporting adaptive management and continuous improvement (Weiss, 1995, as cited in Vogel, 2016; Taplin & Clark, 2017).

Figure 1 presents the study's conceptual framework, illustrating the associative relationships among stakeholder engagement, stakeholder collaboration, and ALS program effectiveness. Importantly, the framework does not imply causality; rather, it reflects statistically grounded associations among these constructs. Learner outcomes, such as completion, assessment performance, and satisfaction, are embedded as key indicators of effectiveness. Overall, the framework offers a coherent analytical lens for understanding how collective stakeholder dynamics are jointly linked to ALS program success.

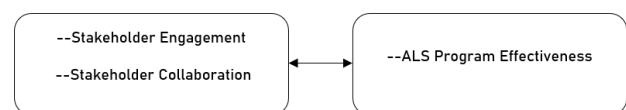


Figure 1
Interplay of Stakeholder Engagement, Collaboration, and ALS Effectiveness

LITERATURE REVIEW

Stakeholder engagement and collaboration are widely recognized in contemporary literature as critical determinants of program effectiveness in community-based and non-formal education initiatives (UNESCO, 2016; Emerson & Nabatchi, 2015; Reed et al., 2018). In alternative education

contexts such as the Alternative Learning System (ALS), where learners often come from marginalized and diverse backgrounds, the active participation of both internal and external stakeholders is essential for sustaining program delivery, ensuring contextual relevance, and improving learning outcomes (Hanemann, 2018; Boeren, 2019). Recent stakeholder-oriented frameworks emphasize that educational programs achieve greater effectiveness when stakeholders are meaningfully involved in decision-making, resource mobilization, and feedback processes, thereby strengthening accountability and shared responsibility (Reed et al., 2018; Bryson et al., 2017).

Empirical research further indicates that stakeholder engagement is inherently multidimensional, encompassing participation in needs assessment, volunteering, provision of resources, and feedback and monitoring mechanisms (Reed et al., 2018; Bussu & Bartels, 2014/extended by Bussu, 2019). Cordial (2025a) demonstrated that stakeholder engagement significantly enhances community resilience in disaster risk reduction initiatives in Catanduanes, underscoring how participatory needs assessment and shared ownership contribute to program sustainability. Although situated in a disaster risk reduction context, these findings offer strong conceptual parallels to ALS implementation, where localized needs identification and continuous stakeholder feedback are equally vital in addressing learners' diverse educational needs. Contemporary participation studies further affirm that programs characterized by inclusive and dialogic engagement processes tend to demonstrate higher legitimacy, responsiveness, and effectiveness, particularly in decentralized governance settings (Amal, 2025).

Stakeholder collaboration extends beyond engagement by emphasizing structured partnerships, joint planning, and coordinated implementation among institutions and community actors. Recent collaborative governance literature highlights that formalized

partnerships, shared goal-setting, and routine coordination meetings enable organizations to align strategies, optimize resource use, and reduce service fragmentation in complex public programs (Emerson & Nabatchi, 2015; Bryson et al., 2017). Cordial (2025b) found that coordinated stakeholder actions significantly influenced the perceived effectiveness of disaster risk reduction management programs in Catanduanes, reinforcing the proposition that collaboration mechanisms are instrumental in translating stakeholder participation into tangible program outcomes. These findings are particularly relevant to ALS programs, which rely heavily on inter-agency collaboration among the Department of Education, local government units (LGUs), non-government organizations (NGOs), and community-based organizations to address access, retention, and quality constraints.

In educational leadership research, effective stakeholder collaboration is frequently mediated by institutional leadership capacity and administrative performance. Cordial, Tabuzo, and Bermudo (2025) established that instructional leadership competence and financial management proficiency significantly predict administrative performance in elementary schools, suggesting that leadership effectiveness plays a central role in sustaining collaborative arrangements and partnership-driven initiatives. While the study focused on formal school environments, its implications extend to ALS centers, where program coordinators and implementers often operate within decentralized structures and resource-constrained contexts, making leadership-driven collaboration particularly critical (Bush & Glover, 2016; Hallinger, 2018).

Program effectiveness in ALS is commonly assessed using indicators such as completion rates, assessment performance, and program satisfaction. Contemporary studies on non-formal education effectiveness indicate that programs supported by strong stakeholder networks tend to demonstrate higher learner retention, improved assessment outcomes, and greater participant satisfaction due to enhanced

instructional support and contextual relevance (Boeren, 2019; UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, 2017). Cordial, Valledor, and Bermudo (2025) further illustrated that implementation strategies and stakeholder responsiveness significantly influenced the effectiveness of the Rapid Mathematics Assessment in Panganiban District, providing empirical evidence that stakeholder-driven implementation practices play a decisive role in improving learner outcomes and program credibility.

Despite the growing body of post-2016 literature on stakeholder engagement, collaboration, and program effectiveness—several research gaps remain evident. First, many empirical studies examine stakeholder engagement and collaboration as isolated constructs, with limited attention to their interrelationships within non-formal education programs such as ALS. Second, while stakeholder participation has been widely studied in formal education and disaster risk management contexts, there remains a notable scarcity of municipality-level, context-specific studies focusing on ALS implementation in rural and island communities such as Panganiban, Catanduanes. Third, existing studies frequently emphasize qualitative or descriptive approaches, leaving a gap in quantitative correlational evidence linking stakeholder engagement and collaboration to measurable indicators of ALS program effectiveness.

The present study addresses these gaps by adopting a descriptive-correlational design to empirically examine the relationships among stakeholder engagement, stakeholder collaboration, and ALS program effectiveness. By simultaneously analyzing these variables, the study responds to contemporary calls for integrated analytical approaches that capture the interactive dynamics between participatory processes and program outcomes in decentralized education systems (Bryson et al., 2017; Reed et al., 2018). Moreover, the inclusion of both internal and external stakeholders provides a holistic analytical lens that remains underexplored in ALS research, particularly within localized Philippine contexts.

In sum, while recent literature affirms the importance of stakeholder engagement and collaboration in enhancing program effectiveness, empirical evidence specific to ALS contexts, especially at the local level, remains limited. The present study contributes to the literature by generating context-sensitive, data-driven insights that clarify how engagement and collaboration function as interrelated mechanisms influencing ALS effectiveness in Panganiban. These findings are expected to inform policy formulation, strengthen multi-stakeholder partnerships, and support evidence-based improvements in ALS implementation.

METHODS

Research Design. This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the levels of stakeholder engagement, stakeholder collaboration, and the effectiveness of the Alternative Learning System (ALS) program in Panganiban, and to determine the relationships among these variables. Descriptive methods were used to quantify stakeholder engagement, collaboration, and program effectiveness across defined indicators, while correlational analysis assessed the strength and direction of associations among the variables without manipulating conditions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Bryman, 2016). This design is appropriate for educational and community-based studies seeking to explain relationships among naturally occurring variables within real-world program implementation contexts (Boeren, 2019).

Population, Samples and Sampling Technique. The population of the study consisted of 125 stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Alternative Learning System (ALS) in Panganiban District, comprising 88 internal stakeholders (ALS teachers, school administrators, and DepEd personnel) and 37 external stakeholders (LGU representatives, NGOs, community organizations, and partner institutions) (Cordial, 2025a; Cordial, 2025b). The sample size of 95 respondents was

determined using Slovin's formula at a 5% margin of error, a method widely recognized for calculating representative samples in educational research (Mweshi & Sakyi, 2020). Proportionate stratified random sampling was then employed to allocate the sample into 67 internal and 28 external stakeholders, ensuring proportional representation and enhancing the reliability and generalizability of the findings across stakeholder groups (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Instrumentation. Data were collected using a researcher-developed survey questionnaire designed to examine stakeholder engagement, stakeholder collaboration, and the effectiveness of the Alternative Learning System (ALS) program. The instrument comprised three structured sections: the first measured stakeholder engagement through involvement in needs assessment, volunteering, resource provision, and feedback mechanisms; the second assessed stakeholder collaboration in terms of joint planning, formalized partnerships, co-implementation of activities, and coordination processes; and the third evaluated ALS program effectiveness based on completion rates, assessment performance, and participant satisfaction. Responses were measured using a standardized four-point Likert scale, wherein mean scores of 3.25–4.00 indicated high levels, 2.50–3.24 reflected moderate levels, 1.75–2.49 denoted low levels, and 1.00–1.74 represented minimal levels of engagement, collaboration, and effectiveness. This scoring framework ensured consistency, precision, and comparability of responses across constructs. Content validity was established through expert review by specialists in educational research and ALS implementation, while reliability testing via a pilot study involving 20 non-sample stakeholders yielded a high split-half reliability coefficient ($r = 0.902$), confirming the instrument's strong internal consistency and methodological rigor.

Data Analysis. The data of the study were statistically analyzed using MegaStat to address the research objectives. Weighted

mean was employed to determine the levels of stakeholder engagement, degree of stakeholder collaboration, and effectiveness of the ALS program, providing a clear quantification of respondents' perceptions. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was utilized to examine the relationships among the variables, including stakeholder engagement, stakeholder collaboration, and ALS program effectiveness, assessing both the strength and direction of associations without manipulating conditions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Boeren, 2019). These analyses ensured accurate, reliable, and interpretable findings for evidence-based program recommendations.

Ethical Considerations. This study adhered to established ethical research standards. Participation was voluntary, with informed consent obtained after clearly explaining the study's purpose, procedures, and participants' rights, including withdrawal without penalty (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured, and data were used solely for academic purposes. All records were securely stored in password-protected digital files and locked storage, accessible only to the researcher. Data will be retained for five years and securely disposed of thereafter through permanent deletion and document shredding, consistent with ethical research guidelines (Bryman, 2016).

RESULTS

The present study examined stakeholder engagement, collaboration, and their relationships with the effectiveness of the Alternative Learning System (ALS) program in Panganiban. The findings provide insights into how stakeholder involvement contributes to program implementation, learner outcomes, and overall program success.

Stakeholder Engagement Levels among Internal and External Participants in the Alternative Learning System (ALS) Program. The findings in Table 1 reveal a high level of stakeholder engagement in the ALS program, with an

overall weighted mean of 3.51, indicating that stakeholders are highly engaged across various dimensions. Specifically, volunteering in ALS activities scored the highest (WM = 3.55), suggesting that stakeholders actively participate in program implementation, reflecting strong commitment and ownership. Involvement in needs assessment (WM = 3.51) and provision of feedback and suggestions (WM = 3.49) indicate that stakeholders play a consultative role in shaping program priorities. The provision of support or resources (WM = 3.48) underscores tangible contributions that facilitate program operations. Collectively, these high engagement levels create a collaborative environment that supports learner-centered interventions, enhancing both learner outcomes and overall program success.

Table 1
Mean Distribution of Stakeholder Engagement Levels in the Alternative Learning System (ALS) Program

Variable	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Involvement in ALS Needs Assessment	3.51	Strongly Agree/ Highly Engaged	2
Volunteering in ALS Activities	3.55	Strongly Agree/ Highly Engaged	1
Provision of Support or Resources	3.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Engaged	4
Feedback and Suggestions	3.49	Strongly Agree/ Highly Engaged	3
Overall weighted mean	3.51	Strongly Agree/ Highly Engaged	

Stakeholder Collaboration Levels among Internal and External Participants in the Alternative Learning System (ALS) Program. In a complementary manner, Table 2 presents the levels of stakeholder collaboration within the ALS program, showing an overall weighted mean of 3.46, which reflects strong collaboration across all dimensions. Structured coordination meetings scored the highest (WM = 3.48), highlighting that stakeholders actively engage in organized discussions to ensure alignment of objectives and effective communication. The co-implementation of activities (WM = 3.47) reflects joint efforts in program execution, while formalized partnerships (WM = 3.45) and joint planning and goal setting (WM = 3.44) indicate that collaboration extends into strategic planning. These results suggest that collaboration enhances program efficiency, ensures coherent

implementation, and contributes to improved learner outcomes by fostering a supportive and coordinated environment.

Table 2
Mean Distribution of Stakeholder Collaboration Levels in the Alternative Learning System (ALS) Program

Variable	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Joint Planning and Goal Setting	3.44	Strongly Agree/ Highly Collaborative	4
Formalized Partnerships	3.45	Strongly Agree/ Highly Collaborative	3
Co-implementation of Activities	3.47	Strongly Agree/ Highly Collaborative	2
Structured Coordination Meetings	3.48	Strongly Agree/ Highly Collaborative/	1
Overall weighted mean	3.46	Strongly Agree	

Effectiveness Levels of the Alternative Learning System (ALS) Program in Panganiban. Table 3 presents the effectiveness levels of the ALS program, with an overall weighted mean of 3.57, indicating that the program is perceived as highly effective by stakeholders. Completion rates scored the highest (WM = 3.60), reflecting strong retention and engagement strategies. Total program effectiveness (WM = 3.58), program satisfaction (WM = 3.56), and assessment performance (WM = 3.54) collectively demonstrate that learners are achieving intended outcomes. These findings suggest that the ALS program not only provides access to alternative education but also delivers meaningful learning experiences that promote learner achievement and satisfaction.

Table 3
Mean Distribution of ALS Program Effectiveness Levels in Panganiban

Variable	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Completion Rates	3.60	Strongly Agree/ Highly Effective	1
Assessment Performance	3.54	Strongly Agree/ Highly Effective	4
Program Satisfaction	3.56	Strongly Agree/ Highly Effective	3
Total Effectiveness of the ALS Program	3.58	Strongly Agree/ Highly Effective	2
Overall weighted mean	3.57	Strongly Agree/ Highly Effective	

Correlation between Stakeholder Engagement and Stakeholder Collaboration in the Alternative Learning System (ALS) Program. Furthermore, the correlation analyses provide deeper insights into the relationships among

engagement, collaboration, and program effectiveness. Table 4 shows a significant positive relationship between stakeholder engagement and collaboration ($r = 0.649$), indicating that active involvement fosters effective cooperation, shared decision-making, and joint ownership of program activities.

Table 4
Pearson r Test Analysis Between Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration in the ALS Program

Variables	Statistical Test	Computed Value	Critical Value @ .05	Decision	Interpretation
Association between Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration among Internal and External Participants in the ALS Program	Pearson r	0.649	0.201	Reject Ho	Significant Positive Relationship

Correlation between Stakeholder Engagement and the Effectiveness of the Alternative Learning System (ALS) Program on Learner Outcomes. Similarly, Table 5 reveals a significant positive relationship between stakeholder engagement and ALS program effectiveness ($r = 0.459$), suggesting that higher engagement enhances instructional quality, learner support, and overall program responsiveness, which in turn improves learner outcomes.

Table 5
Pearson r Test Analysis Between Stakeholder Engagement and ALS Program Effectiveness on Learner Outcomes

Variables	Statistical Test	Computed Value	Critical Value @ .05	Decision	Interpretation
Association between Stakeholder Engagement and ALS Program Effectiveness in Relation to Learner Outcomes	Pearson r	0.459	0.201	Reject Ho	Significant Positive Relationship

Correlation between Stakeholder Collaboration and the Effectiveness of the Alternative Learning System (ALS) Program. In contrast, Table 6 indicates no significant relationship between stakeholder collaboration and program effectiveness ($r = 0.141$). This finding suggests that collaboration alone, without meaningful engagement, structured accountability, or alignment with instructional strategies, may not directly impact learner outcomes. Together, these results underscore the importance of integrating engagement and collaboration, highlighting that active stakeholder

participation is the key driver of ALS program success and the optimization of learner achievement.

Table 6
Pearson r Test Analysis Between Stakeholder Collaboration and ALS Program Effectiveness

Variables	Statistical Test	Computed Value	Critical Value @ .05	Decision	Interpretation
Association between Stakeholder Collaboration and the Effectiveness of the ALS Program	Pearson r	0.141	0.201	Fail to Reject Ho	No Significant Relationship

DISCUSSION

The present study examined stakeholder engagement, collaboration, and their relationships with the effectiveness of the Alternative Learning System (ALS) program in Panganiban. The findings provide valuable insights into the mechanisms through which stakeholder involvement contributes to program implementation, learner outcomes, and overall program success. As Table 1 indicates, stakeholder engagement in ALS is high, with an overall weighted mean of 3.51. Notably, volunteering in program activities scored the highest (WM = 3.55), suggesting strong commitment and ownership among both internal and external stakeholders. Involvement in needs assessment (WM = 3.51) and provision of feedback (WM = 3.49) further demonstrate that stakeholders actively shape program priorities, while the provision of resources (WM = 3.48) highlights tangible contributions to operational effectiveness. These findings align with UNESCO (2016) and Hanemann (2018), who underscore that meaningful engagement is essential in community-based and non-formal education contexts, particularly where learners face marginalization and diverse needs. Active stakeholder engagement fosters learner-centered interventions, enhances program responsiveness, and strengthens overall program sustainability.

Complementing these findings, Table 2 shows that stakeholder collaboration is similarly robust, with an overall weighted mean of 3.46. Structured coordination meetings (WM = 3.48)

and co-implementation of activities (WM = 3.47) indicate that stakeholders do not only participate individually but engage in coordinated efforts, reflecting shared responsibility in achieving program objectives. The presence of formalized partnerships (WM = 3.45) and joint planning and goal setting (WM = 3.44) further illustrates that collaboration extends into strategic planning, ensuring institutionalized coordination. These results support the assertions of Emerson and Nabatchi (2015) and Bryson et al. (2017), who argue that structured partnerships and shared governance enhance resource alignment, reduce service fragmentation, and improve program coherence. In ALS contexts, such coordinated efforts are critical for addressing challenges in access, retention, and learning quality, and they facilitate the creation of a supportive environment conducive to improved learner outcomes.

The effectiveness of the ALS program itself, as presented in Table 3, is perceived as high (overall WM = 3.57). Completion rates scored the highest (WM = 3.60), reflecting the program's ability to retain learners and maintain engagement. Total program effectiveness (WM = 3.58), program satisfaction (WM = 3.56), and assessment performance (WM = 3.54) collectively suggest that learners are achieving intended outcomes. These results are consistent with Boeren (2019) and UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (2017), who found that non-formal education programs supported by engaged and collaborative stakeholders tend to demonstrate higher learner achievement and satisfaction. The ALS program in Panganiban not only expands educational access but also provides meaningful learning experiences, highlighting its role in addressing local educational gaps and promoting inclusive education.

Correlation analyses provide further insights into the dynamics of engagement, collaboration, and program effectiveness. Table 4 reveals a significant positive relationship between stakeholder engagement and collaboration ($r = 0.649$), indicating that active involvement

enhances cooperative behavior, shared decision-making, and joint ownership. This mutually reinforcing relationship underscores that engagement is a prerequisite for effective collaboration and aligns with Reed et al. (2018), Amal (2025), and Cordial (2025a), who emphasize that participation and joint action strengthen program legitimacy, responsiveness, and sustainability. Similarly, Table 5 demonstrates a significant positive association between stakeholder engagement and ALS program effectiveness ($r = 0.459$), suggesting that engagement directly improves instructional quality, learner support, and program responsiveness. These findings are consistent with Cordial, Valledor, and Bermudo (2025), who found that participatory implementation strategies positively influence learner outcomes and program credibility in alternative education contexts.

In contrast, Table 6 indicates that stakeholder collaboration alone does not have a significant direct relationship with program effectiveness ($r = 0.141$). This finding suggests that collaboration without meaningful engagement or structured alignment with instructional strategies may not translate into tangible improvements in learner outcomes. As highlighted by Cordial (2025b) and Bryson et al. (2017), collaboration is most effective when integrated with active engagement, leadership support, and accountability mechanisms. This insight implies that ALS program coordinators should focus not only on fostering partnerships but also on ensuring that collaboration is purposeful, linked to instructional strategies, and coupled with active stakeholder involvement.

The integrated results of this study carry significant implications for practice and policy. First, they underscore the central role of stakeholder engagement as a driver of program effectiveness. Programs that prioritize participatory decision-making, resource mobilization, and feedback processes are better positioned to achieve high completion rates, improved assessment performance, and learner satisfaction. Second, while

collaboration facilitates operational coordination, it is insufficient on its own to ensure effectiveness. Policies should therefore aim to institutionalize engagement mechanisms alongside collaborative structures to maximize program impact. Third, these findings reinforce the need for targeted capacity-building initiatives for stakeholders, including training on participatory planning, instructional support, and monitoring strategies, which can further enhance learner outcomes and program sustainability.

Despite these contributions, the findings of the study should be interpreted in light of several limitations. First, the study employed a descriptive-correlational design, which limits causal inferences regarding the relationships among stakeholder engagement, collaboration, and program effectiveness. Second, data were collected primarily through a self-reported survey questionnaire, which may be subject to response bias or social desirability effects. Third, the study was geographically limited to the municipality of Panganiban, which may constrain the generalizability of the results to other ALS contexts with different institutional capacities, stakeholder configurations, or socio-economic conditions.

These limitations point to important directions for future research. Subsequent studies may employ longitudinal or mixed methods designs to examine how changes in stakeholder engagement and collaboration over time influence ALS outcomes. Qualitative approaches, such as in-depth interviews or case studies, may also be used to capture nuanced stakeholder dynamics and contextual factors not fully reflected in survey data.

Moreover, future research could expand the scope to include multiple municipalities or provinces, enabling comparative analyses and strengthening external validity. Examining additional mediating variables, such as leadership practices or instructional quality, may further clarify the pathways through which stakeholder processes affect program effectiveness.

In conclusion, the study confirms that high levels of stakeholder engagement and collaborative mechanisms contribute to the success of ALS programs in Panganiban. Engagement fosters shared ownership, improves instructional quality, and strengthens program responsiveness, while collaboration enhances coherence and resource alignment. Recommendations for practice include designing structured engagement frameworks, integrating collaboration with strategic and instructional planning, and building stakeholder capacity to sustain participatory processes. At the policy level, educational authorities should consider formalizing stakeholder involvement protocols and providing institutional support to ensure that engagement and collaboration jointly enhance program effectiveness. Collectively, these strategies can optimize learner achievement, improve program sustainability, and inform evidence-based interventions in alternative education settings, contributing to broader educational equity and social inclusion objectives.

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Data availability statement. All data supporting the findings of this study are included within the manuscript and its supplementary materials.

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