

Motivational Factors and Learning Persistence Among ALS Learners

Alyn Mae J. Abella¹, Wenie Rose D. Canay²

¹Southern de Oro Philippines College, Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines

²Opol Community College, Opol, Misamis Oriental, Philippines

ABSTRACT: Education plays an important role in empowering individuals, especially in alternative learning programs. This study examined the motivational factors, focusing on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and learning persistence among Alternative Learning System (ALS) learners in Opol East and West District. The study involved 139 ALS learners selected through purposive sampling. Using a quantitative correlational research design, data were collected through a modified questionnaire and analyzed using weighted Mean, Standard Deviation, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r). The findings revealed that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are very high among ALS learners. Their learning persistence is high. The study further found a strong and significant relationship between motivational factors and learning persistence. The study highlights that motivation plays an essential role in helping learners stay engaged and committed to achieving their educational goals. It suggests that ALS learners continue developing clear personal goals, actively participate in learning activities, and maintain consistent study habits to strengthen persistence and successfully complete the program.

KEYWORDS: extrinsic, intrinsic, motivation, persistence

I. INTRODUCTION

As an Alternative Learning System Community Implementers in the Opol East District, it is a familiar yet disheartening experience to witness learners commence their educational journey with enthusiasm, only to gradually disengage, miss sessions, or eventually cease attending altogether. Many exhibits great potential initially but often fail to complete the learning modules or drop out before finishing the program. Despite the flexible learning setup, it becomes evident that academic support alone is not sufficient to sustain their interest and participation.

This recurring issue is not isolated. Across the Philippines, learner retention in the Alternative Learning System (ALS) remains a significant challenge. ALS was established to provide second-chance education to out-of-school youth and adults, particularly those marginalized due to poverty, family obligations, or early employment. However, the success of this initiative heavily depends on learners' persistence and motivation throughout the program.

Recent studies emphasized the pivotal role of motivation both intrinsic like personal growth, self-improvement and extrinsic like rewards, passing the A&E Test in sustaining learner engagement. For instance, Idulsa et al. (2024) observed that ALS learners with strong motivational factors are more academically engaged and more likely to complete their modules compared to their less motivated peers. Their study showed that learners who are driven by clear personal goals such as gaining employment, supporting their families, or pursuing further education demonstrated higher levels of concentration, perseverance, and initiative in completing their academic tasks. These learners are more consistent in attending learning sessions, actively participates in discussions, and seek help when faced with difficult concepts. The researchers also noted that institutional support, including encouragement from learning implementers and access to learning materials, further strengthened the learners' motivation. This finding underscores the critical role of motivation in promoting self-directed learning, persistence, and academic success within the flexible learning environment of the ALS program.

Furthermore, Mahinay et al. (2025) highlighted that while the Alternative Learning System (ALS) offers flexibility and inclusivity, substantial challenges persist that hinder its overall effectiveness. These include slow policy implementation, inconsistent program delivery, and unequal access to learning materials and technological resources, particularly in remote or underserved areas. Such systemic issues can negatively impact learners' motivation, leading to decreased engagement and lower retention rates.

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This suggests a critical need to further examine and address the motivational factors both internal and external that influence learner persistence, as well as to strengthen institutional support mechanisms that can sustain learner commitment throughout the program. However, within the Opol District, there is still a clear lack of localized research exploring how motivational factors directly affect learner retention in the Alternative Learning System (ALS). Although national studies provide important insights, they often present generalized conclusions that may not capture the distinct socio-cultural and economic conditions of learners in this specific context. Insights from Community ALS Implementers in Opol East highlight recurring issues many learners discontinue their studies despite the program's flexible setup, mainly because of urgent household duties, financial difficulties, or emotional stress. CAIs also note that some learners grapple with low self-confidence due to previous academic setbacks and limited family support, which further weakens their drive to stay in the program.

This underlines the urgent need for context-specific, evidence-based studies that examine these localized challenges in depth, so that tailored interventions can be designed to tackle the real obstacles to learner persistence and foster sustained engagement in the Alternative Learning System. This study aims to fill that gap by examining the motivational factors and learning persistence among ALS learners in the Opol District. By identifying what motivates or discourages them from completing the program, this research hopes to offer practical insights for educators and program implementers, enabling the development of targeted interventions to enhance learner retention and success in alternative education.

This study was anchored on two foundational theories that explain the relationship between motivation and learning persistence: Self-Determination Theory (SDT) as cited by Ryan et al., (2000), and Tinto's Student Integration Model (1993) as adapted for non-formal education settings. The Self-Determination Theory (SDT) by Ryan and Deci serves as the psychological foundation of this study. It helps explain why learners are motivated to engage and persist in learning tasks. SDT distinguishes between intrinsic motivation which is the learning for personal satisfaction or interest and extrinsic motivation which is learning for external rewards or outcomes. This theory guides the study in identifying which types of motivation (intrinsic vs. extrinsic) most significantly influence ALS learners' persistence. It also supports the inclusion of reward instruments and institutional support as factors that can either foster or hinder autonomous motivation, depending on how they are perceived by learners.

On the other hand, Tinto's Student Integration Model, adapted for non-formal education like ALS, provides the institutional and social framework for the study. It emphasizes that learners are more likely to persist when they feel integrated into the learning environment both academically and socially. This theory supports the investigation into how institutional support, such as teacher guidance, learning materials, and learner engagement strategies, contributes to the learners' commitment and continuity in the ALS program. Together, these two theories guide the development of the study's research framework, variables, and analysis, offering both an individual (psychological) and contextual (institutional) understanding of what motivates ALS learners in Opol East and West District to stay in the program. By using SDT and Tinto's model, the study gains a holistic perspective on the factors that influence learning persistence in a non-formal, community-based education system.

The conceptual framework of this study illustrates the relationship between motivational factors specifically intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as the independent variable, and learning persistence as the dependent variable. Institutional support intervention is also incorporated as a reinforcing factor that enhances both motivation and persistence.

Intrinsic motivation refers to the learners' internal drive to engage in learning due to personal interest, self-development, satisfaction, and a sense of purpose. This includes aspects such as self-confidence, personal growth, enjoyment in learning, and the desire to achieve personal goals. In contrast, extrinsic motivation pertains to external influences that encourage learners to continue their education, such as rewards, recognition, social approval, and opportunities for future advancement, including employment or further studies.

Learning persistence, the dependent variable in this study, is measured through learners' session attendance and module completion. These indicators reflect their consistency, commitment, and determination to continue learning despite challenges. It also includes behaviors such as active participation, goal setting, and resilience in overcoming academic difficulties.

Furthermore, this study integrated institutional support intervention as a key component of the framework. Institutional support encompasses the programs, strategies, and assistance provided by the ALS system, including facilitator guidance, recognition programs, peer support, access to learning resources, and other motivational interventions.

The framework assumed that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation directly influence learning persistence. At the same time, institutional support strengthens this relationship by enhancing learners' motivation and providing an enabling environment for persistence to develop. When learners receive adequate institutional support, they are more likely to remain motivated, attend sessions regularly, complete learning modules, and successfully finish the program.

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Moreover, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are viewed as interconnected factors that collectively influence learners' behavior. Institutional intervention serves as a reinforcing mechanism that bridges motivation and persistence, ensuring that learners are not only motivated but also adequately supported in achieving their educational goals.

II. METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a correlational research design to examine the relationship between motivational factors, specifically intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and the learning persistence of Alternative Learning System (ALS) learners in Opol East and West District. A correlational approach was selected because it is appropriate for determining the strength and direction of relationships among variables without manipulating them. This design is especially useful in educational research where variables naturally exist and cannot be controlled. Bhandari (2023) highlighted that correlational research allows the analysis of relationships among variables in their natural context, making it suitable for studies that aim to identify patterns and associations.

Furthermore, the use of a correlational design is appropriate in the ALS context, where ethical and practical limitations prevent the manipulation of learner motivation and institutional conditions. Rather than controlling variables, the study sought to understand how these factors relate to one another in actual learning environments. Alex (2025) emphasized that correlational research is widely applied in education because it enables researchers to examine naturally occurring variables and generate insights that may guide future interventions and decision-making. Overall, the correlational design provides a systematic and objective way of analyzing the relationships among intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, institutional support, and learning persistence. The results of this study may serve as a basis for developing evidence-based strategies aimed at improving learner retention and success in ALS programs.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Problem 1. What is the level of motivational factors of ALS learners in terms of:

- 1.1 intrinsic motivation; and
- 1.2 extrinsic motivation?

Table 1. Summary of Motivational Factors

Factors	Mean	SD	Qualitative Description
Intrinsic Motivation	4.26	0.74	Very High
Extrinsic Motivation	4.18	0.77	High
Overall	4.22	0.76	Very High
Note: 4.21 – 5.00 Very High 3.41 – 4.20 High 2.61 – 3.40 Moderate 1.81 – 2.60 Low 1.00 – 1.80 Very Low			

Table 1 presents the overall motivational factors of ALS learners, showing an overall Mean of 4.22 with SD= 0.76, which is qualitatively described as Very High. This means that learners possess a strong level of motivation in pursuing their education, driven by both internal and external factors. Intrinsic motivation obtained a higher Mean of 4.26 with SD = 0.76 qualitatively described as Very High compared to extrinsic motivation with the Mean of 4.18 with SD = 0.77, qualitatively described as High, suggesting that learners are more influenced by personal interest, self-improvement, and internal satisfaction rather than external rewards alone. However, the high level of extrinsic motivation also shows that external support systems such as recognition, encouragement, and incentives still play a significant role in sustaining their engagement.

The findings suggest that ALS learners are primarily driven by personal interest, self-improvement, and the satisfaction they gain from learning, while still valuing external support such as recognition, encouragement, and guidance. This indicates that both internal and external sources of motivation work together in shaping their learning behavior. The relatively close mean scores between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation reflect a balanced motivational profile, where learners' internal drive is strengthened by positive reinforcement from their environment. Additionally, the moderate standard deviations suggest that learners generally share similar motivational experiences, showing a consistent pattern across the group.

According to Deci et al. (2020), optimal motivation is achieved when both intrinsic and extrinsic factors are present and supportive of each other. They emphasized that while intrinsic motivation fosters deeper engagement and long-term persistence, extrinsic motivation can reinforce behavior and provide necessary support, especially in challenging learning environment. This is similar to the present findings, as the very high overall motivation of ALS learners suggests that a combination of personal drive and external encouragement contributes to their continued participation and learning persistence.

Problem 2. What is the level of learning persistence among ALS learners?

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Table 2 presents the Learning Persistence of ALS Learners. It has an overall Mean of 4.14 with SD = 0.87, qualitatively described as High. This indicates that learners generally demonstrate a strong capacity to continue their studies and remain committed to learning despite various challenges they may encounter. It suggests that many ALS learners are able to attend sessions regularly, accomplish assigned modules, and exert consistent effort even when faced with difficulties. This reflects a meaningful level of determination and adaptability, which is essential in flexible learning setups such as ALS.

This finding supports the study of De Guzman et al. (2023), which emphasized that learner persistence in alternative and flexible learning programs is strongly influenced by both personal determination and the presence of supportive learning environments. Their study noted that learners are more likely to remain engaged when they receive consistent guidance, encouragement, and access to appropriate learning resources. This suggests that persistence is not only shaped by individual effort but also reinforced by the support systems surrounding the learner. In relation to the present study, the high level of learning persistence among ALS learners reflects their commitment to education, while also highlighting the importance of strengthening institutional and instructional support to help sustain their engagement over time.

Table 2. Learning Persistence

Indicators	Mean	SD	Qualitative Description
1 I attend ALS sessions regularly.	4.05	0.98	High
2 I complete all the learning modules assigned to me.	4.17	0.85	High
3 I try to catch up on missed lessons when I am absent.	4.06	0.96	High
4 I stay focused during learning sessions.	4.08	0.93	High
5 I review my lessons at home even when we don't have class.	4.13	0.91	High
6 I continue studying even when I encounter challenges.	4.09	0.94	High
7 I actively participate in ALS activities and discussions.	4.24	0.73	Very High
8 I set goals for myself in completing the ALS program.	4.13	0.88	High
9 I have not considered dropping out of ALS.	4.17	0.83	High
10 I am determined to finish the ALS program no matter what.	4.26	0.69	Very High
Overall	4.14	0.87	High

Note: 4.21 – 5.00 Very High 3.41 – 4.20 High 2.61 – 3.40 Moderate 1.81 – 2.60 Low 1.00 – 1.80 Very Low

Moreover, the indicator 10, *I am determined to finish the ALS program no matter what*, has the highest Mean of 4.26 with SD= 0.69, qualitatively described as Very High. This means that learners exhibit a strong sense of determination and commitment to complete the ALS program despite possible challenges and obstacles. It indicates that they possess a high level of perseverance and a goal-oriented mindset, which drives them to continue their studies until completion.

This suggests that ALS learners demonstrate a strong sense of commitment and determination to complete the program despite the challenges and difficulties they may encounter. It reflects a clear goal-oriented mindset, where learners are driven by their desire to improve their future opportunities through education. This also indicates that they value the importance of finishing what they have started, which strengthens their overall learning commitment. The relatively low standard deviation further implies that this high level of determination is commonly shared among the learners.

According to Clement et al. (2024), that learners' persistence is strongly associated with clear educational goals, personal determination, and the perceived value of completing learning programs. Their study emphasized that learners are more likely to remain committed when they recognize the benefits of education in improving their future prospects and life outcomes. In relation to the present study, the very high level of determination among ALS learners reflects their strong belief in the importance of education as a pathway to better opportunities. This suggests that strengthening learners' goal clarity and reinforcing the value of education may further support their commitment to completing the program.

Meanwhile, the indicator 1, *I attend ALS sessions regularly*, has the lowest Mean of 4.05 with SD=0.98, qualitatively described as High. This means that while learners generally demonstrate regular attendance, it is slightly less consistent compared to other aspects of learning persistence. This indicates that while ALS learners generally attend sessions regularly, their attendance is the lowest among the indicators of learning persistence, suggesting slight inconsistencies in participation. It implies that learners remain engaged in the program, but external factors such as work demands, family responsibilities, and other personal challenges may occasionally affect their ability to attend consistently. The relatively higher standard deviation also reflects differences among learners, where some maintain regular attendance while others experience interruptions in participation.

According to Altbach (2024), attendance in flexible learning programs is often shaped by socio-economic conditions and the competing responsibilities that learners face in their daily lives. He emphasized that although learners may demonstrate strong motivation to continue their education, factors such as financial limitations, family obligations, and distance from learning centers

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can still hinder regular participation. This is similar to the present finding, as the high but comparatively lower rating in attendance suggests that ALS learners remain committed, but may require additional support systems to ensure more consistent engagement in learning sessions. Addressing these barriers through improved access and flexible support mechanisms may help strengthen sustained attendance and participation.

Problem 3. Is there a significant relationship between motivational factors and learning persistence among ALS learners?

Table 3 presents the correlation between motivational factors and learning persistence among ALS learners. The results reveal that intrinsic motivation has an r -value of 0.835 and extrinsic motivation has an r -value of 0.771, both indicating a Strong Positive Correlation with learning persistence. This means that as the level of motivation increases, the level of learning persistence among ALS learners also increases. The p -values of 0.001 for both variables are lower than the 0.05 level of significance, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0). This confirms that the relationships observed are statistically significant and not due to chance.

Furthermore, the overall correlation coefficient of 0.866 signifies a very strong positive relationship between motivational factors and learning persistence. This suggests that both internal drive and external support work together in influencing learners' engagement, attendance, and completion of learning tasks. Although both forms of motivation are important, intrinsic motivation shows a slightly stronger relationship, highlighting the greater influence of personal interest and self-determination in sustaining persistence.

Table 3. Test of Correlation Between Motivational Factors and Learning Persistence

Motivational Factors	Learning Persistence				
	r-value	p-value	Level	Decision	Interpretation
Intrinsic Motivation	0.835	0.001	Strong Positive Correlation	Reject H_0	Significant
Extrinsic Motivation	0.771	0.001	Strong Positive Correlation	Reject H_0	Significant
Overall Correlation	0.866	0.001	Strong Positive Correlation	Reject H_0	Significant
Note: 1.00 Perfect Positive Correlation 0.70 – 0.99 Strong Positive Correlation					
0.50 – 0.69 Moderate Positive Correlation 0.10 – 0.49 Weak Positive Correlation					
0.0 – 0.09 No Positive Correlation <i>Significant when computed p-value < 0.05.</i>					

According to Bianco et al. (2024), who emphasized that motivation is a key driver of learner engagement and completion in alternative learning settings. Their study highlighted that learners who are both internally driven and externally supported are more likely to remain actively involved in their studies and complete learning requirements. In relation to the present study, this implies that strengthening both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors can significantly enhance learning persistence among ALS learners. It further suggested that a balanced motivational environment contributes to stronger engagement and better learning outcomes.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Many learners' value education as a means to improve their quality of life, which strengthens their desire to learn.
2. Learners remain committed to attending sessions and completing their tasks because they are focused on achieving their goals and improving their future.
3. Motivation directly supports learners' continued engagement. When learners are highly motivated, they are more likely to stay active, participate, and complete their learning requirements.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are offered:

1. ALS learners may continue to strengthen their personal goals and maintain a positive attitude toward learning by actively participating in sessions and taking responsibility for their own progress.
2. ALS learners may further improve their consistency by attending sessions regularly, completing assigned tasks on time, and managing their time effectively despite personal responsibilities.

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3. ALS learners may sustain their motivation by setting clear goals, reflecting on their progress, and staying focused on the benefits of completing the ALS program.

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