



SOCIAL SUPPORT AND SELF-ESTEEM AMONG ALTERNATIVE LEARNING SYSTEM LEARNERS IN ALFONSO LISTA DISTRICT

Juty I. Rafael

*College of Advanced Education, Ifugao State University-Potia Campus,
Ifugao, Philippines*

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20054933>

ABSTRACT

The Alternative Learning System (ALS) learners often face unique challenges that may impact their self-esteem and the level of social support they receive. This study examined the relationship between social support and self-esteem among ALS learners in Alfonso Lista District during the School Year 2024-2025, aiming to identify the most influential type of social support and propose an intervention program. Using a descriptive-correlational design, data were collected from ALS learners through standardized questionnaires assessing their perceived levels of social support and self-esteem. The findings revealed that ALS learners generally experience moderate to high levels of social support, with family and peers serving as their primary sources of support. Their self-esteem was also at a moderate to high level, with a strong sense of self-respect but some difficulty in recognizing personal achievements. Pearson correlation analysis showed that all four dimensions of social support—emotional, tangible, affectionate, and positive social interaction were significantly correlated with self-esteem ($p < .01$). Among these, tangible support exhibited the highest correlation ($r = .485$), indicating that practical assistance plays a crucial role in enhancing self-worth. Based on these findings, the study proposes a holistic intervention program, "Building Confidence Through Support," which includes mentorship, peer buddy programs, community assistance, and team-building workshops to strengthen social support and boost self-esteem. The study underscores the importance of structured support systems in improving the confidence and well-being of ALS learners and provides insights for educators, policymakers, and future researchers.

Keywords: *Alternative Learning System, Intervention Program, Self-Esteem, Social Support, Tangible Support*

INTRODUCTION

Social support and self-esteem are widely recognized as critical determinants of learners' academic engagement, persistence, and psychological well-being. In educational settings, particularly those serving marginalized populations, supportive social environments can foster resilience, motivation, and positive self-concepts, which are essential for learning success. These factors are especially salient in alternative education programs designed for learners who have disengaged from or have limited access to formal schooling.

The Alternative Learning System (ALS) in the Philippines provides a flexible and inclusive educational pathway for out-of-school youth and adults who face socio-economic, geographic, or personal barriers to traditional education. Through community-based and learner-centered approaches, ALS aims not only to improve academic competencies but also to support learners' holistic development (Llego, 2022; Hernando-Malipot, 2021). However, ALS learners often encounter challenges such as financial constraints, social stigma, limited resources, and interrupted educational experiences, which may negatively affect their self-esteem and sense of belonging.

Social support refers to the resources and assistance individuals receive through their social networks and relationships, including emotional, instrumental, and informational support (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Drageset, 2021). In educational contexts, social support from family members, peers, teachers, and the community has been found to promote academic motivation, persistence, and psychological well-being. Emotional support provides encouragement and empathy, instrumental support offers tangible assistance such as learning materials, and informational support helps learners navigate academic and life challenges. For ALS learners, who often lack stable educational structures, the availability and quality of social support may play a particularly vital role in sustaining engagement and overcoming adversity.

Self-esteem, defined as an individual's subjective evaluation of personal worth and competence, is a key psychological factor influencing learning behavior and outcomes (Donnellan et al., 2011, as cited in Orth et al., 2022). Learners with higher self-esteem are more likely to exhibit motivation, resilience, and positive attitudes toward education. Conversely, learners with low self-esteem may experience self-doubt, anxiety, and disengagement, which can hinder academic progress. In alternative learning environments, self-esteem may be shaped by learners' prior educational failures, social acceptance, and perceived support within the learning community.

Empirical studies have consistently demonstrated a positive relationship between social support and self-esteem across diverse populations, suggesting that supportive interpersonal relationships enhance individuals' confidence, coping abilities, and sense

of value (Yıldırım et al., 2024; Mehra et al., 2021). In educational settings, learners who perceive higher levels of social support tend to report stronger self-esteem and better academic and psychological outcomes. Despite this growing body of research, limited attention has been given to examining how this relationship manifests within alternative education programs, particularly among ALS learners in localized Philippine contexts.

While global and national studies have explored flexible learning, inclusive education, and alternative learning models (Caingcoy et al., 2021; Ruiz et al., 2019; Henderson et al., 2018), existing literature largely focuses on program effectiveness, access, and instructional design. Few studies have explicitly examined the psychosocial dimensions of ALS, particularly the interaction between social support and self-esteem. Moreover, there is a notable lack of empirical evidence addressing how different forms of social support relate to self-esteem among ALS learners at the district level, where contextual, cultural, and socio-economic factors may uniquely shape learners' experiences.

In alternative education settings such as ALS, learning extends beyond academic instruction and is deeply embedded in learners' social and cultural environments. The non-traditional pathways followed by ALS learners often involve disrupted schooling histories, socioeconomic vulnerability, and limited access to formal support structures, making psychosocial factors particularly influential in shaping educational experiences (Llego, 2022; Hernando-Malipot, 2021). A supportive learning environment that affirms learners' identities and lived experiences is therefore essential in fostering positive self-perceptions, resilience, and sustained engagement (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Mehra et al., 2021).

This gap is especially evident in the Alfonso Lista District, Ifugao, where ALS learners are influenced by distinct geographic, cultural, and socio-economic conditions. Understanding how social support operates within this setting, and how it relates to learners' self-esteem, is essential for developing responsive and contextually appropriate interventions. Addressing this gap is timely, given the continuing efforts of the Department of Education to strengthen ALS as a mechanism for educational inclusion and lifelong learning (Department of Education, 2021).

Therefore, this study aimed to examine the relationship between social support and self-esteem among Alternative Learning System learners in the Alfonso Lista District. By providing empirical evidence on these psychosocial factors within a specific local context, the study sought to contribute to the limited body of research on ALS learners' psychological well-being. The findings are expected to inform educators, policymakers, and program implementers in designing targeted support mechanisms that enhance both the academic success and personal development of learners in alternative education settings.

Research Questions

This study aimed to examine the relationship between social support and self-esteem among learners enrolled in the Alternative Learning System (ALS) in the Alfonso Lista District, Ifugao, during the School Year 2024–2025.

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

1. What is the extent of perceived social support among ALS learners in the Alfonso Lista District in terms of:
 - 1.1 Emotional support;
 - 1.2 Tangible support;
 - 1.3 Affectionate support; and
 - 1.4 Positive social interaction?
2. What are the self-esteem levels of ALS learners in the Alfonso Lista District?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the extent of perceived social support and the self-esteem levels of ALS learners?
4. Which dimension of social support significantly influences the self-esteem levels of ALS learners?
5. What intervention program may be proposed based on the findings to enhance social support and self-esteem among ALS learners?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive–correlational research design to examine the relationship between perceived social support and self-esteem among learners enrolled in the Alternative Learning System (ALS). This design allowed for the description of learners' levels of social support and self-esteem and the determination of the strength and direction of their relationship without inferring causality. Selected demographic variables (age, sex, and civil status) were included for contextual purposes.

The study was conducted in a public-school district implementing ALS programs in Alfonso Lista, Ifugao, Philippines. Institutional names are not disclosed for ethical considerations. The respondents were 200 ALS learners enrolled during the School Year 2024–2025. A total enumeration sampling method was used, wherein all registered learners during the data collection period were invited to participate.

Data were gathered using a structured survey questionnaire consisting of two standardized instruments. Perceived social support was measured using the Social Support Survey adapted from the RAND Corporation, which assesses emotional support, tangible support, affectionate support, and positive social interaction using a 5-point Likert scale. Self-esteem was measured using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), a validated 10-item instrument rated on a 4-point Likert scale. Higher scores indicated greater perceived social support and higher self-esteem.

RESULTS

Table 1. Weighted mean of the extent of social support to the Alternative Learning System (ALS) learners in terms of emotional support

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Qualitative Description
1. Someone you can count on to listen to you when you need to talk	4.25	All the time
2. Someone to give you information to help you understand a situation	3.76	Most of the time
3. Someone to give you good advice about a crisis	3.95	Most of the time
4. Someone to confide in or talk to about yourself or your problems	3.78	Most of the time
5. Someone whose advice you really want	3.76	Most of the time
6. Someone to share your most private worries and fears with	3.47	Most of the time
7. Someone to turn to for suggestions about how to deal with a personal problem	3.52	Most of the time
8. Someone who understands your problems	3.75	Most of the time
Grand Mean	3.78	Most of the time

Table 2. Weighted mean of the extent of social support to the Alternative Learning System (ALS) learners in terms of tangible support

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Qualitative Description
1. Someone to help you if you are confined to bed	4.01	Most of the time
2. Someone to take you to the doctor if you need it	4.18	Most of the time
3. Someone to prepare your meals if you are unable to do it yourself	4.00	Most of the time
4. Someone to help with daily chores if you are sick	4.11	Most of the time
5. Someone to run errands for you	3.63	Most of the time
Grand Mean	3.99	Most of the time

Table 3. Weighted mean of the extent of social support to the Alternative Learning System (ALS) learners in terms of affectionate support

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Qualitative Description
1. Someone who shows you love and affection	4.36	All the time
2. Someone to love and make you feel wanted	4.18	Most of the time
3. Someone who hugs you	3.70	Most of the time
4. Someone who listens to you without judgement	3.63	Most of the time

5. Someone who offers words of encouragement	3.57	Most of the time
Grand Mean	3.89	Most of the time

Table 4. Weighted mean of the extent of social support to the Alternative Learning System (ALS) learners in terms of positive social interaction

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Qualitative Description
1. Someone to have a good time with	3.84	Most of the time
2. Someone to get together with for relaxation	3.94	Most of the time
3. Someone to do something enjoyable with	3.77	Most of the time
4. Someone to be a companion for engaging in conversations and laughter	3.80	Most of the time
5. Someone to share new experiences	3.58	Most of the time
Grand Mean	3.79	Most of the time

Table 5. Weighted mean of the self-esteem levels of the Alternative Learning System (ALS) learners

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Qualitative Description
1. Overall, I am satisfied with myself.	3.36	Strongly Agree
2. At times, I think I am quite good.	2.78	Agree
3. I feel that I have several good qualities.	3.00	Agree
4. I can do things as well as most other people.	2.97	Agree
5. I feel I have much to be proud of.	2.72	Agree
6. I certainly feel useful at times.	3.00	Agree
7. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.	3.11	Agree
8. I have respect for myself.	3.45	Strongly Agree
9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a success.	2.77	Agree
10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.	3.11	Agree
Grand Mean	3.03	Agree

Table 6. Correlation between social support and self-esteem among Alternative Learning System (ALS) learners

Variables	N	Self-Esteem (Pearson Correlation)	Sig. (2-tailed)	Interpretation
Emotional Support	200	.390**	.001	Significant
Tangible Support	200	.485**	.001	Significant

Affectionate Support	200	.388**	.001	Significant
Positive Social Interaction	200	.373**	.001	Significant

Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 7. Regression analysis of social support predicting self-esteem among Alternative Learning System (ALS) learners

Predictor Variables	Beta Coefficient	t-value	Sig.	R ²	F	p-value
Emotional Support	.042	.933	.352	.255	16.67	.001 ^b
Tangible Support	.190	3.867	.000			
Affectionate Support	.003	.055	.956			
Positive Social Interaction	.063	1.420	.157			

Note: Regression is significant at $p < .05$.

DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents the weighted means on the extent of emotional support received by Alternative Learning System (ALS) learners. Overall, respondents reported a generally high level of emotional support, with a grand mean of 3.78, interpreted as “Most of the time.” The highest-rated indicator was having someone willing to listen when learners need to talk (WM = 4.25, All the time), indicating the presence of dependable listeners, which supports findings that emotional support positively contributes to learners’ development (Salo et al., 2022).

Learners also reported frequent access to advice, guidance, and understanding during difficult situations, with weighted means ranging from 3.52 to 3.95, suggesting that ALS learners generally have people they can turn to for reassurance and information. However, the lowest mean (WM = 3.47) was observed for having someone they could trust with their most private worries and fears. Although still interpreted as “Most of the time,” this suggests some hesitation in deeper emotional disclosure. This finding aligns with Martinez et al. (2020), who noted that cultural norms and stigma may limit help-seeking and emotional openness among Filipinos.

These results have important implications for self-esteem. Prior research indicates that perceived emotional support enhances motivation, engagement, and self-esteem (Shen et al., 2024). While ALS learners generally experience emotional support, the relatively lower comfort in sharing sensitive concerns highlights the need for more secure and trusting environments. As noted by Wimmer et al. (2024), constrained emotional expression may heighten vulnerability to stress. Strengthening emotionally safe spaces within ALS programs may therefore further enhance learners’ self-esteem and well-being.

Table 2 summarizes the weighted means for the extent of tangible support received by Alternative Learning System (ALS) learners. Overall, respondents reported a

high level of tangible support, with a grand mean of 3.99, interpreted as “Most of the time.” The highest-rated indicator was having someone who can accompany the learner to a doctor when needed (WM = 4.18), indicating reliable access to health-related assistance. This finding supports previous research highlighting the buffering role of tangible support in mitigating stress and promoting well-being (Mao et al., 2020).

Learners also reported frequent assistance during illness, including help when confined to bed (WM = 4.01), meal preparation (WM = 4.00), and support with household chores (WM = 4.11). These results suggest that ALS learners generally have dependable support systems that address essential needs during periods of vulnerability. In contrast, the lowest mean (WM = 3.63) was observed for having someone to run errands, indicating that support for routine tasks is comparatively less consistent. This finding echoes Riobóo-Lois et al. (2024), who emphasized that access to personal assistance varies and often prioritizes urgent needs.

The generally high level of tangible support has important implications for self-esteem. As noted by Liu and Cao (2022), tangible social support enhances resilience and reduces stress, thereby supporting psychological well-being. For ALS learners, consistent practical assistance may reinforce feelings of security, value, and competence, contributing positively to self-esteem. Nonetheless, the relatively lower support for routine responsibilities suggests an area where additional reinforcement may further strengthen learner confidence and engagement.

Table 3 presents the weighted means on the extent of affectionate support received by Alternative Learning System (ALS) learners. Overall, respondents reported a high level of affectionate support, with a grand mean of 3.89, interpreted as “Most of the time.” The highest-rated indicator was having someone who consistently shows love and affection (WM = 4.36, All the time), indicating that many learners feel emotionally valued and cared for. This finding supports earlier research showing that affectionate behaviors contribute to emotional security and stress reduction in supportive relationships (Van Raalte & Floyd, 2021).

Learners also reported frequent experiences of feeling wanted and loved (WM = 4.18) and receiving physical expressions of affection such as hugging (WM = 3.70), suggesting the presence of emotionally nurturing relationships that foster belonging. Nonjudgmental listening also received a favorable rating (WM = 3.63), indicating access to emotionally safe spaces for sharing concerns. In contrast, the lowest mean (WM = 3.57) was observed for receiving verbal encouragement, suggesting that affirming and motivational communication may be less consistently expressed. This aligns with findings that verbal encouragement, when combined with other forms of affection, is particularly effective in enhancing positive outcomes (Pacholek & Zemková, 2022).

The generally high level of affectionate support has important implications for self-esteem. Affectionate interactions have been shown to strengthen emotional bonding and promote psychological security (Jakubiak et al., 2022). For ALS learners, consistent

expressions of care may foster self-worth and emotional resilience; however, strengthening verbal encouragement may further enhance confidence and self-esteem.

Table 4 presents the weighted means on the extent of positive social interaction experienced by Alternative Learning System (ALS) learners. Overall, respondents reported a favorable level of positive social interaction, with a grand mean of 3.79, interpreted as “Most of the time.” The highest mean was recorded for having someone to relax with (WM = 3.94), indicating that learners commonly have companions who provide opportunities for stress relief and emotional enjoyment. This supports findings that social engagement and shared activities promote positive emotions and well-being (Sun et al., 2023).

Learners also reported frequently having someone to spend enjoyable time with (WM = 3.84), engage in conversation and laughter (WM = 3.80), and participate in enjoyable activities (WM = 3.77). These results suggest that ALS learners generally benefit from supportive and pleasant social relationships that foster companionship and belonging. In contrast, the lowest mean (WM = 3.58) was observed for having someone to share new experiences with, indicating that opportunities for novel shared activities may be less frequent. This aligns with Basu and Banerjee (2020), who noted that environmental and contextual constraints can limit the breadth of social experiences despite the presence of support networks.

Positive social interaction has important implications for self-esteem. Prior studies show that supportive social engagement enhances resilience, emotional regulation, and confidence (Saleem & Zia, 2024). For ALS learners, regular participation in enjoyable social interactions may reinforce feelings of acceptance and self-worth, while expanding opportunities for shared new experiences could further strengthen social competence and self-esteem.

Table 5 presents the weighted means of the self-esteem levels of Alternative Learning System (ALS) learners. Overall, respondents demonstrated moderate to high self-esteem, with a grand mean of 3.03, interpreted as “Agree.” The highest-rated indicator was “I have respect for myself” (WM = 3.45, Strongly Agree), indicating that learners generally recognize their personal worth and dignity. This supports findings that higher self-esteem is associated with positive social, emotional, and academic functioning (Orth & Robins, 2022).

Learners also reported favorable self-evaluations in overall self-satisfaction (WM = 3.36) and maintaining a positive attitude toward themselves (WM = 3.11), suggesting a generally constructive self-image. Moderate agreement was observed in indicators related to perceived competence and usefulness (WM range = 2.97–3.00), indicating acknowledgement of personal abilities alongside occasional self-doubt. In contrast, relatively lower means were noted for indicators reflecting pride and perceived success, such as “I feel I have much to be proud of” (WM = 2.72), suggesting difficulties in recognizing achievements. This pattern is consistent with Cameron et al. (2023), who noted that self-esteem shapes perceptions of success and future expectations.

Overall, the findings suggest that ALS learners maintain a positive sense of self-worth despite challenges, though areas related to pride and achievement recognition may require reinforcement. Supporting learners' self-efficacy and acknowledgment of accomplishments may further enhance self-esteem and motivation (Lin & Chekal, 2024).

Table 6 presents the correlation analysis between perceived social support and self-esteem among Alternative Learning System (ALS) learners. Results show that all four dimensions of social support—emotional support, tangible support, affectionate support, and positive social interaction—were positively and significantly correlated with self-esteem at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). These findings indicate that higher levels of social support are associated with higher self-esteem among ALS learners.

Among the dimensions, tangible support demonstrated the strongest relationship with self-esteem ($r = .485, p < .01$), suggesting that practical assistance such as help with daily needs, learning materials, and transportation plays a particularly important role in strengthening learners' self-worth. This result supports previous findings emphasizing the importance of connectedness and practical support in alternative education settings (Lemon & Calder, 2022). Emotional support ($r = .390, p < .01$), affectionate support ($r = .388, p < .01$), and positive social interaction ($r = .373, p < .01$) each showed moderate positive correlations with self-esteem, indicating that feeling listened to, cared for, and socially included contributes meaningfully to learners' self-perceptions. Similar relationships have been documented in studies highlighting the role of emotional reinforcement, belongingness, and supportive interactions in promoting self-esteem (Casquejo et al., 2025; Elshanum, 2024).

The null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between social support and self-esteem among ALS learners was therefore rejected. Overall, the results confirm that multiple forms of social support are significantly associated with self-esteem, underscoring the importance of strengthening supportive networks—particularly tangible and emotional support—to enhance learners' confidence and psychological well-being in alternative education contexts (Rahim, 2024).

Table 7 presents the multiple regression analysis examining the predictive effects of different types of social support on self-esteem among Alternative Learning System (ALS) learners. The regression model was statistically significant ($F = 16.67, p < .05$) and accounted for 25.5% of the variance in self-esteem ($R^2 = .255$), indicating that social support plays a meaningful role in explaining learners' self-esteem.

Among the four predictors, tangible support emerged as the only significant predictor of self-esteem ($\beta = .190, t = 3.867, p < .05$). This suggests that practical forms of assistance—such as provision of learning materials, financial aid, transportation, and help with daily tasks—directly contribute to enhancing learners' confidence, sense of worth, and self-belief. This finding reinforces earlier correlation results, where tangible support demonstrated the strongest association with self-esteem, and aligns with evidence highlighting the importance of concrete assistance in improving psychological well-being and self-regulation (Urano et al., 2022; Lagatiera et al., 2024).

In contrast, emotional support ($\beta = .042$, $p = .352$), affectionate support ($\beta = .003$, $p = .956$), and positive social interaction ($\beta = .063$, $p = .157$) did not significantly predict self-esteem when analyzed simultaneously. While these forms of support were positively correlated with self-esteem, their effects were not significant after controlling for tangible support, suggesting that practical assistance has a more direct and measurable impact on self-esteem than emotional or social support alone.

Overall, the results indicate that tangible support is the strongest factor influencing self-esteem among ALS learners. These findings underscore the importance of prioritizing material and logistical support within ALS programs to enhance learners' confidence, engagement, and psychological well-being.

Conclusions

Based on the study's findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The ALS learners receive high social support across emotional, tangible, affectionate, and positive interactions, occurring most of the time;
2. ALS learners maintain a positive self-perception despite the challenges of non-traditional learning environments;
3. Higher levels of support contribute to greater confidence and self-worth among learners;
4. Practical assistance plays a crucial role in enhancing learners' confidence, motivation, and persistence; and
5. A structured intervention program is proposed to strengthen social support and self-esteem, ensuring that ALS learners receive comprehensive assistance through mentorship, peer engagement, community support, and team-building activities.

Recommendations

Based on the study's conclusions, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. ALS teachers and program coordinators are highly encouraged conduct regular family engagement activities and peer support programs to sustain and enhance the high levels of social support that ALS learners receive from their families and peers;
2. ALS implementers, educators, and community leaders may create platforms to celebrate learners' accomplishments through recognition programs, awards, and portfolio presentations to help them develop a stronger sense of pride in their achievements;
3. The Department of Education (DepEd) ALS Division, local government units (LGUs), and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) may integrate structured support programs that cater to the emotional, tangible, affectionate, and social needs of ALS learners to sustain the positive impact on their self-esteem;

4. ALS teachers, community leaders, and stakeholders may strengthen tangible support initiatives, such as scholarship grants, provision of school materials, transportation assistance, and livelihood programs, to further boost the self-esteem and confidence of ALS learners;
5. ALS implementers, DepEd officials, LGUs, and community-based organizations may adopt and institutionalize the "Building Confidence Through Support" program to holistically address the self-esteem and social support needs of ALS learners by incorporating structured mentorship, peer-buddy systems, community outreach efforts, and life skills training; and
6. Future researchers are encouraged to conduct a longitudinal or phenomenological study focusing on how sustained tangible support (e.g., financial assistance, learning materials, and transportation aid) influences the self-esteem, persistence, and academic outcomes of ALS learners over time, as well as to explore other contributing factors such as family involvement, community participation, and learner motivation.

Intervention Program

Based on the findings of the study, evidence-based intervention program titled "Building Confidence Through Support: A Holistic Social Support Program for ALS Learners" is proposed. The program is designed to enhance learners' self-esteem by strengthening available social support mechanisms. Findings showed that while emotional, affectionate, tangible support, and positive social interaction were all positively associated with self-esteem, tangible support emerged as the strongest predictor, highlighting the importance of practical and material assistance in fostering learners' confidence and sense of self-worth.

Anchored in Social Support Theory (Cohen & Wills, 1985) and supported by recent empirical evidence (Karunaratne, 2022; Yuan et al., 2023), the program adopts a holistic and learner-centered framework structured around three components: (1) tangible support initiatives (e.g., provision of learning materials and logistical assistance), (2) emotional and affectionate support activities (e.g., mentoring and peer support), and (3) positive social interaction opportunities (e.g., collaborative and life-skills activities). These components are intended to address both the material and psychosocial needs of ALS learners, thereby promoting sustained engagement and improved self-esteem.

The proposed intervention aligns with national efforts to strengthen Alternative Learning Systems through increased educational investments and inclusive education policies (Department of Budget and Management, 2025; EDCOM 2, 2025). By integrating community partnerships and support structures into ALS implementation, the program aims to provide a sustainable model for enhancing learner well-being and academic participation. Overall, the intervention offers research-informed framework that may guide policymakers and educators in developing targeted support strategies for ALS learners.

"Enhancing Social Support and Self-Esteem: A Holistic Program for ALS Learners"

Findings	Activity	Objectives	Strategies	Success Indicators	Persons Involved	Time Frame
Tangible support significantly influences self-esteem.	<i>ALS Support Network</i>	Provide ALS learners with practical support (e.g., meals, transportation, learning materials).	Organize community-based assistance programs (e.g., donation drives, mentoring sessions).	Increased access to resources and logistical support.	ALS teachers, LGUs, NGOs, and parents.	Monthly
Emotional support enhances self-esteem.	<i>"Kumustahan Sessions"</i>	Offer emotional support through regular mentorship and guidance.	Conduct group discussions, peer mentoring, and one-on-one counseling.	Improved emotional resilience and motivation.	ALS teachers, peer mentors, and social workers.	Bi-weekly
Affectionate support strengthens self-worth.	<i>"ALS Buddy Program"</i>	Foster a sense of belonging among learners.	Pair learners with peer buddies for encouragement and social interaction.	Increased positive relationships and learner engagement.	ALS teachers, peer buddies, trained volunteers.	Year-round
Positive social interaction contributes to self-esteem.	<i>Team Building and Life Skills Workshops</i>	Enhance socialization and teamwork among learners.	Conduct team-building activities, collaborative projects, and group games.	Increased confidence and social skills.	ALS teachers, psychologists, and community leaders.	Quarterly

Compliance with Ethical Standards

The author affirms that this study complied with established ethical research standards. Informed consent was obtained from all respondents prior to participation, and participation was voluntary, with respondents free to withdraw at any time without penalty. Anonymity and confidentiality were strictly maintained, and all data were handled in accordance with data privacy regulations. The well-being of respondents was safeguarded throughout the research process, and the data were used solely for academic and research purposes. The author declares that no conflict of interest exists, that plagiarism was strictly avoided, and that the findings were interpreted objectively and without bias. Artificial intelligence (AI) tools were used solely to assist in language editing and manuscript organization; however, all substantive content, analysis, interpretations, and conclusions are the sole responsibility of the author.

Acknowledgments

The researcher wishes to express sincere gratitude to the individuals who contributed to the completion of this study, particularly the respondents for their time and cooperation. Appreciation is also extended to the developers of the research instruments used in this study and to colleagues and mentors who provided guidance and support throughout the research process.

REFERENCES

- Basu, S., & Banerjee, B. (2020). Impact of environmental factors on mental health of children and adolescents: A systematic review. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 119, 105515. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105515>.
- Caingcoy, M., Pacursa, J., & Adajar, M. (2021). Effectiveness of the Alternative Learning System Informal Education Project and the Transfer of Life Skills among ALS Teachers: A Case Study. *International Journal of Community Service & Engagement*. <https://doi.org/10.47747/ijcse.v2i3.298>.
- Cameron, J., Chee, K., & MacGregor, J. (2023). Impressions of self-esteem influence impressions of close others and predictions for hypothetical events. *Self and Identity*, 22, 592 - 619. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15298868.2022.2164346>.
- Casquejo, A., Obenza, D., Catabas, J., Gorrero, A., Remoroza, J., & Navarro, A. (2025). The Nexus Between Belongingness and Self-Esteem in University Students. *Journal of Tertiary Education and Learning*. <https://doi.org/10.54536/jtel.v3i1.3782>.
- Cohen, S., & Wills, T. A. (1985). Stress, social support, and the buffering hypothesis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 98(2), 310-357. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.98.2.310>
- Department of Budget and Management (DBM). (2025). Historic first: P1.224-T budget for basic and higher education for 2026 reaches 4.0% of GDP.
- Drageset, J. (2021). Health promotion in health care – Vital theories and research. *National Library of Medicine*. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-63135-2_11
- EDCOM 2. (2025, November 13). Gatchalian: 2026 education budget “highest in country’s history,” meets UN recommendation. Senate of the Philippines. https://web.senate.gov.ph/press_release/2025/1113_edcom1.asp
- Elshanum, D. (2024). The Role of Parents in Enhancing Self-Esteem of School-Age Children: Exploring Parenting Styles, Involvement, and Socioeconomic Factors. *Acta Psychologica*. <https://doi.org/10.35335/psychologia.v3i3.65>.
- Henderson, D., Washington, K., Hamit, S., Ford, S., & Jenkins, K. (2018). Modeling Resilience in an Alternative Education Context. *The Urban Review*, 50, 675-692. <https://doi.org/10.1007/S11256-018-0461-1>.
- Hernando-Malipot, M. (2021, January 8). Advocates laud ALS Act that will address ‘access, equity and quality’ in education. *Manila Bulletin*. <https://mb.com.ph/2021/01/08/advocates-laud-als-act-that-will-address-access-equity-and-quality-in-education/>
- Jakubiak, B., Fuentes, J., & Feeney, B. (2022). Affectionate Touch Promotes Shared Positive Activities. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 49, 939 - 954. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01461672221083764>.
- Karunarathne, R. A. I. (2022). Impact of perceived social support and social skills on adolescent’s self-esteem: The social support theory perspective. *Journal of Business and Technology*, 6(2), 37–50. <https://doi.org/10.4038/jbt.v6i2.87>
- Lagatiera, G., Aparecio, D., & Sagarino, K. (2024). Training Needs Assessment of Monkayo District Alternative Learning System: Basis for Community Extension. *International Journal of Research and Scientific Innovation*. <https://doi.org/10.51244/ijrsi.2024.1108016>.
- Lemon, K., & Calder, N. (2022). What can we learn from alternative education in creating connectedness with Indigenous priority learners? *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*. <https://doi.org/10.55146/ajie.2022.29>.
- Lin, P., & Chekal, L. (2024). Self-efficacy in educational contexts: a comparative analysis of global perspectives. *HUMANITARIAN STUDIOS: PEDAGOGICS, PSYCHOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY*. [https://doi.org/10.31548/hspedagog15\(1\).2024.180-187](https://doi.org/10.31548/hspedagog15(1).2024.180-187).

- Liu, Y., & Cao, Z. (2022). The impact of social support and stress on academic burnout among medical students in online learning: The mediating role of resilience. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 10. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2022.938132>.
- Llego, M. A. (2022, August 25). Inclusive Education in the Philippines. TeacherPH. Retrieved August 25, 2022, from <https://www.teacherph.com/inclusive-education-philippines/>
- Mao, X., Zhang, L., & Liu, Y. (2020). Stressors and Subjective Well-Being among Chinese Older Adults: Uncovering the Buffering Roles of Tangible Support Patterns. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 52, 78 - 98. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022120977042>.
- Martinez, A., Co, M., Lau, J., & Brown, J. (2020). Filipino help-seeking for mental health problems and associated barriers and facilitators: a systematic review. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, 55, 1397 - 1413. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00127-020-01937-2>.
- Mehra, N., Wang, S. J. S., Reyes, J., et al. (2021). Evaluation of an Alternative Learning System for youths at risk of involvement in urban violence in the Philippines. *Cost Effectiveness and Resource Allocation*, 19(1), 66. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12962-021-00320-5>
- Orth, U., & Robins, R. (2022). Is high self-esteem beneficial? Revisiting a classic question. *The American psychologist*, 77 1, 5-17. <https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000922>.
- Pacholek, M., & Zemková, E. (2022). Effects of Verbal Encouragement and Performance Feedback on Physical Fitness in Young Adults. *Sustainability*. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14031753>.
- Rahim, A. (2024). Exploring the Role of Self-Compassion and Social Support in Women's Resilience: A Qualitative Study of Coping with Life Adversities. *Human Nature Journal of Social Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.71016/hnjss/rtsh7220>.
- Riobóo-Lois, B., Frieiro, P., González-Rodríguez, R., & Verde-Diego, C. (2024). Personal assistance, independent living, and people with disabilities: An international systematic review (2013-2023). *Disability and health journal*, 101630. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dhjo.2024.101630>.
- Ruiz, G., Pilapil, G., Rule, K., Tulod, S., & Amparado, M. (2019). Evaluation of the Playgroup Project and Alternative Learning System Programs in Village Looc and Village Opao, Mandaue City, Cebu, Philippines. *JPAIR Institutional Research*. <https://doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/8tg92>.
- Saleem, T., & Zia, A. (2024). Effects of Social Support on Academic Resilience of Undergraduate Students. *UMT Education Review*. <https://doi.org/10.32350/uer.71.06>.
- Salo, A., Vauras, M., Hiltunen, M., & Kajamies, A. (2022). Long-term intervention of at-risk elementary students' socio-motivational and reading comprehension competencies: Video-based case studies of emotional support in teacher–dyad and dyadic interactions. *Learning, Culture and Social Interaction*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lcsi.2022.100631>.
- Shen, H., Ye, X., Zhang, J., & Huang, D. (2024). Investigating the role of perceived emotional support in predicting learners' well-being and engagement mediated by motivation from a self-determination theory framework. *Learning and Motivation*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lmot.2024.101968>.
- Sun, R., Teulings, I., & Sauter, D. (2023). Why Being Social and Active Boosts Psychological Wellbeing: A Mediating Role of Momentary Positive Emotions. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/19485506231218362>.
- Urano, Y., Ikeda, T., & Mearns, J. (2022). Receiving assistance in emotion regulation: A preliminary investigation. *Personality and Individual Differences*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2021.111445>.
- Van Raalte, L., & Floyd, K. (2021). Examining the Moderating Influence of Relationship Satisfaction on Affection and Trust, Closeness, Stress, and Depression. *Journal of Family Communication*, 22, 18 - 32. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15267431.2021.2000990>.

- Wimmer, J., Coyle-Eastwick, S., Fox, J., & Grapin, S. (2024). Stress, social support, and internalizing problems: Domains of stress and support. *Psychology in Schools*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.23344>.
- Yuan, W., Xie, Z., Dong, P., & Yang, Y. (2023). Linking perceived social support to self-esteem and social integration among adolescents with visual impairment: A cross-lagged study. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, Article 1054857. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1054857>
- Yıldırım, M., Çağış, Z., Aziz, I., Rizzo, A., Turan, M., Nucera, G., Khabbache, H., Szarpak, L., Chirico, F., & Zaffina, S. (2024). The mediating role of self-esteem in the relationship between social support and affective experiences among undergraduate students in Turkey. *Acta psychologica*, 250, 104540. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2024.104540>.

APA Citation:

Rafael, J. I. (2026). SOCIAL SUPPORT AND SELF-ESTEEM AMONG ALTERNATIVE LEARNING SYSTEM LEARNERS IN ALFONSO LISTA DISTRICT. *Ignatian International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research*, 4(5), 736–751. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20054933>

jutyrafael52@gmail.com