

Alternative Learning System (Als) Teachers' Formative Assessment Practices, Learners' Online Learning Readiness, And Autonomy

Armand Glenn S. Lapor

Guimaras State University, Mclain, Buenavista, Guimaras

ABSTRACT

This study examined the formative assessment practices of Alternative Learning System (ALS) teachers, learners' online learning readiness, and autonomy in Panay Island for School Year 2025–2026. Conducted in October 2025, the study involved 181 randomly selected ALS teachers through stratified proportionate random sampling. Data were gathered using a validated questionnaire adapted to the ALS and online learning contexts. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed, with sex, highest educational attainment, school size, type of school, and teaching experience considered as profile variables. Data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, t-test, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and Pearson's correlation coefficient through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Results showed that formative assessment practices were implemented at a very high level, with an overall mean of 4.38. Learners' online learning readiness was also rated very high, with an overall mean of 4.32, while learner autonomy obtained a very high overall mean of 4.29. No significant differences were found in formative assessment practices, online learning readiness, and learner autonomy when respondents were grouped according to sex, highest educational attainment, school size, type of school, and teaching experience. Likewise, no significant relationships were found among formative assessment practices, online learning readiness, and learner autonomy. The findings indicate that the respondents demonstrated consistently high levels of formative assessment implementation, online learning readiness, and learner autonomy, while the statistical tests did not establish significant associations among the three major variables. The study provides information that may support teacher development, instructional planning, and the continued improvement of ALS learning practices.

Keywords: Alternative Learning System, formative assessment practices, online learning readiness, learner autonomy, ALS teachers, Panay Island

INTRODUCTION

The Alternative Learning System (ALS) provides a valuable chance for people who are unable to enter or complete ordinary basic education. By means of flexible learning arrangements, students are able to continue their studies regardless of their circumstances, requirements, or the resources they have. In view of its flexibility, it is necessary for teachers to employ appropriate assessment methods if they are to monitor progress, identify any learning difficulties, give feedback, and assist students in achieving their aims. Formative assessment is particularly important since it permits teachers to see how well students understand the material and how their learning is progressing. The continuous feedback that it

provides allows teachers to modify their teaching and to offer help whenever it is needed. As the students in ALS come from all sorts of backgrounds and have different experiences, effective formative assessment helps to make the learning process more sensitive and focused on each individual student.

Since a greater amount of learning is taking place online and through the use of technology, it is essential that students are ready for flexible learning situations. Being prepared for learning online involves students being motivated, confident, persistent and capable of looking after their own learning tasks. Learner autonomy is closely linked with this and refers to students being able to take control of their learning, make decisions, solve problems and work independently towards their goals. These attributes are particularly important for ALS students because flexible learning usually requires them to look after their own learning to a greater extent. Meanwhile, teachers can make use of formative assessment to provide feedback and support, thus helping students to keep track of their progress and become more independent.

The study examined the way in which ALS teachers on Panay Island made use of formative assessment, as well as the students' readiness for online learning and their level of autonomy during the 2025–2026 school year. Its purpose was to describe the teachers' profiles, including their gender, educational attainment, the size of their school, the type of school, and the length of their teaching experience. The study also assessed the levels of formative assessment, online learning readiness, and learner autonomy and investigated whether these levels varied according to the teachers' backgrounds. Furthermore, it looked into whether there were any connections between formative assessment, online learning readiness, and learner autonomy. The overall aim was to gain a better understanding of assessment and learning in ALS programs in that area.

The study was carried out in October 2025 and involved 181 ALS teachers from Panay Island, who were selected at random to ensure representation among the various groups. In order to address the needs of ALS and online learning, the researchers used a validated questionnaire. The study adopted a descriptive-correlational method, describing the teachers' profiles by means of frequency and percentage, calculating the main variables using averages, and applying t-tests and ANOVA to identify differences between the groups. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationships between the main variables, and all the data were analysed using SPSS.

The study concentrated exclusively on certain ALS teachers on Panay Island for the 2025–2026 school year and examined formative assessment, online learning readiness, and learner autonomy. The teachers' profiles comprised information on their sex, level of education, the size of their school, the type of school, and the length of their teaching experience. It did not cover teachers who were not part of ALS, students in regular basic education, or ALS programs outside that area. As a result, the findings apply only to the individuals and circumstances that were studied. Nevertheless, the results may be of use in improving formative assessment, teacher training, lesson planning, and flexible learning within ALS, in particular by helping students to become more ready and independent when taking part in online and self-directed learning.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study employed a descriptive-correlational research design in order to examine the way in which Alternative Learning System (ALS) teachers on Panay Island make use of formative assessment, as well as the learners' readiness for online learning and their level of autonomy during the 2025–2026 school

year. The descriptive component assessed the levels of formative assessment, online learning readiness, and autonomy. The correlational part of the study looked at the relationships between these key variables. Additionally, the study investigated whether there were any significant differences in these variables according to the learners' sex, highest educational attainment, school size, type of school, and teaching experience. This type of design was appropriate since it enabled the researchers to look at the existing conditions and relationships without altering any of the variables.

Respondents of the Study

The research looked at 181 ALS teachers from Panay Island who took part in the Alternative Learning System in the 2025–2026 school year. In order to choose the participants, the researchers applied stratified proportionate random sampling so that all the groups within the population would be adequately represented. The teachers provided details regarding their formative assessment practices and the conditions connected with online learning readiness and learner autonomy.

Research Instrument

The primary instrument used for gathering data was a questionnaire which had been designed specifically for use in ALS and online learning contexts. The questionnaire dealt with teachers' practices regarding formative assessment, learners' readiness for online learning, and learner autonomy; it also contained questions concerning the teachers' backgrounds, such as their sex, the highest level of educational attainment they had achieved, the size of the school, the type of school, and the length of their teaching experience. Before being presented to the teachers, the questionnaire was checked to ensure that the questions were appropriate, clear, and consistent with the aims of the study.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data collection occurred in October 2025. Prior to distributing the questionnaire, the researchers obtained the necessary permissions and consulted both the appropriate authorities and the ALS staff. They explained to the teachers why the study was being carried out and took steps to ensure that all the information would remain confidential. The questionnaires were given to the chosen teachers, who were allowed sufficient time to complete them. After having been collected, the questionnaires were checked to verify that they were complete, then sorted, inputted into the system, and prepared for analysis.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The researchers went into the situation and carried out the analysis with the help of SPSS. In order to describe the teachers' profiles—they looked at factors such as sex, the highest level of educational attainment, the size of the school, the type of school, and teaching experience—they used frequencies and percentages. To determine the levels of formative assessment practices, online learning readiness, and learner autonomy, they calculated the mean. When they wanted to see whether there were any significant differences between two groups, they applied the t-test, and when comparing three or more groups, they used ANOVA. Pearson's correlation coefficient was employed in order to assess whether there were any significant relationships among formative assessment practices, online learning readiness, and learner autonomy. All of the statistical tests were carried out at the 0.05 significance level.

Ethical Considerations

The researchers adhered to the ethical guidelines during the study. When collecting the data they addressed all the respondents with respect and made sure to explain both the purpose and the details of the study. It was made clear to the respondents that their information would be used only for academic and research purposes. Confidentiality of all the responses was maintained and no information which

could identify individuals was disclosed. The data were managed properly and were used only in the way stated in the study.

RESULTS

For the 2025–2026 school year, 181 Alternative Learning System (ALS) teachers who had been randomly selected from Panay Island took part in the study. The respondents were chosen through stratified proportionate random sampling. The research concentrated on formative assessment practices, learners' readiness for online learning, and learner autonomy. The teachers were divided according to their sex, the highest level of educational attainment they had achieved, the size of their school, the type of school they worked in, and the length of their teaching experience. The data were analysed using frequency, percentage, mean, t-test, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and Pearson's correlation coefficient, with a significance level of 0.05.

ALS teachers demonstrated a very high degree of formative assessment practices, with a general mean score of 4.38 (SD = 0.39). The highest mean was recorded for monitoring learners' progress at 4.45 (SD = 0.41), then came giving feedback at 4.40 (SD = 0.43), followed by supporting learning improvement at 4.36 (SD = 0.40), and finally adjusting instruction on the basis of the assessment results at 4.31 (SD = 0.44). This indicates that ALS teachers regularly kept an eye on learners' performance, provided them with feedback, and used the results of assessments to aid learning.

The learners also displayed a very high degree of readiness for online learning, the average being 4.32 (standard deviation = 0.42). Among the various factors, motivation had the highest average score at 4.39 (standard deviation = 0.43), then came persistence at 4.35 (standard deviation = 0.44), followed by confidence in using online resources at 4.31 (standard deviation = 0.45), and finally readiness to manage online tasks at 4.28 (standard deviation = 0.46). This indicates that the learners were generally ready for online and flexible learning and had both the motivation and persistence to carry out the activities.

Learner autonomy was similarly very high, the average being 4.29 (SD = 0.45). The highest average was recorded for independence in carrying out tasks at 4.36 (SD = 0.46), then for self-direction at 4.32 (SD = 0.44), followed by problem-solving at 4.29 (SD = 0.47), and lastly responsibility for learning at 4.23 (SD = 0.49). This indicates that the learners were able to manage their own activities, make decisions, solve problems, and take responsibility for their progress.

If the teachers were grouped according to sex, there were no significant differences in their use of formative assessment, their readiness for online learning, or their level of learner autonomy. Male teachers had a mean score of 4.35 for formative assessment as compared to 4.39 for female teachers ($t = -0.58$, $p = .563$). In the case of online learning readiness, the males obtained a score of 4.29 and the females 4.33 ($t = -0.54$, $p = .590$). For learner autonomy, the males scored 4.26 and the females 4.30 ($t = -0.51$, $p = .611$). Since all the p-values were greater than .05, the differences were not considered significant.

There were no significant differences either when the teachers were grouped according to their highest level of educational attainment. The mean score for formative assessment was 4.34 for those who had a bachelor's degree, 4.39 for those who had a master's degree, and 4.43 for those who had a doctorate ($F = 1.18$, $p = .310$). In the case of online learning readiness, the means were 4.28, 4.33 and 4.37 ($F = 0.96$, $p = .385$). For learner autonomy, the means were 4.25, 4.30 and 4.34 ($F = 0.88$, $p = .417$). Educational attainment therefore did not result in any significant differences among the three variables.

There were no significant differences among the variables according to school size. Teachers in small schools had a mean score of 4.36 for formative assessment, those in medium schools had 4.38, and those in large schools had 4.41 ($F = 0.72$, $p = .488$). For online learning readiness, the means were 4.29, 4.32 and 4.35 ($F = 0.51$, $p = .602$). In the case of learner autonomy, the means were 4.26, 4.30 and 4.33 ($F = 0.57$, $p = .567$). Since all the p-values were greater than 0.05, school size was not associated with differences in the three variables.

There were also no significant differences according to the type of school. Teachers in public schools had a mean score of 4.37 in the case of formative assessment, whereas those in the other kinds of school had a mean of 4.40 ($t = -0.46$, $p = .646$). With regard to online learning readiness, the means were 4.31 and 4.34 ($t = -0.38$, $p = .706$). For learner autonomy, the means were 4.28 and 4.31 ($t = -0.37$, $p = .714$). Therefore, school type did not result in any significant differences in the three variables.

The teaching experience showed no significant differences among the three main variables. Teachers who had between 1 and 10 years' experience had a mean score of 4.36 for formative assessment, those with between 11 and 20 years had 4.38, and those with more than 20 years had 4.41 ($F = 0.59$, $p = .556$). For online learning readiness, the mean scores were 4.29, 4.32, and 4.35 ($F = 0.47$, $p = .627$). In the case of learner autonomy, the means were 4.26, 4.30, and 4.33 ($F = 0.43$, $p = .652$). Since all the p-values were greater than .05, teaching experience did not result in a significant difference.

The Pearson correlation analysis revealed no significant relationship between formative assessment practices and learners' online learning readiness ($r = .091$, $p = .222$); it also found that formative assessment practices were not significantly related to learner autonomy ($r = .104$, $p = .162$). Similarly, the association between online learning readiness and learner autonomy was not significant ($r = .121$, $p = .103$). Although all the correlations were positive, their p-values were greater than .05. Therefore, the null hypotheses regarding the relationships among the three variables were retained.

To sum up, ALS teachers demonstrated a very high degree of formative assessment (with a mean of 4.38), and the learners had very high levels of online learning readiness (with a mean of 4.32) and autonomy (with a mean of 4.29). Nothing significant was found regarding sex, educational attainment, school size, school type, or teaching experience. The study also revealed no significant relationships between the three main variables. This indicates that the high levels observed in these areas were consistent throughout all the groups in the study.

Summary

The study examined the way in which Alternative Learning System (ALS) teachers on Panay Island in the Philippines made use of formative assessment, as well as the learners' readiness for online learning and their level of autonomy during the 2025–2026 school year. It was carried out in October 2025 and involved 181 ALS teachers who were selected by means of stratified proportionate random sampling. Data were obtained through the use of a questionnaire which had been validated and was specifically designed for ALS and online learning. The research employed a descriptive-correlational design in order to investigate the various variables and to determine whether there were any significant differences or relationships among them.

The study was concerned with the way in which ALS teachers make use of formative assessment and with the learners' levels of online learning readiness and autonomy. The participants were divided according to their sex, level of education, the size of their school, the type of school and the length of their teaching experience. To describe the data, the research employed frequency, percentage and mean,

and t-tests and ANOVA were used to examine differences between the groups. Pearson's correlation coefficient was applied in order to determine whether there were any relationships among the key variables. The data analysis was carried out using SPSS.

Findings of the Study

The findings indicated that ALS teachers frequently employed formative assessment in their teaching. They regularly monitored the learners' progress, provided feedback, assisted the learners in improving, and altered their teaching in response to the assessment results. Formative assessment was generally used at a very high level; this shows that ALS teachers used it not merely for the purpose of measuring performance but also to support and improve learning.

The study also discovered that the learners were very well prepared for online learning; they displayed motivation, continued to carry out their tasks, and felt confident about using online resources. They were able to meet the demands and responsibilities associated with online learning. These findings indicate that ALS learners were generally suited to flexible, technology-supported learning.

The study also found that the learners possessed a high degree of autonomy; they were able to carry out tasks by themselves, direct their own learning, solve problems and take responsibility for their work. This indicates that ALS learners display the characteristics of independent and self-directed learning, a feature which is important in flexible learning environments.

The study also revealed no significant differences in formative assessment practices according to sex, level of education, the size of the school, the type of school, or the amount of teaching experience. Similarly, there were no differences between the groups in the learners' online learning readiness and autonomy. This indicates that the levels of these variables were generally the same for all the groups in the study.

The results also revealed no significant relationships between formative assessment practices, online learning readiness, and learner autonomy. Although all three of these factors were at a high level, the analysis found no strong connections between them. This indicates that these variables may all be high in ALS settings without being directly linked.

Conclusions

The study found that ALS teachers frequently carried out formative assessment in their teaching. They often kept an eye on the learners' progress, provided feedback, helped the learners to improve, and made changes to their teaching when necessary. This demonstrates that assessment plays an important role in teaching and learning within ALS and that teachers use it to support learners in flexible learning environments.

The study also discovered that ALS learners were well geared up for online learning; they were motivated, continued to carry out their tasks, felt confident in using online resources, and were able to handle the various online learning activities. Moreover, they displayed a high degree of autonomy by working on their own, guiding their own learning, solving problems, and taking responsibility for their education.

The study also found that formative assessment practices, online learning readiness, and learner autonomy did not vary significantly according to sex, level of education, the size of the school, the type of school, or the teaching experience; there were no significant relationships between these three

variables as well. Although all three factors were at a high level, the study did not discover any strong links between them.

Recommendations

In light of the study's findings and conclusions, it is suggested that the Department of Education and the relevant ALS administrators continue to provide ALS teachers with professional development, particularly in the areas of formative assessment, feedback strategies, assessment literacy, and the use of assessment results to improve teaching. As formative assessment is already in common use, it should be kept up and further enhanced through continuous training and by sharing effective strategies. Teachers could include self-assessment, reflective exercises, individualised feedback, and other learner-focused assessment methods in order to better support learners' academic development. They should also provide structured opportunities for learners to build their readiness for online learning by incorporating digital literacy activities, giving orientation on online learning platforms, assigning guided online tasks, and offering suitable technical assistance.

ALS teachers should continue to encourage learner autonomy by providing a variety of activities which help to develop independence, self-direction, problem-solving skills, the ability to make decisions, and a sense of responsibility. Furthermore, school administrators and ALS coordinators should ensure that learners are given adequate resources, digital tools, and technical support so that they can succeed in flexible, technology-supported learning.

Since the study discovered no strong connections between formative assessment, online learning readiness, and learner autonomy, these areas should be regarded as separate yet related components of ALS learning; improving one does not ensure that the others will change. Therefore, programmes ought to deal with assessment, online readiness, and autonomy as a whole by providing broad support for both teachers and learners.

Future researchers could carry out this study in other situations involving ALS, in different school districts, or in other areas to find out whether the results are similar. They might also examine other factors such as access to technology, digital skills, the learning environment, socioeconomic status, the level of community support, and previous experiences of online learning. Furthermore, qualitative or mixed-method research could be used to explain how ALS teachers make use of formative assessment and how learners develop their online readiness and autonomy in flexible, technology-supported environments.

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