

Challenges on the Implementation of Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE) Program

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Abstract— *The Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE) is a curriculum integrated into the K to 12 Curriculum of the Department of Education (DepED) primarily aimed to supplement the needs of the Muslim learners not only in Muslim-dominated areas but throughout the Country. This study primarily aimed to identify challenges in the implementation of the ALIVE program within the Basilan Schools Division. A qualitative in-depth interview was conducted with 11 school heads focusing on three themes such as resource, process, and contextual variables. Lack of financial and instructional resources intended for the ALIVE program, lack of monitoring and supervision from the division office, and lack of evaluation policies for Asatidz were the major challenges felt by the School Heads.*

Keywords— *Asatidz, Arabic Language, Basilan Schools Division, Bangsamoro, Islamic Values, Madrasah Education.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The Organic Act for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) provides the necessary provision for the regional government to establish an educational subsystem to perpetuate Filipino Islamic values and develop spiritual, intellectual, social, cultural, scientific, and physical aspects of the people of the region. Another act that strengthen and expand the organic act of the ARMM mandated the integration of the ALIVE program in all public schools throughout the region (ARMM ALIVE Manual, 2012). Recently, the ARMM was replaced by the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) through the Bangsamoro Organic Law (RA 11054). The BARMM is a parliamentary-democratic regional government that consists of an executive and a legislative branch headed by the Chief Minister. The education sector under the BARMM setup such as the Department of Education (DepED), the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) were merged into a single entity called Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education (MBHTE) headed by the Minister.

The Philippine educational system tries to improve learning and education processes to accommodate every learner's needs. Since the learning process is ongoing and evolving within our fundamental teaching practice, exploring any educational philosophy is necessary for all learners. Today, we are in a rapidly changing world [20], in which the Muslim community is scarred by extremism. There are deep

and pressing concerns for immediate attention, such as religious fanaticism and radicalism, multi-religious environmental degradation such as loss of precious social respect, spiritual awareness, and purpose of existence [21]. The hope is not too late, for there is still a mechanism to build a knowledge base through education. While the nature of education differs from one system to another, it is the most effective way to transform human development [21]. In the case of Basilan, the primary defect of the conventional educational policy is the lacking of focus on Islamic principles. Hence, establishing Islamic education by integrating the ALIVE program in our educational system should aim to produce educated individuals regardless of religious affiliation. Native and non-native Muslim speakers seek to learn it because it requires them to worship since the Holy Qur'an is in Arabic text [6]. Every Muslim is obliged to learn the Arabic language, while non-Muslims used the speech to achieve a social or economic purpose. The ALIVE program is part of the higher program called the Madrasah Education Program (MEP). The MEP intends to provide every Muslim learner a relevant and appropriate educational opportunities.

The educational system has its own permeated sense of philosophy and policy. Jamjooon [9] elucidated that Islam represents a general and comprehensive concept, which maintains a self-contained, unique, and distinctive educational policy. Since the period of Islamization in the Philippines began on the island of Sulu (particularly in Simunul, Bongao, Tawi-Tawi – it is part of Sulu Sultanate during that time) during the 13th century where the Qur'anic schools commenced to teach young children and recite the Qur'an [1]. The educational system has already been established differently in the sense that children will go to the house of the teacher to learn in reading the Qur'an. Abu Bakar [1] further explained that the Madrasah is an educational institution that plays a significant role among young Filipino-Muslims to receive religious instruction and acquire Islamic knowledge, values, and culture. However, nowadays, Islamic education has been challenged due to the negative connotations about the breeding ground for terrorism—nevertheless, no evidence supports this claim. According to Al-Attas [5], some of the highlighted problems are confusion error in knowledge, the loss of moral discipline within the community, and the rise of

leaders who are not qualified for the Muslim community's good leadership.

In the Philippine context, many religious groups have set up and built their institutions following legal regulations. To support this sacred institution, the Philippine government has attempted to address madrasah education issues through circulating memoranda that urge the deployment of competent and quality teachers who share the same advocacy in Islamic education. The Tripoli Agreement signed between the Philippine government, and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) stipulated authorities' rights in the ARMM region [12].

The K to 12 Curriculum's salient features strengthens primary education from universal kindergarten to senior high school. As cited in [2], former DepEd Secretary Luistro claimed that the K to 12 Program would help Filipino students acquire advanced skills and knowledge with global standards. The curriculum is essential in an academic discipline [10]. It is the fundamental reference book for teaching and learning that should be printed and published to guide all teachers during the processor when they are at home. The curriculum is essential for it is a guide that covers the entire learning system. It is context-specific as education has to address teachers and society [11]. It is a broad concept covering the body as the whole of knowledge, all activities, and learning process experienced by a student at school that educational institutions have formally and systematically planned according to its level of expertise [15].

There are few studies conducted about the MEP. Particularly, the Madrasah Education Program (MEP) mitigates, prevents, or counters violent extremism [18]. Moreover, the MEP delivers some program goals through institutional support, pedagogical and instructional development, and cultural diversity enrichment [17]. However, few challenges have been identified by some researchers. For instance, in Marawi City, the lack of resources such as textbooks and other learning materials is one of the most challenging parts of the implementation of the MEP [19]. Other challenges were also identified such as lack of permanent infrastructure [17], low and delayed allowances [13,17], and inadequate qualified teachers [13].

Furthermore, the ALIVE program was not evaluated and appropriately monitored, and minimal faculty development [8]. Hence, the BARMM in particular should institute reforms in hiring qualified ALIVE Teachers [19] and upgrade the Asatidz teaching competence.

The main purpose of the study was to assess challenges encountered or felt by the school heads concerning the implementation of the ALIVE program within the division.

II. METHODOLOGY

Under the Basilan Schools Division, 9 districts are offering the ALIVE program, and 1 district that does not offer the program. Out of 9 districts, 87 schools have the ALIVE program. The study randomly selected 10 school heads for the in-depth interview. One-on-one personal interview using semi-structured guided questions focusing on three variables such as resource, process, and contextual was conducted. The semi-

structured guided questions were patterned from the survey questionnaire developed by Rogayan and Villanueva [16].

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this section, the Islamic Teachers is referred to as Asatidz while the singular form of the Asatidz is called Ustadz. Secular education refers to the curriculum provided by the national government while Madrasah education refers to the curriculum provided by the private Islamic schools.

A. Resource Variables

The ratio of ALIVE Teachers (Asatidz) to learners does not meet the minimum standard. Lack of ALIVE teachers is a prevalent problem in almost all schools within the division. According to Respondent 3:

"There are 260 learners handled by one Ustadz."

Sometimes the classes are being fused or mixed, and one Ustadz is handling multi-grade learners. Accordingly,

"In most cases, the Asatidz is handling multiple classes to the extent of 13 classes per session." (Respondent 10)

"One Ustadz is handling a muti-grade class of different levels." (Respondent 10)

However, few schools have no problem with the ratio of learners to Asatidz, specifically those with a small population. Respondent 9 says:

"We do not have problems concerning the number of Asatidz because we only have a small population on which the Ustadz can manage his/her classes according to the standard number of learners."

While it is very usual that ALIVE classes have a more significant number of learners compared to other subjects, some roughly feel it as manageable. According to Respondent 6:

"We have a small population in our school, but we only have 1 Ustadz assigned to handle ALIVE subjects in all grade levels. We may feel it manageable; however, we need additional Asatidz to maintain the quality of learning in our school."

Language is one of the barriers and sometimes constitute the biggest problem for the Asatidz. The qualifying exam called QEALIS administered by the national government is in Arabic, while the textbooks they used were in English. Thus,

Asatidz is fluent in the Arabic language, while the medium of instruction is English. According to Respondent 2:

"The Ustadz assigned in my school is a high school graduate, and she keeps on telling me that she has difficulty in using the provided textbook since the language used throughout the text is in English."

Moreover, the specialization of Asatidz is not a problem because all Asatidz is well-versed in the Arabic language. However, most of them lack teaching pedagogy. Accordingly,

"We have no problem about the specialization of the Asatidz, but I feel uneasy because they are just high school graduates in secular education." (Respondent 1)

"Asatidz cannot differentiate between the needs of the individual learners. Even though they are college graduates in Arabic courses, they are just high school graduates in secular education. We hope that the qualifications for the Asatidz on secular education will be upgraded, and the Asatidz must be both a graduate of both Arabic and secular." (Respondent 8)

"Asatidz need more training on teaching pedagogy." (Respondent 2)

"Professional qualification of Asatidz must be considered so that they will have proper training on teaching methodology and strategies to manage their classes appropriately." (Respondent 10)

There are a few challenges to the time allotment of ALIVE classes. According to Respondent 3:

"Time allotment is just enough because we usually combine classes like grade 1 and grade 2."

However, due to multiple classes handled by the Asatidz, the time intended for the ALIVE class is not enough. According to Respondent 5:

"The four hours given to the ALIVE classes in a week is not enough."

Also, Respondent 10 reiterated,

"Our Asatidz has difficulty in dividing their time because of handling three

sections per session and 300 learners is handled by a single Ustadz."

The most challenging for the ALIVE classes is having few Asatidz but too many learners. Some schools cannot implement ALIVE classes in all grade levels. According to some Respondents,

"We only have the ALIVE class for Grade 6." (Respondent 1)

"ALIVE classes are too big." (Respondent 10)

"ALIVE classes are too crowded and mixed with different grade levels." (Respondent 5)

Almost all schools mixed their ALIVE classes and allotted a few minutes for every grade level. Another challenge is the level of learning. There are instances that the Asatidz discuss the lesson according to the level of understanding of pupils in the lower grade in a multi-grade ALIVE class. Thus, those students in the higher grade may feel bored. According to Respondent 6:

"Any Ustadz find difficulty in handling all grade levels in a single ALIVE class because of the learners' level of understanding."

School heads encountered some challenges in the preparation of lesson plans and instructional materials (IMs) by the ALIVE teachers. ALIVE teachers mostly do not prepare their lessons ahead of time or do not prepare any lesson plan. According to Respondent 7:

"The Asatidz do not write or submit their daily lesson plan."

Also, according to Respondent 5:

"Asatidz were not trained in using instructional materials and learning devices."

The Asatidz may have appropriately experienced handling ALIVE classes of different levels. Still, they lack training on lesson plan preparation, and at the same time, some do not have available textbooks or resources for the ALIVE learners. Accordingly:

"The Asatidz are not ready with their IMs." (Respondent 10)

"The Asatidz need textbooks and IMs exclusive for ALIVE classes." (Respondent 8)

Many of the challenges were related to a lack of skills and competence in preparing instructional materials (IMs) and lesson plans. The use of the English language in IMs and textbooks also contributes to the difficulty of Asatidz in understanding lesson plans. It is because most of the ALIVE texts provided are in the Arabic language on which lessons are to be prepared using the English language. Accordingly,

"Text written in English is tough for the Asatidz to understand." (Respondent 2)

"Most of the time, we usually tell the Asatidz to produce their own IMs and find some resources on their own which they think are best suited for each grade level." (Respondent 4)

Asatidz needs training on the development, preparation, and construction of assessment tools and classroom management. Accordingly,

"There is a need for Asatidz to attend training related to assessment or making formative and summative tests for ALIVE learners." (Respondent 2)

"Asatidz need to improve their classroom management especially during assessment activities. I observe that ALIVE classes are very noisy during the assessment period." (Respondent 3)

"The division should provide reference material or guide for the Asatidz on how to construct formative and summative assessment for the ALIVE learners. The division office should conduct training on constructing test items and preparing assessment tools for all Asatidz." (Respondent 8)

Some Asatidz feels insecure because most of them are hesitant to join seminars or training. According to Respondent 1:

"Sometimes, the Asatidz are hesitant to join seminars together with regular teachers, and I think it is because of their educational qualification."

Programs for the professional development of the Asatidz are not readily available. Nevertheless, MBHTE activities focus on seminars and training for a specific area. Accordingly,

"Lack of professional development given to the Asatidz" (Respondent 8)

"Professional development of Asatidz focus on attending seminars and training." (Respondent 9)

"Our school is regularly conducting school-based LAC session of which we include the Asatidz." (Respondent 10)

Facilities and amenities such as classrooms exclusive for ALIVE learners are needed. Establishing prayer rooms within the school will enable ALIVE teachers to conduct additional sessions on Islamic practices and values after prayer time. There is also a need to provide supplemental reading and other references materials for learners. Accordingly

"We do not have any references or materials for ALIVE learners. Most of the time, we just usually borrow materials from our neighboring private madrasah." (Respondent 1)

"A prayer room is needed for both female and male students." (Respondent 2)

"Aside from discussions during ALIVE classes, the Asatidz also conduct values orientation every after prayer." (Respondent 10)

Supplemental learning materials are also needed aside from the traditional books being used in the ALIVE subjects. According to Respondent 2:

"Supplemental reading materials should be considered aside from the traditional books."

It is very challenging to involve the parents in implementing the ALIVE program because of specific reasons such as lack of communication between school and parents. Parents concentrate their attention on traditional weekend madrasah, and activities are being conducted during the weekend. Accordingly,

"I see no support from the parents when it comes to ALIVE program." (R1)

"Parents tend to have little involvement in ALIVE related activities because they rely on the existing weekend madrasah." (R2)

"Parents support any activities related if they are well informed." (R7)

"Parents are supportive, but they are asking not to conduct the ALIVE activities during the weekend because"

their children are attending the weekend traditional madrasah classes." (R10)

This is similar to the findings of Sali and Marasigan [17], in which challenges affecting the program implementation of MEP are limited instructional resources. It also resembles the study of Jamaluddin and Cadir [8], in which the financial aspect of the Madrasah is the primary concern for the sustainability of the school, which emanates from the lack of ALIVE teachers and learning resources, and minimal faculty development. Moreover, it was also pointed out by Marasigan [13] that madrasah education in the Philippines has several issues and concerns on non-availability of ALIVE teachers in remote areas, lowest allowance and delayed salary, mismatch on training and educational attainment, and no training on pedagogic skills. The findings of Marasigan [12], in which it is evident that the DepED is deficient in technical and financial assistance. It also conforms to the study of Solaiman [19] that the major problems encountered by the Asatidz are non-availability or limited textbooks, and insufficient classroom supplies. Further, the study of Mustafa and Abd Rashid [14] shows that the Asatidz tend to prefer the traditional method rather than applying a new approach, which conforms to the challenges revealed in this study on the lack of pedagogic approach by the Asatidz.

Most of the school heads suggested on augmentation of financial assistance for the ALIVE activities. Moreover, they also recommended including the development of IMs for the ALIVE curriculum in the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) of the School Improvement Plan (SIP). Respondent 7 says:

"ALIVE program activities and financial assistance for IMs development and other learning materials should be included in formulating the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) of the School Improvement Plan (SIP)."

Training for Asatidz should be included as annual activities to enhance the teaching pedagogy of the Asatidz. Respondent 4 says:

"The division should regularly conduct training for Asatidz."

There is also a need to train the school heads in Arabic to understand the essence of the ALIVE program. Respondent 8 says:

"Arabic literacy training for school heads is needed."

The division should also include financial assistance for the professional development of the Asatidz. Respondent 5 says:

"Scholarship for Asatidz should be included as part of the Annual Investment Plan of the Province."

Infrastructure projects intended for the Asatidz and learners should be included in the Capital Outlay of the Division. Respondent 6 says:

"Asatidz needs to have their library holdings where they can put their personal IMs."

It seems that the Asatidz and the school heads match their perception regarding the resource variables.

B. Process Variables

Asatidz is very much involved in participating in school organizations such as teacher organizations and the like. According to Respondent 3:

"We have no issue with the participation of the Asatidz in our organization, and besides, they are very active in all activities of the school."

Also, according to Respondent 9:

"The Asatidz are always involved in the school program."

There are some Asatidz who are hesitant to voice their opinion or suggestion. According to Respondents 5:

"The Asatidz are hesitant to give their suggestion or opinion."

However, Asatidz freely decides on some matters when it is related to the ALIVE program. According to Respondent 10:

"Asatidz were given a chance to decide or make decisions on some issues and concern about the ALIVE program."

There is a need to improve the implementation process, strengthen the monitoring and supervision, and augment funds intended for the ALIVE program implementation. Accordingly,

"There is a need to improve the process of ALIVE implementation especially on planning and organizing." (Respondent 4)

"Funds as support for ALIVE related activities should be provided." (Respondent 2)

"Needs to strengthen the monitoring and supervision of the ALIVE teachers and the program as a whole." (Respondent 5)

"I observed that the Asatidz do not properly evaluate or assess the learners especially in the formative and summative assessment." (Respondent 5)

There is a need to provide the necessary textbooks suited to the level of learners. According to Respondent 1:

However, in some instances, the assessment is sometimes challenging for the school heads because Asatidz does not submit their assessment tools such as test papers for the review of the school head. According to Respondent 4:

"Available textbooks are too advanced for some learners while those in other levels do not have the learning materials."

"Most of the time, the Asatidz out rightly evaluate students without submitting the assessment tools to us for review, so, majority of the learners tend to receive low markings."

The required competencies for all grade levels were not fully implemented. According to Respondent 9:

"At the end of the school year, learning competencies required for every grade level were not fully covered."

Furthermore, another challenge for the school heads is the difficulty in providing technical assistance to their Asatidz because some hardly understand Arabic text. Some school heads are illiterate in the Arabic language. According to Respondent 8:

"I find it hard to review the evaluation and assessment of learners because I have less knowledge in the Arabic language."

The Asatidz seldom conducted remedial classes because most learners do not attend ALIVE remedial classes or some schools have constraints in finding available time to hold remedial sessions for ALIVE classes. In most cases, Asatidz was not trained how to conduct remedial classes. Accordingly,

"Only a few are attending remedial classes because pupils wanted to go home early especially those coming from far-flung areas." (Respondent 1)

Most of the time, school heads establish a good working environment for everyone regardless of their religion or ethnic group. A harmonious relationship exists between teachers and Asatidz. According to Respondent 3:

"Most of the learners do not attend the prescribed time and schedule for remedial classes." (Respondent 2)

"We do not have any issue about Asatidz, and besides, every Ustadz is given the privilege to voice his opinions. They have a good relationship with the regular teachers."

"Some of the Asatidz do not conduct remedial classes, and there are instances that the principal is the one who is planning and organizing the remedial classes." (Respondent 4)

"We do not have available time to conduct remedial classes." (Respondents 5,6,7 and 8)

According to Respondent 6:

"Both Asatidz and teachers have a harmonious relationship because they always help one another in every activity, especially in dealing with the learners."

Grade-level meetings for ALIVE are usually integrated with regular meetings. According to Respondents 3, 8, 9, and 10:

"The grade-level meeting for ALIVE is always integrated with a regular meeting."

Even non-Muslim parents have the free will to let their children attend ALIVE classes. According to 1:

"In our case, Christian learners sometimes join and attend ALIVE classes, and I found no disapproval from the parents of the learners."

Evaluation and assessment of learners are the most challenging for the Asatidz, specifically, formative and summative assessment. Accordingly,

"Sometimes I find it difficult to review the assessment conducted by the Asatidz." (Respondent 4)

Likewise, the study of Marasigan [13] that the Madrasah education in the Philippines has no guidelines in the monitoring of qualified teachers which signifies the lack of

monitoring and evaluation from the division on the ALIVE program implementation. It is also similar to the findings of Marasigan [12], in which it is evident that the DepED is deficient in management competency, and policy formulation and review. Alag [4] also revealed that lack of support and assistance from the higher officials conforms with the result of the current study.

The school heads suggested including the development of an instrument for monitoring the ALIVE program implementation. Respondent 8 says:

"Needs for district coordinator to regularly monitor and supervise ALIVE teachers."

Annual training and seminars on the construction of summative and formative assessments for the ALIVE program should be part of the program implementation strategy of the division. Respondent 2 says:

"There is a need to train the Asatidz on summative and formative test construction regularly."

Moreover, the division should include programs for the annual recruitment of Asatidz and conduct performance assessments every year. Respondent 3 says:

"There are Asatidz who are not reporting because of the delay in allowances, and at the same time, we need an additional Asatidz so that they can help in counseling for some learners that focus on Islamic values."

Similarly, many challenges were also felt by the school heads on the ALIVE implementation under the process variables that match with the Asatidz perceptions on which they perceived the implementation below average (sometimes observed).

C. Contextual Variables

Information on the learners' progress is always provided to the parents during general parents' meetings. Communication and feedbacking are made possible through letters while other parents prefer to personally inquire about their children's progress. Accordingly,

"We always inform the parents about the progress of their children through letter or sometimes during meetings."
(Respondent 1)

"Some parents visit the adviser of their children to inquire about the performance of their children."
(Respondent 3)

"We are lucky to have educationally motivated parents, especially in Arabic. Parents always come to school every time we called them." (Respondent 7)

However, there are instances that parents do not receive any information because of the distance of their houses from the school and lax attitude. In some cases, some parents were not able to receive the letters from the teachers. According to Respondent 2:

"Some parents seem not to bother even if their children perform poorly."
(Respondent 2)

"Sometimes information does not reach the parents because of the distance of their houses from the school, and maybe the letters were lost along the way, and learners forgot to inform their parents."
(Respondent 4)

"Some parents do not attend the meeting, and others just sent a representative."
(Respondent 8)

Some learners have difficulty in ALIVE subjects, especially those who do not have the Arabic language foundation skills or do not attend traditional weekend madrasah. According to Respondent 2:

"Children who do not have background experience in weekend madrasah struggles most in ALIVE subject."

Contrary to common notions, learners who attended ALIVE classes tend to apply fundamental Islamic values in their daily routine, such as observing proper dress, performing prayer on due time, and respect towards their parents. Accordingly,

"Exposure of children to ALIVE classes, learners starting to perform prayer and observed proper wearing of dress."
(Respondent 3)

"Learners are encouraged to attend ALIVE classes, and we have seen from among them that those female students who do not wear their veil tend to wear it during the ALIVE classes. Others become very courteous to their ALIVE teachers." (Respondent 10)

There are no challenges about the application of ALIVE learning of pupils with their parents at home or school because parents are the ones who guide or assist their children to apply what they have learned in ALIVE classes. Accordingly,

"The parents were of full support and mostly guide their children in learning Arabic." (Respondent 5)

"Most of the parents showed willingness and always help their children to apply all the Islamic values." (Respondent 10)

Attendance of parents to orientations on the ALIVE program is very challenging for the school heads. Parents tend to give reasons such as previous knowledge about the program and willingness to support even without proper orientation. According to Respondent 8:

"Only a few attended the ALIVE orientation." (Respondent 2)

"Some parents do not attend the orientation on ALIVE." (Respondent 8)

"Parents do not attend in any orientation about ALIVE program because according to them they already know about the program and some of them personally pledge full support to the program. (Respondent 10)

There is a need to contextualize the learning materials to be used in ALIVE subjects. Textbooks are in the Arabic language which must be translated to Yakan and other mother tongue languages of the learners for better understanding. Development and reproduction of big books and other reading materials are emphasized. As reiterated by Respondent 2:

"Islamic textbooks should be written in mother tongue or Yakan."

Moreover, Asatidz should be trained in making appropriate materials to be used for homework because some of them give tasks to pupils that are not fitted to their level. There is a need also for closer supervision and monitoring by the school heads. According to Respondent 4:

"The school head should supervise Asatidz on the types of materials given to learners for homework."

The only challenge about the ALIVE program implementation is the medium of instruction used. According to Respondent 5:

"The Asatidz encountered difficulties on the ALIVE curriculum because of the language use, which is English."

When it comes to the religious affiliation of the learners, school management respect non-Muslims. They are given the freedom and excused from attending ALIVE-related activities.

There exists no language barrier among the various ethnic groups in the school because most of the non-Yakan learners can understand or speak also the Yakan language. Cultural differences do not affect the teaching-learning activities of ALIVE classes. According to Respondent 1:

"The school did not encounter any problem because of gender, ethnic or cultural differences. All learners from different ethnic tribes and religious groups respect each other."

There is a challenge to stereotyping teachers. Asatidz is sometimes treated differently from the other teachers. According to Respondent 1:

"We observed that the Asatidz are treated differently."

Parents tend to support fully the weekend madrasah because the ALIVE curriculum is limited in scope, focusing only on general Islamic values. Some parents believe that the ALIVE program is a duplication or a distraction to lessen the attendance of learners in weekend madrasah. Accordingly,

"Parents give preference on the weekend madrasah over the ALIVE curriculum." (Respondent 2)

"Some parents are complaining why there is ALIVE in school when there is already a weekend madrasah in the area." (Respondent 4)

"Some parents said that the ALIVE curriculum is one way to stop traditional Madrasah from operating." (Respondent 7)

Learners' perception of the ALIVE implementation varies. Some learners feel that the ALIVE is just a repetition of what they are learning from the traditional madrasah. Others, however, are very thankful to have the ALIVE curriculum integrated into secular education because it complements learning in Arabic and values. According to Respondent 1,

"Learners who attended weekend madrasah feel bored during the ALIVE classes because they are more advanced than other learners."

The community is in full support of the ALIVE curriculum even though some stakeholders are hesitant and have a reservation about the program. Some see it as a competition. However, community support is seen from their participation during ALIVE activities. Accordingly,

"The community support 100% of all the ALIVE activities in school." (Respondent 1)

"Some of the traditional madaris were against to the implementation of ALIVE because some learners were not able to attend their weekend Arabic classes." (Respondent 5)

This affirms the findings of Jamaluddin and Cadir (2017), in which some of the issues encountered by the Asatidz is the non-existence of uniform admission policy. Also, it affirms the study of Marasigan (2017b) that the Madrasah education in the Philippines has no guidelines in hiring, retention, and monitoring of qualified teachers in private madaris. Moreover, it is similar to the findings of Marasigan (2017a), in which it is evident that the DepED is deficient in technical and financial assistance, curriculum, management competency, teachers' qualifications, and policy formulation and review.

The DepED should include or provide transportation and representation allowances intended for the ALIVE program. The school should visit the parents of the ALIVE learners to maximize the attendance of the parents during orientation or meetings. According to Respondent 10:

"Parents of some learners cannot attend meetings or orientation due to the distance of their houses and some do not have the transportation."

Moreover, the division office should conduct regular orientation about the ALIVE program especially for those non-Muslim parents and those Muslim parents but hesitant to accept the advantages of the program. According to Respondent 3:

"There should be more orientation activities for parents about the ALIVE program."

There are some challenges encountered by the school but not as many as compared to the other two areas. The school heads only have a few challenges when it comes to the contextual variables.

IV. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Resource Variables

The following are some of the challenges encountered or observed by the school heads concerning the implementation of the ALIVE curriculum under the resource variables. Responses were summarized according to the guided questionnaires.

1. The ratio of Asatidz and learner does not meet the minimum standard.

2. No challenges were felt by the School Heads on the specialization of the Asatidz because most of the ALIVE teachers are highly specialized in the Arabic language.
3. Not enough time for ALIVE classes because of multi-grade levels.
4. ALIVE classes are fused or combined in multi-grade classes. No rooms or space specifically intended for ALIVE learners and Asatidz.
5. The school heads don't feel that time preparation of the ALIVE teachers is a challenge.
6. Lack of knowledge of Asatidz on lesson planning and IMs preparation. There are language barriers to instructional materials (IMs).
7. Lack of competence requires training on the preparation of formative and summative assessment to include tests construction.
8. Insecurities of Asatidz that make them hesitant to join seminars or training with regular teachers. Lack of teaching pedagogy of Asatidz.
9. Lack of resources, textbooks, and other learning materials for ALIVE learners. Non-availability of programs for Asatidz's professional development.
10. Lack of communication between Asatidz and parents.

The following are recommendations of school heads specifically for the ALIVE curriculum implementation under the resource variables.

1. Financial assistance for the ALIVE activities.
2. Development of the IMs and other instructional materials for the ALIVE curriculum.
3. Training for Asatidz on the teaching pedagogy.
4. Training for school heads in the Arabic language.
5. Financial assistance for professional development of Asatidz.
6. Infrastructure projects for ALIVE learners and Asatidz.
7. Development of monitoring and evaluation instrument for ALIVE curriculum.
8. Annual training for the construction of summative and formative assessments for Asatidz.

B. Process Variables

The following are some of the challenges encountered or observed by the school heads concerning the implementation of the ALIVE curriculum under the process variables.

1. Not enough challenge on teachers' organization that addresses concerns.
2. The Asatidz are always consulted about the ALIVE program before the school head decision.
3. Lack of funds for the ALIVE curriculum implementation and related activities.
4. Lack of monitoring and supervision of ALIVE program.
5. Lack of remedial classes conducted for ALIVE subjects.
6. Lack of evaluation and assessment for learners.
7. Lack of capacity building and training for school heads on the Arabic language.
8. The school provides all support for materials needed in the ALIVE implementation.

9. ALIVE learners were grouped according to their social aptitude or ability for the class discussion. However, there are instances that the learners were being fused to a single class due to the limited number of Asatidz but most of the students were already adjusted to the situation.
10. ALIVE learners are very active in any social task because most of the time, they always organize Islamic symposiums.

The following are recommendations of school heads specifically for the ALIVE curriculum implementation under the process variables.

1. Annual recruitment of Asatidz and annual assessment of Asatidz performance.
2. Transportation allowances and representation allowances intended for meetings with parents and other stakeholders.

C. Contextual Variables

The following are some of the challenges encountered or observed by the school heads concerning the implementation of the ALIVE curriculum under the contextual variables.

1. Lack of information and feedback given to parents regarding the progress of the learners in ALIVE subjects.
2. No challenges were encountered in terms of the application of what they learned in ALIVE subjects.
3. Similarly, the School Heads believe that the ALIVE learners applied their experiences at home by practicing Islamic values.
4. There are no challenges when it comes to communication with the parents. They are always available when there is a meeting about the ALIVE activities.
5. Lack of diagnostic evaluation to pupils that will segregate advanced learners.
6. Need to contextualize learning materials for ALIVE subject. Lack of training for Asatidz on the preparation of appropriate materials for homework.
7. It is not a problem because all the ALIVE teachers are already well adjusted to the ALIVE curriculum. Stereotyping of teachers, that is, Asatidz is treated differently from the others teachers.
8. Not fully supported by parents because of duplication or replication with weekend madrasah.
9. The school heads do not encounter any challenges regarding the implementation of the ALIVE program from the students.
10. The community always supports the implementation of the ALIVE program.

The school heads specifically for the ALIVE curriculum implementation recommended that the division office should regularly conduct orientation programs about the ALIVE program to different stakeholders in the community.

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