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Critical success factors of the alternative learning system eSkwela project

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Abstract

The eSkwela project is one of the major technological advancements in the Alternative Learning System (ALS) through its Information technology, reducing the digital divide and enhancing the capacity of the ALS students to be successful participants in a global and knowledge-based economy. This paper intends to examine the critical success factors of the eSkwela project as perceived by mobile teachers and students. The factors were tested by surveying 16 mobile teachers and 53 students of ALS. The results revealed that learners' characteristics, teachers' characteristics, educational institution support, and information quality are the most critical success factors of the eSkwela project.

Keywords: Critical success factors, Alternative Learning System, Computer-based e-learning, ICT, technology

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1. INTRODUCTION

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) has become an important issue, especially in education, as it has become the knowledge transfer highway worldwide (Ghavifekr et al., 2015). Advancements in ICT enabled the integration of IT elements in education (Fong Yew & Jambulingam, 2015). E-learning is now a trend, challenging the concept of education and the traditional way of teaching, and it is also the paradigm of modern education (Shi et al., 2008).

E-learning refers to integrating technology into the teaching-learning process, in which instruction, lessons, and information are delivered to students via electronic devices such as USB sticks, CD-ROMs, interactive TV, audio or videotape, and the Internet (Bhuasiri et al., 2012). Through e-learning, people are now communicating and learning electronically (Fong Yew & Jambulingam, 2015). The study by Fitzpatrick (2012) reveals that e-learning is an emerging technology used to deliver online, hybrid, and synchronous learning to students. Problems in educational institutions regarding the quality of education are partially resolved through e-learning (Musa & Othman, 2012).As Laily et al. (2013) stressed, e-learning already addresses the problems related to quality education and knowledge.

Many institutions are now implementing e-learning because it advances and improves education through teaching and learning (Fong Yew & Jambulingam, 2015).

The implementation of e-learning for out-of-school youth was an idea from the Commission on Information and Communications Technology through the Human Capital Development Group (CICT-HCDG), in partnership with the Department of Education Bureau of Alternative Learning System (DepEd-BALS). This eSkwela project is a computer-based e-learning center for out-of-school youth; it serves as a venue for them to learn to use computers, to survive in the 21st century, to review for the Accreditation and Equivalency Exam, or to help students rejoin the formal school system. This Center is also a venue for the Digital Linkages Program of CICT, distance learning training, and other computer-related training, such as Teachers' computer literacy training and ICT skills training. And due to this project, teaching and learning for mobile teachers and out-of-school youth students become innovative, interesting, and stimulating (Pacific, 2009).

Despite the numerous benefits and government support for e-learning programs, failures still persist. Arman and Wiyono (2016) noted that failures in e-learning will occur when technological infrastructure is inadequate, learners are poorly prepared, motivation is low, and managerial support is lacking. On the other hand, Oyefolahan & Abdallah (2014) also pointed out that the instructor's acceptance of the e-learning system is one contributory factor of its successful implementation and adoption.

Thus, to overcome these deficiencies, it is necessary to identify the factors that contribute to e-learning success, referred to as Critical Success Factors (CSFs) (Musa & Othman, 2012). CSFs are factors that every organization must have to carry out tasks successfully (Yang & Liao, 2016), and these factors should be manageable, quantifiable, and few in number (Musa & Othman, 2012).

This research aims to identify the most important CSFs of e-learning by determining the relative importance of the factors influencing the eSkwela Project, as perceived by teachers and students in the Alternative Learning System.

Related literature and the conceptual framework were discussed in the succeeding section. To answer the research questions, the study used survey questionnaires, as presented in Chapter 4. Data presentation, analysis, and interpretation are outlined in Chapter 5, and the conclusion is discussed in Chapter 6.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This part will review the related literature bearing on the present work.

A. Alternative Learning System

In a country where the majority of the population is school-age, education is a cornerstone of development. According to a survey by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS), there are roughly 1.2 million out-of-school youth in the Philippines, aged 6 to 24. From these numbers, 36.5% came from Mindanao, and the highest numbers emanated from the Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao with 14.4%, 12.3% from SOCCSKSARGEN, and 9.8% from Northern Mindanao. They became out-of-school youth due to poverty, engaging in early marriage, and a lack of interest in school, and the most affected individuals are females (Momongan et al., 2015).

The Department of Education (DepEd) implemented the Alternative Learning System (ALS), a free education program for those without access to formal education. The mandate of the Department is to prioritize those who cannot attend school, those who have dropped out, and those without plans to attend school, so that they may enter the educational system and have their learning needs addressed (Arzadon & Nato, 2015). And so this program is one contributory factor for out-of-school youth learners, as they have the chance to improve their quality of life and increase their literacy levels.

ALS is an alternative to the regular class, as it is a ladderized, modular form of education, and students must select schedules based on their preferences and availability. School-based and community-based are ways teaching is conducted in ALS. School-based programs use school campuses as their instructional venues, while community-based programs use barangay halls or other private venues as their classroom sites. The teachers who deliver instructions are called mobile teachers, and their lessons are centralized because they follow the teacher's guide for all academic subjects, such as sciences, mathematics, English, Filipino, social sciences, and current events (Perry & Mercado, 2015).

Thus, the efficient delivery of basic education to out-of-school youth is now possible due to the integration of technology into the teaching and learning process, enabled by the eSkwela project. This project aims to make these out-of-school youth technologically advanced and able to compete in a globally developed economy.y. APEC Education Foundation (AEF) extends financial assistance to this program as it opens its doors to marginalized people, but currently, it is already under the e-Government Fund of the National Government (Pacific, 2009).

B. Computer-based E-learning

Equipping everyone with technological and lifelong skills ensures they have a good job and access to quality learning. A country with highly educated individuals can address governance issues in a highly diverse society (Apao et al., 2014).

With the emergence of ICT, nobody wants to be left behind. Being computer-literate will give each person a significant competitive advantage by providing tremendous opportunities.ICT has overwhelmingly improved the way people think, work, and do business. Thus, almost all organizations have struggled to innovate and transform the systems they have adopted for many years (Oyefolahan & Abdallah, 2014). Also, the organization's productivity is increasing, as many activities are now implemented quickly, precisely, and accurately due to rapid ICT development (Laily et al., 2013).

Hence, computer-based e-learning is now the latest trend that most educational institutions are using, for it is an innovative approach to education and enhances the way teachers teach the lesson(Bhuasiri et al., 2012).E-learning can be in various forms, such as web-based, computer-based, virtual reality classrooms, and lesson delivery via e-networks (Kasse & Balunywa, 2013).E-learning focuses much more on the learner, which is why it has superseded the traditional teaching and learning process (Huang et al., 2014). As Lwoga (2014) said, implementing e-learning enhances educational tools, expands learners' opportunities, and strengthens the roles of teachers and learners in the learning community. E-learning is also recommended for learners who dropped out of regular schools, as it is an effective educational tool (Basak et al., 2016).

Thus, e-learning will be successful and sustainable if and only if there is an active teaching style, well-equipped and functional technology, and a supportive organization. And in implementing an appropriate e-learning evaluation of the critical success factors entwined with other elements is required (Musa & Othman, 2012).

C. Critical Success Factors

Critical Success Factors (CSFs) emerged in the 1970s literature when some organizations became more successful than others, and since then, research has investigated these factors (Cheawjindakarn et al., 2012). Many definitions of CSFs have been introduced in the literature; Rockart defined them as “areas that have satisfactory results will ensure successful competitive performance for the organization.”And Freund defined it as “things that must be done if a company is to be successful” (Selim, 2007).

Moreover, some researchers defined it as a factor that should be confirmed and carefully examined, as it is a necessary asset that institutions must have to survive (Huang et al., 2014) and also as a single area within the organization that must be taken care of (Musa & Othman, 2012).

Hence, many authors have sought to identify the possible reasons why e-learning implementation is successful or unsuccessful in some institutions. Consequently, many factors contribute to e-learning success.

As seen in the study by Musa and Othman (2012), elements are classified into several areas, including technology, teachers, students, and institutional support. This study found that to achieve the goals of e-learning, students should be provided with adequate, up-to-date information.

Fong Yew & Jambulingam (2015) cite the different attributes of teachers, environment and infrastructure, presentation, and delivery of content as factors that affect e-learning.E-learning offers a lot of opportunities to learners, teachers, and the educational institution as a whole; thus, all these factors need to be considered and improved appropriately to achieve success.

While collaboration of students, course content, ICT, and infrastructure are aspects that influence the effectiveness of e-learning, they are factors that can be seen in the study of Laily et al. (2013The most important factor in the study is the student dimension; thus, to make the performance of e-learning effective, improvement in the facilities is needed, so that good communication and interaction between students and teachers will be established... According to Mosakhani & Jamporazmey (2010), there is a necessity to know the different reasons why there is a need to reinforce e-learning, and these factors are: teachers' characteristics, students' characteristics, ICT, and organizational support.t. And these CSFs contribute to educational institutions in evaluating the innovations in e-learning and finding the project's strengths and weaknesses, thus modifications can be madeAccording to the study by Shi et al. (2008), the following are the critical success factors: learners, instructors, ICT, course content, design, and the environment. A comparative study between two countries; thus, the cultures of the two countries were considered the most important factor contributing to the success of e-learning.ng.

Bhuasiri et al. (2012), on the other hand, identify critical success factors, including students' and teachers' characteristics, organizational support, infrastructure, course content, and motivation. It was noted that promoting and educating learners about the benefits of using ICT and conducting computer and internet training will surely lead to success in e-learning.

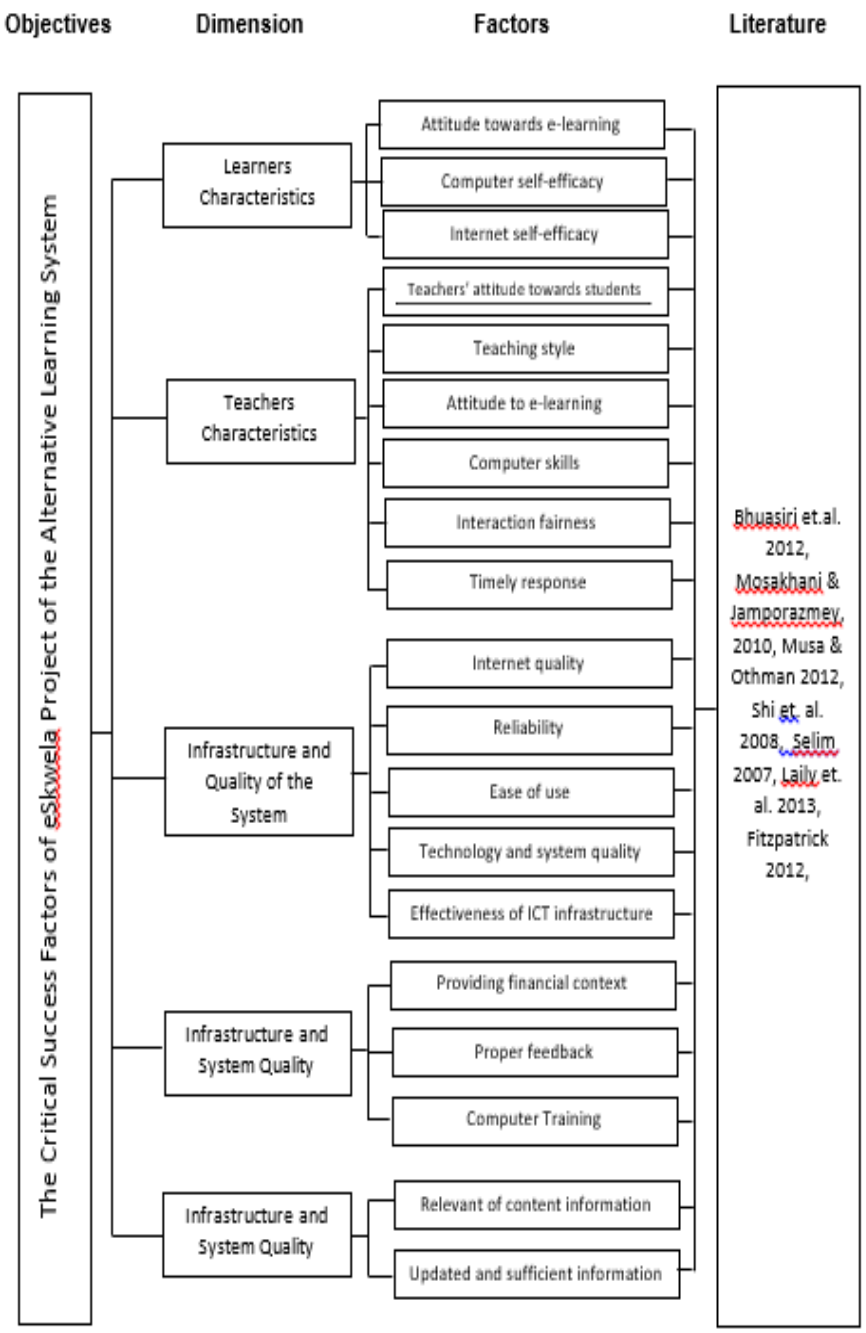
Selim (2007) enumerated factors perceived by students, including instructors' characteristics, students' characteristics, technology, and university support. These factors are all perceived by students; thus, they would assist the educational institution in its quest to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of e-learning implementation.

The implementation of CSFs aims to provide the administration with insights into factors that could influence its success rate and make e-learning an alternative mode of teaching and learning (Odunaike et al., 2013). It can be seen that, to ensure the successful implementation and use of e-learning, CSFs must be addressed (Shi et al., 2008).

From the different research works mentioned above, as adopted from Bhuasiri et al. (2012), Figure 2 clearly shows that the important factors from the various studies are being compiled to make a paradigm for e-learning critical success factors in the Alternative Learning System.

Figure 1.

Hierarchical Model for CSFs in the Alternative Learning System



3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 2.

The Research Paradigm

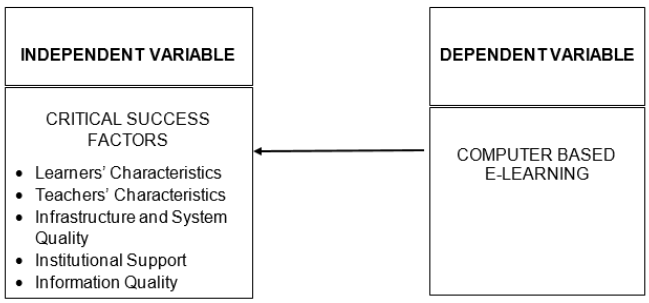


Figure 2 presents the study's conceptual framework. As can be gleaned, the model focused on the idea that computer-based e-learning is influenced by CSFs.

The independent variable is the CSFs implemented by the BALS. These factors are learners' characteristics, teachers' characteristics, infrastructure and quality of the system, institutional support, and information quality. Each of the factors mentioned has its sub-factors.

A. Learners' Characteristics

Refers to students' different features and behaviors, which have a profound influence on e-learning effectiveness (Testa & de Freitas, 2003). Learners' is the most important factor of e-learning, and so the focus must not be on the methods but should be from the learners' perspective, for e-learning success relies not on the technical advancement but the person's knowledge (Huang et al., 2014).

B. Teachers' Characteristics

Referring to the different teaching styles used by the teachers and their awareness towards e-learning. Teachers are responsible for ensuring the smooth implementation of e-learning; they must address any queries, problems, or uncertainties learners raise about the lesson. Learners are attention seekers. Their needs must be addressed immediately to maintain satisfaction with the subject matter (Fong Yew & Jambulingam, 2015). The teachers' role is to help students become computer-literate and, together, achieve the learning goals (Huang et al., 2014).

C. Infrastructure and System Quality

E-learning must be well-equipped with all the necessary facilities for proper implementation and use, as insufficient IT infrastructure will result in dissatisfaction among learners and teachers (Fong Yew & Jambulingam, 2015). Well-equipped facilities are appealing and inspiring to learners (Musa & Othman, 2012).

D. Institutional Support

According to Basak et al. (2016), failures in e-learning are due to several factors, including insufficient financial support, insufficient implementation expertise, and insufficient managerial support. Hence, supportive management positively affects teachers' and learners' intentions to participate in and attain the goals of e-learning (Oyefolahan & Abdallah, 2014).

E. Information Quality

Significance, completeness, correctness, and ease of understanding of the lesson elicit strong satisfaction among learners (Bhuasiri et al., 2012). Attractiveness, or the appeal of the lesson content, should also be considered, as it captures learners' interest (Fong Yew & Jambulingam, 2015).

The dependent variable is the computer-based e-learning, which is the technology integration by the instructors in the teaching and learning process.

The study's underlying concept is that the ALS eSkwela project is significantly affected by various factors. Once these factors are overcome, the ALS eSkwela Project aims to enhance the capacities of out-of-school youth, leading them to participate in a global society.

4. METHOD AND MATERIALS

The study primarily employs a descriptive method and uses questionnaires as its primary data source. Several studies and concepts are reviewed, and a paradigm was developed to examine the CSFs of the eSkwela project of ALS. It was shown in the previous chapter that the critical success factors model is based on the study of several authors (Bhuasiri et al., 2012; Fitzpatrick, 2012; Mosakhani & Jamporazmey, 2010; Musa & Othman, 2012; Perry & Mercado, 2015; Selim, 2007; Shi et al., 2008).

A. Survey Questionnaire

The researcher used a survey questionnaire patterned after instruments from reliable, validated studies to measure factors that greatly affect computer-based e-learning in ALS, but further modifications were made to fit the study's needs.

Part I of the questionnaire collects data on teachers' and students' ages, genders, educational qualifications, years of service, and other factors.

Part II of the research instrument consists of the identified CSFs in e-learning. Respondents were asked to assess the determinants that most strongly affect the implementation of the ALS eSkwela project. The possible response is to subjectively specify the level of importance to the project being implemented, and rate it as follows: Strongly Agree-5, Agree-4, Neutral-3, Disagree-2, Strongly Disagree-1.

Table 1 shows the summary of the measurement items used for each factor and related literature sources.

Table 1.

Summary of the Questionnaire Instrument

Critical Success Factors	Number of Items	References
Leaners' Characteristics	3	Bhuasiri et al. 2012, Laily et al. 2013, Mosakhani & Jamporazmey 2010, Musa & Othman 2012, Shi et al., 2008, Selim 2007
Teachers' Characteristics	6	Bhuasiri et al. 2012, Mosakhani & Jamporazmey 2010, Shi et al., 2008
Infrastructure and System Quality	5	Bhuasiri et al. 2012, Laily et al. 2013, Mosakhani & Jamporazmey 2010, Musa & Othman 2012, Shi et al., 2008, Selim 2007
Educational Institution Support	3	Bhuasiri et al. 2012, Mosakhani & Jamporazmey 2010, Fitzpatrick 2012, Selim 2007
Information Quality	2	Bhuasiri et al. 2012, Mosakhani & Jamporazmey 2010, Fitzpatrick 2012

B. Sample Selection

This research used total enumeration as its sampling technique, in which all members of the population were included as respondents. The study was conducted across five (5) clusters of the Alternative Learning System in Tacurong City, specifically: Central School, South Tacurong District, North Tacurong District, West Tacurong District, and East Tacurong District. The respondents comprised sixteen (16) teachers, including nine (9) Mobile Teachers, five (5) Cluster Coordinators, and two (2) Education Program Supervisors. Additionally, fifty-three (53) student respondents from the five (5) clusters of the department participated in the study.

C. Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher sought the permission of the Schools Division Superintendent of Tacurong City and the Education Program Supervisor of the Alternative Learning System. The letter request was personally delivered by the researcher.

The respondents were made to understand clearly the importance of the study and the invaluable help they contributed by honestly answering the survey questionnaires. Further, the researcher made clear that the data gathered were used solely for the study and that their confidentiality was preserved.

After gathering the data, the researcher tallied them with the help of a statistician. Finally, these data were computed, analyzed, interpreted, and presented in tables.

Ethical Considerations

The conduct of this study followed recognized ethical practices in educational research. Before implementing the data collection process, authorization was obtained from the appropriate education authorities and the program supervisors overseeing the Alternative Learning System (ALS).

Both teachers and student participants were briefed about the nature and objectives of the study. Their involvement was voluntary, and consent was obtained before administering the survey instruments. For student respondents, special care was taken to ensure that participation was appropriate to their context within the ALS program.

All responses were treated with strict confidentiality, and no identifying details were recorded in the dataset. The information gathered was utilized exclusively for scholarly purposes and was stored securely throughout the research process. Participants were not subjected to any form of pressure and had the option to refrain from answering any part of the questionnaire or to withdraw entirely.

The study was carried out with respect for participants' dignity, rights, and well-being, ensuring that no harm or disadvantage resulted from their participation.

D. Statistical Treatment

The survey results were analyzed based on respondents' responses to the problem. The Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, and mean, were utilized by the researcher to explain the following:

1. Socio-demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, and others;
2. What are the identified critical success factors of the eSkwela project of ALS, and
3. How important are the indicators of the eSkwela project of ALS from the teachers and learners viewpoint?

A 5-point Likert scale was used to determine whether the indicators are important as perceived by teachers and learners.

Table 2.

The 5-Point Likert Scale

Range of Mean	Qualitative Description
4.21-5.00	Very Important
3.41-4.20	Important
2.61-3.40	Moderately Important
1.81-2.60	Of Little Importance
1.00-1.80	Unimportant

To speed up and improve the precision of statistical and tabular calculations, a suitable software package was used. The questionnaire's reliability was above the acceptable level of 0.89, as measured by Cronbach's Alpha. Content validity of the research questionnaire was established, as it was derived from well-established and validated research works, and appropriate modifications were made to develop the questionnaire.

5. PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter presents, analyzes, and interprets the data gathered in response to the basic problems identified earlier in this study.

Table 3.

Percentage Distribution of ALS Mobile Teachers' Socio-demographic Profile

Teachers' Demographic Profile	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	21-30	2	12.50%
	31-40	8	50.00%
	41-50	6	37.50%
Gender	Male	12	75%
	Female	4	25%
Number of Years' Experience	1-20	10	62.50%
	11-20	4	25%
	21-30	2	12.50%
Educational Qualification	BEED with Masters Degree	4	25%
	BEED	11	68.75%
	BSED	1	6.25%

Table 3 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of the teacher's socio-demographic profile. As shown, the majority of the teachers' respondents are 31-40 years old, with a frequency of 50%, 6 or 37.50 percent of the respondents are ages 41-50, and there are two (2) teachers, or 12.50% are ages 21-30 years old. The result shows that the majority of the mobile teachers are in early adulthood, and young teachers have the physical stamina to visit far-flung barangays to impart learning to out-of-school youth (Pinca, 2015).In addition, Alufohai & Henry (2015) found that teachers aged 31-40 were perceived by students as more active in classroom management, motivation, and communication, and as much more competent.

In terms of gender distribution, Table 3 indicates that in ALS, it is much more dominated by male teachers, contrary to the fact that more female individuals are more inclined to the teaching profession, as indicated in an article that 86.3% of teachers all over the country were women, and 13.7% of this total is male (Esplanada, 2010). The difference indicates that male teachers are more appropriate to be assigned to ALS, as they will be visiting far-flung barangays (Pinca, 2015).

Based on their years of experience, 62.50% of teachers have 1-10 years, 25% have 11-20, and only 12.50% have 21-30 years of teaching experience. The results indicate that mobile teachers are still young in the service and suggest that they may lack the necessary exposure to be efficient and effective mobile teachers, but they can still take many steps to improve the delivery of their services (Pinca, 2015).

The results of the mobile teachers' educational qualifications indicate that 68.75% were elementary teachers, 25% held master's degrees, and only 6.25% were secondary school teachers. This only shows that all teachers attended training during regular classes, unlike in ALS classes. According to Pinca (2015), the ALS mobile teachers' degree is not appropriate for teaching through ALS, as these teachers lack the formal training and exposure to handle learning sessions as envisioned in the ALS delivery system and in the andragogical aspect of teaching.

Table 4.

Percentage Distribution of ALS Students' Socio-demographic Profile

Students Demographic Profile	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	15-17	23	43.40%
	18-20	16	20.19%
	21-23	9	16.98%
	24-26	1	1.89%
	27 and above	4	7.54%
Gender	Male	33	62.27%
	Female	20	39.63%
Reasons for not attending regular school	Lack of interest	16	30.18%
	Poverty	31	58.49%
	Working	2	3.77%
	Early Marriage	4	7.55%
Learner initial computer skills	Beginner	42	79.24%
	Intermediate	11	20.75%
	Expert	0	0%

The result in Table 4 clearly shows that more learners' ages 15-17 years old are out of school youth with a frequency of 43.40%, there are 16 learners whose age ranges from 18-20 years old or 30.19%, 9 or 16.98% of the respondents' age is 21-23, there are 4 students or 7.54% of learners are ages 27 and above and only 1 or 1.89% of respondents are in age between 24-26. This is true because, according to the survey, more youth are not in school than children (FLEMMS, 2015).

Learners' gender was dominated by males, with 33 students (62.27%), and only 20 female students (39.63%). Atilano et al. (2016) cited that one of the possible reasons why there are more male students enrolled in ALS is the issue of bullying. There are many male students who dropped out or stopped attending the regular school because they experienced being bullied or they are bullies in school. Or they are the hard-headed students who are difficult to deal with because of their delinquent behavior. Thus, their performance and school attendance were greatly affected.

Based on the reasons for not attending school, Table 4 shows that poverty is the main reason (58.49%), followed by lack of interest (30.18%), early marriage (7.55%), and working (3.77%). Poverty is the heart of many of the most cultural barriers to schooling, for it affects academic performance. Another reason is the lack of interest; according to Atilano et al. (2016), these students do not see the value of education and envision only small returns on the time and effort they put into their studies.

The learners are mostly beginners in terms of computer skills: 79.24% are beginners, 20.75% are intermediate, and no one is an expert. This only shows that ALS students need to be trained in a range of computer skills so they are not left behind and can compete in the modern world.

Table 5.

Mean Analysis of Factor - Learners' Characteristics

Learners' Characteristics *Mean = 3.556*	Group of Participants: Students Mean	Teachers Mean	Average Mean	Verbal Description
Learners attitude towards e-learning	3.377	3.813	3.595	Important
Computer self-efficacy	3.302	3.688	3.495	Important
Internet self-efficacy	3.340	3.813	3.577	Important

As can be gleaned from the table, learners' attitude towards e-learning, computer self-efficacy, and internet self-efficacy are all important factors in the successful implementation and usage of e-learning. E-learning is student-centered, with students as the main beneficiaries of the system (Bhuasiri et al., 2012).In addition, learners' characteristics are considered one factor in determining the acceptance of e-learning technologies and tools. Thus, progress, growth, and the implementation of e-learning depend greatly on learners' characteristics. Learners' lack of computer skills can lead to online anxiety and an inability to benefit from e-learning (Taha, 2014).

Table 6.

Mean Analysis of Factor - Teachers' Characteristics

Teachers' Characteristics *Mean = 3.830*	Group of Participants: Students Mean	Teachers Mean	Average Mean	Verbal Description
Learners attitude towards students	4.208	4.00	4.104	Important
Teachers style	3.774	4.00	3.887	Important
Teachers attitude towards e-learning	3.962	4.188	4.075	Important
Teachers' computer skills	3.623	4.125	3.874	Important
Interaction fairness	3.717	4.063	3.890	Important
Timely response	3.698	3.75	3.724	Important

Table 6 clearly shows that teachers' characteristics are an important factor in e-learning success. Instructors are considered the most important factor in implementing e-learning projects, and they must approach e-learning in a friendly and energetic manner to create a positive e-learning environment (Barawid, 2011). Teachers' attitude towards students had the highest average of 4.104, and this is true: when teachers allocate sufficient time to interact with students during the learning process, students' level of satisfaction increases significantly (Bhuasiri et al., 2012).

Table 7.

Mean Analysis of Factor - Infrastructure and System Quality

Infrastructure and System Quality *Mean = 3.269*	Group of Participants: Students Mean	Teachers Mean	Average Mean	Verbal Description
Internet quality	2.774	3.375	3.075	Moderately Important

Internet reliability	3.019	3.500	3.260	Moderately Important
Ease of use	3.151	3.375	3.263	Moderately Important
Technology and system quality	3.425	3.438	3.432	Important
Solid and permanent ICT infrastructure	3.377	3.438	3.408	Moderately Important

Table 7 reveals that technology and system quality are the only factors that play an important role in e-learning success as perceived by students and mobile teachers. This refers to the number of computers deployed to the department for learning, and computers with better specifications will be better able to support student learning activities (Laily et al., 2013). Computer units alone are so important to them, as Perry & Mercado (2015) reveal that ALS students still need more state-of-the-art facilities to support their studies. Despite limited resources, the administration, teachers, and students still make computer-based e-learning a success.

Table 8.

Mean Analysis of Factor - Educational Institution Support

	Group of Participants			
Educational Institutional Support *Mean = 3.474*	**Students Mean**	**Teachers Mean**	**Average Mean**	**Verbal Description**
Providing financial context	3.189	3.750	3.470	Important
Proper feedback	3.415	3.563	3.489	Important
Computer training	3.302	3.625	3.464	Important

The results in Table 8 indicated that proper feedback had the highest mean of 3.489. As the project continues, there is constant communication and coordination between the DepEd BALS and the pilot site implementers. They discussed, brainstormed, and together solved different concerns and shared success stories. In addition, to collect feedback and recommendations, interviews, report submissions, and site visits are being conducted to support continuous improvement of the project (Pacific, 2009). This only shows that open communication among DepEd, ALS supervisors, mobile teachers, and students would lead to significant accomplishments.

Table 9.

Mean Analysis of Factor - Information Quality

	Group of Participants			
Information Quality *Mean = 3.668*	**Students Mean**	**Teachers Mean**	**Average Mean**	**Verbal Description**
Relevant content of information	3.509	3.938	3.724	Important
Updated and sufficient information	3.472	3.750	3.611	Important

As shown in Table 9, the relevance of the information is a very important determinant of e-learning success. Providing relevant information will positively affect learners' satisfaction (Bhuasiri et al., 2012). Also, Taha (2014) reveals that the content of information is the most vital element of the e-learning environment, for it influences the learning experience and learners' satisfaction with e-learning. Thus, a well-designed delivery process, with proper support for learners that meets their needs, will help increase learners' confidence in using e-learning.

Table 10.

Mean of the Critical Success Factors of the eSkwela Project

eSkwela Factors *Mean = 3.668*	Group of Participants			Verbal Description
	Students Mean	Teachers Mean	Average Mean	
Learners' Characteristics	3.340	3.771	3.556	Important
Teachers' Characteristics	3.830	3.844	3.837	Important
Infrastructure and System Quality	3.113	3.425	3.269	Moderately Important
Educational Institution Support	3.302	3.646	3.474	Important
Information Quality	3.491	3.844	3.668	Important

Table 10 shows the mean of the CSFs of the eSkwela project as perceived by students and mobile teachers of ALS. Taha (2014) and Selim (2007) reveal that the quality of technology and the efficiency of infrastructure play an important role in e-learning, as they encourage learners and teachers to interact with multimedia resources. This contrasts with the result, as the infrastructure and system quality in ALS played a moderately important role in the project's success. The technological facilities at ALS are not fully operational. The ALS Education Program Supervisor relayed that they have only 22 computer units for the entire district in Tacurong City, don't have a computer teacher, and rely solely on their teachers' computer skills and knowledge. A computer technician doesn't exist; teachers are responsible for fixing whatever damage occurs in the computer laboratory. Despite the challenges, ALS remains a success in computer-based e-learning and provides significant learning opportunities for out-of-school youth. The ALS department used whatever technological resources they had to impart wisdom and skills to their students. The department's future plan is to make ALS more accessible to the technologically oriented generation of learners through IT-based distance education.

6. CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study is to explore the most important critical success factors of e-learning by determining the relative importance of the factors that influence the eSkwela Project, as perceived by teachers and students in the Alternative Learning System. This study used quantitative research methods, with respondents completing questionnaires.

The general analysis of the data revealed that learners' characteristics, teachers' characteristics, educational institution support, and information quality play an important role, while infrastructure and system quality contribute to the successful implementation and use of e-learning in ALS, as perceived by teachers and students. ALS had just used ICT effectively to educate out-of-school youth and adults. Since its implementation, they have served more than 1,000 out-of-school youth and adults. The effects are felt where it matters most: among the marginalized poor, among housewives, among the disabled, and in other sectors.

With this, the eSkwela Project contributes significantly to ALS teachers, students, and the administration as a whole by strengthening the existing ALS program through technology. And this would not be possible without the support of the local partners and stakeholders. As proof, the eSkwela project was awarded an honorable mention in the 2010 UNESCO King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa Prize, demonstrating its effective and innovative use in alternative education (Barawid, 2011).

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