



## **An analysis of the Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education Program: Implications for Policy**

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### **Abstract**

Education is not only a rights but a responsibility. In this sense education for the Muslim must be properly plan and implemented in order for the Muslim to become Khalifa. The study was focused on the effectiveness of A.L.I.V.E. Program from the point of view of Asatidz in Cotabato City. The study was limited only to assess the effectiveness of the A.L.I.V.E. Program. The respondents of the study were the A.L.I.V.E. teachers in elementary level of Public Schools in Cotabato City and Asatidz for the school year 2013-2014.

The program also helped to develop Muslim children in understanding their religion better. It was also found out that the program is designed by the national government to facilitate the immediate integration of the Muslims to the mainstream Filipino cultures- the undying objective of the Philippine government since its creation. It recognized and valued the Muslims' unique socio-cultural and spiritual heritage and the pupils who attended the A.L.I.V.E. acquired knowledge on Islamic values and learned their religion, thus, Muslim children were able to perform the basic teachings of Islam.

*Keywords: Khalifa, Asatidz, A.L.I.V.E. (Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education), Cotabato City*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Islam is a universal religion. It is the only *din* that is capable to meet and answer all the needs and demands of the time. It satisfies the need of human inquiry. Being a religion of intellect, it teaches man that there is no conflict between the words of Allah and His work. Hence, the foundation of this religion is education, because the first revelation received by the last prophet of Islam is about education. Thus, education is obligatory to all mankind. Allah (S.W.T.) revealed the following verses to the last Prophet of Islam, Prophet Mohammad (S.A.W.).

*“Recite in the name of your Lord, who created, (96:01) Created man from a clinging substance, (96:02). Recite and your Lord is the most Generous, (96:03). Who taught by the pen, (96:05). Taught man that which he knew not? (96:05)”.*

Teaching Arabic during the early time of the Muslims in the Philippines is considered non-formal education in its present equivalent. The Guru (Teachers in Arabic) taught

their students in their home every night because during the day, students worked at the farm of the Guru, as a form of services rendered in payments for their study. They were taught first on how to read and write in Arabic. The students were let to memorize the Juds of the Qur' an (part of the Qur'an chapters).

Recognizing this long history of dichotomy, the Department of Education in its effort to address these concerns, facilitated the formulation of standard and viable curriculum for public schools and for the private madrasah in consultation with associations and stakeholders such as Project Madrasah Education (PME) of DepEd ARMM, Accrediting Association of Muslim Schools and Colleges, Inc. (AAMSCI), and the Bangsamoro Development Agency (BDA). It is on this premise that this study on the effectiveness of A.L.I.V.E .Program from the point of view of Asatidz in Cotabato City was conducted.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The study focused on the effectiveness of A.L.I.V.E. Program from the point of view of Asatidz in Cotabato City. Specifically, this study shall answers the following questions:

1. To what extent the National objectives of the A.L.I.V.E. Program are attained?
2. How effective is the curriculum of the A.L.I.V.E. program?
3. How effective is the A.L.I.V.E. program from the point of view of the respondents classified as: Implementers and Asatidz?
4. What is the policy implication of the result of the study?

### **Review of Related Literature**

Education caters for the growth of man in all aspects such as spiritual, intellectual, imaginative, physical, scientific, linguistic, both individually and collectively, and motivates all these aspects towards goodness and the attainment of perfection. The ultimate aim of Islamic education is the realization of complete submission to Allah (S.W.T.) on the level of individual and the community at large, (Tamano, 1996). Therefore, education in Islam intended to produce God-fearing and righteous individual who lives in accordance with the teaching of Holy Qur'an and sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) in order to achieve ultimate bliss in the life of this world and the life in the hereafter.

In addition, Khan (2011), stated that the social usage of putting the children early to school was not altogether unknown during the days of *jahiliyyah* (ignorance) while the Jews and Christians had educational institutions of their own where they imparted instruction in the sacred lore, although in the opinion of the Prophet it was all de-educating the child as they were indifferent to the importance of acting upon their knowledge. Traditions supply the case of a child of ten who learnt the Qur-an and could recite it according to a recognized form and style. Further, modern age is a period of inter-continental missiles and artificial satellites; it is driven by an insane desire for speed and speedy results. Its impatient spirit brooks no delay. It is impatient alike to create and destroy. On the other hand, it is controlled and directed by extreme individualism and even the most dogmatic socialist is a believer in individualism within areas of interests which are not controlled by political ideology. But like other arts, education of a child demands great patience, persistence and disciplined control. It demands an intense, love and sympathy with the child and an innate or acquired

understanding of the child mind. It is only these qualities of dead and heart which can produce lasting results in the domain of fine arts and child education.

In addition, Badrodin (2013), Indicated that the first man, Adam (peace be with him), was taught the nature of essence of creation. This is attested to in another ayah, "He (Allah S.W.T.) taught Adam the names of all things" Qur'an 2:31. This essential knowledge was transmitted to succeeding generations through the institutions of prophet hood. Since knowledge is the means for progress and development, Islam places no bar to the acquisition of knowledge. There are numerous *ayaat* (verses) of the Qur'an in which the word "*ilm*" (knowledge) and its derivatives are used. Many reports in the Hadith collection encourage men and women to acquire and pursue knowledge. Therefore, seeking knowledge was always vigorously pursued by the early generations of Muslims and teachers have always been in Muslim society.

In the country today, three (3) modes of Islamic teachings: 1) Teaching of Islam in madrasah, 2) Teaching of Islam as a subjects in some private and public schools, and 3) Teaching of Islam as a degree program in higher educational institutions (i.e., University of the Philippines, Mindanao State University, University of Southern Mindanao, Jamiatu Muslim Mindanao, Jamiatul Philippine Al-Islamia, Lake Lanao College, etc.).

## METHODS

The study used the descriptive evaluative method of research to find out the practices that prevail in the A.L.I.V.E. Program. It was conducted in the different elementary schools under DepEd Cotabato City Division. The respondents of this study were the seventy-four (74) individuals who were considered to be knowledgeable about the issues on the implementation of the Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (A.L.I.V.E.) program in DepEd Cotabato City School Division. A self-made questionnaire was used to gather the needed data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### **The Extent of the Attainment of the A.L.I.V.E. Program on the National Objectives**

The administrator respondents implementing the A.L.I.V.E. program revealed that the objectives of the program are attained with the grand mean of 3.05. This statement is further validated by the researcher during the personal interview conducted for the administrators' implementers of the A.L.I.V.E. program. The respondents explained that the implementation of the A.L.I.V.E. program really helps in institutionalizing the study of Arabic language and Islamic Values, besides it helped developed the Muslim children in understanding their religion better.

In managerial theories and practices, administrators have to accept responsibilities. Those in authority have to be accountable. What is important is that the duties should be distributed in accordance with the responsibilities and capabilities of each individual staff. Praises and credits should be given where they are due. Each has to perform his

task to achieve the global mission. Each staff is part of the team as a whole. Everyone is indispensable. Good administrators must continuously strive to provide the best example to all his subordinates, (Al-Habshi, 1988).

The administrators also rated the following A.L.I.V.E. program objectives as attained such as developed and institutionalize Madrasah education as a vital component of the national education system, developed through participative consultation involving education stakeholders a framework of national policies as basis for Madrasah education, undertake appropriate advocacy initiatives in support of Madrasah education, upgrading quality basic education to the level of the national performance indicators and achievement levels and alternative learning system and livelihood skills development for Filipino Muslims out-of-school and for present day students of Private Madaris. This implied that the implementations of the A.L.I.V.E. program were properly managed by the implementers and other stakeholders of education for the Muslim Filipino. Moreover, those objectives were in accordance with the government's development policy towards Muslims in the Philippines in their effort to integrate them through education.

Table 1. Attainment of the A.L.I.V.E. Program on the National Objectives

	Mean	Description
<b>Objectives</b>		
1. Developed and institutionalize Madrasah education as a vital component of the national education system.	3.00	Attained
2. Develop through participative consultation involving education stakeholders a framework of national policies as basis for Madrasah education.	3.08	Attained
3. Undertake appropriate advocacy initiatives in support of Madrasah education.	2.85	Attained
4. Upgrading quality basic education to the level of the national performance indicators and achievement levels.	3.15	Attained
5. Alternative learning system and livelihood skills development for Filipino Muslims out-of-school and for present day students of Private Madaris.	3.15	Attained
<b>Grand mean</b>	<b>3.05</b>	<b>Attained</b>
3.50-4.00	Highly Attained	1.50-2.49
2.50-3.49	Attained	1.00-1.49
		Less Attained
		Least Attained

### Effectiveness of the Program in Providing Curriculum for A.L.I.V.E. Program as Perceived by Administrator

The administrative respondents revealed that the implementation of the curriculum for A.L.I.V.E. program was effective with a grand mean of 2.95. The administrator respondents revealed that the curriculum for A.L.I.V.E. program recognizes and values

the Muslim's unique socio-cultural and spiritual heritage. It put into proper context the importance of both moral-spiritual formation and intellectual-physical development – the formation of a balanced personality. Further, this rating given by the administrator means that the A.L.I.V.E. program makes Muslim children learned their religion better and able to read and write Arabic and makes them read the holy Quran which is the divine law of the Islam and learned the Islamic values. The respondents rated effective the following aspect of the curriculum like pupils learned to read and write Arabic, speak Arabic language, construct sentences in Arabic Language, communicate using Arabic language and able to read the holy Qur'an.

Table 4. Implementation of the A.L.I.V.E. Program Curriculum

<b>Curriculum</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>A. Arabic Language</b>		
Pupils learned to read and write Arabic.	3.15	Effective
Pupils speak Arabic language.	2.62	Effective
Pupils can construct sentences in Arabic Language.	2.54	Effective
Pupils can communicate using Arabic language.	2.38	Effective
Pupils able to read the holy Qur'an.	3.38	Effective
	<b>2.81</b>	<b>Effective</b>
<b>B. Islamic Values</b>		
Pupils say Assalamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa barakatuhu before entering to room.	3.92	Very Effective
Pupils say Allhamdullilah whenever achieved something.	3.77	Very Effective
Pupils show courteous to school official.	3.54	Very Effective
Pupils perform five times prayer.	3.46	Effective
Pupils recite short supplication.	3.69	Very Effective
	<b>3.68</b>	<b>Very Effective</b>
	<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>2.95</b>
		<b>Effective</b>
3.50-4.00	Very Effective	1.50-2.49
2.50-3.49	Effective	1.00-1.49
		Less Effective
		Least Effective

On the other hand they also rated very effective the Islamic Values being learned by the pupils from attending class in A.L.I.V.E. program such as say Assalamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa barakatuhu before entering to room, say Allhamdullilah whenever achieved something, show courteous to school official, perform five times prayer. This indicates the that ALIVE helped pupils developed their values and able to performed the same wherever they are. However, on the statement perform five times prayer they rated it effective. This means that Muslim children attending ALIVE program shows a very good transformation by doing good in the school and forbid the wrong.

### **The Extent of Objectives of the A.L.I.V.E. Program are Attained As Perceived by the Asatidz**

The Asatidz respondents revealed that the objectives of the A.L.I.V.E. program were attained with a grand mean of 2.90. This means that the Asatidz believed that the implementation of the A.L.I.V.E. in Cotabato City division was properly implemented to attain its objectives. Moreover, the respondents rated the following statement that briefly

described the objectives of the A.L.I.V.E. program as attained such as developed and institutionalize Madrasah education as a vital component of the national education system, develop through participative consultation involving education stakeholders a framework of national policies as basis for Madrasah education, undertake appropriate advocacy initiatives in support of Madrasah education. Upgrading quality basic education to the level of the national performance indicators and achievement levels, alternative learning system and livelihood skills development for Filipino Muslims out-of-school and for present day students of Private Madaris. This implies that the implementation of the ALIVE program helped much shaping the Islamic education in the country.

Table 4. The Extent of Objectives of the ALIVE Program are Attained/Achieved As Perceived by the Asatidz

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Description</b>
Developed and institutionalize Madrasah education as a vital component of the national education system.	3.00	Attained
Develop through participative consultation involving education stakeholders a framework of national policies as basis for Madrasah education.	2.75	Attained
Undertake appropriate advocacy initiatives in support of Madrasah education.	2.83	Attained
Upgrading quality basic education to the level of the national performance indicators and achievement levels.	2.92	Attained
Alternative learning system and livelihood skills development for Filipino Muslims out-of-school and for present day students of Private Madaris.	3.00	Attained
	<b>Mean 2.90</b>	<b>Attained</b>
3.50-4.00	Highly Attained	1.50-2.49
2.50-3.49	Attained	1.00-1.49
		Less Attained
		Least Attained

### **Effectiveness of the Program in Providing Curriculum for A.L.I.V.E. Program As Perceived by Asatidz**

The Asatidz respondents revealed that the curriculum for A.L.I.V.E. program was effective with a grand mean of 3.29. The Asatidz respondents further revealed that the pupils attending A.L.I.V.E. class was able to read short word Arabic and even the Quran pupils able to read it. This means that Muslim children attending A.L.I.V.E. class can make used of Arabic language in communicating others. During the interview conducted by the researcher to the Asatidz they explained that pupils in attending A.L.I.V.E. program learned the basic Islamic values such as say Assalamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa barakatuhu before entering to room, say Allhamdullilah whenever achieved something and recite short supplication.

Table 5. Effectiveness of the Program in Providing Curriculum for A.L.I.V.E. Program As Perceived by Asatidz

<b>Curriculum</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Description</b>
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<b>A. Arabic Language</b>			
Pupils learned to read and write Arabic.		3.58	Very Effective
Pupils speak Arabic language.		2.67	Effective
Pupils can construct sentences in Arabic Language.		2.42	Effective
Pupils can communicate using Arabic language.		2.33	Effective
Pupils able to read the holy Qur'an.		3.75	Very Effective
<b>Sub-mean</b>		<b>2.95</b>	<b>Effective</b>
<b>B. Islamic Values</b>			
Pupils say Assalamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa barakatuhu before entering to room.		3.83	Very Effective
Pupils say Allhamdullilah whenever achieved something.		3.75	Very Effective
Pupils show courteous to school official.		3.83	Very Effective
Pupils perform five times prayer.		3.00	Effective
Pupils recite short supplication.		3.67	Very Effective
<b>Sub-mean</b>		<b>3.62</b>	<b>Very Effective</b>
<b>Grand mean</b>		<b>3.29</b>	<b>Effective</b>
3.50-4.00	Very Effective	1.50-2.49	Less Effective
2.50-3.49	Effective	1.00-1.49	Least Effective

### The Extent of Objectives of the A.L.I.V.E. Program are Attained As Perceived by the Teachers

The teacher's respondents revealed that the objectives of the A.L.I.V.E. program were attained with a grand mean of 2.84. The teachers' respondents further explained that being the front liners in implementing the program they have all the way to evaluate the performance of the pupils with the respect to the objectives of the A.L.I.V.E. program.

Table 6. The Extent of Rationale/Objectives of the A.L.V.E. Program are Attained/Achieved As Perceived by the Teachers

Objectives	Mean	Description	
1. Developed and institutionalize Madrasah education as a vital component of the national education system.	2.92	Attained	
2. Develop through participative consultation involving education stakeholders a framework of national policies as basis for Madrasah education	2.94	Attained	
3. Undertake appropriate advocacy initiatives in support of Madrasah education.	2.88	Attained	
4. Upgrading quality basic education to the level of the national performance indicators and achievement levels.	2.66	Attained	
5. Alternative learning system and livelihood skills development for Filipino Muslims out-of-school and for present day students of Private Madaris	2.78	Attained	
<b>Grand mean</b>	<b>2.84</b>	<b>Attained</b>	
3.50-4.00	Highly Attained	1.50-2.49	Less Attained
2.50-3.49	Attained	1.00-1.49	Least Attained

## Effectiveness of the ALIVE Program

The teachers' respondents revealed that the curriculum for the A.L.I.V.E. program is effective because, the Muslim pupils learned to read and write Arabic language, with a sub-mean of 2.73. Moreover, the teachers' respondents explained that there are pupils who are able to read Arabic words and even stories written in Arabic text. Furthermore, they rated the curriculum as effective on the following aspect such as learned to read and write Arabic, speak Arabic language and able to read the holy Qur'an. However, on the statement like construct sentences in Arabic Language and communicate using Arabic language, they rated it less effective. Likewise, the teachers' respondents rated effective the curriculum for A.L.I.V.E. like show courteous to school official, perform five times prayer and recite short. On the other hand, they rated very effective on the statement such as say Assalamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa barakatuhu before entering to room, say Allhamdullilah whenever achieved something.

Table 7. The Effectiveness of the A.L.I.V.E. Program Curriculum

Curriculum	Mean	Description	
<b>A. Arabic Language</b>			
Pupils learned to read and write Arabic.	3.00	Effective	
Pupils speak Arabic language.	2.53	Effective	
Pupils can construct sentences in Arabic Language.	2.41	Less Effective	
Pupils can communicate using Arabic language.	2.35	Less Effective	
Pupils able to read the holy Qur'an.	3.35	Effective	
	<b>2.73</b>	<b>Effective</b>	
<b>B. Islamic Values</b>			
Pupils say Assalamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa barakatuhu before entering to room.	3.80	Very Effective	
Pupils say Allhamdullilah whenever achieved something.	3.61	Very Effective	
Pupils show courteous to school official.	3.29	Effective	
Pupils perform five times prayer.	3.06	Effective	
Pupils recite short supplication.	3.47	Effective	
	<b>3.45</b>	<b>Effective</b>	
	<b>3.10</b>	<b>Effective</b>	
3.50-4.00	Very Effective	1.50-2.49	Less Effective
2.50-3.49	Effective	1.00-1.49	Least Effective

## Conclusion

The effectiveness of the A.L.I.V.E. program from the point of view of Muslim scholars in Cotabato City is that the objectives of the program are attained; why, because in the first place, the implementation of the ALIVE program helped to the institutionalization of the study of Arabic language and Islamic values. Besides, the program helped the Muslim children understood their religion. Secondly, the program is effective because it



recognizes and values the Muslim's unique political, socio-economic and cultural heritage. It put into proper context the importance of both moral-spiritual formation and intellectual-physical development- the formation of balanced personality.

### **Recommendations**

On the bases of the findings and conclusions of the study the following are strongly recommended.

1. A.L.I.V.E. program shall be strengthen to give more chance to Muslim children to learn their religion while learning the secular education.
2. Curriculum visits for the A.L.I.V.E. program shall be undertaken to ensure that basic knowledge in Islam are properly integrated in the learning competency.
3. Evaluation of the performance of the pupils in Arabic Language and Islamic Values shall be conducted to determine the extent of knowledge acquired by the pupils according to the level of competency.
4. Trainings for A.L.I.V.E. teachers shall be given to improve their skills in teaching.

### **Policy Implication of the Study**

There are inescapable educational realities suffered by the Muslims that posed a great challenge to the incoming Bangsamoro government. These were:

- (a) The Region's educational development lags well behind that of other regions;
- (b) Past decades of relatively low enrollment rates (due to violent conflicts) in Muslim Mindanao have resulted in a large pool of illiterate and underschooled adolescents and adults;
- (c) Since the Region basic education system depends largely on its own tertiary education graduates for the supply of its teachers, it already a part of a vicious cycle of poor education quality, where poorly educated teachers deliver poor instruction that yield poorer than averages candidates; and
- (d) The Islamic education agenda implied in the ARMM Organic Law– for schools to able to transmit and inculcate Islamic values to children as well as to offer basic knowledge and skills essential to their future – remains an unfulfilled promise of regional autonomy.

Education lies at the core of human development for Muslims in the ARMM, in its dual ability to

[a] transmit and inculcate values and culture that allow young residents of the Region to form their identities as citizens of the Philippine nation and of unique Islamic community within that nation, and

[b] provide ARMM citizens with the capacity to pursue economic opportunities inside and outside the Regions. The builders of ARMM were fully aware of this central position of education, hence the provision in the ARMM Organic Law pertaining explicitly to education. In fact education remains of the center of the political agenda to the present day (FGD).

To enable the Regional Government to fulfill this responsibility, the Organic Laws gives it a wide range of powers and authorities over education in the Region. As the law provides, the Regional Government is responsible for existing schools, colleges, and universities within its area of jurisdiction. It is supposed to make the Region's education

system function as a subsystem of the national education system, following the same structure but with emphasis on the autonomy of the subsystem. It can mandate that the Region's school adopt the basic core courses, minimum curriculum, and textbooks required by the National Government, but it has the prerogative and responsibility to add other courses and instructional materials that are appropriate to the Muslims in the Region. Graduates from the Region's system are expected to be able to transfer outside ARMM with full accreditation.

Despite the provisions in the RA 6734 that give value on education as a prime and priority in any human development undertakings, the ARMM still trails behind all regions with respect to basic indicators of educational development. There are many factors that can explain the observed educational disparities between ARMM and other regions in the country. The World Bank [2003] revealed that "education outcomes" are the product of supply conditions such as the availability and quality of schools, as well as the desire of the people to attend school which, in turn, depends partly on the value that they place on education and the return they expect in the marketplace.

As suggested by one of the informants of this study "the most important challenge is how to formulate a coherent regional policy of technical and financial oversight and support for madaris [plural of madrasah] that recognizes their role in ARMM's education system." For the Muslim people in the ARMM (as explained by a Shari'ah expert), "an important thing to note is that basic education should transmit and inculcate Islamic values and culture as the unique heritage of the people in the region." This basic education, at the same time, will enable ARMM citizens to participate in national life, implying the need to transmit and inculcate a common Philippine heritage; and should prepare ARMM residents for their duties and responsibilities as citizen of their communities and, among them, the future leaders of the community should be developed and nurtured.

However, there are existing problems regarding the Arabic and Islamic studies subjects to the elementary and secondary schools in the ARMM today. First, according to the Research Director of MSU-Maguindanao, the subjects in Arabic and Islamic Studies have no points in the ranking system of honor students. Second, the allotted time for the Arabic and Islamic Studies subjects is very limited. According to the Assistant Regional Cabinet Secretary of DILG-ARMM, "total education of the youth must be in the top priority list of every ARMM administrator in their development efforts because the first revelation (IQRA, means READ) in the Qur'an is about education" (Personal Interview; January 24, 2014).

Addressing the educations problems in Muslim Mindanao requires appropriate management systems and adequate resources. The traditional investments for expanding access or improving quality, such as school building construction and increasing school supplies are needed, but to extract the benefits from those investments, the whole system must be better managed.

To better the educational system in the ARMM, a very challenging task is for the policymakers to use legislation to mandate a level of legislation for basic education. If the resources allocated to education in ARMM are inadequate to deliver schooling and at high quality, an alternative is to base the budgeting and financing process on a clear

regional agenda for improving education services that itself is the product of broad consultation and negotiation with stakeholders.

The majority of Muslim leaders are graduates of the local universities – and it is likely that future leader too. Indeed, these institutions appear to be strongly aware of the role that they can play in engendering peaceful solutions to the Region's troubled history and stalled development.

But above all, any important issue about governance and management of education in Muslim Mindanao must radiate on the role of the National Government on education in the Region. In principle, with the autonomy, ARMM has broad freedom of action to define and act upon its intended level of performance, and when patterns of accountability have been established and sustained, the issue of what role the National Government plays in service delivery is less pressing. However, according to Philippine Human Development Report [2005], when such patterns have not been demonstrated, then the pressure is greater for the National Government to examine its role regarding standards of quality of the Region's obligatory provision of education, especially if the National Government has committed itself to international standards of delivery (as in, for example, education for all).

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