

## Bridging cultural and religious identities in Philippine public education: The implementation of the ALIVE program in a pilot elementary setting

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### Abstract

**Aim:** This study examined the implementation of the Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE) program at Kalibo Pilot Elementary School (KPES), a predominantly non-Muslim public school in the province of Aklan, Philippines. Specifically, it aimed to evaluate how national Madrasah Education Program (MEP) policies are operationalized at the school level and to determine the educational, cultural, and social impacts of the program on Muslim learners within a "minority-within-a-minority" context.

**Methodology:** A descriptive qualitative research design was employed to capture the localized realities of program implementation. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with purposively selected participants consisting of eleven Muslim learners, one Ustadz (ALIVE teacher), and one Madrasah Coordinator. The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's framework to identify recurring patterns related to implementation mechanisms, learner development, challenges, and coping strategies.

**Results:** Findings revealed that the ALIVE program at KPES is formally integrated into the school's instructional framework and demonstrates strong compliance with Department of Education guidelines. The program significantly contributes to learners' Arabic literacy, moral formation, cultural affirmation, and school engagement, while also fostering religious identity, intercultural competence, and social inclusion in a non-Muslim majority environment. However, implementation is constrained by limited instructional resources, scarcity of trained Asatidz, scheduling conflicts, and insufficient exposure to Arabic outside the classroom. To address these challenges, stakeholders employ adaptive teaching strategies, sustained teacher capability-building, learner-centered instruction, and strong community support.

**Conclusion:** The study concludes that the ALIVE program at KPES functions as both a cultural conservatory and a spiritual anchor for Muslim learners, enabling them to navigate dual identities with confidence and resilience. Despite persistent structural and logistical challenges, the program's institutionalization and stakeholder adaptability position it as a viable model for inclusive and culturally responsive education. The findings provide valuable insights for educational leaders, curriculum developers, and policymakers seeking to strengthen culturally responsive teaching practices, promote inclusive learning environments, and support minority learners in diverse educational settings across the Philippines.

**Keywords:** Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE); Madrasah Education Program; Inclusive Education; Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

### INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental human right that serves as the bedrock for social equity and national development. Globally, the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) mandates inclusive and equitable quality education, emphasizing that cultural identities, diversity, and local contexts must not be treated as barriers to learning (Corbett & Guilherme, 2021). However, the global landscape reveals a persistent "inclusion gap" where minority groups often face a disconnect between state-mandated curricula and their cultural heritage. Addressing this requires a

departure from rigid academic canons toward inclusive design, encompassing "decolonizing the curriculum" and the application of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to ensure equitable opportunities for all students (Cambridge Centre for Teaching and Learning, 2024).

In the Philippine context, the Department of Education (DepEd) has addressed this through the institutionalization of the Madrasah Education Program (MEP), which integrates the Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE) into the national basic education framework. While policy measures such as DepEd Order No. 41, s. 2017, standardize the program, its success relies on a multifaceted pedagogical ecosystem. This study is significant because it grounds the MEP within the learning sciences, investigating how the cognitive architecture of Muslim learners is engaged through culturally relevant instruction that bridges their specific socio-cultural schemas with national learning standards. By adopting the lens of educational psychology, the research interrogates how a culturally responsive curriculum fosters a positive cycle of engagement, acknowledging that learning is most profound when it validates a student's existing cultural framework.

The effective delivery of this curriculum is inseparable from teacher preparation and professional development. The *Asatidz* (ALIVE teachers) serve as the primary nexus between national policy and local implementation; therefore, this study examines how their specialized training—or lack thereof—in pedagogical content knowledge affects their ability to translate abstract policy into meaningful classroom practice. This directly influences learner belongingness and identity formation, as the school environment acts as a crucial site where students negotiate their dual identities. When the curriculum mirrors their heritage, students develop the psychological sense of belonging required for academic persistence and social integration within the larger, predominantly Christian community. Consequently, the study evaluates current educational assessment and evaluation practices, shifting the focus from narrow, standardized metrics toward context-sensitive assessment that captures the nuanced development of the learner's identity and subject-matter mastery.

Despite these imperatives, a notable research gap persists. Most literature on Madrasah education is concentrated in Mindanao or the National Capital Region, leaving the Visayas region—specifically the "minority-within-a-minority" context of Kalibo Pilot Elementary School (KPES) in Aklan—largely unexplored. This study is necessary to bridge this geographical and operational divide. By analyzing the interplay between institutional support, teacher agency, and local stakeholder engagement, this research moves beyond large-scale policy evaluation. It provides a localized lens into the socio-cultural realities of MEP, offering a critical blueprint for inclusive education that prioritizes the holistic development and dignity of the individual learner in culturally diverse provinces across the archipelago.

### Review of Related Literature and Studies

The success of a multicultural educational system lies in its ability to integrate the diverse identities of its learners into a cohesive academic framework. In the Philippines, the Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE) program stands as a landmark initiative aimed at bridging the gap between secular education and the religious aspirations of Muslim Filipino students.

Salindab and Maglantay (2025) posit that the integration of the Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE) program into the national educational framework provides a structured pathway for aligning academic delivery with the cultural and spiritual values inherent to Muslim communities. This integration is formally governed by Department of Education (DepEd) Order No. 41, s. 2017, which established the Madrasah Education Program (MEP) within the K–12 Basic Education system. The primary objective of this policy is to provide Muslim learners with culturally appropriate and relevant educational opportunities by acknowledging their unique backgrounds and motivations (DepEd, 2017). Furthermore, the curriculum is designed to be engaging by incorporating competencies and subject matter that resonate specifically with the lived experiences of Muslim students (Salindab & Maglantay, 2025).

Beyond curriculum structure, the program significantly impacts character building. Abubakar (2022) highlighted the positive influence of Islamic values education on moral development, concluding that such instruction plays a critical role in shaping the ethical foundation of learners. However, despite these theoretical and moral strengths, the ALIVE program faces significant operational hurdles. Mangadang et al. (2025) noted that while the program provides essential culturally relevant opportunities, its success is often hampered by implementation challenges. This is further supported by Harad and Arriola (2022), whose study identified systemic obstacles faced by school heads, including insufficient financial and instructional resources, a lack of consistent monitoring and supervision from division offices, and the absence of standardized evaluation policies for *Asatidz*.

### Synthesis

The collective body of literature underscores the vital role of the ALIVE program in reconciling the national K–12 framework with the cultural and spiritual imperatives of Muslim Filipino learners. Previous studies have established

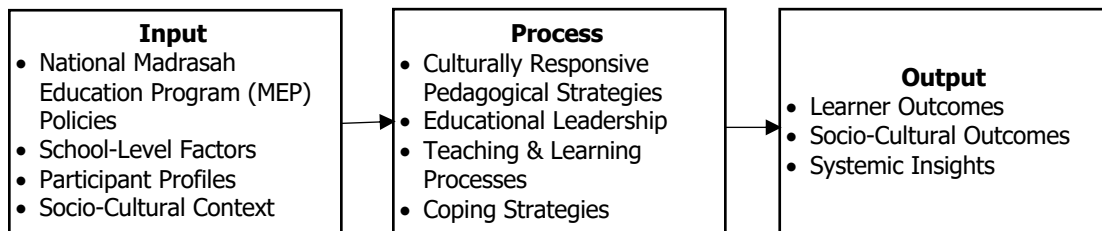
that when institutional policy is aligned with learners' unique backgrounds, it significantly enhances moral development, identity formation, and educational engagement (Abubakar, 2022; Salindab & Maglantay, 2025). Furthermore, it is well-documented that the program's success is contingent upon the interplay of resource management, leadership support, and the professional agency of the *Asatidz* (Harad & Arriola, 2022; Mangadang et al., 2025). However, what remains insufficiently explored is the operationalization of these policies within a "minority-within-a-minority" context—specifically, in urban, predominantly Christian regions outside the historically established hubs of Mindanao and the National Capital Region. While national implementation metrics are well-researched, there is a critical dearth of empirical data regarding the localized, micro-level strategies employed by schools like Kalibo Pilot Elementary School to sustain the MEP amid limited standardized instructional materials and varying levels of division-level support. This study addresses this research gap by shifting the focus from broad policy compliance to the socio-cultural and operational realities of a unique, non-traditional setting. By documenting how local stakeholder engagement and indigenous institutional support sustain the program at the school level, this research contributes to the existing body of knowledge by providing a replicable model for inclusive education, demonstrating how minority representation can flourish within a diverse, non-Muslim majority environment.

### Theoretical Framework

Culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) of Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995) serves as an essential theoretical and practical framework for this study, as it provides the analytical lens necessary to evaluate how the ALIVE program facilitates the academic and socio-emotional success of Muslim learners within the unique, non-Muslim majority environment of Kalibo Pilot Elementary School. By grounding the research in CRP, it critically examined how the program acknowledges and validates the cultural capital of the learners, transforming the classroom into a space where their religious and linguistic identities are treated as intellectual assets rather than peripheral concerns. This approach enables a more profound investigation into how the *Ustadz* and institutional leaders bridge the gap between national Madrasah Education Program (MEP) policies and the localized realities of the classroom, ultimately illustrating how inclusive instructional practices foster resilience and academic engagement. Furthermore, by highlighting CRP as a vital mechanism for "minority-within-a-minority" support, this study contributes to the broader academic discourse on educational equity, offering a robust argument for how culturally situated pedagogical strategies can mitigate systemic marginalization and promote genuine intercultural competence in diverse Philippine educational settings.

### Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored in the IPO (input-process-output) paradigm.



The conceptual framework of this study is anchored in an Input-Process-Output (IPO) model, which systematically captures the trajectory of the ALIVE program's implementation within the unique socio-cultural landscape of Kalibo Pilot Elementary School. The input component encompasses the foundational national policies of the Madrasah Education Program (MEP), alongside the school's specific institutional infrastructure and the demographic profile of the participants, establishing the structural baseline for the research. The process phase serves as the core of the study, where culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) acts as the primary mechanism; here, the investigation focuses on how the *Ustadz* and school leaders bridge national mandates with localized, adaptive teaching strategies and classroom management to sustain the cultural and spiritual identity of Muslim learners. Finally, the output highlights the measurable and qualitative outcomes of this implementation, ranging from improved Arabic literacy and student engagement to the fostering of intercultural competence and social inclusion. By utilizing this paradigm, the study was able to logically map the transition from policy intent to classroom practice, allowing for a comprehensive evaluation of how stakeholder adaptability and culturally responsive strategies transform systemic challenges into a sustainable model for minority education.

### Statement of the Problem

Despite global and national commitments to inclusive and equitable quality education under Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) and the Department of Education (DepEd) Order No. 41, s. 2017, the implementation of the Madrasah Education Program (MEP) continues to encounter challenges in diverse educational settings. The Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE) program was institutionalized to provide Muslim learners with culturally responsive and inclusive educational opportunities within the Philippine basic education system. However, while policy frameworks support its implementation, limited empirical evidence exists regarding how the program operates in areas where Muslim learners represent a minority within a predominantly non-Muslim school environment.

Most existing studies on Madrasah education focus on Muslim-majority areas such as Mindanao and the National Capital Region, leaving the experiences of Muslim learners in the Visayas region largely unexplored. In particular, the implementation of the ALIVE program at Kalibo Pilot Elementary School in Aklan presents a unique educational context that requires investigation. There is insufficient understanding of how the program contributes to learners' educational development, cultural identity formation, social integration, and school engagement, as well as the challenges encountered by teachers and school administrators in its implementation.

Addressing these gaps is important for strengthening culturally responsive pedagogy, supporting inclusive learning environments, informing curriculum implementation, and guiding educational leaders and policymakers in improving programs that serve culturally diverse learner populations. This study therefore seeks to examine the implementation, impact, challenges, and sustainability mechanisms of the ALIVE program within the unique socio-cultural context of Kalibo Pilot Elementary School.

### General Objective

To evaluate the implementation and impact of the Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE) program within the socio-cultural context of Kalibo Pilot Elementary School.

### Specific Objectives

1. To analyze the implementation framework of the ALIVE program at Kalibo Pilot Elementary School and determine how national Madrasah Education Program policies are operationalized at the local level.
2. To assess the educational, cultural, and social impacts of the ALIVE program on Muslim learners within a predominantly non-Muslim educational environment.
3. To identify the pedagogical, instructional, and administrative challenges encountered by educators and school leaders in implementing the ALIVE program.
4. To determine the coping mechanisms, adaptive practices, and strategic interventions employed by stakeholders to address implementation barriers and sustain the program.
5. To generate evidence-based recommendations that may strengthen inclusive education, culturally responsive pedagogy, and ALIVE program implementation in culturally diverse educational settings.

### Research Questions

Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What mechanisms and processes characterize the implementation of the ALIVE program at Kalibo Pilot Elementary School?
2. How does the ALIVE program influence the educational, cultural, and social development of Muslim learners within a predominantly non-Muslim educational environment?
3. What pedagogical, instructional, and administrative challenges are encountered by educators and administrators in the implementation of ALIVE classes?
4. What strategies, adaptive practices, and interventions are employed by stakeholders to address implementation barriers and sustain the program?
5. What implications and recommendations may be derived from the findings to strengthen inclusive education and culturally responsive pedagogy in culturally diverse educational settings?

### METHODOLOGY

#### Research Design

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design. According to Ayton (2023), a qualitative descriptive design is both essential and appropriate for inquiries aimed at cultivating a comprehensive understanding of an under-researched field, rather than focusing on a singular phenomenon.

This design was particularly beneficial for the study as it allowed for a deep exploration of the ALIVE program's implementation within the specific, "minority-within-a-minority" context of Kalibo Pilot Elementary School. By utilizing a descriptive qualitative approach, the researcher was able to move beyond policy compliance and document the actual operational realities and socio-cultural impacts experienced by Muslim learners in a predominantly Christian urban center. This method empowered the investigation to give voice to students and *Ustadz* (teacher), providing a platform for their lived experiences to inform educational practice.

### Population and Sampling

The participants of the study consisted of 11 Muslim students enrolled at Kalibo Pilot Elementary School, Kalibo, Aklan during School Year 2025–2026, 1 *Ustadz*, and 1 Madrasah Coordinator for a total of 13 participants.

This study utilized purposive sampling. It is the most appropriate and accurate technique for this study because the research objectives require deep, specialized insights that a random probability sample cannot provide. Given that the Madrasah Education Program (MEP) at Kalibo Pilot Elementary School (KPES) operates within a "minority-within-a-minority" context, the participant pool is inherently small and specific. To fulfill the study's goals such as analyzing localized implementation frameworks and identifying pedagogical challenges it is vital to select "information-rich" cases, specifically the ALIVE teachers actively teaching ALIVE, administrators responsible for program monitoring, and Muslim learners directly involved in the program. By deliberately selecting participants based on their direct experience and roles, purposive sampling ensures that the data collected is highly relevant to the unique socio-cultural dynamics of Aklan, thereby maximizing the depth and accuracy of the qualitative findings.

### Research Instruments

The primary data collection instruments for this study comprised semi-structured interview guides specifically developed for the participating Muslim learners, the *Ustadz*, and the Madrasah Coordinator. To ensure construct validity and alignment with the research objectives, these instruments underwent a rigorous content validation process conducted by a panel of three subject matter experts. The panel consisted of an expert in Islamic studies, a seasoned school administrator with extensive experience in the Madrasah Education Program (MEP), and a qualitative research specialist, all of whom hold at least a master's degree in their respective fields. The experts evaluated the interview guides based on specific criteria, including clarity of language, relevance of items to the research objectives, and the appropriateness of the questions for the target participants' developmental and cultural context. Following the evaluation, several revisions were implemented to refine the phrasing of the questions, enhance their cultural sensitivity, and ensure they were effectively designed to elicit comprehensive data regarding the program's implementation, challenges, and impacts. This meticulous validation process verified that the final instruments were robust and capable of addressing the study's core problems with depth and precision.

### Data Collection Procedure

The data gathering process adhered to a systematic and ethical protocol to ensure both administrative compliance and the protection of all participants. The researcher initiated the process by securing formal authorization through letters of intent submitted to the Department of Education (DepEd) Schools Division Office (SDO) of Aklan and the School Head of Kalibo Pilot Elementary School (KPES). Following institutional clearance and the rigorous content validation of the research instruments, the primary data collection was conducted in January 2026.

Interviews were held in quiet, neutral settings within the school premises, specifically the classroom of the researcher to ensure privacy and minimize interruptions. Before each session, the researcher secured written informed consent from the Madrasah Coordinator and the *Ustadz* and obtained informed parental consent along with student assent for the learner participants, in strict adherence to ethical guidelines for research involving minors.

Each interview was audio-recorded with the explicit permission of the participants to ensure accuracy in data capture. Following the conclusion of each session, the recordings were promptly transcribed verbatim. To ensure the integrity of the qualitative data, the transcripts were reviewed against the original audio files for accuracy and then organized for thematic analysis. Individual interviews with the Muslim learners lasted approximately 30 minutes, a timeframe specifically chosen to be manageable and conducive to thoughtful sharing, ensuring that the participants felt comfortable and engaged throughout the process.

### Treatment of Data

The data collected from the semi-structured interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis, adhering strictly to the six-phase framework established by Braun and Clarke (2006). This inductive approach was selected to identify, analyze, and report patterns within the qualitative data, ensuring the localized socio-cultural and operational



realities of the ALIVE program at Kalibo Pilot Elementary School were captured with both depth and academic rigor. The analysis proceeded through the following systematic stages:

1. **Familiarization with the Data:** The researcher began by transcribing all audio recordings from interviews with the *Asatidz*, Madrasah Coordinator, and learners. These transcripts were read and re-read multiple times to immerse the researcher in the data, noting initial observations and recurring ideas related to the participants' experiences.
2. **Generating Initial Codes:** Following familiarization, the researcher engaged in systematic data coding. Each transcript was examined to identify meaningful segments, which were then assigned descriptive labels (codes). This process organized the raw data into manageable units that captured the essence of the participants' lived experiences.
3. **Searching for Themes:** The researcher then collated the various codes into potential themes. By organizing the codes according to their conceptual similarities, the researcher identified broader patterns across the dataset, allowing for the transition from specific data points to generalized, significant themes.
4. **Reviewing Themes:** The potential themes were reviewed and refined to ensure they accurately represented the data. This involved checking the themes against the coded extracts and the entire dataset to ensure that the patterns were coherent and distinct. Themes that lacked sufficient evidence were either merged, discarded, or refined to ensure a comprehensive reflection of the participants' voices.
5. **Defining and Naming Themes:** Once a finalized set of themes was established, each was rigorously defined and named. This phase involved creating clear definitions for each theme to capture its core concept, ensuring that the findings articulated the specific nuances of the ALIVE program's implementation and the participants' unique social context.
6. **Report Writing:** The final phase involved synthesizing the analysis into the research findings. Through this, the researcher distilled the complex responses from the participants into a coherent narrative, weaving together analytic commentary and direct data extracts to provide a rigorous and transparent account of the study's findings.

This systematic application of Braun and Clarke's (2006) method ensures methodological transparency, allowing for an evidence-based interpretation of how the ALIVE program functions within the unique context of Kalibo Pilot Elementary School.

### Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to rigorous ethical standards to ensure the protection of all participants. Prior to data collection, formal authorization was secured from the DepEd Schools Division of Aklan and the School Head of Kalibo Pilot Elementary School. Following the principles of the Data Privacy Act of 2012, the researcher ensured informed consent from adult participants and obtained both parental consent and student assent for the involved minors. To protect the "minority-within-a-minority" population, strict anonymity and confidentiality were maintained using pseudonyms, while the interviews were conducted with cultural sensitivity to honor the religious identities of the *Ustadz* and Muslim learners. All data were securely stored and treated with the utmost respect to avoid any potential harm or social risk to the stakeholders.

### RESULTS and DISCUSSION

This section presents, analyzes, and interprets the findings of the study in direct alignment with the established research questions. The data are organized into core themes derived from the participants' responses, followed by an in-depth discussion of their implications. To ensure qualitative depth and authenticity, the thematic analysis is supported by verbatim excerpts and significant statements from the study's participants.

### Mechanisms and processes involved in the implementation of the ALIVE program at Kalibo Pilot Elementary School

**Structural integration and regulatory compliance.** The implementation is characterized by strict adherence to the Department of Education (DepEd) national standards. Participants emphasize that the program is not an extracurricular add-on but is formally integrated into the school's official timetable. By embedding the ALIVE classes into the official timetable, KPES elevates the program from a mere religious offering to a core institutional commitment. This formalization is crucial for the program's survival in the Visayas, as it ensures that Islamic education is not siloed

but is part of the broader educational ecosystem. When analyzed through the lens of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), this structural formalization serves as a fundamental mechanism for educational equity and representation. Ladson-Billings (1995) argues that culturally responsive schools must move beyond superficial tolerance and actively validate the cultural capital that students bring to the classroom. By situating Islamic education within the standard timetable, KPES treats the religious and linguistic identities of Muslim learners as academic assets rather than "siloes" or "peripheral concerns." This structural integration sends a powerful message to the school community: that Muslim students' heritage is a legitimate and valued part of the academic ecosystem.

Participants stated: *"Strict compliance with DepEd guidelines," "Integrated into the school's official timetable," and "Supervision of an ALIVE Teacher."*

The formalization of the ALIVE program within the official school timetable is a recognized strategy for ensuring its sustainability and institutional legitimacy. Research indicates that embedding Islamic education into the formal curriculum, rather than treating it as an extracurricular activity, is essential for mainstreaming Muslim education (Department of Education, 2017). By adhering to Department of Education (DepEd) standards, programs ensure that Islamic education is effectively integrated into the broader Philippine educational ecosystem, thereby promoting cultural recognition and educational equity for Muslim learners (Mangadang et al., 2025).

**Standardized Madrasah curriculum and resource utilization.** Instruction relies on a blend of national mandates and foundational religious texts. The curriculum is primarily defined by the Madrasah Education Program (MEP), utilizing specific modules and the Qur'an to balance linguistic and moral education. By utilizing DepEd-issued textbooks and modules alongside primary references from the Qur'an and Hadith, the school achieves a delicate balance between secular educational standards and the preservation of Islamic faith. From the perspective of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), this integration is a sophisticated application of academic empowerment, where the curriculum is explicitly designed to reflect the students' cultural reality (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Participants stated: *Use of "ALIVE Curriculum Guide," "DepEd-issued textbooks," and "Primary references from the Qur'an and Hadith."*

The reliance on a blend of national mandates (the Madrasah Education Program or MEP) and foundational religious texts (the Qur'an and Hadith) is a hallmark of current implementation practices. This dual approach helps balance secular educational requirements with religious instruction. Recent assessments highlight that the curriculum's effectiveness is often tied to the availability of DepEd-issued modules and the alignment of these resources with the learners' specific cultural and linguistic contexts (Mangadang et al., 2025).

**Capability building through specialized pedagogy.** Implementation is driven by trained educators (*Asatidz*) who receive targeted professional development. The focus is on bridging traditional content with modern instructional methods. By focusing on trained educators (*Asatidz*) who undergo seminar-workshops, the school ensures that those leading the ALIVE classes are not just subject matter experts in Islam and Arabic but are also skilled in the science of teaching. When examined through the lens of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), this commitment to capability building serves as a crucial mechanism for educational equity and representation. Ladson-Billings (1995) emphasizes that culturally responsive educators must possess both a deep understanding of their students' cultural schemas and the pedagogical versatility to make content accessible and meaningful. By equipping *Asatidz* with modern instructional techniques, KPES ensures that Islamic education is not delivered through rote memorization, but through dynamic, student-centered practices that honor the learners' cognitive and cultural needs.

Participants stated: *"Seminar-workshops focused on teaching strategies," "New methods of teaching apparatus," and "Classroom management" training.*

The role of the *Asatidz* (madrasah teachers) is critical to the program's success. Recent studies underscore that *Asatidz* need continuous professional development to bridge traditional Islamic pedagogical methods with modern, student-centered instructional strategies required by DepEd. Training in classroom management, instructional planning,

and active learning is vital, especially given that many *Asatidz* may not have formal training in the Philippine public school system's specific pedagogical frameworks (Sali, 2024). Ongoing capacity-building initiatives, such as those implemented by various DepEd regional offices in 2026, remain a priority for maintaining teaching quality (DepEd Region III, 2026).

**Multidimensional assessment and outcome validation.** Success is measured through both academic proficiency (Arabic literacy) and character formation (Islamic values). The *Musabakah* (Skills Exhibition) serves as a critical external validator for these objectives. By assessing both Arabic literacy and Islamic values formation, the program acknowledges that for a Muslim minority in the Visayas, education must serve as both a cognitive tool and a moral compass. When analyzed through the lens of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), this assessment strategy represents a move toward more inclusive educational assessment and evaluation practices that honor the holistic development of the student.

Participants stated: "*Skills in Arabic writing,*" "*Koran reading,*" "*Islamic values formation,*" and "*Results of the yearly Musabakah.*"

The use of the *Musabakah* (Skills Exhibition) serves as a key external validator for both academic proficiency in Arabic and character formation. By assessing competencies such as Arabic literacy and the application of Islamic values, the program functions as both a cognitive and moral framework for students (DepEd Region XII, 2024).

## **Influence of ALIVE program to the educational, cultural, and social development of Muslim learners within a non-Muslim majority locale**

### ***Educational Development***

**Holistic skill acquisition (literacy and numeracy).** The most immediate impact mentioned by learners is the acquisition of foundational skills. Students consistently highlighted their ability to read, write, and count in Arabic. For Muslim learners in a non-Muslim locale, gaining these specific skills provides a sense of academic achievement that is culturally relevant. It bridges the gap between their religious identity and their formal schooling. For Muslim learners navigating a non-Muslim locale, the development of these specific skills serves as a profound marker of academic empowerment and educational equity. When analyzed through the lens of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), this achievement is far more than the mastery of a new language; it is a critical act of cultural identity formation.

Participants stated: "*I learned a lot about writing Arabic*" and "*Reading letters and counting numbers.*"

Research indicates that the ALIVE program facilitates more than just religious instruction; it provides a framework for holistic skill acquisition. Mastery of Arabic orthography, literacy, and numeracy acts as a form of cultural and academic capital that enhances learners' self-efficacy. Recent findings emphasize that when learners achieve proficiency in Arabic, it fosters a sense of accomplishment that improves their performance across other subjects by grounding them in a familiar learning structure (Salindab & Maglantay, 2025).

**Character building and moral development (*tamang asa*).** The program goes beyond academics by fostering behavioral changes. Participants repeatedly linked the ALIVE program to becoming a good person and learning proper conduct. In a locale where Islamic values might not be the dominant social norm, the ALIVE program serves as a critical space for value integration, ensuring that students develop a moral compass rooted in their faith while navigating a diverse environment. Participants consistently identified the program as a primary catalyst for positive behavioral change and ethical conduct. When interpreted through the lens of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), this focus on moral development is a manifestation of the "holistic student" approach, where the school serves as a site for deep cultural identity formation.

Participants stated: "*it really helped me and I learned many lessons about our culture and tradition*" and "*I learned how to be a good person.*"

The program's focus on *tamang asal* (proper conduct) addresses the moral development of learners by integrating Islamic ethics with everyday school values. By serving as a "moral compass," the ALIVE curriculum helps students navigate diverse social environments where Islamic norms may not be dominant (Natividad, 2025).

**Cultural affirmation and learner confidence.** Learners expressed that the program makes them feel smart and more confident. This is directly tied to learning about their own traditions and culture. Representation in the curriculum acts as a psychological buffer. By validating their identity, the school becomes a safe, inclusive space, which directly boosts self-esteem and mitigates feelings of marginalization in a non-Muslim majority area. The ALIVE program's most profound impact is the tangible surge in learner confidence, as students explicitly connect their academic success and self-assurance to the study of their own traditions and cultural heritage. When interpreted through the lens of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), this finding serves as a powerful testament to the role of representation in the curriculum as a psychological buffer against marginalization. Ladson-Billings (1995) argues that when students' cultural identities are validated, they are more likely to experience academic success; at KPES, the curriculum acts as a mirror that reflects the students' own lived realities, transforming the classroom from a site of potential alienation into a safe, inclusive educational experience.

Participants stated: *"of course I learned a lot because of this ALIVE program" and "more confident... because I learned a lot."*

Cultural affirmation turns schools into safe, inclusive spaces, allowing Muslim learners to maintain their unique cultural identity while simultaneously participating in the broader Philippine educational system (Natividad, 2025).

**Heightened motivation and school engagement.** The program acts as a pull factor for school attendance. Several students noted that they are more interested in coming to school specifically because of the ALIVE classes. The inclusion of culturally responsive pedagogy (like ALIVE) increases student retention and daily engagement. It transforms the school from a purely secular institution into one that cares for the learner's whole identity. The ALIVE program functions as a powerful pull factor for student attendance, with learners consistently citing these classes as a primary motivation for their daily engagement. When viewed through the lens of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), this increase in retention is not merely a logistical outcome but a fundamental shift in the school's relationship with its minority learners. Ladson-Billings (1995) argues that when pedagogical practices acknowledge and honor the student's culture, they transform the school into a place where the "whole learner" is welcomed, rather than just the "academic student." By embedding the ALIVE program into the daily experience, KPES successfully transitions from a purely secular institution into one that fosters genuine social belongingness.

Participants stated: *"I'm happy that there is program like this in our school" and "I like going to school every day."*

The ALIVE program functions as a powerful "pull factor" for school attendance. Culturally responsive pedagogy, which embeds the students' heritage into daily learning, is linked to higher retention rates and increased daily engagement (Abdalla et al., 2023). By transforming the school from a purely secular institution into one that cares for the learner's "whole identity," the program fosters a sense of belonging that encourages students to attend school regularly and participate more actively in the classroom (Natividad, 2025).

### **Cultural Development**

**Strengthening religious identity and spiritual connection.** The most prominent theme is the program's role in reinforcing the learners' connection to their faith. Students expressed that ALIVE helps them maintain a relationship with Allah through prayer and understanding their responsibilities as Muslims. In a non-Muslim majority setting, the ALIVE program acts as a spiritual anchor. It prevents identity erosion by providing a structured environment where students can validate their religious beliefs during the school day. When interpreted through the lens of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), this outcome highlights the program's role in facilitating deep cultural identity formation. Ladson-Billings (1995) asserts that effective pedagogy must support students in developing a sense of self that is congruent with their home culture, particularly when they exist within a larger, potentially assimilatory social structure.

By providing a structured environment where students can validate their religious beliefs during the school day, KPES prevents the "identity erosion" that often threatens minority learners in non-Muslim majority settings.

Participants stated: *"Maintain my connection within Islam," and "Connection with God (Allah) to strengthen me every day."*

The transition from theoretical knowledge to *Akhlaq* (Islamic ethics) is a recurring theme in contemporary research on Islamic education. Studies emphasize that the pedagogical approach of ALIVE—which teaches justice, honesty, and patience—directly correlates with improved social harmony within diverse school communities (Salindab & Maglantay, 2025).

**Ethical manifestation and character refinement.** Participants noted a transition from theoretical knowledge to practical application of Islamic values such as justice, honesty, generosity, and respect for humanity. The program facilitates behavioral integration, where students align their daily actions with Islamic ethics. This development of *Akhlaq* (good character) serves as a bridge for harmonious living within a diverse community. When analyzed through the lens of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), this refinement of character is an essential component of cultural identity formation, as it enables students to bridge their private religious convictions with their public social interactions. Ladson-Billings (1995) argues that culturally responsive education should prepare students to act as contributing members of their community while maintaining their cultural integrity; at KPES, the cultivation of *Akhlaq* serves as a practical blueprint for this balance.

Participants stated: *"Belief in one God, Justice and sincerity, honesty, generosity, patience," and "Properly wearing a hijab and performing daily prayers."*

Recent research highlights that the ALIVE program acts as a protective factor against the negative impacts of social stigma and bullying. By fostering an explicit sense of religious pride, the program shifts the learner's perspective from defensive marginalization to empowered identity (Natividad, 2025).

**Cultivating religious pride and resilience against stigma.** There is a clear link between the program and an increased sense of pride. Notably, one student mentioned that the program is a defense against social challenges like bullying. By educating both the learner and (by extension) the school community about Islam, the program fosters psychological resilience. It empowers students to navigate a non-Muslim environment with dignity rather than shame or fear. When interpreted through the lens of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), this development of pride is a critical outcome of educational equity and representation. Ladson-Billings (1995) emphasizes that a central goal of CRP is to arm students with the cultural strength needed to critique and navigate societal inequities. By educating both the learners and, by extension, the broader school community about Islam, KPES transforms the classroom into a site of cultural identity formation where the student's heritage is framed as a source of power rather than a target for shame.

Participants stated: *"Yes, I am truly proud to be Muslim because I know Islam is the right religion" and "I am on the right path, Islam is the second largest religion in the world."*

Research indicates that the ALIVE program functions as a "spiritual anchor" for Muslim learners, providing a formal space to reconcile their faith with their secular education (Camral, 2025). By facilitating an environment where Islamic identity is explicitly recognized and valued, the program empowers students to navigate potentially stigmatizing environments with confidence. Studies show that when learners engage in systematic Islamic studies, they experience higher self-esteem and a stronger sense of religious pride, which acts as a psychological buffer against social challenges such as bullying or exclusion (Camral, 2025; Department of Education, 2017).

**Preservation of cultural and traditional heritage.** Students highlighted that the program is their primary source for understanding Muslim traditions and heritage that might not be visible in the standard curriculum. The ALIVE program serves as a cultural conservatory. It ensures that the specific traditions of Muslim Filipinos are passed down



to the younger generation, even when living in locales where these traditions are not the majority practice. When analyzed through the lens of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), this preservation of heritage is a fundamental act of educational equity and representation. Ladson-Billings (1995) posits that for marginalized groups, the curriculum must serve as an intellectual and cultural sanctuary, ensuring that students' specific histories and practices are not erased by dominant narratives. By serving as this conservatory, KPES ensures that the heritage of Muslim Filipinos remains a vibrant, living reality rather than a fading memory, even within a non-Muslim majority locale.

Participants stated: "*It's very important to maintain my connection within Islam and understand my responsibility as a Muslim*" and "*performing 5 daily prayers on time.*"

The ALIVE program acts as a primary conservatory for Muslim Filipino traditions. In locales where these customs might not be visible in the standard curriculum, the program ensures the continuity of Islamic practices and values (Department of Education, 2017). By providing instruction in Arabic literacy and Islamic ethics, the program bridges the gap between generations, ensuring that cultural heritage is passed down formally within the school system (Camral, 2025). This cultural validation is essential for maintaining "faith-based resilience," where learners perceive their religious responsibilities—such as daily prayers—as an integral part of their identity, thereby fostering a deep-seated connection to their traditions (Camral, 2025).

### **Social Development**

**Fostering intercultural competence through "makipag-kapwa tao".** The program provides the ethical framework for students to interact harmoniously with others, regardless of religious differences. By learning proper conduct (*tamang asal*), students develop the social skills necessary to be good persons in a diverse community. It encourages prosocial behavior. In a non-Muslim majority locale, this theme shows that ALIVE does not isolate learners but rather equips them with universal values that facilitate better relationships with their non-Muslim peers and teachers. When viewed through the lens of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), this outcome highlights the program's role in promoting educational equity and representation by fostering a sense of shared humanity that transcends religious boundaries. Ladson-Billings (1995) argues that CRP should not only validate the culture of the minority learner but also equip them with the capacity to engage meaningfully with the broader society; at KPES, the integration of universal values acts as a bridge for such engagement.

Participants stated: "*My classmate understands my situation as a Muslim and respect my beliefs*" and "*I'm also friendly always smile to each and everyone.*"

The ALIVE program's emphasis on *tamang asal* (proper conduct) serves as a foundational ethical framework that promotes *makipag-kapwa tao* (relating well to others). Research suggests that when Islamic ethics—such as patience, respect, and sincerity—are explicitly taught, they facilitate better social cohesion between Muslim and non-Muslim students (Salindab & Maglantay, 2025). By grounding prosocial behavior in religious values, students are better equipped to navigate diverse environments, as these universal values provide a common language for interaction that transcends religious boundaries (Natividad, 2025).

**Strengthening social belonging and inclusion.** The ALIVE program acts as a cultural bridge that validates the students' presence in the school. When students see their culture represented in the curriculum, they feel more welcome and motivated to participate in the broader school society. It promotes institutional belonging. For a minority group, feeling seen by the institution reduces social alienation and increases the likelihood of active participation in school-wide social and extracurricular activities. When analyzed through the lens of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), this outcome is a direct application of the principle that educational equity and representation are foundational to creating an inclusive school climate. Ladson-Billings (1995) argues that for minority students to thrive, the institution must move beyond superficial inclusion to actively validate the students' cultural capital; at KPES, the program achieves this by transforming the school from a foreign, potentially alienating space into one where students feel genuinely welcomed.

Participant stated: *"I have new friends that I meet every day while studying in the ALIVE program" and "I improved my relationship to other students."*

Evidence indicates that students who see their culture represented in school-wide activities are significantly less likely to experience alienation and more likely to engage in extracurricular and social interactions with the broader student body. This sense of being "seen" by the institution transforms the school from a secular environment into a communal space where Muslim learners feel secure to build friendships and participate actively (Natividad, 2025).

**Practical integration of religious duty in social spaces.** Social development is also seen in how students manage their religious obligations (like wearing the hijab or performing prayers) within a secular/non-Muslim social structure. It facilitates identity integration. The program helps students navigate the dual identity of being a Filipino student and a devout Muslim simultaneously, allowing them to maintain their religious visibility within the social fabric of the school without feeling the need to hide their faith. When interpreted through the lens of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), this integration is a profound achievement in cultural identity formation, as it allows students to maintain religious visibility without the fear or shame that often accompanies minority status in secular spaces.

Participants stated: *"Understand my responsibility as a Muslim," "Always wear a hijab," "Performing 5 daily prayers on time."*

This integration allows them to maintain their religious visibility without fear, turning their identity into a source of personal integrity that is respected—rather than hidden—within the school community (Salindab & Maglantay, 2025).

#### **Prevailing challenges encountered by educator and administrator in the delivery of ALIVE classes**

**Scarcity of specialized human and material resources.** Implementation is hindered by a critical shortage of both qualified personnel and physical instructional tools. Because KPES is located outside the traditional strongholds of Madrasah education, there is no local reservoir of trained *Asatidz* to draw from. This scarcity is compounded by a lack of specialized textbooks and other teaching materials. When analyzed through the lens of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), this resource scarcity represents a significant barrier to educational equity and representation. Ladson-Billings (1995) emphasizes that culturally responsive teaching requires not only a commitment to diversity but also the tangible tools—qualified practitioners and representative materials—necessary to translate that commitment into daily classroom practice.

Participants stated: *"Limited number of trained Asatidz," and "Limited availability of textbooks"*

The shortage of qualified *Asatidz* (teachers) and instructional materials is a well-documented barrier in non-Muslim majority regions. Research indicates that the lack of local teacher reservoirs forces institutions to rely on visiting educators or under-trained personnel, which undermines the consistency of instruction (Salindab & Maglantay, 2025).

**Pedagogical barriers and learner diversity.** Educators struggle with a wide spectrum of student readiness and the difficulty of teaching a language that lacks a supportive environmental echo. Teaching Arabic in Kalibo is an uphill battle because students lack exposure outside the classroom. In Mindanao, a student might hear Arabic or Islamic terms in the market or mosque; in Aklan, the classroom is often the only place they encounter the language. This creates a massive gap in proficiency levels. When analyzed through the lens of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), this geographic and linguistic isolation represents a critical challenge to educational equity and representation. Ladson-Billings (1995) argues that for learning to be effective, it must be contextualized within the learner's lived experience; however, in a locale where Arabic is not a part of the "community curriculum," the teacher is tasked with the arduous work of building a language-rich environment from scratch.

Participants stated: *"Varying proficiency levels," "Lack of sufficient exposure to Arabic," and*

The "environmental echo" of a language—the degree to which students encounter the target language outside the classroom—is vital for fluency. In areas like Aklan, the classroom is often the sole site of Arabic language acquisition. This lack of exposure creates a significant disparity in proficiency levels, complicating classroom management and instructional pacing (Salindab & Maglantay, 2025). Educators are forced to adopt remedial strategies to bridge the gap between students limited external exposure and the curriculum's academic requirements.

**Contextualization and Contemporary Relevance.** There is a persistent difficulty in making traditional religious and linguistic content resonate with modern, urbanized youth in a predominantly non-Muslim setting. The traditional Madrasah curriculum may not immediately address the specific socio-cultural realities of a Muslim youth living in a Christian-dominated urban center. There is a "contextual gap" where teachers must work harder to explain how Islamic values apply to modern, secular situations encountered in a place like Kalibo. When analyzed through the lens of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), this challenge highlights the tension between a standardized, potentially static curriculum and the dynamic identity needs of minority learners. Ladson-Billings (1995) emphasizes that the cornerstone of CRP is the ability to connect academic content to the students' actual social and cultural world; therefore, when the curriculum lacks this bridge, it fails to provide the inclusive educational experience necessary for deep learner engagement and motivation.

Participants stated: *"Challenges in contextualizing lessons to align with contemporary issues," and "Persistent need for additional professional training."*

Educators require specialized professional development to translate abstract religious principles into the "language" of modern, secular students, ensuring that the curriculum remains relevant to their daily lives (Natividad, 2025).

**Structural friction and scheduling constraints.** The "minority-within-a-minority" status results in logistical conflicts where the ALIVE schedule clashes with the regular K-12 curriculum. This is perhaps the most visible challenge of the "minority-within-a-minority" status. Because the ALIVE program must fit around the regular curriculum, it is often relegated to vacant periods or unconventional time slots. This creates a dual burden for the students, who must use their rest periods for religious study. This unfavorable scheduling leads to difficulties in maintaining engagement, especially when students are tired or when the classes are held at inconvenient times. When viewed through the lens of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), this logistical challenge undermines the principle of educational equity and representation. Ladson-Billings (1995) asserts that a truly responsive institution must demonstrate that it values the diverse cultures of its student body by providing equitable time and space; however, the current scheduling suggests that Islamic education is perceived as an "add-on" rather than a fundamental component of the learner's development.

Participants stated: *"Time slot is not favorable," "Utilizing students' vacant periods," and "Unconventional or inconvenient" scheduling.*

Structural friction reinforces the perception that ALIVE is an "add-on" rather than a core institutional pillar, often requiring administrators to navigate complex scheduling conflicts to secure adequate class time (Natividad, 2025).

## Strategies or interventions employed by stakeholders to address the implementation barriers identified in the program

**Adaptive pedagogical and instructional re-engineering.** To mitigate resource and time constraints, educators have shifted toward highly efficient, student-focused teaching models. Because ALIVE often occupies vacant periods or unconventional slots, teachers cannot afford wasted time. The adoption of learner-centered methodologies suggests

that *Asatidz* are moving away from traditional rote learning to more engaging, efficient methods that maximize the limited class hours. This indicates a high level of professional resilience: rather than succumbing to scheduling friction, educators are re-engineering their delivery to ensure students remain engaged despite the logistical hurdles. When analyzed through the lens of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), this shift from traditional rote learning to learner-centered methodologies is a vital act of pedagogical re-engineering. Ladson-Billings (1995) emphasizes that effective teachers must be adaptive, constantly modifying their delivery to ensure that the unique needs of their students are met, even when the institutional environment is unaccommodating. By maximizing limited class hours with engaging, efficient content, educators are actively prioritizing the inclusive educational experience over the rigid constraints of the schedule.

Participants stated: *"Systematic instructional planning," "Learner-centered teaching methodologies," and "Integrated teaching strategy."*

When faced with restricted time slots and logistical constraints, *Asatidz* (teachers) often pivot toward "instructional re-engineering." Recent studies indicate that shifting from traditional rote memorization to learner-centered methodologies—such as differentiated instruction and active learning—maximizes limited contact hours and keeps learners engaged (Salindab & Maglantay, 2025). This pedagogical resilience is a hallmark of professional adaptation, where teachers move away from "teacher-led" delivery toward "student-focused" models to ensure that religious and linguistic learning remains effective even in unconventional time slots (Natividad, 2025).

**Strategic resource and capacity enhancement.** Addressing the resource vacuum involves a multi-pronged approach of training existing staff and lobbying for better material allocation. Addressing the lack of qualified *Asatidz* and materials requires an institutionalized response. Participants highlighted that strengthening teacher training is a primary strategy. In Aklan, where the pool of ALIVE experts is small, the strategy is to build from within through professional development. When viewed through the lens of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), this strategy is an essential exercise in educational equity and representation. Ladson-Billings (1995) argues that for schools to be truly responsive to the needs of minority learners, they must foster an internal capacity to deliver relevant, high-quality instruction. In the Aklan context, where the reservoir of ALIVE expertise is limited, "building from within" through targeted professional development is not merely an administrative choice; it is a pedagogical imperative to ensure that the school can sustain a meaningful inclusive educational experience.

Participants stated: *"Strengthening teacher training," "Improving resource allocation," and "Additional training for ALIVE teachers."*

By embedding professional development into the school's operational framework, administrators ensure that *Asatidz* are not only content experts in Islam and Arabic but are also skilled in modern educational management (Natividad, 2025).

**Leveraging geographic and communal proximity.** The program's survival is bolstered by the physical and social closeness of the Muslim community to the school. A unique strength of the KPES implementation is the spatial proximity of the Muslim community. The fact that the community lives very near the school creates a natural support system. This accessibility reduces the barriers to attendance and allows for a more organized implementation. When analyzed through the lens of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), this geographic closeness serves as a powerful facilitator of educational equity and representation. Ladson-Billings (1995) posits that an effective school is not an island, but an extension of the community it serves; therefore, the spatial accessibility of the community at KPES allows for a seamless integration of home and school life. This physical proximity reduces logistical barriers to attendance and enables the school to function as a genuine "cultural conservatory," where the values taught in the classroom are echoed and supported by the learners' daily home environments.

Participants stated: *"Muslims are living very near the school," "Fostering community involvement," and "Accessible for the school children."*



The sustainability of Islamic education in non-Muslim majority areas relies heavily on the integration between the school environment and the surrounding Muslim community. Historically, the *Madrasah* (plural: *madaris*) has been defined as a community-based educational institution (House of Representatives, 2022).

**Linguistic-values symbiosis.** Learning Arabic is seen not just as a language skill, but as the essential key to authentic religious practice and identity. Participants believe that understanding Arabic allows students to live authentically. This is critical for the "minority-within-a-minority" because it provides them with unfiltered access to their religious texts (Qur'an and Hadith), preventing their identity from being diluted by the surrounding culture. It moves the program from a language class to an identity-building class. When interpreted through the lens of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), this symbiosis is a primary mechanism for cultural identity formation. Ladson-Billings (1995) asserts that students from marginalized groups require the tools to define their own reality rather than having it filtered through dominant cultural lenses; by mastering the liturgical language, these students immunize their identity against dilution in a non-Muslim majority setting.

Participants stated: "*Bridges knowledge and action,*" "*Directly understand the Qur'an and Hadith,*" and "*Live out Islamic teachings meaningfully.*"

The perception of Arabic as the "essential key" to authentic religious practice is well-documented in the literature. For non-native speakers, Arabic performs a dual function: it is both a tool for communication and a "spiritual necessity" for essential religious practices such as *Salah* (prayer) and Qur'anic recitation (Muthoifin & Elbanna, 2026).

## Conclusions

The implementation of the Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE) program at Kalibo Pilot Elementary School represents a highly institutionalized and resilient model of inclusive education within a "minority-within-a-minority" context. The findings demonstrate that the program's success is anchored in its formal integration into the school system, compliance with national educational policies, and sustained stakeholder support. The program contributes significantly to learners' educational development through Arabic literacy acquisition, enhanced school engagement, and moral formation, while simultaneously strengthening cultural identity, social belonging, and intercultural competence. The study further reveals that culturally responsive and learner-centered instructional practices play a critical role in supporting Muslim learners within a predominantly non-Muslim educational environment. Despite challenges related to limited resources, teacher availability, contextualization of instruction, and scheduling constraints, educators and school leaders have demonstrated adaptive and innovative approaches that sustain program implementation. The findings contribute to educational research by providing evidence on how culturally responsive curricula can support inclusive teaching and learning, strengthen minority learner participation, and foster educational equity. The study also offers insights for curriculum developers, educational leaders, teacher educators, and policymakers seeking to improve culturally responsive pedagogy, teacher professional development, and inclusive educational programs in culturally diverse school settings throughout the Philippines.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations may be considered by educational stakeholders to strengthen the implementation and sustainability of the Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE) program. The Department of Education and school administrators may review existing scheduling arrangements to reduce conflicts between ALIVE classes and regular academic requirements. Curriculum developers may consider producing more localized and culturally responsive instructional materials that reflect the realities of Muslim learners in minority settings. Educational leaders may strengthen teacher capability-building programs through mentorship initiatives, professional development activities, and continuous instructional support for Asatidz. Teacher education institutions may incorporate culturally responsive pedagogy, inclusive education, and intercultural competence into professional preparation programs. Finally, schools may strengthen partnerships with local government units and Muslim community organizations to enhance resource mobilization, learner support, and long-term program sustainability.

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