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A Qualitative Investigation of Andragogy in Adult Bible Classes in Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod Congregations in St. Louis

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by

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A Dissertation submitted to the Education Faculty of Lindenwood University

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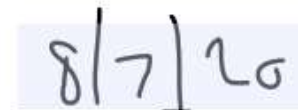
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Declaration of Originality

I do hereby declare and attest to the fact that this is an original study based solely upon my own scholarly work here at Lindenwood University and that I have not submitted it for any other college or university course or degree here or elsewhere.

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Abstract

This qualitative study explored what changes, if any, would occur in Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS) Bible classes after pastors participated in training that focused on implementing andragogical teaching methods in their Bible classes. The researcher sought to examine Andragogy in its relationship to adult Christian education, specifically in Sunday adult Bible classes. Also, in order to better understand the impact of andragogy in the specific contexts of the study, the researcher investigated the relationship between andragogical principles and LCMS doctrinal positions. Andragogical principles used in this study were derived, broadly conceived, from Malcomb Knowles's Six Assumptions and Eight Processes of andragogy. In addition, the study explored how the participants reacted to andragogical training and how their self-perceptions as educators aligned with observations made by the researcher. Three LCMS pastors from three different congregations participated. First, after obtaining consent and conducting interviews, the researcher observed all three participants teaching their adult Bible classes on Sunday mornings for two months. Second, the researcher conducted two workshops with the participants on both andragogical theory and design. Third the researcher then observed the participants for five more months in their Bible classes, mindful of any changes to teaching strategies, learning experiences, or any other impact of andragogical theory and design. Concurrent with the observations the participants filled out weekly journal prompts on their experiences. At the conclusion of the study all three participants reflected on their experiences in a focus group. The researcher then analyzed the qualitative data, concluding that the data showed that andragogical training did indeed make an impact on the adult Bible classes of the participants. In particular, the

researcher concluded that major changes included an increase in the amount of interaction between the learners, the amount of teacher-directed questions focused on individual life application, an increased understanding of the nature of adult learners, and an increased desire in the participants for more intentional reflection by their learners. In addition, the study revealed that the participants reacted favorably with their andragogical training, which in turn led them to a better alignment of their self-perceptions to their teaching strategies.

Keywords: andragogy, Bible class, adult Christian education, LCMS, teaching strategies

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Chapter One: Introduction

Introduction

According to a six-year study of Christian congregations, two-thirds of senior pastors and discipleship leaders in Christian congregations reported that "intentional, systematized study of the Bible is an essential element of spiritual formation" (Barna Group, 2016, pp. 26–27). When it came to which practices have the most significant impact on developing disciples, 92% of the same church leaders answered personal Bible study, and 88% indicated a small group Bible study. Nevertheless, in the same study, only 33% of practicing Christians and 6% of non-practicing Christians reported being currently in a small group Bible study. The study implied a disparity between what was perceived as critical to spiritual growth by church leaders and what was currently being practiced in Christian congregations.

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) is one such Christian denomination. According to recent statistics (Magness, 2017), the LCMS is a church body of some 6,100 congregations scattered across the United States, consisting of more than two million members. The congregations of the LCMS also support 2,029 parochial Lutheran schools, including 1,150 early childhood centers, 793 elementary schools, and 86 high schools. In turn, these schools support some 185,968 students of various ages (The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod School Ministry, 2017). Since not all congregations and schools faithfully reported their information, it was likely that the actual number was higher than the reported number. Parochial education for children is a high priority for the LCMS.

Parochial education has been emphasized in LCMS congregations chiefly because of the denomination's confessional adherence to the teaching of God's Word. In Luther's Large Catechism, one of the documents in the Book of Concord to which all Lutheran pastors subscribe, Luther wrote that special attention should be

> devoted to hearing God's Word so that the special function of this day of rest should be the ministry of the Word for the young and the mass of poor people…we should daily be engaged with God's Word and carry it in our hearts and upon our lips [Psalm 119:11-13]. But as said above, since we don't always have free time, we must devote several hours a week for the sake of the young, or at least a day for the sake of the entire multitude, to being concerned about this alone. (McCain, 2006, p. 368)

Since the inception of the LCMS, its members and leaders have upheld the Word of God as the rule and norm of its theology—establishing seminaries, colleges, and schools to educate children and their teachers in the study of God's Word—as was demonstrated by the establishment of the first seminary for training pastors even before the official founding of the LCMS (Suelflow, 2000).

Perhaps in part because of this emphasis on church work and parochial school education, the LCMS has seen a different trend in adult education. In 2016, congregations self-reported a total enrollment of 124,644 in adult post-confirmation, or Bible study, classes (Sias, 2018). The same report, however, revealed that only about two-thirds of congregations in the LCMS reported statistical numbers that year, and for the congregations that did not report, the statisticians used the most recently reported statistics. Additionally, this number only reported current enrollment, not attendance or

attendance trends. Though there was no reliable data on the exact numbers of LCMS congregations that offered adult Bible classes or on their attendance numbers, the researcher had no reason to doubt that the practice at the time of this study in the LCMS followed the trend laid out by the Barna Group report.

In his PhD dissertation on the development of adult Christian education in the LCMS from 1914 to 1989, Kane (1994) concluded that the LCMS historically has never developed a sustained emphasis on leadership in adult education. He also concluded that pastors had taught mainly in lecture style, a traditional approach not generally appreciated by learners. As of this study, little to no targeted training in adult education theory is available to pastors in the LCMS. The two seminaries of the LCMS that produce all the pastors in the church body, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (CSL), and Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFW), had limited resources and limited time to prepare pastors before their ordinations. Both CSL and CTSFW offered limited classes in education, with adult education, or andragogy, only partially addressed within the context of teaching pedagogy. Offerings for adult education training after ordination are often limited and voluntary. The LCMS emphasis on pedagogy resulted in andragogy being mostly overlooked by those who taught education in the LCMS.

Beginning in the 1960s and spanning the next three decades, adult educator and thought leader Malcolm Knowles adopted previous theories on adult education from Europe and carried the concept of andragogy into the spotlight of American discourse (Peterson & Ray, 2013). Knowles himself acknowledged that the philosophy of andragogy set out to organize the body of knowledge about adult learning into a

systematic framework of assumptions, principles, and strategies (Knowles, 1984). Andragogy's theoretical roots have been described as:

> intertwined with Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs, with self-actualization as a goal for learning, and with Carl Rogers' emphasis on the learner's characteristics of personal involvement, self-initiation, and self-evaluation. This humanistic approach to learning emphasizes human nature, human potential, human emotions, and affects, motivation, choice, and responsibility. (Carpenter-Aeby, & Aeby, 2013, p. 4)

In terms of adult Christian education, Knowles wrote that the emphasis on adult Christian education should be to develop "'mature Christian persons' in contrast to 'dependent Christian persons'" (Knowles, 1993, p. 95).

The implementation of andragogical principles and teaching strategies in educational environments has been studied in adult education settings. Non-religious studies showed that introducing andragogical principles, like tailoring instruction to learning styles and orienting learners to the learning task, helped improve adult learner engagement and behavior before and after instruction (Alewine, 2010; Carpenter-Aeby & Aeby, 2013). Though there was some research into the use of andragogical principles and teaching strategies in adult Christian education, as of the time of this study, there was no substantial body of research on the impacts of andragogy in Bible class settings.

Rationale of the Study

It is clear that there were gaps in the research, not only for the use of andragogy and andragogical principles in adult Christian education but more pointedly in the area of

pastor-led LCMS adult Bible classes. Though many, if not most, LCMS congregations have held adult Bible classes at one point or another in their history, there has been little investigation about teaching methods of pastors in those settings. Beyond that, with little to no pastoral training in the area of andragogy or adult learning either during or after seminary, it can be assumed that, at the time of this study, current teaching practices did not meet best practices in adult education.

Through this research project, the researcher aimed to add valuable insight into the impact of andragogical teaching principles and methods on LCMS pastors and adult education in their congregations. The researcher desired, in this qualitative study, to investigate what changes, if any, would occur when LCMS pastors were made aware of adult-learning theory and trained in its implementation. The researcher investigated any changes in perceptions and behaviors of the learners in these classes toward being mature, lifelong learners. The researcher interpreted the results of this study to offer insight as to what may or may not assist pastors in the LCMS in developing more effective teaching for adults. In addition, any insights and conclusions gleaned from this research were intended to help religious educators in other church bodies better evaluate their pastoral education or continuing education priorities.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the proposed study was to complete a qualitative case study using observations, interviews, journals, and focus groups to explore the impact of andragogical teaching methods, broadly conceived, used by pastors in adult Bible Classes in LCMS congregations in the St. Louis area.

The researcher sought to determine what changes, if any, would occur in LCMS Bible classes after pastors participated in training that focused on implementing andragogical teaching methods in their Bible classes. By observing pastors before and after two interventions in andragogical teaching methods, the researcher investigated the overall impact of andragogy on their teaching. Also, by observing the learning environment throughout the study, the researcher drew connections between the teachers' and learners' experiences during the research. Upon completion of the study, the researcher critically examined the impact of the andragogical process not only on the pastors but also on the Bible study participants in terms of the principles of adult learning theory, especially concerning andragogy as defined and based upon Knowles's Six Assumptions and Eight Processes of andragogy.

Knowles's Six Assumptions:

1. Adult learners need to know why they need to learn something before undertaking to learn it.

2. Adult learners have a self-concept of being responsible for their own decisions and for their own lives.

3. Adult learners come into an educational activity with both a greater volume and a different quality of experience from that of youths.

4. Adult learners become ready to learn those things they need to know and to be able to do in order to cope effectively with their real-life situations.

5. Adult learners are motivated to learn to the extent that they perceive that learning will help them perform tasks or deal with problems that they confront in their life situations.

6. Adult learners are responsive to some external motivators (better jobs, promotions, higher salaries, and the like), but the most potent motivators are internal pressures (the desire for increased job satisfaction, self-esteem, quality of life, and the like). (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005, pp. 64–68)

Knowles's Eight Processes:

1. Adult learners benefit from their facilitator providing additional preparation in the andragogical process as they begin their learning experiences.

2. Adult learners benefit from their facilitator setting an educational climate supportive to the more informal and collaborative nature of the andragogical process.

3. Adult learners benefit from their facilitator implementing mechanisms for mutual educational planning.

4. Adult learners benefit from their facilitator involving them in the process of diagnosing their learning needs.

5. Adult learners benefit from their facilitator setting learning objectives for the class by mutual negotiation.

6. Adult learners benefit from their facilitator designing their learning experiences mindful of their readiness to learn or problems in life rather than simply by content unit.

7. Adult learners benefit from participating in learning activities that align with andragogical assumptions.

8. Adult learners benefit from a mutual evaluation of learning with the facilitator. (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005, p. 116)

Process

The researcher developed a training workshop intervention for pastors based on best practices in adult education (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001). Not only did this intervention utilize andragogical teaching strategies, but it was also designed to teach others how to consider using andragogical teaching strategies, broadly defined by Knowles's Six Assumptions and Eight Processes, in their own adult Bible classes. Before testing the training intervention with the research group, the researcher practiced the intervention with an online test group not involved in the study and considered their feedback.

After the training intervention of the pastors in the study, the researcher continued investigation through interviews, journals, observations, and a focus group. During this time, the researcher explored whether there was congruency among how pastors perceived themselves as instructors and how the participants interacted with their instructors during Bible classes. Consequently, throughout this research study, the primary investigator sought to develop a better understanding of adult-learning principles in Bible classes with adult learners, possibly enlightening both the pastors being studied and the broader LCMS adult-learning community.

The information obtained through this study is intended to add to the knowledge base regarding teaching strategies used with Bible class participants in a group environment, more particularly as these strategies relate to the principles of andragogy. The researcher also investigated the teaching styles of the instructors and the students' experiences both before and after the intervention.

Questions

The six research questions used for this study were:

1. How will pastors react to instruction in the principles of andragogical theory and design?

2. What changes, if any, will occur when andragogical teaching strategies are implemented by pastors in Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Bible classes?

3. What is the relationship between the instructors' self-perceptions regarding their instructional strategies with their learners when compared to observations made by the researcher?

4. In what ways, if any, are the Bible study participants' experiences in class different after the pastor received andragogical training?

5. What, if any, new instructional strategies have emerged as a result of the pastor's receiving andragogical training?

6. To what extent, if any, does the instructor in the adult Bible classes utilize any of the Six Assumptions and Eight Processes espoused by Malcolm Knowles?

Study Limitations

The qualitative study was highly limited in its scope. Due primarily to the nature of pastor-led Sunday morning Bible classes in LCMS contexts, the window for observation in any given week was minimal. Since the researcher in the study observed Bible class facilitation in person in different settings, the study was also limited geographically and numerically. The study only involved three pastors and three congregations, all affiliated with the LCMS and all located in the region south of St. Louis. The study was also limited by the interest level of the participants. Though the

three participants in the study were recommended to the researcher by the Missouri

District President, the participants also had to consent to participate, indicating a

willingness to adapt their Bible class teaching styles. This willingness may not have been

indicative of the typical LCMS pastor, who may have no desire to learn andragogy. The

researcher was aware of the narrow scope of the study and worked to compensate for the

narrowness of the sample size by collecting a variety of data sets in a variety of ways

over an extended period, namely a typical parish education year. Even though the time

for data gathering was cut short due to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, data gathered during

this time was sufficient to answer the research questions.

Definition of Terms

      Adult Bible Class: An adult Bible class is a group of two or more adults who

regularly and voluntarily meet for the purposes of studying the Bible or Holy Scripture

(Kane, 1994, p. 5). In the LCMS, these are typically led, but not always, by LCMS

pastors. Pastor-led Bible classes are the focus of this study.

      Andragogy: Andragogy has been defined as the art and science of teaching adults

(Knowles et al., 2005, p. 60). The andragogical model is a system of alternative

assumptions that includes and builds upon pedagogical assumptions of how people learn

(Knowles et al., 2005, p. 72).

      Book of Concord: The Book of Concord is, outside the Bible, the foundational

document of Confessional Lutheranism. Unconditional subscription to the Lutheran

Confessions as a proper exposition of the Word of God is essential to both LCMS

membership and identity. The official stance of the LCMS is

We accept the Lutheran Confessions as articulated in the *Book of Concord* of

1580 because they are drawn from the Word of God, and on that account we

regard their doctrinal content as a true and binding exposition of Holy Scripture

and as authoritative for all pastors, congregations and other rostered church

workers of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod." (The Lutheran Confessions,

n.d.)

Congregation: Each congregation, otherwise known as church or parish, of the

LCMS serves as an independent unit, able to call their pastors, who serve in Word and

Sacrament ministry publicly on behalf of their congregation. Each congregation has its

constitution and polity, and members of the congregation elect officials to serve the

congregation. Each congregation's membership in the LCMS is voluntary (Barry, n.d.a).

Concordia Publishing House: The official publishing arm of the LCMS ("Who

We Are," n.d.).

District President: The District President is the elected ecclesiastical supervisor

of pastors, congregations, and other church workers in one of 35 LCMS districts across

the United States ("Districts of the LCMS," n.d.).

Law and Gospel: The Lutheran Church considers Law and Gospel to be the two

great doctrines of the Bible. "The Law teaches what we are to do and not to do; the

Gospel teaches what God has done, and still does, in Jesus, for our salvation" (Luther's

Small Catechism, 2017, p. 49).

Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

(LCMS) is a church body of some 6,100 congregations scattered across the United States,

consisting of more than two million members (Magness, 2017). Membership in the

LCMS, for both church workers and laity, is dependent on the confession that Scripture is the inspired Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions are a correct exposition of the Word of God ("Belief and Practice," n.d.)

Pastor: In the LCMS, a pastor is both ordained (set apart as clergy by one of two LCMS seminaries) and called (chosen by an LCMS congregation through prayerful deliberation) to serve in the office of public ministry on behalf of that congregation. LCMS pastors serve primarily in duties of Word (preaching and teaching) and Sacrament (administering Baptisms and Holy Communion) for that congregation (Barry, n.d.).

Seminary: In the LCMS, a seminary "serves church and world by providing theological education and leadership centered in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ for the formation of pastors, missionaries, deaconesses, scholars, and leaders in the name of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod" ("About Concordia Seminary," n.d.).

Summary

The researcher sought to determine what changes, if any, would occur in LCMS Bible classes after pastors participated in training in andragogical teaching methods. To supplement this research question, the researcher investigated what new strategies and experiences resulted from the pastors' receiving andragogical training, while also examining the relationship between the perceptions of the teachers and their learners on the learning experience. Also, the researcher observed how the participating teachers implemented any of the Six Assumptions and Eight Processes espoused by Knowles and sought to determine the effects of andragogical training on the sample of pastors, including how well that training was received. The qualitative research was conducted on three sites, meeting once a month for seven months. Qualitative data

included participant interviews, observations, journal entries, and focus groups. At the end of the study, the researcher coded and analyzed the data considering the research questions and then concluded what changes did or did not occur in LCMS Bible classes after the pastors received training in andragogical theory and design.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

Introduction

 This chapter provides a broad-to-narrow account of literature needed not only to understand the use of andragogy in Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) settings but also to identify the gaps in current understanding and usage of andragogical principles in pastor-led adult Bible classes. The first section of this chapter explains and summarizes the rise and use of andragogy as a model for understanding adult education, beginning with a theory about its use historically and leading through to the time of this dissertation's publication, with a special focus on Malcolm Knowles. The second section of this chapter examines the interplay of andragogy as a philosophy in adult Christian education, in non-LCMS denominational contexts, both theologically and considering current practice. Essential to this was a look at Knowles's Six Assumptions alongside relevant literature in Christian theology correlating to these principles. The third section of this chapter examines andragogy within the LCMS. This begins with a comparison of the Six Assumptions, in view of Christian theology already examined, to specific hallmarks of Lutheran theology and continues with a historical look at specifically LCMS practices in adult education. Finally, this chapter concludes by examining the state and lack thereof of andragogy in the LCMS training and ongoing education of its pastors at the time of the dissertation's publication.

A History of Andragogical Teaching Practices

 An understanding of the history of andragogy as a set of assumptions for instructional theory and design begins with an acknowledgment of its ideological roots. The term *andragogy* was a neologism, or a "newly coined word or phrase that is just

emerging into mainstream use" (Peterson & Ray, 2013, p. 81). Whereas the word

pedagogy was derived from two Greek words roughly translated as "leading children,"

the word *andragogy* modified the term to mean "leading adults" (Forrest & Peterson,

2006, p. 113). Andragogy was commonly defined as the art and science of teaching

adults (Knowles et al., 2005, p. 60). The andragogical model is a system of alternative

assumptions that included and built upon pedagogical assumptions of how people learn

(Knowles et al., 2005, p. 72). Malcolm Knowles (1977), early on in his investigation of

the theory, wrote:

> As I understand it, all of the early great teachers of history were teachers of
>
> adults. In ancient China, Confucius and Lao-Tze were teachers of adults. All of
>
> the Hebrew prophets and Jesus, all the great Greek teachers, Socrates, Plato,
>
> Aristotle, were teachers of adults. (p. 202)

Knowles claimed that after the fall of the Roman Empire much of what had

previously been known about the art and science of teaching adults was lost. Knowles

claimed that starting around the seventh century, monastic schools emerged that focused

more on the narrow transmission of reading and writing in order to preserve this

information. When Europe began secular schools around the 12th century, they followed

the path of monastic schools rather than the ancient schools. To Knowles (1977), much of

the educational assumptions for the education of children and adults in Europe arose from

this monastic model of education.

Modern andragogy had its roots in Alexander Kapp's (1833) attempt to describe

how Plato taught young adults and also in Edward Thorndike's (1928) approach to adult

capacity and ability to learn and Lindeman's attempts to apply these ideas to a more

formal setting (Taylor & Kroth, 2009). According to Henschke (2009), the term

andragogy itself was first authored by Kapp in 1833 when Kapp was writing on the

lifelong necessity to learn. Kapp focused on the movement from childhood to adulthood.

To him, learning happened both through teachers as well as personal self-reflection,

meaning that adult learning was more than just teaching adults; it also involved helping

people become more self-reflective. Often quoted as one of the forefathers of andragogy,

Lindeman, in 1926, wrote an influential book that brought European ideas of adult

education to the American sphere (Lindeman, 1989). He planted the seeds of what would

eventually become Knowles's assumptions. An important aspect of his work was that he

focused on discussion between adults and facilitators as the center of adult education, a

fairly new concept. He wrote on how the purpose of adult education is to give meaning to

life experience above classifications of knowledge, writing "teachers of youth assume

that their function is to condition students for a preconceived kind of conduct; teachers of

adults, on the other hand, will need to be alert in learning how the practical experiences

of life can enliven subjects" (p. 123).

     Beyond these influential adult educators, researchers noted that andragogy's

theoretical roots were also "intertwined with Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs, with

self-actualization as a goal for learning, and with Carl Rogers' emphasis on the learner's

characteristics of personal involvement, self-initiation, and self-evaluation" (Carpenter-

Aeby & Aeby, 2013, p. 4). O'Bannon and McFadden (2008) summarized Dewey's

contribution to the theory this way: in experiential learning, Dewey emphasized how

"every experience a learner has affects, either positively or negatively, future experiences

and becomes a 'moving force' for change" (p. 23).

In line with experiential learning, andragogy's core principles were built upon the assumption that children's social roles often revolve around being full-time students, while adults' social roles revolve around their roles in society. Forrest and Peterson (2006) noted that while pedagogy focused on the issues in the lives of children, andragogy emphasized the real-life situations of adults. Different researchers have summarized that the roots of andragogy arose from the modernist humanistic tradition, emphasizing human nature, motivation potential, and adult societal needs and emotions (Carpenter-Aeby & Aeby, 2013; Forrest & Peterson, 2006).

More than 500 researchers have continued to investigate andragogy (Henschke, 2016). Though there is much to say about the progression of andragogy as an academic field, Henschke (2009) divided its development into different general eras, highlighting the history of back-and-forth between acceptance and skepticism as to the ideas behind andragogy developed from the 1960s to 2000 (Henschke, 2009). Maehl (2000) noted how andragogy is not just the work of one or a few people but has instead influenced many in the adult-education community and their respective philosophies (p. 33).

The Contributions of Malcolm Knowles

The researcher and synthesizer of many of these learning theories, Knowles contributed significantly to not only the development but also the popularity and use of andragogy (Carpenter-Aeby & Aeby, 2013; Kroth & Taylor, 2009; Peterson & Ray, 2013; Rachal, 2002). Knowles (2005) noted how, in his mind, the major difference between andragogy and pedagogy was dependence on the teacher, with the pedagogue doing everything in their power to maintain their learners' dependency upon them while the andragogue does everything in their power to help move people toward ever-

increasing self-directedness. Knowles argued that the purpose of adult education should be self-actualization and that andragogical formal education should also include emotional and psychological development as well as intellectual development. Knowles's focus on autonomy in andragogy allowed for learners to take more ownership in making choices that best fit their needs (Sharifi, Someimani, & Jafarigohar, 2017). Central to Knowles's idea of andragogy was a developing set of assumptions about the adult learner. These began as four assumptions, gradually changing over the course of his lifetime to six (Knowles et al., 2005, pp. 68–69). The first four assumptions were widely accepted as central to andragogy, while the last two, those noted in the list below, were accepted by varying degrees by educators (Forest & Peterson, 2006). These have been described in some detail in the following section.

Knowles's Six Assumptions.

The assumption of self-concept assumes that adult learners have a self-concept of being responsible for their own decisions and for their own lives (Knowles et al., 2005). On the one hand, Knowles (1996) defined an adult as someone "who has achieved a self-concept of being in charge of his or her own life, of being responsible for making his or her own decisions and living with the consequences" (p. 255). At the same time, Knowles admitted that formal education for adults often mentally pulled adults back to their conditioning as pupils in elementary education, where they were usually not self-directing. Thus, tension emerged for many adults resulting in their withdrawing from enrolling in continuing education. Knowles concluded, then, that one of the primary jobs of the adult educator is to help adult learners deal with this tension, assisting them in

making the transition from more dependent learners to more self-directing learners (Knowles, 1996).

Additionally, the assumption of a learner's experience assumes that adult learners come into an educational activity with both a greater volume and a different quality of experience from that of youths (Knowles et al., 2005). According to Knowles (1996), youth tended to think of the experience as something that happens to them, while adults found their identity in their experiences. Thus, according to this assumption, adult educators should look for ways to tap into that experience, either through building upon those experiences or employing experiential learning techniques. At the same time, the assumption postulated that adult educators should be mindful that because of their experience, adult learners may be less open to new ideas, and adult education classes may be more heterogeneous than that of youths, and educators should therefore be mindful of finding ways for individualized learning.

Likewise, the assumption of readiness to learn assumes that learners become ready to learn those things they need to know and be able to do in order to cope effectively with their real-life situations (Knowles et al., 2005). According to Knowles, this assumption ran contrary to the more or less mastery model that dominates pedagogy. In the pedagogical model, there is a natural and logical sequence of knowledge by subject area that is learned over time. In the andragogical model, the division by subject matter took a back seat to division by developmental or life stage. The andragogue, then, must be aware of the importance of timing his or her educational offerings to meet the different stages or needs of adulthood, such as young adult, parenting, and retirement (Knowles, 1996).

Orientation to learning, the third assumption, assumes that adult learners are motivated to learn to the extent that they perceive that learning will help them perform tasks or deal with problems that they confront in their life situations (Knowles et al., 2005). Though at first this may seem like little more than a claim that subject matter should be deconstructed and only approached through problem-based learning strategies, the assumption is much more subtle. Instead, Knowles stressed the importance of emphasizing tasks and life roles in the communication and organization of the subject matter. According to Knowles (1996), the communication of how different units work together and build towards a deeper ability to fulfill life tasks and roles should be a high priority of adult educators.

The assumption of the need to know assumes that adult learners need to know why they need to learn something before undertaking to learn it (Knowles et al., 2005). Knowles summarized this assumption as a matter of cost and benefit analysis. He stated that adults were keenly aware of the time and energy investment needed to engage in any educational endeavor. Thus, he summarized that adult educators should be mindful of making a case for the value in life performance that their subject may give to the adult learners and communicate appropriately (Knowles, 1996).

Finally, the assumption of motivation assumes that adult learners are responsive to some external motivators, but the most potent motivators are internal pressures (Knowles et al., 2005). Knowles believed that andragogues should remember that the most powerful motivators for adults include factors like self-esteem, achievement, and such. According to Knowles (1996), "The message here, as I read it, is to appeal to both

the desire for job advancement and life enrichment in promoting your programs" (p.

258).

Knowles's Eight Processes.

In addition to these Six Assumptions were Eight Processes for facilitators when

creating an andragogical learning experience. According to Henschke (2014), the Six

Assumptions relate more to andragogical theory whereas the different learning processes

relate to andragogical design. Knowles (1996) himself noted that the andragogue must

approach instructional design from a different perspective than a pedagogue, writing that

the andragogue must see their task as primarily to design and manage a process for

facilitating learning for their students, and only secondarily serving as a content expert.

The different learning processes, which like the andragogical assumptions changed over

time (Knowles et al., 2005, p. 116).

The first process element, that of preparing the learner, revolves around the

assumption that adult learners benefit from their facilitator providing additional

preparation in the andragogical process as they began their learning experiences. This

first step in process design emphasizes the need for orientation of the learners to how the

andragogical process differs from the traditional content-centered focus of pedagogical

design.

Next, the second process element, setting the climate, builds on the assumption

that adult learners benefit from their facilitator setting an educational climate supportive

to the more informal and collaborative nature of the andragogical process. Knowles

(1996) noted that a prerequisite of effective learning is a proper climate—where factors

such as mutual respect, collaboration rather than competitiveness, supportive rather than

judgmental atmosphere, mutual trust, fun, and human needs are the priority (p. 259).

    The third process element, mutual planning, hinges on the assumption that

learners benefit from their facilitator implementing mechanisms for mutual educational

planning. A major implication of this process element is that "people tend to feel

uncommitted to the extent they feel that the decision or activity is being imposed on them

without their having a chance to influence it" (Knowles, 1996, p. 260). As such, Knowles

suggested that all the stakeholders involved in a program have a voice or an influence in

the total planning.

    Continuing, the fourth process element, the diagnosis of learning needs, revolves

around the assumption that adult learners benefit from their facilitator involving them in

the process of diagnosing their learning needs. As Knowles (1996) summarized, "One of

the highest arts in training is creating the conditions and providing the tools that will

enable learners to become aware of their training needs and therefore translate them into

learning needs" (p. 260). This processing element, then, encourages teachers of adults to

use self-diagnostic tools with which each learner can better understand his or her actual

learning needs.

    The fifth process element, setting learning objectives, builds on the assumption

that adult learners benefit from their facilitator setting learning objectives with the class

by mutual negotiation. Knowles (1996) went on further to describe this process as a kind

of translating learning needs into objectives, being mindful to understand that different

kinds of learning require different kinds of objectives.

Next, the sixth process element, designing the learning experience, revolves around the assumption that adult learners benefit from their facilitator designing their learning experiences mindful of their readiness to learn or problems in life rather than simply by content unit In this process element, after formulating objectives together, the andragogue and the learner would both design a plan for achieving those objectives, and that plan would include "identifying the resources most relevant to each objective and the most effective strategies for utilizing these resources" (Knowles, 1996, p. 261).

The seventh process element, learning activities, builds on the assumption that adult learners benefit from participating in learning activities that align with andragogical assumptions This processing element is closely related to the sixth element. In this case, however, instead of simply planning activities, the facilitator would be mindful of involving the participants in selecting and enacting educational activities. These could include a mixture of total group, subgroup, and individual learning projects, mindful of the actual needs of the learners, involving them in the process (Knowles, 1996, p. 261).

The eighth process element, evaluating the learning, revolves around the assumption that adult learners benefit from a mutual evaluation of learning with the facilitator (Knowles et al., 2005, p. 116)., Knowles (1996) argued that, regardless of the type of evaluation the key to the andragogical model was the requirement that "the learners be actively involved in the process of evaluating their learning outcomes" (p. 261).

The development of Knowles's thought.

In the period between Knowles's first encounter with andragogy based on ideas laid out by Kapp, Lindeman, and others and the 1980s, Knowles acknowledged how his

views progressed. Often thought of as the one who created a dichotomy or said that all

adults learn one way and all children another, Knowles later acknowledged that his

theory was essentially an alternative set of assumptions, more like a continuum than a

dichotomy. During this period, Knowles (1980) noted how he began to see teachers of

children experimenting and applying andragogical concepts to their instruction to great

success, noting "the models are probably most useful when seen not as dichotomous but

rather as two ends of a spectrum. . . . As I see it, whenever a pedagogical assumption is a

realistic one, then pedagogical strategies are appropriate" (p. 43).

Later on, Knowles (1993) acknowledged that pedagogy and andragogy do not

represent bad and good dichotomies but instead a "continuum of assumptions to be

checked out in terms of their rightness for particular learners in particular situations" (p.

96) and that "the andragogical model is . . . a system of ideas that incorporates the

assumptions of pedagogy rather than ideology for one practice purely" (p. 98). In

choosing whether or not to focus more on pedagogy or andragogy, Knowles (1993)

suggested a few options for educators, notably gauging the degree of familiarity and

previous experience with the content to be learned and the level of the learner's skill in

taking responsibility for his or her own learning. Knowles (2005) wrote that as people

mature their capacity to be self-directing increases and their capacity "to use their

experience in learning, to identify their own readiness to learn, and to organize their

learning around life problems increases steadily from infancy to preadolescence, and then

increases rapidly during adolescence" (p. 62).

Andragogical teaching methods.

Like pedagogy, andragogy is not a teaching technique but instead a philosophy

that teachers look to for guidance (Forrest & Peterson, 2006). That said, especially in

looking at Knowles's Eight Processes through the lens of the Six Assumptions, certain

teaching techniques and strategies emerged that helped facilitate adult learning.

Prominent among the emergent teaching techniques used to facilitate andragogy was the

learning contract. Anderson (1998) simply defined a learning contract as "a written

agreement negotiated between a learner and a teacher, lecturer or staff adviser that a

particular activity will be undertaken in order to achieve a specific learning goal or goals"

(p. 2).

As such, learning contracts dovetail into this andragogical model in several key

ways. First, they allow learners to be more selective about what they learn and how they

want to learn it. Also, learning contracts allow learners to build off their own life

experiences and tap into past experiences when selecting the criteria for specific learning

projects. Just as important, they build off adult learners' greater need for intrinsic

motivation over extrinsic motivation in contrast to child and youth learners (Knowles et

al., 2005). Finally, learning contracts are often the product of negotiation between a

learner and a facilitator. Though the learner selects key components of the contract, it is

made in conjunction with a facilitator who oversees the process. After the terms of the

contract are settled, the learner is allowed a certain amount of freedom to choose in

congruence with andragogy, but not at the expense of the goals of an organization or

facilitator who oversees the learning process (Knowles et al., 2005).

Learning contracts consist of at least four criteria: learning objectives and goals for a project, strategies and resources that will be used by the learner to achieve these objectives, the evidence that will be produced to show those objectives have been achieved, and the criteria by which the evaluator will assess this evidence (Anderson, Boud, & Sampson, 1998). Another useful component of a learning contract is a timeline or set of dates by which the evidence of learning needs to be presented to the facilitator (Berger, Caffarella, & O'Donnell, 2004). These elements are written down in a contract form, much like a syllabus, but with much more learner buy-in than the general pedagogical learning plan. These key components can be arranged graphically on a page or a screen in a variety of forms. Again, learning contracts are designed to be flexible tools in the toolbox of educators, and if they contain the above key components can be tailored to fit the individual preferences of different learners.

Other instructional techniques, that likewise complemented the andragogical assumptions, eventually also became popular among adult educators. These included but were not limited to allowing participants greater freedom in selecting some or all of their course readings, allowing participants opportunity to reflect on and share their experiences in class, creating environments where student interests are free to surface, listening to and addressing real life issues in the lives of the learners, role-play, problem-based learning, and service-learning (Forrest & Peterson, 2006). In line with these techniques and strategies, an increased awareness grew of the need for not only the teacher to understand their teaching styles (Conti, 2004) but also for the learners to identify and utilize their own preferred learning styles as well (James & Kolody, 2004; Kolb & Kolb, 2013). In andragogical circles techniques like discussion and critical

thinking were emphasized (Brookfield, 2004). In addition, others included the importance

of building culture of trust (Covey & Merrill, 2006). Andragogical teaching techniques

have not necessarily been implemented at the expense of lectures or more traditional

methods when necessary (Farrah, 2004). Instead, these andragogical techniques

supplemented and augmented more traditional education to fall in line with adult learning

needs.

Trends in Recent Uses of Andragogy

Rachel (2002) defined andragogy as both a philosophy and a way of teaching

adults in which "the learner is perceived to be a mature, motivated, voluntary, and equal

participant in a learning relationship with a facilitator whose role is to aid the learner in

the achievement of his or her primarily self-determined learning objectives" (p. 219). As

such, andragogy intrigued many who were curious about its potential uses, including in

formal education, in the use of learning contracts, in online environments and its use in

relation to other adult learning theories

Examples from formal education.

Different researchers investigated the use of andragogy in formal education. In

one study of college students, the researcher concluded that if instructors were not first

taught the principals of andragogy, many defaulted to a more pedagogical model of

instruction (Sogunro, 2017). In another study, Alewine (2010) used a sample of male

inmates entering a mandatory general education degree classroom in a quasi-

experimental post-test design. The researcher questioned whether an andragogical-based

orientation to the class would increase readiness in self-perception of mood state, teacher

perception of mood state, and teacher perception of classroom behavior. At the end of the

orientation, the researcher concluded there was no significant difference between those who had the orientation and those who did not. The researcher's interpretation was that adults not used to being given personal responsibility to learn and forced to attend orientation classes may not benefit from andragogical principles. At the same time, the researcher observed how, in the long term, those who had been oriented in andragogical principles showed significantly less negative behavior and took more behavioral responsibility. The major takeaway here was that learning andragogical principles and applying them may require time to produce results.

In another study, with 24 adult females in a first-year class for a social work program, ages 27–63, Carpenter-Aeby and Aeby (2013) implemented andragogical strategies by starting with a survey, then focused on discussing learning styles at the output of the class. The learners had an opportunity to discuss and plan learning styles at the outset, with weekly course evaluations and individual conferences to continually give feedback to the facilitator as to which learning activities would work best. These activities included individual presentations, small groups, role-playing, case studies, hands-on training and informal discussion. At the end of the study, each one of these techniques resulted in a higher student rating, with the highest being the change of activities. In addition, the facilitators instituted weekly recognitions of those bringing in information above and beyond what was needed, which contributed to self-direction. Overall, the researchers listed the benefits of adding andragogical elements as: allowing students and facilitators to be mutual partners in the learning process, utilizing developmental tasks and social roles in the design and instruction and increased immediacy and application of the content. (Carpenter-Aeby & Aeby, 2013).

Others in higher education adapted andragogical principles for use in their

particular settings. Franco (2019) included andragogy as one of her adult learning

theories beneficial to use in formal education, especially in the area of doctoral studies.

Franco stated that Knowles's andragogical assumptions, combined with ideas from

Kolb's learning styles theory (Kolb & Kolb, 2013), may help give instructors in higher

education a greater amount of respect for learners, making space for conversational

learning and making space for learners to take charge of their learning, among other

things (Franco, 2019, p. 184). Storey and Wang (2017) postulated that the use of the

Critical Friends Protocol (CFP) in graduate programs would put andragogical

assumptions into practice. The CFP was defined as a group of eight to 12 learners who

regularly met together to "encourage graduates to engage and reframe in the quest for

understanding" (p. 109) for the purpose of timely, constructive, and purposeful analysis

and critique of each other's' work. In one case, involving a graduate art program, after

implementing the andragogical teaching strategy of the CFP "students reported that they

developed collegiality, established a professional network of support, and facilitated

different ways of thinking" (p. 110). Storey and Wang (2017) summarized that the use of

the protocol "as an andragogical strategy can enhance student-cognitive engagement

toward meaningful learning outcomes, ensure a consistent commitment to dialogue and

learning, and ensure equity of college students" (p. 113).

Examples of learning contracts.

Researchers investigated the use of learning contracts in different ways. Some

researchers investigated how learning contracts contributed to the development of self-

directed learning in adults. Gnuse (2004) found that the greatest motivating factor was

stimulating the need to learn. These needs were described as the catalysts that move

individuals toward specific felt goals that they desire to gratify. Other researchers noted

below found that providing a slate of side options for additional projects and assessments

using learning contracts opened doors for learners to discover and fulfill relevant learning

needs as they progress through a course. These included Chyung (2007), who noted that

not all learners necessarily understood all of their relevant needs at the beginning of a

course of study. For many adult learners, the process of negotiable learning contracts

opened up the possibility for adjusting strategies on the go that more traditional syllabus

structures prevented. Another study (Lee & Pang, 2013) had adult learners rank the

factors that contributed to their motivation from greatest to least impact. The researchers

found that the externally focused factor of peer pressure had the least impact on

motivation while the internally focused factor of personal development had the most. Yet

another study (Lemieux, 2001) found that when learners were asked to share the most

important impact learning contracts had on their classes, the majority of them indicated

that learning contracts in some way helped empower them to be more self-determined in

their learning. Once the learner-instructor relationship was established through the

learning contract, each learner was sent off into the learning experience more internally

motivated to pursue his or her learning goals. In several of these studies, the simple

presence of a learning contract as an instructional strategy increased the overall internal

desire to learn in classroom participants.

Another example of andragogy's varied use in formal education occurred in using

andragogical teaching methods, notably multiple humanistic small group activities as

opposed to lecture, in a training workshop for health care workers. The researcher in the

aforementioned workshop, Holland (2018)commented that the andragogical methods proved effective. Holland (2018) wrote that "the effects of the andragogy and constructivism and humanistic learning theories were critically explored and revealed positive teaching outcomes," (p. 299) and that the teaching strategies used "facilitated critical thinking and deep-level learning where students demonstrated their ability to analyze and evaluate the theory making connections to practice" (p. 299).

Examples from online learning.

Perhaps the most investigated use of andragogy has been in online learning. In one study of 38 land-based and 31 online learners in a graduate medical class, the same teacher and topic were offered. Pre and post surveys asked students to identify their preferred Kolb learning styles (Kolb & Kolb, 2013) and rate their course experiences, Likert-scale, to compare overall satisfaction between two groups. Results found that overall achievement and learning was similar between two groups, and the researchers concluded that online courses were more influenced by life situation than preference or style. The use of andragogical teaching strategies resulted in higher student ratings at the end of the course, with the highest impact strategy being the change of activities (Knapke et al., 2016).

In another qualitative study of the implications of andragogy in online learning environments, nine midwestern physical education teachers enrolled in a state-approved online graduate endorsement program. Data gathering methods included questionnaires, journal reflection reports, and bulletin board assignments; added andragogical elements involved in the online course included monitoring instructor communication, bulletin board discussion experiences, and assessment experiences. Recommendations from the

study included the need for more face-to-face contact. The study also found that adults

need more immediate feedback; they expect immediate feedback to stay emotionally

connected to their learning. (Sato, Haegele, & Foot, 2017).

In a different online andragogy study of the first year of courses for biology

majors, roughly 600 students were tested to see what form of teaching methods created

the greatest success in student achievement: pure in person lecture, hybrid (lectures

online and labs in person), or blended (mini-lectures in person and labs in person and

mini-quizzes). The study found that the blended method fostered the highest levels of

achievement in learning, as adults benefit from the inclusion of human interaction and

sharing experiences in education (Gonzalez, 2014). Other online learning strategies,

intentionally derived from andragogical principles included: incorporating interactive

elements, lecture-connected discussion in small and large groups, synchronous video

chats, and asynchronous tools (Wright & Benoit, 2019).

Yet other researchers investigated how andragogy could play out in the modern

digital world. One of the main themes revolved around the concept of digitally mediated

learning (DML). Though DML was deemed important, the researchers stressed that

teachers would be wise to see that technologically enhanced environments were no

replacement for good teaching. At the conclusion of their study, the researchers noted the

importance for facilitators to see themselves as guides, context providers, and quality

controllers within the context of limitless access to information, while also helping

students contribute to and create content themselves. The researchers also concluded that

the new world calls for an expansion of the vision of andragogy, where learners actively

create their own learning process rather than just consume content, and realize that

learning is an ongoing, lifelong social process in support of individual needs (LaNoue et al., 2011). Likewise, Sharifi, Someimani, and Jafarigohar (2017) conducted a study wherein one group of English language learners used e-portfolios to assist in building autonomy and another did not. They concluded that "e-portfolio evaluation was beneficial because it encouraged self-directed learning and presented feedback to both students and teachers" (p. 1448).

Andragogy's use in relationship to other modern adult learning theories.

Other researchers have investigated how Knowles's assumptions of andragogy complement other adult learning theories. One study summarized Kolb's contribution to andragogy by saying that Kolb linked education, work, and personal development together. The study suggested that one is not separated from another, and that adult education involves movement in various degrees, from being an observer to an actor and from analytic detachment to specific involvement in the learning process. The research pair, O'Bannon and McFadden (2008), strove combined experiential learning and andragogy, and they created the experiential andragogy program model. According to O'Bannon and McFadden (2008), as one moves between the steps, learning occurs. These researchers concluded that both experiential learning and andragogy plans and procedures must be flexible for each learner, especially in non-traditional learning environments. In a similar way, Franco (2019) saw common threads between Knowles and Kolb, as well as Meziro, and worked to create a framework for synthesizing the different concepts. Likewise, Henschke (2014) stated that using Kolb's Learning style Inventory was a good way to implement andragogy into a curriculum. He stated that the point of highlighting the four different Kolb learning styles is not about catering to each

person's personal style as much as it is to help people understand how learning works. Other researchers have used Knowles's theory to emphasize the need for emotional intelligence and emotional perception when designing instruction that is meant to motivate learners (Majeski, Stover, Valais, & Ronch, 2017, p. 137).

Other researchers elaborated on the themes of andragogy and applied them to lifelong learning. Grow (1991) expanded on the andragogical theme of moving learners from dependency to independency by developing the Staged Self-Directed Learning Model (SSDL). He stated that "Good teaching matches the learner's stage of self-direction and helps the learner advance toward greater self-direction" (p. 125). Thus, he advocated that his model was not simply to give information but to assist teachers in understanding how to best teach their learners in the most effective way in order to achieve the ultimate end of the educational process—in his words, "to produce self-directed, lifelong learners" (p. 127). In a similar vein, Carr, Balasubramian, Atieno, and Onyango (2018) concluded that lifelong learning requires implementation of formal, non-formal, and informal learning and blending pedagogy, andragogy, and other learning theories.

Criticisms of andragogy.

Though often praised, andragogy was sometimes criticized as a legitimate learning theory. Rachal (2002) noted that empirical investigations into the efficacy of andragogy as a science were rare, mostly occurring in unread dissertations, and that the theory had been treated more as an art than a science. Reasons for this include that it has been widely customized in its approach and has moved more from an ideal, the original intent, to an ideology or an orthodoxy (Rachal, 2002). Others noted that, for andragogy to

remain a focus of adult education and overcome its major criticism, it must develop

instruments for finding empirical data (Kroth & Taylor, 2009). In one meta-analysis of 18

different users of andragogical approaches, Rachal noted that andragogy was rarely, if

ever, implemented in its purest form and almost always customized and changed for its

context, concluding that people tend to think of andragogy in terms of degrees based on

situations and variables rather than a particular science, or more of a slogan than a

science (Rachal, 2002).

The Role of the Bible Class

In order to understand any relationship between andragogy and adult Bible classes

in an LCMS context, the researcher deemed it first necessary to investigate both the role

of the Bible class in the Christian tradition and what other Christian educational theorists

have noted about any potential benefits andragogy may or may not have contributed to

their research. Niblette (1984) summarized that since its inception, the adult Bible class

movement (synonymous in this case with Sunday School) has provided for the church a

place where discussion and discovery of the truths of God's Word could take place. Truth

that is personally discovered is truth that is permanently possessed. Sunday School

(though not a biblical term) is the church coming together collectively and reasoning

together for the purpose of personal and corporate growth (p. 33).

Trester (1982) added that "a key to Christianity's future is community . . . but to

begin to reflect theologically, adult Christians need the biblical and theological insight

that enables them to relate their understanding to [sic] Christ and Christianity to their own

experience" (p. 544). To reach these common ends of engaging in group Bible class,

Niblette (1984) emphasized three overarching goals for Bible class: namely, Bible study

that leads to personal discovery; fellowship that allows for purposeful sharing of ideas, thoughts, and feelings among believers; and outreach that allows for positive growth.

Data contemporary to this study reinforced the historic rationale for the benefits of group Bible study. In a Barna Group study (2016), two-thirds of senior pastors and discipleship leaders reported that, for adults, "intentional, systematized study of the Bible is an essential element of spiritual formation" (p. 26). When it came to practices that have the greatest impact on developing adult disciples, church leaders put personal Bible study at 92% and small group Bible study at 88% (p. 26). The intent of the creation of adult Bible classes was rooted in the desire for Christians to gather together around the Scriptures in order to help them continually grow together in faith for life. The decline in participation in Bible study in the first decades of the 21st century does not diminish the felt need for it in Christian congregational life.

Though there was some overlap between Bible class and small group ministry, there were also some important distinctions. The small group ministry model, or "cell group" model, for adult education became popular beginning in the 1940s and took a prominent position in the 1990s, based around models developed for large congregations that desired to care for the spiritual and relational needs of individuals (Icenogle, 1994). Icenogle's proposed definition of a small group was "a face-to-face gathering of a few (three to 20) persons to be, to share and to act for the betterment of one another and the wider good of others" (p. 14). Such groups generally formed around God's Word for the purpose of building relationships and accomplishing tasks together. The small group system, creating small groups of Christians for Bible study within the congregation, has been criticized by some in the LCMS for bringing otherworldliness, legalism,

decisiveness, and other heresies into the lives of everyday Lutheran laymen (Lindberg, 1988). The danger, Lindberg noted, rested partially in the unintended consequences of small groups to create in-groups and out-groups in the congregation, disrupting not only the social structure but also moving away from the focus on forgiveness for all in Christ and moving toward unity and like-mindedness regardless of doctrine. According to the above definitions, small group ministry deviated from pastor-led Bible classes primarily on the grounds that Bible classes focused most on learning the Word of God together, while small groups, though they often involve Bible reading, emphasized relationship and task over the reception of the Word (Icenogle, 1994). For these reasons, from here on out in this study, the researcher focused primarily on the Bible class model, which is a more formal gathering led by a pastor or other faith leader, rather than the small group model, which is generally designed more around informal relationship-building strategies.

Andragogy's Relationship to Bible Class

There has been some research into the use of andragogy by pastors in their own adult Bible classes, though not in the LCMS. Martell (2011), utilized some andragogical teaching methods in two four-session small group adult Bible studies and analyzed the results. Martell created his own curriculum, taught it, and used mixed methods to analyze what impact the andragogical methods had on his participants. The curriculum Martell used placed a greater emphasis on case studies and discussion than he had before while using pedagogical methods. In his conclusion, he stated that he found andragogical teaching was more effective than pedagogical teaching. He noted that "not only did students learn more factual content under andragogical teaching, they enjoyed and valued the methodology and its emphases more than those that learned under pedagogical

teaching" (p. 116). In his conclusion, Martell (2011) also noted how the most memorable

facet of andragogical teaching was the increase in learner discussion and the facilitation

of relationships. In a different dissertation, Spaude (2017) concluded that using

andragogical techniques in new member classes allowed learning to be more "self-

directed, inquiry-based, and experiential" (p. 33). Both of the above research cases

reported how andragogical teaching strategies had benefited adult Bible classes in their

own contexts, though in both cases the research was conducted by the teacher.

Beyond isolated research of this kind, others have sought to investigate what

impact, if any, andragogy has on learners in adult Bible classes. Andragogy, as noted in

the above sections, has many different facets. For the purposes of this study, the focus

was primarily Knowles's Six Assumptions and Eight Processes. In order to investigate

andragogy's influence on Bible class theory and design, it was useful to break down each

of Knowles's Six Assumptions and relate Bible class scholarship to each part. The

literature was limited as to direct scholarship for each of the Six Assumptions and Eight

Processes, but some colorations were found between the philosophy and practical Bible

study literature.

Role of learners' experience.

Several Bible teachers stressed the need to relate the background of the learners to

their learning experiences. In his analysis of various adult Bible teaching practices,

Christian (1989) concluded that Christian educators generally recognized and accepted

this assumption, showing a knowledge of experience as an important factor in adult

learning. Lewis (1992), another researcher on Christian adult education, noted, "Adults . .

. derive their self-identity from their experiences. . . Adults tend to view who they are

through the lens of their accomplishments in school, their professions, places visited,

skills, and achievements" (p. 169).

Beard (2017) noted that Christian education is ideally incarnational and relational.

In such an ideal, facilitators become and raise up mentors for the learners, who then can

hold up the unique learning experiences of each learner. Beard's implications from this

ideal were that adults need a Bible class atmosphere that is characterized by genuine love,

freedom of expression, and acceptance of differences. This includes guided fellowship

experiences, name tags, and anything that helped create openness among class members.

Lewis (1992) added that "the attitude and behavior of the teacher, more than any other

factor, influences the climate of the Sunday School class" (p. 171). This is in line with

Knowles, who stated that the role of the teacher as a hard-working facilitator of learning,

focused on releasing the energy of learners, was a critical element of andragogical

teaching (Knowles et al., 2005, pp. 252–253). In addition, Lewis (1992) emphasized

active or discovery learning techniques, noting not that lecture is bad, but suggesting

switching up to at least three different learning strategies during the course in order to

accommodate the various leaners.

Need to know.

In addition, some researchers have stated that effective Bible teachers are acutely

aware of keeping the applicability of why the Bible is important out in front of their

learners. Beard (2017) made the claim that in discipleship the need to know comes from

two sources: Scripture and experience. Scripture is vital to transformation, and as

discrepancies arise between Scripture and experience, opportunities to learn will arise.

With declining interest and attendance in adult Bible classes, Roberto (2015), a longtime

thought leader and teacher in Christian education, suggested eight principles for faith

formation in the 21st century: it's holistic, comprehensive and balanced, systematic,

lifelong, contextual, digitally enabled, connected, and multi-platform (p. 84). Each one of

these principles highlights the importance of emphasizing why the learners need Bible

class: the cultivation of lifelong learning.

Self-concept.

In his research, Spaude (2017) concluded that Jesus' own teaching was

andragogical, as "He used events, struggles, and illustrations to allow his disciples to

learn through a self-directed, inquiry style of learning" (p. 6). Thus, Beard (2017) noted

that by following an andragogical system of teaching the Bible, teachers follow Jesus'

example. Jesus helped the learner move from a cognitive understanding of God's

expectations to an environment where those expectations could be witnessed in action, to

a point where the learner was encouraged to live out expectations in life. Knowles (1993)

himself commented that Christian adult education should be geared towards developing

or moving dependent Christian persons to more independent learners. It was also noted

by Lewis (1992) that self-directedness was often a goal of adult education and not a

natural trait in all adults. Instead, it is a clear and worthwhile avenue for church

practitioners to pursue with their adult learners. Self-directed learning then aimed for the

learner to be able to learn in ways unique to his or her circumstances for life (Spaude,

2017).

That said, according to one researcher's findings, for the adult learner's self-

concept, self-direction has been treated inconsistently by Bible class leaders. Christian

(1989) stated that it is often assumed that the teacher knows what the learners need and

want to learn and thus self-direction is often neglected. In order to overcome this bias in teaching the Bible, Lewis (1992) suggested that Bible teachers invite their learners to participate in the planning of course offerings and to critique teachers, and remember that since adults are self-directed, they should provide additional opportunities by keeping extra resources on hand for extending the lesson and learning.

Readiness to learn.

The assumption of readiness to learn revolves around the idea that adults are motivated to learn something because, in the learning of any idea or skill, they will be able to better cope with a real-life task. Implications of this assumption for Bible teachers have included switching up the grouping of learners to create learning communities, selecting curriculum that matches biblical content to the developmental stage of the learner, and moving promotion of Bible classes away from subject-centered topics to life-stage centered topics (Lewis, 1992). Beard (2017) noted that Bible teaching should highlight social roles, primarily that of being a disciple of Christ, wherein people learn and serve in a collaborative community using unique skills of individuals to help serve the rest. While the concept of developmental tasks has not always been emphasized in the research, the age-group characteristics of many show a sensitively to the implications of this assumption (Christian, 1989; Roberto, 2015).

Orientation to learning.

Beard (2017) commented on how the orientation to learning assumption relates to the missional nature of discipleship, where learners encounter new circumstances and see each one as an opportunity for formation and an immediate desire or need for further application of knowledge. Though seen as an important aspect of learning, this is not

always used as a guideline in Bible study literature for what should be studied (Christian,

1989). To remedy this, Lewis (1992) suggested that teachers should remember that

learners are present-centered and that they desire to use tomorrow what they learn today,

much more so than children. Implications for incorporation of this assumption in Bible

classes include the need to hook the students early and capture attention at the beginning.

Lewis (1992) commented on the importance of identifying the particular needs of

learners in adult Christian education, "so the learner will be able to see that the Bible

content will have some bearing on solving a problem, dealing with a frustration, or be

useful in coping with a life-stage task" (p. 175). Lewis additionally suggested that the

focus should be on practical life application, where teachers make sure to divide teaching

time equally between biblical content exploration and personal application.

Motivation.

The assumption of motivation relates to the reality that all human beings have

developmental tasks they need to complete in life. Andragogy assumes that most adults

are motivated by urgency that comes from teachable moments in short periods of time.

Considering this, some have commented on how it is critical for Christian adult educators

to be mindful of this orientation of adults (Patterson, 1993, p. 126). In one iteration of a

small group Bible study, a missional discipleship community, Beard (2017) noted that

people join because they desire meaningful relationships with those who are mentoring,

helping the facilitator have a better understanding of the motivation of those they are

leading. Wade (2006) added that adults showed up to Bible study for two reasons: first,

for relationships; then, for excellent content. Wade noted that traditional adult Sunday

School attendance was declining because people want shorter Sunday morning

experiences and sermons were becoming longer, and that providing alternative times for class might continue to build on the motivation of adults while also providing better opportunities for intentional planning for growth and welcoming new people to Bible class.

Eight Processes.

In addition to the Six Assumptions, Knowles also noted Eight Processes for learning. According to Henschke (2014), the eight process elements of andragogy each correspond to a different question that andragogues should ask themselves when they're trying to decide the procedures, methods, and techniques that will help learners be more actively involved in their learning experiences, no matter the situation. Though not directly addressed in the literature discovered by the researcher, these processes correlated to different themes in Bible class instruction and design literature. In this research, the different processes were grouped by themes relevant to the literature.

The first of the Eight Processes is preparing the learners, which revolves around the question of what procedures should be used to help prepare the adult learners to become actively involved in the course and to meet their expectations (Henschke, 2014). This involves setting the physical and psychological climate, including the climate of mutual respect, collaboration, trust, support, openness and authenticity, pleasure, fun, and humanness (Henschke, 2014). Richards and Bredfeldt (1998), in their classic book *Creative Bible Teaching*, outlined several methods for helping to engage adult learners in the learning process. Though not explicitly andragogical, the bibliography of their book indicated their being influenced by the ideas of Knowles and serves as an example of how andragogues have worked to implement this first process element into their

educational design. One of the central ideas of the book is a lesson planning design for Bible class they titled "Hook, Book, Look, and Took." They wrote that creative Bible teachers, in planning a lesson, should use a "hook" strategy to get their learners' attention, plan a "book" activity to communicate information, use a "look" strategy that guides learners to application, and construct a "took" exercise that aids learners in appropriate response (p. 161). The first part, "hook," appealed to Knowles's first learning process by gaining attention, while specifically the "look" step tied into Knowles's sixth through eighth processes, putting more ownership on learners, rather than simply on the facilitator, to create the application.

The next three learning processes are involving learners in mutual planning, diagnosing learning needs, and translating those needs into objectives. These three processes revolve around these questions: What procedures should I use with this particular group to bring these learning climatic conditions into being? What procedures will I use to involve learners in planning? And what procedures will I use to help the participants diagnose their own learning needs? (Henschke, 2014). The importance of these processes was expressed by several adult Christian educators. Benson (1993), in his chapter of the influential *The Christian Educator's Handbook on Adult Education*, named the importance of learner participation in setting goals in adult Christian education. He suggested, especially at the beginning of a Bible class on any subject, that giving learners an opportunity to express their desires for learning in class will give facilitators more information on what should be covered. He even suggested that one "may use a questionnaire and give [learners] ten minutes of silence to write their reflections before they share their ideas verbally" (p. 165).

Likewise, the importance of enlisting adults to help set course objectives in adult Christian education is mirrored by other authors in *The Christian Educator's Handbook* (1993). Galvin and Veerman (1993) suggested such tactics as doing market research in a congregational context, running focus groups, and formal and informal surveys to help gauge the needs of learners (p. 180). They summarized, through the influence of Knowles, that when adult learners are enlisted to participate in helping to set course goals and objectives, they feel a greater sense of responsibility, recognize some new needs in their life, and learn almost as much through planning as the instruction itself (p. 181).

The fifth learning process, designing a pattern of learning experiences, revolved around the question of what procedures are to be used for helping involve the adult learner in translating their learning needs into andragogical learning objectives (Henschke, 2014). The process involved identifying the resources most relevant to each objective, be they large group, subgroup, or individual objectives, and finding strategies for using those resources (Henschke, 2014). To build on this learning process, several Christian education researchers indicated the importance of laying down a logical pattern of learning experiences. Yount (2010), a well-known and respected thought leader for adult Christian education, with two earned doctorates in education and education research and over 20 years of experience both as a teacher and seminary professor, put together a framework called the Disciplers' Model for teaching the faith to adults. He laid down a sevenfold approach: ask how does the Bible define itself and how do teachers use the Bible, identify the needs of people, help people think about what the Bible says and what it means, help people unmask by removing emotional barriers and stimulating emotional growth, help people relate to each other with Jesus in the middle, help people grow by

focusing on changes in the lives of learners, and develop disciplines of spiritual growth

(p. 4). Though Yount did not directly tie in andragogy in his theory, he did point

extensively to other educational psychologists as inspiration, correlating to Knowles

especially in the areas of focusing on the needs of the learners, their need to know, their

orientation to learning, and internal motivation. In addition to Yount, Richards and

Bredfeldt (1998) noted the need for effective and creative teaching methods, stating that

creative teachers see their responsibility as stimulating the learners' desire to discover

meaning, emphasizing a learner-focused experience.

The sixth through eighth learning processes elements are helping adult learners

manage and carry out their learning plans, selecting appropriate procedures to make

certain the learners are engaged in their learning plans, and evaluating the extent to which

the learners have achieved their objectives. These revolved around these questions: What

procedures can I use for involving the learners in designing a pattern of andragogical

learning experiences? What procedures can I use to make certain the learners are fully

engaged and involved with managing and carrying out their learning plans? And what

procedures can I use to involve the learners responsibly in evaluating the accomplishment

of their learning objectives and meeting the course requirement? (Henschke, 2014).

These processes involved teaching strategies like learning contracts, which could have

rather rigid or flexible objectives, but the means by which those are accomplished can be

individualized.

Knowles (1984) himself wrote chapters for several books about the use of these

learning processes on religious education, including his book *Andragogy in Action* and

the compilation *The Christian Educator's Handbook* (Gangel & Wilhoit, 1993).

Andragogy in Action included two chapters about the flexibility and use of andragogy in religious education, as well as the need for adults to be self-reflective. In *Andragogy in Action*, Knowles suggested his thoughts about andragogy verses pedagogy shifted, noting that andragogy was not an all-in solution but a more or less flexible set of assumptions about how adults learn. In this same book, Trester (1984) suggested that a major solution to adult education issues might lie in development of small communities of adult learners, stating, "The fruit of specialized biblical studies should be used to nurture and empower people in their day-to-day living" (p. 344). Trester noted that Bible studies help supply a model, a religious vocabulary, a challenge, and a forum for the community of faith and, in line with the self-directed learning model of andragogy, that the church of the future will be one built from below by basic faith communities. Beard (2017) added that "if spiritual formation efforts are going to be productive, the life of the individual learner must be considered, and much like andragogy, the focus must be on the unique learner rather than content" (p. 255). Beard also concluded that while modernity-centered and content-centered education did not need to be abandoned, the principles of andragogy could help leaders see beyond the traditional environments. Beard (2017) concluded that instead of classrooms and lectures, teachers should choose homes and non-traditional venues; instead of picking topics based on leader preference, leaders should pick topics based on the needs of those who are being led; and instead of one-size-fits-all, spiritual leaders should find what fits the needs of individuals.

Limitations of andragogy in Bible class.

While some religious educators have noted the benefits of using andragogical assumptions and learning processes in Bible classes, others have warned of its limitations

and negative influences on adult Christian education. One author stated that in Christian

education there is an awareness of current educational theory, but it ran into a certain

barrier with andragogy, noting:

> [Researchers'] treatment of and application of the assumptions is clearly affected
>
> by their theological concepts of truth (what should be taught is determined by
>
> what is true, and what the teacher believes) and the nature of man (seen as fallen,
>
> in need of guidance to find the truth). It could be speculated that this theological
>
> influence has led these authors to a balance between andragogy and pedagogy.
>
> (Christian, 1989, p. 56)

Likewise, Carlson (1993) drew some stark distinctions between adult Christian

education and andragogy. Carlson claimed that, ultimately, some facets of andragogy ran

in tension to the ideal Christian worldview, namely, that andragogy is individual-based

while Christianity is others-based; that andragogy is activity-oriented while Christianity

is being- or identity-oriented first, then outward activity focused; that andragogy is

mostly present and future oriented, whereas Christianity begins with a past orientation

while looking to the future; that andragogy focuses on the cultural idea of man vs. nature,

while Christianity focuses on man in relationship to nature; and that andragogy begins

with a more optimistic view of human nature while Christianity begins with the

assumption of moral depravity. His ultimate view was not that andragogy was

incompatible with Christianity, but that Christians must be mindful of the cultural

assumptions in andragogy that may indeed run counter to the Christian worldview.

Another criticism was andragogy's link to constructivist theory and individualism.

Mercer (2006) stated that, though Protestants firmly hold to the theology of the

priesthood of all believers, there was a hierarchy that does form between clergy and laity

not only in the amount of theological education but also the type of theological education.

In other words, Mercer argued that Bible interpretations should be guided by the overall

community and not simply by the individual. Likewise, Fleisher (2004) challenged

educational researchers to realize that while we tend to emphasize individuals in

education, Christ calls believers to apply their learning and lives in community and that

churches exist to further proclaim the reign of God. Fleischer (2004) noted that "the

religious educator must lead people into authentic service to God's reign by engaging

them in an action-reflection rhythm of Christian praxis" (p. 318). Fleisher concluded that

religious educators should begin with the end in mind and help their congregational

members envision what their commitment to the reign of God means in terms of their

goals and actions.

Lutheran Theology of Interpretation

With a review of the limited literature available connecting andragogy to adult

Bible class, one can move to the topic of andragogy's relationship to adult Bible class

from an LCMS Lutheran perspective. Any discussion of andragogy in Lutheran Bible

class, though, must begin first with laying a groundwork of Lutheran theology on the

nature of the Bible itself and the art of interpretation. Adult Bible class has served as a

kind of group interpretation. As such, the Lutheran principles behind that interpretive

process formed a foundation for understanding any impact andragogical principles may

or may not have in the Bible class.

LCMS understanding of the Bible as the Word of God.

Though the terms *Word of God* and *Bible* are often used interchangeably, it is important to first lay out distinctions between the two before digging into the art of interpretation. Nafsger (2013), a theologian and seminary professor, summarized that the Lutheran way of understanding and defining the term *Word of God* should be in three forms. First, we should understand that God, as a speaking God, is the Word of God Himself. The Bible itself refers to Jesus as the incarnate Word of God, sent by the Father and the Spirit, through whom all things were made. Second, Nafsger referred to the Word of God as the spoken word, that which is proclaimed in the church and received physically in the Sacraments. This Word of God, according to Nafsger, is living and active in the event of receiving it. Third, Nafsger defined the Word of God as the written word, particularly the writings of the prophets and the apostles (p. 113). In summary, Nafsger's analysis of the research on Bible interpretation hinged on defining Lutherans not as people of the Bible but instead as people of the Word. The three forms work together to form a robust understanding. Nafsger (2013) concluded that

> 'People of the Word' believe first of all in Jesus Christ, the Spirit-filled personal Word who was sent by the Father. .. . In addition to this personal Word, God spoke 'in many ways and at many times' in biblical narrative . . . through his spoken Word God calls sinners to repent (Acts 2:36–41), forgives sins (John 20:21–23), and creates faith in the hearts of all who believe (Romans 10:17). Finally, 'people of the Word' believe that the writings of the prophets and apostles are the written Word of God. They believe this because they believe in Jesus, the personal Word. (p. 115)

As for Lutheran theology on the Bible, in line with the third form of the Word of God, the 2017 edition of *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation*, a central handbook for teaching the faith, summarizes that the Bible gathered together the writings of God's prophets over a period of more than a thousand years, yet was verbally inspired by God Himself through the Holy Spirit, making it both infallible and inerrant (p. 46). This high view of Scripture takes into account the reality that, though men wrote down the words in their respective books, it was God the Holy Spirit who was the authority behind it, making the Bible the "Word of God in the words of men" (Kinneman, 2015, p. 127). The theologian Bayer (2007) noted that, in Luther's theology and in the Lutheran theology that followed, Bible study always involved understanding that the Holy Spirit had bound Himself to a specific form of language, in oral speech and literal words of a book, or to the "sounds and letters of Scripture. This freedom of the Holy Spirit to be bound and restricted does not exclude his immediate presence but reveals it" (p. 58). At the same time, LCMS Lutheran Biblical scholarship acknowledged that over time scribes transcribing copies were capable of transcription errors, by their minds wandering while transcribing, scribes falling into old habits, or scribes getting confused, but also that scribes attempted to be faithful to the text, to the faith, to the integrity of the authors, to the integrity of the content of the books, and to their readers while transcribing (Voelz, 2003, pp. 28–32). To this end, Lutheran Bible scholars believed that "the task of textual criticism is not the discovery of any given 'correct' Biblical manuscript but the reconstruction of the original text for each Biblical book" (Voelz, 2003, p. 33).

   LCMS understanding of interpretation.

With this groundwork of textual understanding, theologians described Lutheran Bible study as revolving around the art of individual and group Bible interpretation. Nafsger (2013) in his doctoral studies on Lutheran interpretation of Scripture, argued that the purely modernistic view of individualistic interpretation of the Bible was incorrect. Instead, he concluded that there has traditionally been, since the Reformation, an understanding that though all Christians are involved in the interpretation of Scriptures, being a Christian means being part of the church. He wrote, "the reformers did not intend for the interpretation of the Scriptures to occur in isolation from the church or from its historic understanding of Christian faith" (p. 26). Thus, based on the above points, Lutheran Bible interpretation has always involved a set of principles concerning that interpretation. As summarized in the book *Lutheranism 101*, Lutheran Bible interpretation began with understanding the solas, or "alone" statements, of the Protestant Reformation: grace alone, or our salvation is entirely a gift of grace from God and not our own doing; faith alone, or we receive that grace through faith and not by any works we might do; and Scripture alone, or the sole norm and rule of all doctrine is the Holy Scriptures (Kinneman, 2015, p. 23). To this, many Lutheran scholars have added Christ alone, or our sole basis and assurance of salvation is the life, death, and resurrection of God's Son, Jesus Christ (Kinneman, 2015, p. 24). Nafsger added that the proper way to read the Word of God was to view the central subject matter of Scripture as Jesus, the Word of God. He stated, "The key question that must be asked when interpreting any biblical text is how it fits into God's mission to save sinners through his Spirit-filled word" (p. 157).

As is clear from these statements, Lutheran Bible interpreters have placed a strong central emphasis on the centrality of Christ, the forgiveness of sins, and the life that He gives. The Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR), the official theological review commission for the LCMS, wrote in their influential 1975 document "The Inspiration of Scripture" that "The unity of the Scriptures is Christological [and] consists in this that from Genesis (3:15) to Revelation (22:16) they testify to Jesus, the Christ of God, through whom came grace and truth" (pp. 12–13). This complemented the rule or analogy of faith, specifically

> the question whether the interpretation of a Scripture passage is analogous to faith
> is identical with the question whether it leads me to Christ . . . every alleged
> interpretation of Scripture that directs men to their own works instead of to Christ
> does not correspond with the analogy of faith. (Hoff, 1967, pp. 249–250)

Acknowledging the centrality of forgiveness and life in Jesus in any act of Biblical interpretation and the unity of the Scriptural message has been critical to LCMS Lutherans (Engelbrecht, 2009, p. xiv; Luther's Small Catechism, 2017, p. 354).

In order to keep this Christological focus in view, Lutherans have emphasized certain practices in Biblical interpretation and have viewed these practices as important both to keep Jesus the central message of Scripture and to pay close attention to the specific wording of the text. Luther himself emphasized the proper use of reason in interpreting texts. Concerning the usefulness of the tools of the liberal arts in theology, Luther once commented on how reason under the control of the devil is harmful, but reason is not of the devil. Instead, Luther commented that "reason that's illuminated takes

all its thoughts from the Word. The substance remains and the unreal disappears when reason is illuminated by the Spirit" (Lehmann, 1967, p. 71).

In addition to this, Lutherans emphasize a set of interpretive principles when reading and understanding Scripture. Though not an exhaustive list, these include paying attention to the context of any given passage (Burgland, 2016, p.7), sticking to the plainest and simplest meaning of any text (Burgland, 2016, p.17), looking to other passages of Scripture to help interpret each other (Burgland, 2016, p. 25; Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation, 2017, p. 354), interpreting Scripture in light of the rule of faith or unity of both the Old and New Testaments (Burgland, 2016, p. 31; Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation, 2017, p. 355), interpreting Scripture in view of Christ (Burgland, 2016, p. 41; Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation, 2017, p. 354), and distinguishing between Law and Gospel, or sin and grace, in interpretation (Burgland, 2016, p. 47; Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation, 2017, p. 356).

The emphasis of overarching principles of interpretation that focus the message on life, forgiveness, and salvation in Christ, has led Lutheran interpreters to be especially careful when applying the meaning of any Biblical text to their daily life. This is in line with Luther's intent, as was evidenced in a letter from Luther to his patron, where he commented, "[Scripture's] words, are not, as some think, mere literature; they are words of life, intended not for speculation and fantasy but for life and action" (Pelikan, 1958, p. 46). Feucht (1969), an early pioneer and proponent of the LCMS Bible class movement, proposed asking three questions to properly connect a reading of the text to life: what does the passage say, what does the passage mean, and what does the passage mean to me? (pp. 49–50). By asking these three questions, Feucht proposed that to find life

application in any passage, the interpreter must first take a critical look at the words in

the passage and then look at the overall meaning of the events in that passage in their

contexts. He proposed that this, combined with the above principles of interpretation,

would lead readers to see the clear aim of events within the story of salvation: God's

grace and loving concern for the salvation of all mankind (p. 92). Then, with this

contextual meaning in mind, in light of Christ, the reader could seek to find what the

passage meant to them. Burgland (2016) later went on to explain the third question of

Feucht's principle in that "Answering this question [what does the passage mean for us,

for me?] includes applying the passage to your life: what does God teach me in this

passage, and how will that affect what I believe and do?" (p. 58). Burgland noted that, if

the interpreter paid close attention to the contextual meaning of the passage, in light of

unity of Scripture around Christ, the interpreter should try to stay as close to the original

meaning as possible when seeking to apply it to his or her life (p. 7). Put another way,

after the interpreter has asked the right questions to delve into the meaning of what a text

says and what it means in its context, the interpreter can then ask the question as to what

his or her life in Christ looks like in view of forgiveness in Christ (Marty, 1974, p. ix).

Though not Lutheran, Richards and Bredfeldt (1998) proposed the use of

"inductive" Bible study, which they defined as a method that "seeks to be objective and

impartial in its approach to the text of the Scriptures. Typically, the inductive method

demands that students of the Bible follow three steps in the study process—observation,

interpretation, and application" (p. 63). This inductive method of Bible interpretation

corresponded to Feucht (1969) and Berglund (2006) in beginning Bible study by first

looking at the text with a critical eye to the written word within its context before looking

to application. This was in line with Nafsger's theological investigations that, "interpreting the Scriptures is most appropriately understood as listening to the Word that God has spoken through his prophets and apostles" (Nafsger, 2013, p. 157).

Trends in LCMS interpretation.

Some Lutheran scholars pointed out a trend in Lutheran preaching and interpretation that misconstrues the centrality of preaching and teaching Christ. Petersen (2018) noted that many LCMS pastors have reacted to Biblical interpretation that does not preach the Gospel clearly to the extent that they stepped up their Gospel preaching and gave the impression that "since the Law always accuses and the new man doesn't need the Law's instruction, the Law therefore only accuses" (p. 9). Along with Petersen, Schmitt (2014), a professor of homiletics at Concordia Seminary, described how this trend in interpreting the Bible as solely Law (God's wrath) then Gospel (God's forgiveness) distorted C. F. W. Walther's, the first president of the LCMS, distinction of Law and Gospel (Peterson, 2018; Schmitt, 2014). This corresponded with one of Walther's speeches, where he stated, "Do not think that you have done rightly if you generically preach Law in one part of your sermon and Gospel in the other. No . . . both doctrines may even be contained in one sentence" (Walther, 2010, p. 29).

Schmitt (2014) described this trend of reducing the true meaning of any given text to first Law then Gospel as "telescoping" God's story in the Scriptures rather than telling God's story. This telescoping reduces the story of Scripture to a series of accounts of sinners who have been forgiven, instead of leading hearers to "experience how God makes us part of his holy people, people who live by his proclamation and those whose lives have a holy purpose in the unfolding of his kingdom" (p. 109). Schmitt further

emphatically pointed out that he was not proposing getting rid of the Law and Gospel

dynamic in Lutheran interpretation, which was central to the Lutheran understanding of

Scripture, but instead that Lutheran interpreters could interpret both Law and Gospel as

well as God's greater story at the same time, noting how "God is doing more than simply

acting in your personal life. He is calling you and forming you to be part of his people

who live by his proclamation and serve his holy purposes as he rules the world" (p. 108).

Mayes (2019), an LCMS professor at Concordia Theological Seminary, added

that using the Law then Gospel dichotomy as a structure for preaching or teaching,

though useful in some situations, was not only repetitive but inconsistent with the

Lutheran tradition. He indicated that, historically, Lutheran interpreters emphasized the

biblical framework of first "finding the sense of the biblical text, and second, applying it

to one's hearers and readers" (p. 111). Mayes (2019) continued that this application

rested not only in acknowledging Law and Gospel in a passage but especially in applying

the text to teach, rebuke, warn, and console the hearers. Voelz (2003), a prominent

Lutheran interpretation scholar and professor emeritus at Concordia Seminary, echoed

the theme of how, instead of simply conveying information, interpretation of Scripture

should lead readers to first attempt to see how they participate in the same underlying

reality of the Scriptures and then identify how that reality applies to their own situations.

In line with this thought, according to Kolb (2012), Luther's ultimate purpose in

retelling the Biblical narratives was to provide a deeper understanding and lay a new

foundation for the hearers and readers to see reality and their daily life as God's people in

His world. This corresponded to a central article of the Book of Concord, a defining

confessional document of the LCMS, that noted that one of the purposes of God's Word

is to reveal, as Scripture tells us, the " 'will of God, what is good and acceptable and

perfect' . . . in what 'good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk'

" (McCain, 2006, p. 559). According to Kolb (2012), Luther was guided in his

proclamation of the biblical message by three essential distinctions. These set the tone for

Lutheran Bible interpreters ever since. These three points included a description of what

God says to His human creatures, or the distinction of Law and Gospel; a description of

what it means to be human, or the distinction between the two kinds of righteousness; and

a description of the two realms of relationships in which God speaks and human identity

is displayed (p. 17). According to Kolb (2014), Luther believed that all theology revolved

around God's action to His people wherever they are existentially, either in their rebellion

against God or in their anguish under the threat of His judgment. Thus, Luther's emphasis

on interpreting Scripture through Law and Gospel was directly related to his belief about

the relationship of God's Word to the human experience. Any discussion of andragogy in

LCMS adult Bible classes must keep this ongoing discussion of proper interpretation and

life application in view.

Andragogy's Relationship to LCMS Doctrine

Beyond Blanke (2018), whose work is mentioned below, there has been minimal

to no literature on the relationship of andragogy to Lutheran theology. In light of previous

investigations about andragogy and Bible class in general and Lutheran theological

practices, however, certain colorations can be made. For the sake of the study, the

researcher connected each of the Six Assumptions of Knowles to one or more of the

above central Lutheran doctrines on the Christian life. In doing so, a basic set of benefits

and limitations of andragogical theory in the LCMS context was proposed. As to not try

to force the different assumptions into theological categories, for the sake of this study,

the researcher broadly combined the Six Assumptions into two categories: those that deal

with the role of the learner, namely, the learners' need to know, and self-concept, and

motivation; and those that are concerned with learner outcomes, namely, the role of

experience, readiness to learn, and orientation to learning. These categories were

combined at the researcher's discretion but were determined based on evidence and

trends seen in the research. The researcher also noted how Knowles's Six Assumptions

often overlapped at certain points between the two categories.

Need to know and self-concept and motivation.

The researcher identified two Lutheran doctrines, emphasized in Lutheran

scholarship, that corresponded directly to the andragogical assumptions of need to know,

self-concept, and motivation to learn. Though many other potential inferences to

Lutheran teaching were found, the primary themes and connections emerged from the

doctrines of the priesthood of all believers and the receptive theology of oratio, meditatio,

tentatio.

The priesthood of all believers.

For Lutherans, the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers is central to

understanding the role of the learner. Within Lutheran doctrine, baptism is, indeed, the

crucial entry point for life as God's child, wherein he or she becomes part of the

priesthood of all believers (Commission on Theology & Church Relations, 2018).

According to Lutheran tradition and more contemporary interpretation, the doctrine of the

priesthood of all believers revolves around the three duties of priests in the Bible:

sacrifice, prayer, and teaching/proclamation (p. 15). Though these were performed in the

Old Testament, in light of New Testament statements, notably in 1 Peter 2:9, these apply

to all believers today. According to the Commission on Theology and Church Relations

(Commission on Theology & Church Relations, 2018), the dimension of sacrifice now

encompasses living sacrifices of the body in deeds and donations and support to others,

with prayer and proclamation also involving personal responsibility.

In light of this, Lutheran theology emphasizes how the baptized priesthood of

believers has responsibilities to remain as lifelong, self-directed learners and receivers of

Scripture. This has been evidenced by multiple Lutheran theologians, both historically

and contemporary. One of Luther's most famous quotes about spiritual formation was

"experience alone makes a theologian," (Lehmann, 1967, p. 7). Luther himself noted the

role of lifelong learning and reception of the Word of God in combination with action

and life experience. In other words, at discipleship's core is a lifetime of experiencing

Scripture. According to Gibbs's interpretation, a primary point of Matthew 28:18–20,

known as the Great Commission, is to understand the value of ongoing lifelong education

of the Scriptures in the context of Lutheran theology and Biblical interpretation. On

interpreting this passage, Gibbs commented that "somehow the church (in America, at

least) will need to recapture the truth that once a disciple has begun to be such, there is an

entire lifetime of teaching and learning that must happen in order to be Jesus' disciple"

(p. 1644). In line with this, Blanke (2012) commented that, "a maturing faith is one

which exhibits itself in a growing desire to participate in Word and Sacrament ministry as

well as ongoing study of the scriptures" (p. 11). The doctrine of the priesthood of all

believers, as entered into through baptism, gives responsibility to each Christian to

continually and faithfully pursue discipleship, something that in the Lutheran context especially, requires lifelong, regular reception and study of Scripture.

Oratio, meditatio, tentatio.

From the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers comes the role of personal responsibility for being self-directed in Bible reading. According to Luther scholar Haemig (2014), Luther modeled what he believed was the correct way to study Scripture on Psalm 119. His receptive form of meditating brought about his reformation breakthrough of Law and Gospel, his key tenet. Haemig added that Luther differed from his medieval predecessors in interpretation by focusing less on the allegorical nature of Scripture and more on the paradigm of Law and Gospel. According to Herrmann (2014), "In this way Luther conceived a new framework for the Christological relevance of the entire Bible" (p. 84). Luther's thought was that one could not simply interpret the Bible but instead must let the words of the Bible speak and drive hearers through "judgment and forgiveness, demand and gift, law and gospel, death and life" (Haemig, 2014, p. 452).

Kleinig (2002), an Australian Lutheran professor and theologian, unpacked Luther's doctrine of personal Biblical interpretation based on Psalm 119 even further. Kleinig (2002) wrote that the Lutheran doctrine of oratio (prayer), meditatio (meditation), tentatio (temptation), derived from Luther himself, revolved around the question "What makes a theologian?" In modern terms, Kleinig surmised from Luther that spiritual formation came through passive reception of the faith, that is "the interplay in spiritual warfare of three different powers: the Holy Spirit, God's word, and Satan." (p. 257). Bayer (2007), a Lutheran theologian, summarized Luther's teaching on what makes a

theologian as follows: "A theologian is a person who is interpreted by Holy Scripture, who lets himself or herself be interpreted by it and who, having been interpreted by it, interprets it for other troubled and afflicted people" (p. 36). The point being that, according to different Luther scholars and Lutheran theologians, the spiritual life is not active in terms of a process as in self-development but passive in terms of a process of personal, self-directed reception of the Word of God (Kleinig, 2002, p. 258).

In Lutheran thought, spiritual formation is less of a product and more of a process, which lines up with andragogical assumptions about what motivates adults to engage in the learning process. To Luther, the study of theology began with prayer, but not simply contemplative prayer. Instead, it was about praying for God's Word to be passively done as the Word was received (Bayer, 2007). Meditation, in the Lutheran interpretation, is not about the process of inward listening but in turning outside ourselves. Bayer (2007) summarized Luther's teaching on meditation that once people have heard or read God's words, they "do not now take them back inside for our minds to consider alone. .. . Instead, we let those words permeate the heart and fill it to overflowing so that others may hear them as well" (p. 53).

After prayer for the Holy Spirit to open, enlighten, and guide the learner in the study of the Word and continual repetitive meditation on the Word comes temptation. But the temptation of Satan, in Lutheran thought, comes through the learner's experience. Kleinig (2002) summarized, "While this experience begins at the conscience, it touches all parts of us and integrates the whole person, mentally, emotionally, and physically" (p. 262). Though organizationally, in this dissertation analysis, the researcher divided Knowles's Six Assumptions into two categories, the fact that the doctrine of receptive

theology in oratio, meditatio, and tentatio also draws in the role of learner experience only further emphasized the interconnectivity of the different facets of andragogical theory and design.

Lutheran interpretation of Scripture, specifically the individual responsibility given to the priesthood of all believers to take ownership of receiving the gifts of God's Word, also naturally touched on the role of human experience. Kleinig (2008) stated that exercising faith is a constant interplay between Scripture and our experience of life. In Kleinig's interpretation of Lutheran thought, Christians are to look at what God has to say to us each day and see how God's Word interprets our experience. God's Word teaches us to see our experiences through God's point of view, and the school of experience shapes our minds and souls so that they are attuned to Gods Word (p. 45). Kleinig (2002) concluded that the best curriculum for spiritual formation was one where the whole community fosters the process of prayer, meditation, and temptation, and models how to keep on learning by living the receptive life of faith (p. 266). Bayer (2007), however, summarized Luther's view on the role of the learner experience in Bible interpretation differently: "What makes the theologian a theologian is not experience as such, but the experience of scripture" (p. 63). In Bayer's view, the Lutheran theology of lifelong learning of Scripture has always been called the passive, or receptive, life and is not something we think up ourselves but rather something that happens to us as we experience God's Word.

In Lutheran thought, the baptismal life of the priesthood of all believers is a continual struggle to be a lifelong learner, and this lifelong learning from a spiritual standpoint is not optional. Kleinig (2002) stated, "As soon as God's word is planted in his

heart, the devil tries to drive it out, so that he will not be able to operate by the power of

the Holy Spirit" (p. 264). In other words, Kleinig understood Luther's theology that the

devil would constantly work to tempt people away from their faith, and constant

reception of the Word and the work of the Holy Spirit is vital to strengthening that faith.

Thus, from a Lutheran perspective, the motivation for adults in lifelong learning of

Scripture should not be from external factors like money or success, but instead should

come from internal factors like personal responsibility and virtue, which is received by

listening to and reading Scripture. In a similar vein, Gibbs (2018) commented on the need

for continual study of God's Word as essential to the Christian life by writing:

> The making of disciples continues as the teaching shapes, carves, heals, and
>
> transforms God's children. The Great Commission is not just to get converts,
>
> although it certainly is about that. The Great Commission is also to nurture and
>
> educate believers as they mature and grow in faith and love for all, even for their
>
> enemies. So yes, evangelism—but then also training in righteousness, in
>
> compassion, in Law and Gospel. Bible classes and sermons, as well as the mutual
>
> encouragement of fellow Christians in groups both large and small, are all part of
>
> the making of disciples. (pp. 1643–1644)

In summary, Lutheran doctrines align with andragogical assumptions

about adults, specifically the assumptions of need to know, and self-concept and

motivation. According to Lutheran thought, as royal priests in God's kingdom,

each Christian has the autonomy to go to Jesus in prayer and does not require an

outside priest to intervene for him or her, correlating to the andragogical principle

of self-concept. The doctrine of the royal priesthood, however, also means that

each Christian is also under assault night and day by the ancient enemies of the devil, the world, and the sinful flesh, continually working to tempt people to abandon their identity in Christ. The Word of God alone, as regularly remembered, received, and meditated upon by the self-directed individual Christian in the arena of life, has the power to give the Christian strength to stand firm in the faith. Knowles's andragogical principles assume a need to know and motivation for adult learners, and the Lutheran doctrine, of the priesthood of all believers emphasizes the urgency and intrinsic motivation required in undertaking personal responsibility to engage in lifelong learning. Knowles's view of andragogy also assumes that adults generally see themselves as self-directed in their learning, and the principles of personal meditation on God's Word outlined in the process of oratio, meditatio, and tentatio reinforce that assumption in Lutheran thought.

Role of experience, readiness to learn, orientation to learning.

Fairly early on in his career, Knowles (1972) posited some early ideas about the curriculum that would lead away from dependency and toward lifelong learning. One major idea he proposed was to focus on learner roles and the competencies associated with those roles. These roles included learner, friend, citizen, family member, worker, and leisure-time user. The competencies included emphases like reading and writing for being a learner; goal-building for being a self; listening for being a friend; participating, discussing, and acting for being a citizen; maintaining, saving, and taking responsibility for being a family member; career planning and getting along with people for being a worker; and knowing resources and appreciating the arts for being a leisure-time user.

Knowles's emphases align with two central doctrines of the LCMS: the doctrines of

vocation and the two kinds of righteousness.

The doctrine of vocation.

The term *vocation* came from the Latin term for "calling." Veith (2011) outlined

this concept, explaining that as part of the priesthood of all believers, all Christians have

callings. This was built on the conviction that every Christian should be able to read the

Word of God (p. 19). The doctrine of vocation has been defined as "the link that joins

faith to works. It is the arena in which the believer experiences the law . . . and where the

transformative power of grace takes root and bears fruit" (Strohl, 2014, p. 367). Pless

(2015), a professor of practical theology at CTSFW, stated that the doctrine of vocation

was based on two principles. The first principle is that God is primarily served not by our

self-chosen projects but in the responsibilities. God gives each of us according to our

places in life. These callings in the world are not static, as they change as people move

through life. The second aspect is that God is at work in our work—that we are masks of

God, as God is hidden behind the work of people who do His work in the world.

According to Veith, even when we do not see God, He is there; He is there in the

seemingly mundane things (p. 24). This doctrine dovetails with the Lutheran

understanding of the priesthood of all believers, wherein "each royal priest is to exercise

the functions of the royal priesthood—sacrifice, prayer, proclamation—in a way that

accords with his or her vocations within the three estates of home, church, and society

(See Eph. 5-6; Col 3; 1 Tim. 2)" (Commission on Theology & Church Relations, 2018, p.

39).

Luther believed that the sacrament of baptism brought all who received it into the priesthood of all believers, empowering everyone by the Spirit to proclaim the gospel to others, to forgive their sins in the name of Jesus, and to offer prayers on their behalf (Strohl, 2014). According to Veith, the central realization of this doctrine, in line with the priesthood of believers, is that our callings come from outside ourselves; they are things that we're chosen for. Like being chosen for a particular job, one has to first be hired (p. 55). Strohl noted that how people fulfill their vocations forms the basis for a well-ordered community, stating that as parents raise their children to be godly and provide for their needs, they provide for the wider community.

Central to the doctrine of vocation is the conviction that "Christians need to realize that the present is the moment in which we are called to be faithful. We can do nothing about the past. The future is wholly in God's hands. Now is what we have" (Veith, 2011, p. 59). Veith's statement aligns with the andragogical assumption of readiness to learn. Within this assumption, adults are motivated by their immediate concerns, and the Lutheran doctrine of vocation encourages learners to embrace present concerns through the lens of God's Word. As noted in the Commission on Theology & Church Relations (2018) report, Christians, as baptized believers, should understand that their vocations function as both places where God has called them to serve but also as mission fields into which God has called them to proclaim the Gospel.

The two kinds of righteousness.

A second essential doctrine of Lutheran theology that aligns with the andragogical assumptions of readiness to learn and orientation to learning was that of the two kinds of righteousness. According to Arand (2001), this Lutheran doctrine was based on the

Biblical understanding that humans have passive righteousness in relationship to God

through Christ (by faith) and active righteousness in relationship to our neighbor through

fulfilling our vocations (by love). Arand also emphasized that this theme of the two kinds

of righteousness runs throughout the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, a component

of the Book of Concord, the official confessional document of the LCMS. In the Apology

to the Augsburg Confession, included in the Book of Concord, the Lutheran confessors

wrote:

> Civil righteousness is assigned to free will, and spiritual righteousness is assigned
>
> to the governing of the Holy Spirit in the reborn. In this way, outward discipline is
>
> kept, because all people should know that God requires this civil righteousness
>
> and that, to some extent, we can achieve it. And yet a distinction is shown
>
> between human and spiritual righteousness, between philosophical teaching and
>
> the teaching of the Holy Spirit. (McCain, 2006, p. 198)

Arand (2001) added, based on Lutheran confessional principals like those noted above,

that the doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness both keeps the focus of Bible study on

Christ and enables Christians to see a "Christian righteousness that contributes to our

creaturely righteousness as our new identity leads to new ways of living" (p. 436).

Biermann (2014), another Lutheran scholar, summarized the effects of what

happened when the two kinds of righteousness emphasis are lost in Lutheran practice,

noting how treating Law and Gospel as a polarity has often created the unintended

consequences of individuals either growing more self-righteous or anti-God's Law (p.

116). Biermann went on to write that, though the treatment of the Law and Gospel are

central to a Lutheran understanding of justification, or passive righteousness, before God,

it was often impractical when it came to understanding ethics and finding a way to

express a meaningful and dynamic understanding of the Christian life. Knowles's Six

Assumptions continually emphasize the practical over just the theoretical, and the

doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness in Lutheran thought aligns with the necessity

of practicality and daily life when interpreting the Scriptures.

Robert Kolb, another often published LCMS professor, reemphasized and restated

that the two kinds of righteousness are central to Lutheran thinking, especially with the

linkage between this doctrine and vocation. Kolb (1982) summarized the doctrine by

stating that God made human beings to both stand in vertical dependence on Him but also

in horizontal independence with one another. In addition, Kolb (1982) also stated that

one major development in Luther's framework of theology, and for Lutheran theologians

that came afterward, was that understanding that man is made righteous before God

through faith. Yet this did not excuse humanity from loving and serving the neighbor,

regardless of faith, as the duties and responsibilities assigned to each of us are engrained

in creation itself, believer and non-believer alike. According to later work by Kolb

(1999), the doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness was framework rooted in the Great

Command and as taught by Luther, it asserted that all human life exists on two different

planes of existence at the same time, one of dependency on God in the vertical

relationship and interdependency on fellow man in horizontal relationships. The

difference, according to Luther, was that the believer, because of his or her righteousness

given by faith, inspires and produces his or her own righteousness in horizontal

relationships.

Kolb (2014) later added that Luther's views on how God's Law worked were not simply related to convicting people of their sins but also as an "aid for the believer's decision-making moved by the gospel" (p. 173). Not only did the Word of God reveal sins, but for the Christian, it also instructed believers to godly, upright living. According to Kolb (2014), "the distinction of two kinds of righteousness reinforces the distinction of law and gospel by emphasizing that the gospel alone establishes the core identity or righteousness of believers and moves them to produce the fruits of faith" (pp. 177–178).

Kolb (2014) also added that whereas the Law and Gospel dynamic of Luther focused on how God relates to his human creatures, the two kinds of righteousness were meant to emphasize what it meant to be human. In other words, these distinctions emphasized Luther's belief as to how God's Word applies itself to human existence. The two kinds of righteousness provide the foundation of the human creature's relationship to God and other humans, both seen in relationship to mankind's passive relationship to God through the preaching of sin and forgiveness in Christ, that is Christian identity, but also in regards to instruction for the living of daily life, or works of love flowing from that Christian identity. In another instance, Kolb (1982) emphasized that Lutherans generally have been accused of being impious people, or people who do not focus on good works. This stereotype should not be, he argued, because the relationship of faith and good works is essential to Lutheran teaching in the Book of Concord. Lutheran doctrine of identity, calling, and purpose in the world correlates closely with andragogical assumptions of what motivates adults to be lifelong learners.

In summary, the andragogical assumptions that deal with learner outcomes, primarily the role of learner experience, readiness to learn, and orientation to learning,

correlate to the doctrines of vocation and the two kinds of righteousness. Andragogy

assumes that adults come to any learning experience with a desire to learn things

applicable for their current life roles and experiences. The emphasis on vocation and

living out daily life in this world as a framework for giving purpose to daily discipleship

has been central to the Lutheran perspective since Luther. Likewise, the assumption of

readiness to learn claims that adults desire immediate applicability in their learning, and

the doctrines of vocation and the two kinds of righteousness put an emphasis on the

present lives of each learner. This was not to say that the Lutheran perspective does not

emphasize direct teaching, or the teaching of essential doctrines of the faith that may or

may not bear immediate relevance on the vocations of each learner (Rueter, 2016).

Instead, it emphasizes the continual need for Lutheran teachers of adults to be constantly

aware that the driving force motivating many of their learners is their current situation in

life. Finally, the andragogical assumption of the role of the learner experience

acknowledges that adults come to any learning activity with a wealth of experience and

could likely serve as a resource for other learners in the Christian community by sharing

those experiences, as they do through vocation.

The Origins and Development of the Adult Bible Class

Leading up to the Reformation.

Discussion of the role of andragogy in Bible classes must first begin with an

examination of the foundations of why group Bible classes, sometimes known as adult

Sunday School, exist. From the earliest Biblical records, adult education was a priority.

In Scripture, God commanded households to make three pilgrimages a year to the central

place of worship where they were to offer sacrifices (Exodus 23:14–17; Exodus 34:18–

23; Deuteronomy 16:1, 9–10, 13, 16–17). These pilgrimages not only created an annual

gathering of men for celebration (Engelbrecht, 2009, p. 200), they also provided a place

where the heads of households could gather and study the Scriptures together, often

listening to long sections of Scripture out loud (Steinmann, 2010, p. 93). An example of

this was given in detail in the Book of Nehemiah, when the people gathered together at

one such festival and listened for six hours as the Scriptures were read to them

(Nehemiah 8:1–8). A primary function of these gatherings during festival pilgrimages,

then, was to teach or reinforce in adults the central messages of the Scriptures so they

could then during the Sabbath and other times pass on the central messages of the

Scriptures to those in their households (Deuteronomy 6:1–6).

       Around the time period of the exile and captivity, synagogues formed to carry on

the educational tradition as many households could no longer travel to the temple for the

worship. Synagogues, found throughout the Mediterranean world, comprised ten or more

households and served as local venues for worship, social gathering, and continuation of

the educational tradition (Engelbrecht, 2014, p. 973). As recorded in all four Gospel

accounts, Jesus often visited in synagogues, using this established setting for his teaching

and preaching ministry (Matthew 4:23; Mark 1:21–28; Luke 4:31–37; John 6:22–59).

Later, Jesus' followers began many of their churches through these synagogues.

According to Arand (1997), early Christian adult education served primarily as a period

of catechesis, or teaching of the fundamentals of the faith, to new Christians with the

intention of moving adults toward baptism. This grew and developed into a structured

system during the third and fourth centuries, usually conducted by the bishop. This adult

instruction took hours a day for weeks on end (Arand, 1996). Over the course of

Christian history, after the early church, church buildings became the center of religious life. According to Coffman (2008), low literacy rates and lack of access to Scriptures, along with tendencies of some clergy to discourage personal Bible reading fearing schism or unorthodox teaching, kept Bible study groups from developing.

The Reformation.

The roots of personal Bible study in the Lutheran tradition lie in the Protestant Reformation. While in hiding from the Pope in 1522, the Reformation leader Martin Luther translated the New Testament into the German language, the language of the "common people" (Nohl, 2003, p.121). Though in the 14th century, there had been attempts to translate from Latin to the common language, most notably by John Wyclif, these translations were difficult to come by or too expensive for the common man in Germany. Upon beginning his translation of the New Testament into German, Luther exclaimed:

> Would that the Bible alone might be on the tongue and in the hands, the eyes, the ears, and the hearts of all men! Would to God all explanations might perish and every Christian for himself read the bare text of Scripture and the pure Word of God! (Dallman, 1951, p. 135)

After the whole of the Bible had been translated into German, its use by the common man spread. The New Testament was multiplied by printers and scattered abroad by an increasingly literate German populace so that "even poor women were found who debated with learned doctors. Thus, it happened that in such conversations Lutheran laymen could quote more Bible passages from memory than the monks and the priests" (Nohl, 2003, p. 153).

According to Lutheran historian Rietschel (2000), central to Luther's reforms was an emphasis on education for the German population. From this philosophy, three principles emerged: first, the authority of the Bible was substituted for that of the church; second, the judgment of the individual rather than a church council was to be the decisive factor for a person in one's interpretation of Scripture; and third, the final responsibility for salvation rested upon the individuals rather than upon the institutional church. These three principles necessitated that common people not only had access to the Bible but were also able to read the Bible on their own in their own language (pp. 18–19). Luther argued that, since all baptized Christians were equal before God, education of liberal arts that was once only offered to the child of a prince should be suitable for the child of a laborer as well, and by extension for both boys and girls (Korcok, 2011, p. 43). Thus, Luther not only translated the Bible into the vernacular, he also emphasized and established a system of education in which all people were not only to be able to read the Bible for themselves but also to do so regularly (Rietschel, 2000, p. 21).

Even though a primary emphasis of the Lutheran reformation included education and literacy for children, Luther and the other reformers also understood that there were many illiterate people, especially adults, among their congregations (Haemig, 1996). Luther identified a lack of spiritual vitality and understanding in the parishes. According to Haemig, pastors were not teaching the faith to parents, and thus parents were not teaching the faith properly at home. To combat this, Luther looked to the traditions of the third- and fourth-century adult educators and saw what had been lost in the intervening centuries. He tried to model his catechetical sermons and teaching work in the 16th century on these earlier traditions (Arand, 1996). Thus, Luther and other reformers

devised a system whereby the worship service often became a place where adults and

children could learn the basic catechetical teachings together and then take those ideas to

be reinforced at home (Arand, 1997). Luther put a high emphasis on education, but

household and school instruction were meant to supplement preaching the catechism, or

the central tenets of the faith (Haemig, 1996). This catechetical teaching often was done

in the place of sermons as a series of instructions on the Ten Commandments, the Creed,

the Lord's Prayer, and the Sacraments. It must be noted, however, that during the 16th

century, opportunities to worship and general attendance at multiple services were more

prominent. It was not uncommon for worshippers to attend several different services on

Sunday, as well as multiple services throughout the week. Each one of these provided a

platform for adult education through catechization (Arand, 1997). Adult parishioners

were told that, even though they could not read, if they listened closely, they would be

able to hear God's Word and learn the catechism. The reformation message of salvation

was not intended to be simply for the literate but available to all through listening to the

sermon (Haemig, 1996).

Stemming from both the emphasis on literacy and Bible literacy, combined with a

desire to teach adults through catechetical preaching, Luther also revisited the hymnodic

and liturgical traditions of the day. In his preface to the German mass, he noted

something relevant to this study relating to his hopes for Bible study for the future. He

stated that there were three different kinds of divine service, or mass: the Latin mass, the

German divine service, and a third kind of evangelical order. This third order, he

proposed, should not be public but should be for those who "want to be Christians in

earnest and who profess the gospel with hand and mouth," and that they should find a

place to pray, read, baptize, receive the Sacraments, and do other Christian works

together where they could center their time together "on the Word, prayer, and love"

(Lehmann, 1965, p. 64). Luther went on, however, to state that with the Reformation

there was not yet an interest in this sort of home small group Bible study, much because

of business or temperament, stating how "we German people are a rough, rude, and

reckless people, with whom it is hard to do anything, except in cases of dire need"

(Lehmann, 1965, p. 64). Though this third form of small group Bible study never took

shape in Luther's day, he still desired and hoped that one day Christians would take the

initiative to do so together.

Pietism and the Enlightenment.

After Luther, Pietists, Methodists, and other groups eventually arose out of a

general discontent with the state churches and were a factor in the spread of Bible

reading, especially among the lower classes in the 18th century (De Vries, 2017). Koester

(1993) suggested that the roots of understanding the rationale behind formalized group

Bible classes, in the form we know today, began in the Pietist movement in the 17th

century, especially under Philip Jacob Spener. According to Koester, central to this group

was a belief in the power of the Word of God to transform peoples' lives and to foster an

increase of the use of the Word of God in the community of faith. But Koester also

summarized three more benefits of the pietistic Bible class: preachers learning more

intimately the needs of their people, the people getting a chance to have their questions

answered or at least addressed by the pastor, and people getting better prepared to teach

the faith to others, especially their children. John Wesley, who had contact with the

Pietists, encouraged his Methodist churches to meet in groups. Yet Wesley did not

advocate for using small group studies as a replacement for corporate worship (Coffman, 2008).

De Vries (2017) traced the continual development of Bible classes coming out of the period of the Enlightenment. The first Bible society, The British and Foreign Bible Society, was founded in 1804 and was followed by several other Bible societies over the following decades. These societies were dedicated to producing millions of Bibles. The age of Enlightenment stressed individual reason over communal confessions and combined the sustained literacy efforts of the poor with pietistic groups, which created a market for Bibles. Fervor for spreading the Bible abroad spilled into the same mission at home, namely transforming and enlightening dark hearts of insincere faith with personal faith (De Vries, 2017).

Sunday Schools.

Sunday School arose from the Industrial Revolution in England, when Robert Raikes, a crusading newspaper editor, developed classes on Sunday to reach out to England's poor at the end of the 18th century (Hays, 2009; Larsen, 2008). During the Industrial Revolution, children often worked long hours. As regulations beginning in the early 1800s started lowering the working hours for children, more time for literacy developed. Sunday was often the only day that children had off work, so a basic literacy education developed from that day and time (Larsen, 2008). Sunday School attendance originally grew with working-class families, as they would orient their lives and schedules around the literacy education their children could receive on Sundays after church. Early Sunday Schools focused on literacy with teaching or copying passages out of the Scriptures; there was also a basic catechism that was taught, as were prayers and

hymn singing (Larsen, 2008). In a seminal work on the history of parish education in the

LCMS, Haendschke noted that this Sunday School was a product of liberal Christian

theology that focused mostly on literacy and reform and less on religious education

(Haendschke, 1963). Obviously, the Reformation push for universal literacy and Bible

availability had not been fully realized across Europe in the following centuries. Though

these original Sunday School classes were primarily aimed at children and youth, the

movement arose around the same time period as the Bible society movement.

As the movements of increased literacy, most notably Bible literacy, emerged in

Europe, it was inevitable that it would become a norm for Protestants in the New World.

When the movement did come to the United States, however, it took on less of a liberal

literacy education focus and a more of a religious education focus (Haendschke, 1963).

Whereas Roman Catholics relied on Catholic schools and weekday classes for faith

formation, many Protestants relied on Sunday School and related classes (Hays, 2009).

The Lutheran immigrants who later found the LCMS and who immigrated to the United

States beginning in 1838, brought their tradition of parish schools with them to the New

World. Rietschel (2000) noted in a cornerstone work on Lutheran education that by 1872,

the original group of 12 congregations had grown to 446, and the number of Lutheran

schools grew from 14 to 472 (p. 31), and it was unthinkable that any congregation would

become part of the church body unless it maintained a school for its children.

As the LCMS continued to expand, however, forces worked against their

traditions that gradually pushed them towards including the Sunday School model in their

education. According to Rietschel (2000), the desire to Americanize immigrant groups in

the late 1800s led to several states pursuing the restriction of the rights of these

immigrants to send their children to religious schools instead of public schools. This, combined with growing indifference among the immigrants and the anti-German backlash at the outset of WWI, contributed to the enrollment and expansion of Lutheran schools not keeping pace with the overall growth of the church body (p. 38).

Specific information on the of the development and implementation of Sunday Schools in the LCMS was limited as it developed slowly and organically. Sunday School, as an alternative to Christian education, was feared early on in the LCMS, due to lack of trained pastors and teachers, not a lot of material, its conflict with the congregational school, and the lack of material in the German language (The Lutheran Witness, 1972). Though some congregations had adopted Sunday Schools as early as the 1840s, the first true Sunday School came in when the English Synod became part of the LCMS as the English District in 1911 and Concordia Publishing House (CPH) began to independently publish Sunday School material, some in German but most in English (The Lutheran Witness, 1972; CPH Staff, 2007). By the 1920s, Sunday School was popular and widely accepted as a primary way to assist in teaching religion to children (Haendschke, 1963). Though not as numerous as they once were, the LCMS still maintains a strong group of some 2,029 Lutheran elementary schools, high schools, and early childhood centers (The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod School Ministry, 2017). Even so, the LCMS is made up of some 6,100 congregations (Magness, 2017), and Sunday School in one form or another remains a weekly staple program of many of these congregations.

Bible class in the LCMS.

According to Haendschke (1963), the early stages of the contemporary form of adult Bible class in the LCMS arose from a grassroots movement in the Eastern District

of the LCMS in 1912, based around the question of what happens to post-confirmation

youth. Since Sunday School was already being established, post-confirmation Sunday

School for youth and then later adults served as an extension of the work of Sunday

School. Kane (1994) reported that the Sunday School Board was officially approved by

the LCMS in 1920 and expanded in 1923 and was designed to work in cooperation with

the General School Board overseeing school education established in 1914. By 1941, the

two boards had joined together, and in 1941, there was a call at the synodical convention

for increased interest in adult material for junior high, senior high, and adult Bible classes

(Kane, 1994, p. 58). Kretzmann (1934), an influential thought leader and future seminary

professor, mentioned in an article in the flagship theological journal of the LCMS, that

providing stratified Bible classes for different ages was advantageous, and that Bible

class leaders should look to employ different teaching methods and strategies to reach

their audience. One word he used was "self-activity" as something desirable to have in

teaching adults, not merely passive listening. He equated the straight lecture method as a

"torture, to say the least," to the young people of the church (Kretzmann, 1934, p. 933).

Kretzmann also stated there are different methods, including lecture, outline-discussion,

outline-analysis, members of the group leading the discussion, topical-question, and true-

false or multiple-choice statements, noting "whatever we can do, by the way of

stimulating methods, by introducing a wealth of visual instruction material, and

especially by having our attendants at Bible class do their own thinking, will certainly

make such classes eminently worthwhile" (Kretzmann, 1934, p. 935). In line with this

growing trend, congregations began adding youth and adult classes to their Sunday

Schools to such an extent that, by 1943–1945, it became a concern of the LCMS. A great

deal of this concern revolved around combatting the "confirmation complex," or the idea that confirmation around middle school is a graduation from formal study of God's Word (Haendschke, 1963).

Repp (1948), working for the LCMS, laid out some general reasons why the LCMS, at the 100th anniversary of the founding of Synod, needed to emphasize an adult Bible study program. Repp highlighted different reasons for this need. First, Repp argued that this is an adult world where adults run congregations and are responsible in their Christian homes to lead others in the faith. Second, our Christian adults have increased contact with the world where the islands of Lutheranism have been destroyed, and people from different cultures influence Lutherans. Third, ours is a shrinking world where we must conduct mission work on our doorsteps. Finally, religious education is a continuous process where Scripture makes it clear that the obligation of learning the Word does not stop (Repp, 1948). Implied in Repp's statement was a confrontation with the fact that, with the traditional Lutheran island shrinking, less cultural homogeny among immigrants, and more converts, the Lutherans' cultural heritage could not sustain a culture of being in the Word (Repp, 1948). In 1952, the LCMS launched a Bible study movement, and in it, the synod urged each congregation to develop its own program, with the support of every district, and in conjunction with already established groups like the Walther League (Haendschke, 1963).

The period from 1947 to 1956 saw a marked growth in both the resources put behind Bible classes and in the overall attendance, rising from a low point of 6.8% of communicant members attending per week in 1946 to a high point of 14.2% in 1955 (Kane, 1994, p. 263). In a paper delivered on behalf of the Texas District Board of Parish

Education, education executive Koeneke (1953) helped to show the development of

andragogical thinking in Bible class development, though there was no explicit

andragogy mentioned. One idea he presented was that methods of teaching Bible class

should be mutually beneficial and agreed upon by both the teacher and the class. He

stated several principles, in line with learning theory, about how teachers should

approach adults. These were as follows: adults are not grown-up children; adults are not

all alike; adults are not too old to learn; adults have not outgrown the possibility of

change; adults are not hardened to the Gospel; and adults are not too busy to serve. In

regards to principles of what methods to use, Koeneke stated that teachers should keep

the ability of the teacher, the ability of the students, the purposes of the course of

instruction, and the available equipment, room, time, and size of the group in mind when

designing instruction. Koeneke also stated the prominent use of lecture was inadvisable

and a weakness of Lutheran Bible studies as they functioned like an additional hour-long

sermon rather than a distinct educational experience.

Around this time, the Board of Parish Education produced a quarterly bulletin

called the Bible Class Builder starting in 1955, for Bible class superintendents and the

like, containing suggestions, techniques, and illustrations. Then the Sunday School

Standard was published by the LCMS and supplemented with another publication, the

Bible Class Standard (Haendschke, 1963).

Following the successes of the early 1940s to 1950s, the 1960s to 1980s were,

overall, a period of decline for Bible classes in the LCMS. The LCMS focus in much of

the 1960s revolved around church planting, and education funding moved away from

developing existing programs to creating new, shorter, more experimental ones. In

addition, pastors moved away from their roles as teacher-trainers to educational

administrators (Kane, 1994, p. 416). The 1970s saw a wave of conflict in the LCMS due

to a synodical split, and with dwindling resources, despite pleas by the Board of

Education for synodical action, adult Bible classes continued to dwindle in size and

funding (Kane, 1994, p. 457). The 1980s saw the trend continue, with a lack of resources

and leadership, and adult Christian education entered a period of revision and

maintenance rather than innovation. As the synod membership continued to dwindle, so

did the once heavy emphasis on adult Bible classes (Kane, 1994, p. 480).

The Current State of LCMS Adult Bible Classes

According to Blanke (2012), between 1992 and 2012, the LCMS experienced a

marked and continued decrease in guidance provided by LCMS district and synodical

courses on issues related to parish Christian education. Blanke continued that this was

primarily due to personnel cuts in areas once held as official bodies in the LCMS to

support different agencies of education in youth, family, children, and adult education. Of

these, only the youth ministry office of the LCMS remains. According to Blanke, the lack

of designated individuals for educational support had, not due to any malicious intent,

been detrimental to the health of the LCMS, including but not limited to the synod's

ability to set standardized goals for parish ministry. The last major study conducted by

the LCMS on the state of parish education in the LCMS, titled Congregations at

Crossroads (Benson, Roehlkepartain, & Andress, 1995), was done in collaboration with

Search Institute in 1994 with the data published in 1995. The study reported that the two

factors that had the strongest relationship to faith maturity in parishes were participation

in Christian education and the quality of formal Christian education. The major findings

included, in 1994, that a maximum of 27% of church members, both children and adults,

attended Sunday School or midweek education classes. Assuming there was no overlap in

attendance, that made adult participation in adult Bible classes, no greater than 12.4% of

members (Benson et al., 1995). In response to these findings, Blanke (2012) summarized

that if the two main factors for faith maturity in congregations were participation and

quality, then declining numbers could be correlated to the fact that "churches haven't

made significant strides in increasing relevance or changing methodologies to be more

engaging since 1994" (p. 8).

In 2006, the Institute for Religious Education (IRE) at Concordia University

Nebraska conducted a smaller study of 200 congregations. The IRE found that in the 95%

of churches that offered adult Bible classes, only 11% of confirmed members attended in

the previous week. In their surveys, they asked senior pastors to rate their children's,

youth, and adult ministries on a 1–10 scale. They rated adult ministries a 6 (tied for

highest with children's) and noted that it was the area in the least need of improvement.

This finding ran counter to the fact that adult Bible classes were the one area that had the

lowest percentage of weekly attendance. In the same IRE study, pastors stated that they

spent approximately 23% of their time working on Christian education ministry,

including teaching, planning, and preparation. A majority of 57% said that they never had

coursework outside of one seminary course in education methods, and 56% reported they

didn't participate in any continuing training for education since becoming pastors

(Institute for Religious Education Report, 2006). Blanke (2012) summarized the IRE

findings as follows: many congregations offered a variety of educational opportunities

being attended by a minority of members; programs were being led by individuals with

few chances for professional development in education despite the need to spend almost a

quarter of their time in leading educational ministries; pastors held a perception their

adult programs are seen as the healthiest congregational education program despite

having the lowest attendance; and there was little intentionality behind articulating a clear

purpose for educational ministries or a unified concept of the purpose of educational

activities within the synod as a whole.

In a separate LCMS study conducted in 2010 for congregational confirmation

ministries, Bergman (2016) discovered that, though the LCMS leaders put a high

importance on educational ministries like confirmation, LCMS educational ministries

actually were reaching a small portion of their membership and that the number of those

enrolled in programs was declining, there were few written goals for ministry, and when

goals were implemented, leaders were ineffective in teaching to those goals (pp. 16–17).

Blanke (2012) concluded from his own research that the attendance numbers were

decreasing across the religious educational landscape, much in the same way as was

happening at the time in the LCMS. He stated this was partially due to church

commitment being seen as less important than other life commitments in members'

schedules. Blanke (2012) concluded that, after years of concerted effort to combat the

apathy towards adult education in LCMS congregations, faith leaders only saw increased

apathy.

As of 2019, there was little offered for pastoral education in terms of andragogy.

Of the two seminaries that exclusively train LCMS pastors, only requiring one or two

classes on education. These classes were general in nature, and none of the required

courses for education featured explicit instruction in specifically andragogical teaching

practices. The Post-Seminary Applied Learning and Support organization, an LCMS support group for new pastors entering the field for the first time, offered one optional voluntary course titled *Pastor: Apt to Teach*. In this four-session, video-based course, Blanke (2018) offered one session on andragogy's place in adult education. The Pastoral Leadership Institute, an independent organization aligned with the LCMS, offered many professional development courses but none that dealt explicitly with andragogy.

Summary of Literature Review

This chapter sought to provide a broad-to-narrow account of literature needed not only to understand the use of andragogy in LCMS settings but also to identify the gaps in its current understanding and usage in pastor-led adult Bible classes both within and outside of the LCMS. Andragogy, as a set of assumptions for how adults learn, has had a history of ebb and flow in the adult education community. Though Knowles could no longer be its main proponent, others had stepped up to advocate for its usefulness. In the field of religious education, research into the impact of andragogy has been relatively sparse in general and almost non-existent within the literature of the LCMS. Within the history of Lutheran Bible interpretation, the emphasis of individualized learning of the Word was and has continued to be central. In addition, several key doctrines of the Lutheran perspective, especially the doctrines of the priesthood of all believers and vocation, correlate strongly to certain principles of andragogy. As the trends of adult participation in Bible classes within but not limited to the LCMS continue to decline, there are many opportunities to investigate andragogy's impact on adult Bible class teachers and participants.

Chapter Three: Research Method and Design

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to investigate what changes, if any, would occur when andragogical teaching strategies were implemented by pastors in Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) Bible classes. Research questions were designed help the researcher further understand the overarching purpose in a nuanced way.

The qualitative study used a variety of methods, including interviews, journals, workshops, observations, and a focus group. According to Esterberg (2002), "using multiple kinds of data allows you to balance the strengths and weaknesses of each" (p. 176). This triangulation of the different qualitative methods in the study helped provide a richer, broader base for gathering and analyzing data. Similarly, Maxwell (2013) emphasized the need for triangulation, or using multiple sources, to increase the validity of qualitative research, concluding that multiple resources give conclusions far more credibility than studies that are limited to one source or method. Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2012) identified three techniques qualitative researchers used to collect and analyze data: "observing people as they go about their daily activities and recording what they do; conducting in-depth interviews with people about their ideas, their opinions, and their experiences; and analyzing documents or other forms of communication (content analysis)" (p. 445). For this study, the researcher used all three techniques to collect and analyze data, with twin foci of observation and document analysis for the majority of the study.

The most extensive data set was observation. From a validity standpoint, the researcher kept in mind data that is observed is sometimes seen as stronger than data

retrieved from reports or statements (Shank, 2006, p. 153). Because of this, adding an

observational component to the research study was crucial for raising the study's overall

validity. The observational data, triangulated with the self-reporting of the journals,

combined with the interviews and focus group, provided several varieties of subjective

and objective data to analyze for the sake of this study. Concerning the interplay between

interviews and observations, Maxwell (2013) wrote:

> Although interviewing is often an efficient and valid way of understanding
>
> someone's perspective, observation can enable you to draw inferences about this
>
> perspective that you couldn't obtain by relying exclusively on interview
>
> data...Conversely, although observation provides a direct and powerful way of
>
> learning about people's behavior and the context in which this occurs,
>
> interviewing can also be a valuable way of gaining a description of actions and
>
> events- often the only way, for events that took place in the past or for situations
>
> to which you can't gain observational access. (p. 103)

The study was undertaken to help fill in a gap in the research on the

implementation of andragogical theory and design in adult Bible classes in the LCMS.

Many adult Bible classes in the LCMS are taught by Lutheran pastors in those

congregations in the hour or so before, after, or between worship services on Sunday

mornings. Adult Bible classes often occur concurrently with educational programs for

other ages, like Sunday School or confirmation. Though many parishes also conduct adult

Bible classes on other days or times of the week, these were not the focus of this study.

The rationale for this choice was that these Adult Bible classes are often less consistent in

their frequency of meetings, they are not all taught by LCMS pastors, and not all congregations conduct these varied adult Bible classes.

Time Frame

This qualitative investigation occurred during seven months, mid-August to mid-March, 2019–2020. The determination of this time period was based on the typical parish education schedule in congregations, roughly following the pattern of the typical school year. Outside of these months, it was less typical for congregations to conduct Bible classes with any consistency. For example, in the summer months it is common for congregations to either eliminate or change their Sunday School or confirmation programs for children and youth, and in turn adult Bible classes are influenced by this pattern. Also factoring into this determination was less consistent attendance over the summer months, which would produce less consistent data for the project. The researcher desired to sample populations, as best as the researcher could, that were more or less typical of the 6,000-plus congregations of the LCMS. Though the original plan was that the study would run from mid-August to mid-May, totaling nine months, due to the outbreak of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic in early 2020, Bible studies were shut down and all research was suspended in March, seven months into the nine months of observations. In total, the researcher was able to observe 21 of the planned 27 times. Despite this, the researcher was able to use the available observations to compile data about learner experiences.

Three congregations participated in the study. This number was determined based on several factors. First of all, as noted above, the type of adult Bible class the researcher desired to investigate occurred on Sunday morning and was taught by an LCMS pastor.

Since the typical Sunday morning worship service in the LCMS happens sometime between 8:00–11:00 am on Sunday mornings, with adult Bible classes also happening during this time period, the researcher was hard pressed or unable to attend more than one Sunday morning adult Bible class a week. This meant that the window for collecting observational data, a core component of this study, was limited. In addition, in order to collect some varied data, the researcher, along with his dissertation chair, decided that it would be beneficial to observe more than one congregation. The number of three was determined by the typical number of Sundays in a month, namely four, giving the researcher time to visit one adult Bible class a week, three weeks a month, with one unaccounted week a month for making up for missed sessions or allowing for the researcher to be more flexible with his schedule. This low number of participants demanded that the time period for observation was lengthy enough to collect an appropriate amount of data to help address the research questions.

The researcher had no affiliation with the congregations in the study in terms of having a vested interest in the researcher's employer from a legal or financial standpoint. The researcher did know one of the pastors from past experience, but had no current involvement in his congregation. The pastors and congregations in the study had all purchased educational materials from the researcher's employer, Concordia Publishing House (CPH), so the researcher emphasized that this project was in no way immediately funded by CPH. The researcher reminded the participants that any potential applications of the research project to CPH products would maintain the confidentiality of the congregations and participants.

The participants in the study received no remuneration in exchange for their participation. At the end of the study, each participant received a ministry book, donated by the researcher, as a thank-you gift for their participation. Their identities remained confidential, and the researcher randomly assigned names to their responses strictly as a means of clarification and continuity of responses to questions and focus group participation.

Research Questions

1. How will pastors react to instruction in the principles of andragogical theory and design?

2. What changes, if any, will occur when andragogical teaching strategies are implemented by pastors in Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Bible classes?

3. What is the relationship between the instructors' self-perceptions regarding their instructional strategies with their learners when compared to observations made by the researcher?

4. In what ways, if any, are the Bible study participants' experiences in class different after the pastor has received andragogical training?

5. What, if any, new instructional strategies emerge as a result of the pastors receiving andragogical training?

6. To what extent, if any, does the instructor in the Adult Bible class utilize any of the Six Assumptions and Eight Processes espoused by Malcolm Knowles?

Procedures

First, the researcher contacted the Missouri District President to explore the possibility of conducting the study in St. Louis area congregations. As the Missouri District President serves as the official ecclesiastical supervisor of all called pastors

within his LCMS district, including the researcher, approval from the District President

constituted official permission to conduct the study. Upon receipt of the researcher's

formal request, the District President agreed the study could be conducted as set forth and

responded similarly in an email to the researcher.

During this time, the researcher completed the CITI training as proscribed by the

EdD handbook. The researcher then submitted the completed prospectus for review and

approval, with all necessary attachments. Upon prospectus approval, the researcher

completed the IRB form for expedited review and submitted it for approval.

The researcher then met officially with the District President in person. The

researcher not only further elaborated on the details of the study but also asked the

District President for his recommendations for potential congregational candidates for the

study. The purpose of this was threefold. First, as the ecclesiastical supervisor of all

LCMS pastors in the Missouri District, which corresponds with the boundaries of the

state of Missouri, the District President knew which pastors were eligible and not eligible

to participate. Second, the District President's knowledge of local area pastors and

congregations allowed the researcher to identify potential candidates that would be within

a reasonable driving distance from the researcher, so as to make repeated transportation

to observe the adult Bible classes at the different sites more efficient for the researcher.

Third, the District President knew the overall makeup and contexts of the different

congregations in the District, and as the researcher desired to have a typical sample of

LCMS congregations in the St. Louis area, the District President's knowledge of area

congregations helped the researcher make sure that the different sites selected would

offer an appropriate variety of contexts. At these recommendations, the researcher

identified three pastors who were willing to participate in the research, receiving informal

consent to the project. Once the researcher had obtained IRB approval, the researcher

conferred with the Missouri District President to solidify the nature of the project. The

District President was informed of the participating congregations and the length of the

study.

Demographics and Setting

In order to give greater context, the researcher investigated the general

demographics of the congregations where the participants served, as well as the settings

in which the Bible classes were taught at each congregation. The demographic data for

the different congregations were taken from the Locate a Church section of the official

LCMS website and was public knowledge (Locate a Church, n.d.). Details about the

Bible class settings were compiled from field notes taken by the researcher. The three

participants have been labeled, for the sake of their anonymity, as P1, P2, and P3. P1

served at congregation site S1, P2 served at congregation S2, and P3 served at

congregation S3.

All three congregations shared some similarities and some differences. S1 was a

smaller congregation on the outskirts of the St. Louis region, which reported a

membership of 355 and an average weekly attendance of 155 over three services. The

congregation had only one full-time pastor, P1. S2 was also a congregation on the

outskirts of St. Louis, which reported a total membership of 581 with an average weekly

attendance of 181 over two weekend services and one mid-week worship service. Like

S1, S2 was served by only one full-time pastor, P2. S3 was a congregation in the southern

part of St. Louis which reported a total membership of 1,648 with an average weekly

attendance of 746 over four weekend services. S3 was the only congregation of the three

that was served by two full-time pastors, with P3 serving as one of them. (Locate a

Church, n.d.). All three congregations were located within a reasonable driving distance

from the researcher.

The rooms where the researcher observed the participants were located on site at

the different congregations. P1 used the same room for his Bible classes throughout,

which was a room dedicated to Christian education. At S1 there was a large area for

refreshments along one wall in the space. The space was sometimes well stocked with

food and beverages, something like a basic breakfast buffet with rolls, fruit, donuts,

coffee, and juice, and at other times there was only coffee served. The room setup with

P1 was eight round tables, with a whiteboard and projector up front where P1 sometimes

showed Power Point presentations. S2 held Bible class in the church basement, a space

that during the week was used by the congregation's preschool. S2 usually only served

coffee and some cookies or bars as volunteers brought them. At S2, P2 had the class sit

around a series of rectangular tables in a u-shape, with him and a whiteboard up front.

When the class in which the researcher observed at S2 switched after the workshop, P2

taught in a smaller room where all the learners, eight to ten a week, sat around one large

table. Observations at S3 occurred in two spaces as well. The researcher observed S3 was

the most consistent of the three sites with refreshments, offering coffee, donuts, and other

beverages consistently. When the researcher began his observations at S3, P3 was

teaching in the gym, a temporary space while the parish fellowship hall was being

remodeled. When class resumed with P3 at S3, P3 taught in his traditional spot in the

fellowship hall. Here, the learners sat in long rows of chairs, behind narrow tables, in front of the P3, who lectured and took notes on a whiteboard.

Pre-Workshop Research

In the month prior to the first observations, the researcher set the date and time for initial interviews with each of the participating pastors. At the initial meeting with each pastor, the researcher provided a consent form (Appendix A) and answered questions. He then obtained a signed consent form, thanked the pastor for his participation, and gave the pastor a copy of the consent form. Together, the researcher and each participant reviewed the protocol of the interview, including anticipated length, voluntary nature of the interview and the pastor's option to step out of the interview at any time, appropriateness of declining to answer any questions, and confidentiality. The researcher then proceeded to conduct the interview, using an audio recording device to aid in later transcription.

After each interview, the researcher transcribed and coded the data. Interviews, as a qualitative research methodology, have been labeled as one of the most important collection techniques in qualitative research and an important instrument when checking the accuracy of what has been observed (Fraenkel et al., 2012). For the purposes of this study, the researcher chose to run semi-structured interviews, or interviews wherein the researcher uses a set of interview questions to conduct the interviews yet also allows for freedom and flexibility in letting the participants deviate from those questions (Fraenkel et al., 2012). As the interviews were held at the beginning of the data collection process, the researcher needed to identify certain demographic data pieces for each participant. This data included their current congregational education setting as well as their background in education and exposure to the concepts of andragogy. Informal

interviewing, as opposed to semi-structured, would have had greater potential for missing some of these key data. This open-ended yet standardized form of interviewing, however, left enough flexibility to relate to individual circumstances while also facilitating the researcher's organization and analysis of the data. The interview questions (see Appendix B) included background questions, knowledge questions, experience questions, opinion questions, and feeling questions (Fraenkel et al., 2012). These were each designed around the different research questions for the study, which helped aid in coding the data sets, but only to a limited degree. Pointing to potential confusion about research questions and methods, Maxwell (2013) stated, "There is no way to mechanically convert research questions into methods; your methods are a means to answering your research questions, not a logical transformation of the latter" (p. 100). As such, for the purposes of the study, the researcher was aware in his interviews and observations to observe first and then relate those observations to research questions later. During the interview, the researcher was mindful to show respect for the individual, develop a rapport, be natural, and avoid leading questions. The researcher was mindful to code the interview data in terms of the research questions but also to begin to identify emergent themes in the responses of those interviewed. These codes were then used throughout the rest of the research project. Codes were made using a combination of open and focused coding (Esterberg, 2002), analyzing the raw data for natural patterns while also keeping a mind to specific themes from the study's research questions.

At the conclusion of the interview, the researcher provided each pastor with a journal and asked him to write down any thoughts and reflections throughout the course of the two months of instruction prior to the intervention. These journals functioned as a

type of questionnaire. According to Fraenkel et al. (2012), in qualitative research there are a variety of survey or questionnaire styles, both cross-sectional and longitudinal. For the purposes of the research, the journaling was classified as a panel study. Whereas other types of survey or questionnaires either follow a trend or a cohort, a panel study surveys the same sample of individuals at multiple times throughout the course of the research study. A main benefit of employing this method is that, "because the researcher is studying the same individuals, she can note changes in these characteristics or behavior and explore the reasons for these changes" (Fraenkel et al., 2012, p. 394). Journal entry prompts were provided by the researcher. The prompts were "What did you do today, and where do you think you need improvement?" and "What are two big takeaways from your Bible class today?" These were written to be intentionally open-ended as to allow the participants to direct the nature of their reflection. As open-ended questions may be criticized as being sometimes difficult to interpret and thus difficult to code (Fraenkel et al., 2012), the researcher made sure at monthly meetings when collecting the physical surveys to ask if there were any questions that arose or any clarity that could be given. The researcher emphasized the importance and value of journaling to the pastor who was encouraged to be intentional and mindful when completing entries each week as the journals would play an important role in the study.

The researcher attended and observed adult Bible class of two pastors two times and of one pastor three times during the two months of the study. The reason for this discrepancy between the three sites was that, due to unexpected travel from one of the participants, the researcher had to reschedule one observation. At the beginning of the first observation, as agreed upon previously by the researcher and the pastor, the pastor

indicated to the class that he would be observed from time to time over the upcoming

months but did not mention the intended purpose of the study. This was done to help

mitigate research bias. The members of the adult Bible classes were assured that their

identities would remain anonymous over the course of the study, as would their

congregation and the pastor. The researcher used a template for observation agreed upon

by both himself and his Chair (see Appendix C), and transcribed those notes into digital

form after each observation for the purpose of coding and compiling data after.

Workshops

After the initial two months of observation, the researcher convened with the

participants for two two-hour workshops at one of the participant congregations. These

two workshops were held on Thursday evenings over two consecutive weeks. This was

the best time as agreed upon by all three participants and the researcher. These

workshops had, in part, been practiced by the researcher in workshops on andragogy in

parish education in Phoenix and Saint Charles at different points in the months preceding

the interventions. According to Orngreen and Levinsen (2017), the modern conception of

workshops to brainstorm together arose in the 1940s and continues today. Ongreen and

Levinsen also stated that workshops should be led by experienced facilitators who

include those learning in genuine participation. Ongreen and Levinsen recommended the

following for best practice in conducting workshops:

> The participant group is kept small to allow everyone personal attention and the
>
> chance to be heard. The participants are expected to actively participate and
>
> influence the workshop's direction, as well as to practice the relevant techniques,
>
> skills, situations, and so forth. Additionally, workshop participants and organizers

expect an outcome (e.g. the generation of new insights, suggestions, or

(re)designs of a product, process, or innovation. (p. 72)

The researcher was mindful of the importance and difficulty of running

workshops at the outset of the intervention. In his summary of best practice of conducting

workshops, Sowell (2016) indicated that the heart of a workshop is the need to do work

rather than just scribble down information presented by a lecturer; workshops should be

platforms to engage the learners in activities and provide opportunities to share ideas and

experiences. Sowell presented a basic framework for planning, preparing, and delivering

workshops. First is the critical need for planning a hands-on topic. Not every topic is best

suited for a participant workshop. The researcher in this study was acutely aware of the

tendency to turn new information into a lecture and was mindful of Sowell's direction to

keep the intervention a workshop and not just a presentation. Second is the need to know

your audience, keeping the topic relevant to them, and keeping in mind the different

assumptions of andragogy. Sowell also emphasized the need for practicing the workshop,

checking the presentation room and seating arrangements, and keeping in mind

contingency plans in case of technological failures as well as providing well-prepared

materials (p. 4). At the workshop interventions for this study, the researcher began with

prayer, then collected the journal entries from the previous two months. The first of these

workshops was designed around facilitating learning experiences on andragogy, focused

primarily on the Six Assumptions. The outline to the first workshop can be found in

Appendix D. In this first workshop, the facilitator presented to the pastors on the learning

theory of andragogy and demonstrated andragogical teaching techniques to the

participants. The researcher was mindful to use best practice in facilitating the workshop,

focusing on helping the participants "learn, acquire new knowledge, perform creative problem-solving, or innovate in relation to [the] domain-specific issue" of adult Bible classes in the LCMS context (Orngreen & Levinsen, 2017, p. 71).

The researcher considered the recommendations of Sowell (2016), who suggested thinking of a workshop's construction and implementation in three parts: beginning, middle, and end. According to Sowell, the beginning stage should set the tone for the workshop, with a clear introduction as to the intent and goal of the workshop, as well as appropriate ice-breakers or other warm-up activities to help participants get to know each other and feel more relaxed prior to the main part of the workshop. The middle stage of the workshop focused on active learning and not just passive listening, allowing for pairs, small groups, and whole-group discussion as well as clear communication that would help the participants understand the purpose of the activities and how they related to their work. Key to the activities in the middle stage, according to Sowell (2016), was maintaining group work, making sure the material is at the appropriate level for the audience, managing time, using appropriate visuals and other materials to communicate ideas, and allowing time for questions (pp. 6–7). Finally, according to Sowell (2016), the ending stage of the workshop should provide enough time for the learners to wrap up, summarize, and ask questions of the presenter.

The researcher then observed the participants in their brainstorming of how they might implement these andragogical principles into their own adult Bible classes. At the end of the first workshop, the researcher provided the pastors with a new journal and asked them to jot down any thoughts and reflections throughout the course of the participants' instruction prior to the workshops. The researcher was mindful to keep the

needs of participants in mind when facilitating the intervention. Again, the researcher

emphasized to the pastors the importance and value of journaling and asked them to be

intentional and mindful when completing entries each week as the journals would play an

important role in the research and study. Journal entry prompts were provided by the

researcher. The prompts for the second section of the study were "How has your teaching

changed in light of your andragogical training? What aspects of using andragogy are

becoming easier or even automatic?" and "What are two big takeaways from your Bible

class today?" The researcher used videography to record the intervention.

The second workshop proceeded much like the first workshop, just one week

later. The focus of the second workshop was on the design theory of andragogy, or the

Eight Processes of Knowles. The outline for this second workshop was noted in

Appendix D. This second workshop began with prayer and reflection and questions since

the first workshop intervention the week prior. The researcher intentionally built in less

content coverage for the second workshop, anticipating more time for reflection. The

participants were reminded of the importance of the journal prompts and were instructed

to journal each week. After the workshops, at each observation, the researcher would

collect the previous month's journal entries, transcribe them, and code the data for later.

Post-Workshop Research

During the five months of the second segment of the study, the researcher

attended one adult Bible class of each pastor either four or five times and observed. The

researcher was mindful of weather events and church holidays, making sure to make up a

missed adult Bible class session if that occurred. The notes of the observations were

primarily based on how the teaching and learning aligned with Knowles's Six

Assumptions and Eight Processes. Aagaard and Matthiesen (2015), through their research into the rationale behind participant observation, noted how life is more than just dialogues and narratives. More typical qualitative methods, like interviews and questionnaires, though helpful and central to qualitative research, were verbal in nature and not necessarily material. Aagaard and Matthiesen commented, "Interviews favor verbal interactions and thus do not necessarily take into account how people bodily and perhaps silently engage and participate in concrete social and material situations" (p. 40). Hojholt and Kousholt (2014) noted how participant observation may enrich psychological analyses with broad empirical material from peoples' everyday lives and social interplay. Aagaard and Matthiesen (2015) also surmised that in order to overcome our humanist bias of purely focusing on the verbal pieces of qualitative research, it might be important for researchers to oscillate between interviews and participant observation. This was further reinforced by the belief that while interviews are popular in qualitative research, participant observations were also frequently used alongside them (Berthelsen et al., 2017). Thus, for the purposes of the study, the researcher felt that observation was an important component of qualitative research in tandem with other methods.

Fraenkel et al. (2012) noted four different roles that a researcher can take during observation, from complete participant to complete observer (p. 445). For the sake of this study, the researcher primarily took the role of what Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun called nonparticipant observation, in which

> researchers do not participate in the activity being observed but rather "sit on the
>
> sidelines" and watch . . . when a researcher chooses the role of observer-as-

participant, she identifies herself as a researcher but makes no pretense of actually

being a member of the group she is observing. (p. 446)

In this particular case, the pastors acknowledged the researcher to be an observer,

sitting in on Bible classes, but the researcher did not intentionally interact with the with

the participants or learners during observation.. The researcher also kept in mind the

recommendation that, when entering an observation, the researcher should take into

consideration how he chooses to enter the setting and how much involvement is both

needed and allowed by the methodology of participant observation (Berthelsen et al.,

2017). Fraenkel et al. (2012) also noted two considerations of which researchers engaged

in observations should be aware of. First, they noted the observer effect, in which

participants adjusted their behaviors to a considerable degree due to the presence or

influence of the observer in the room. To combat the observer effect, the authors noted

that researchers should invest extra observational time in the setting so as to help learners

become accustomed to their presence. In addition, the authors suggested that researchers

should not disclose the purpose of their study to the participants until after the data is

collected to help offset undue influence.

In line with this, the researcher also made sure in his observations to note the

physical layout of the spaces, being mindful of the fact that "while interviews are chiefly

about talking and listening to people, participant observation involves watching, sensing,

feeling, and being present with people and things" (Aagaard & Matthiesen, 2015, p. 41).

This, according to the researchers, involves expanding the qualitative scope to involve

material artifacts like tables, chairs, seating arrangements, and the like. To accomplish

this, Aagaard and Matthiesen recommended that researchers create situational maps when

conducting participant observation. This involved making accurate diagrams of where

people sit, the layout of the room, what props or aids are used, and how participants

engage with those material objects.

Focus Group

After the final class observation, the pastoral participants reconvened to attend a

focus group (see Appendix E). This occurred via video conferencing, as the outbreak of

the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic prohibited social interaction and had shut down any in-

person research. The focus group functioned as a kind of summary interview at the end of

the research study experience. The benefits of focus groups include the informal

discussion, which allows and encourages the participants to speak freely and completely

about their different beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and opinions which they possess (Berg,

2004, p. 143). The participants had already provided, through their interviews, journals,

and participant observation, data for the researcher to code and interpret. The researcher

was mindful of the fact that the object of the focus group was to get at what the

participants really thought of the use of andragogy in their Bible classes in a social

context. It was critical that, in one place, they were able to share and listen to the views of

others. According to Berg (2004), the energy generated from focus groups allows the

participants to "brainstorm collectively with other members of the group. A far larger

number of ideas, issues, topics and even solutions to a problem can be generated through

group discussion than through individual conversations" (p. 124). The researcher took

care to remember that focus groups were not discussions, neither are they problem-

solving sessions or decision-making groups, but instead were interviews (Fraenkel et al.,

2012, p. 457). The downsides of focus groups include the lack of depth of information

covered in relationship to other qualitative strategies like semi-structured interviews, which do not provide the same rich observational data that could be obtained over long stretches of observation. Berg (2004) suggested that focus group interviewing is best done in coordination with other more conventional qualitative data-gathering methods. The researcher kept this in mind as he added and coded the focus group data to the results.

The researcher, then, took special care to moderate the group, making sure everyone had an opportunity to share their views in the social setting but keeping the overall discussion on course and in line with the research questions of the study. The focus group took roughly an hour. The session began with prayer and an overall thank you to the participants. Berg (2004) suggested that focus group moderators follow five steps when designing a focus group: introductions and introduction activities, statement of the basic rules and guidelines for the interview, short question-and-answer discussions, special activities or exercises, and guidance for dealing with sensitive issues (p. 133). The researcher kept these guidelines in mind when conducting the focus group. At the conclusion of the focus group the pastoral participants were each given a ministry resource, supplied by the researcher, in appreciation for their assistance with the study.

Analysis

All data was collected and stored in a locked file throughout the study and during dissertation writing. Esterberg (2002) suggested researchers follow certain principles when managing data that has been collected. For the sake of this study, the researcher was mindful of these suggested steps and used them as often as possible. First, Esterberg suggested keeping the different types of data separate in separate files, accurately labeled.

Esterberg also suggested keeping data rigidly in chronological order, using field notes as a proper way to make sense of what data was collected. The researcher kept a physical journal of notes during the entire study, marking down field notes before and after each observation, helping to keep a record of any variations or changes that were encountered. This logbook kept a record of pertinent dates and was transferred to online files each week and organized online in a password protected, cloud-based location.

The researcher then took to the careful task of analyzing the data. According to Esterberg (2002), the task of qualitative research, and the qualitative researcher, was ultimately to make meaning out of raw materials (p. 152). This was in line with Shank (2006), who noted that data analysis was ultimately about "searching for patterns in data. When we find a pattern, then we have good reason to suppose that something systematic is creating that pattern" (p. 14). As different researchers may look at different data sets and come up with different conclusions, the researcher kept in mind that any conclusions should be at least plausible and based on the data. As such, there can be no perfect way to analyze data, just whatever methods work best to effectively make meaning from that data. That said, the researcher strove to create the most representative and useful analysis of the data possible.

For coding the data, the researcher used a combination of open and focused coding. Esterberg (2002) noted that open coding's primary purpose was to evaluate the data apart from preconceived notions and categories, finding patterns in the themes of the data and categorizing the data among a short list of the most common topical themes that organically emerged from the data (p. 159). On the other hand, focused coding was defined by taking the first list of codes derived from the open coding and focusing them

down to the key themes that emerge (p. 161). In the specific case of this research study,

the researcher kept the research questions of the study in mind when developing the

focused codes, looking for correlations between the data sets and the questions guiding

the impact of andragogy in the Bible classes being studied. In the interpretation of

qualitative data, Maxwell (2013) stressed that

> reading and thinking about your interview transcripts and observation notes,
>
> writing memos, developing coding categories and applying those to your data,
>
> analyzing narrative structure and contextual relationships, and creating matrices
>
> and other displays are all important forms of data analyses. (p. 105)

Maxwell also emphasized that there is no one way to interpret qualitative research, and

instead the researcher would be wise to use both organizational categories, like open

coding, and substantive or theoretical categories of coding when interpreting any

significant amount of data. As such, the researcher began with open coding, using

significant words or phrases to create a system of codes, but also used more theoretical

categories, including Knowles's Six Assumptions and Eight Processes, in conjunction

with the data to create a more robust interpretation of the data. Once all data was

collected, the researcher coded the results and analyzed the same to determine if there are

common themes, congruency in responses, or variances and generally what meanings all

the participants made of what they had learned and experienced in this intervention.

Validity

Validity was a major concern of the researcher during the qualitative study,

especially since a majority of the time spent gathering research was done in participant

observation. The use of multiple methods of data gathering assisted in the triangulation of

data, but as Maxwell (2013) wrote, "validity threats are made implausible by evidence, not methods" (p. 121). As such, the researcher took extensive notes during the observations and the workshops, and transcribed the interviews, journals, and focus group word for word in an effort to gather as much evidence as possible before coming to conclusions or answering his research questions. Maxwell concluded that, in order to gather the best qualitative data, researchers should pay attention to the following validity tests: intensive long-term involvement, rich data, respondent validation, intervention, searching for discrepant evidence and negative cases, triangulation, numbers, and comparison (pp. 125–129). In this study, the researcher was involved with the participants in different ways over a span of seven months and compiled extensive transcripts and notes. After the initial interviews, the researcher sent the transcripts to the participants for validation. Participant responses during the final focus group were used to help triangulate data from the observations, journals, and interviews. In addition, the study relied on an intervention in the form of two workshops during the study, which added credibility to the observations made by the researcher and comments made by the participants as to the impact of the andragogical training during the workshops. In total, these steps were taken in order to help mitigate any threats to the validity of the study.

Conclusion

This qualitative study investigated what changes, if any, occurred when andragogical teaching strategies were implemented by pastors in Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Bible classes. To do so, the researcher, at the approval of the Missouri District President of the LCMS, reached out to different pastors in the area in southern St. Louis. Three pastors agreed to participate. At the initial meeting, each participant went

over the details of the study, signed a consent form, and participated in an interview with

the researcher. After this, the researcher observed all three participants teaching their

adult Bible classes on Sunday mornings, recording observational notes. Each participant

was also given two journal prompts to fill out each time they taught on Sunday mornings,

which they agreed to hand in to the researcher. After the initial period of observations,

where two pastors were observed twice and one observed three times, the pastors took

part in two nights of workshops on andragogical theory and design with the researcher.

After this intervention, the participants were given new journal prompts that they agreed

to fill out each week. The researcher then observed the three participants for a series of

months, taking special note to record what impact, if any, the andragogical training had

on the participants. In total, one site was observed four times and two sites were observed

five times after the workshops. At the end of the research period, the researcher held a

one-hour focus group with all three participants where they shared their experiences with

one another and with the researcher. The interviews, journals, and focus group

interactions were transcribed by the researcher. The notes the researcher took from the

observations were transcribed and coded. The researcher recorded the workshops, and

upon playback, summarized the highlights of those workshops. The researcher then

looked over and coded the data for study. The results from that information were

recorded in Chapter Four.

Chapter Four: Results

General Qualitative Feedback

This qualitative study explored the impact of andragogical teaching methods, broadly conceived, used by pastors in adult Bible Classes in Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) congregations in the St. Louis area. Data was gathered using observations, interviews, journals, and a focus group. The researcher sought to determine what changes, if any, would occur after pastors participated in training that focused on implementing andragogical teaching methods in their Bible classes. The researcher observed the pastors both before and after two workshops in andragogical theory and design. In doing so, the researcher investigated the overall impact of andragogy on their teaching. Also, by observing the learning environment throughout the study, the researcher drew connections between the teachers' and learners' experiences during the research.

As the researcher gathered and compiled the data, the researcher divided the data for this study of the impact of andragogy on adult Bible classes in LCMS congregations into two parts: pre-workshop and post-workshop. First, the researcher examined the research questions by considering the interviews and observations of the researcher before the two workshops in andragogical theory. For this first section, several of the research questions could not be investigated thoroughly as they were contingent on what changes, if any, would occur once andragogical training was implemented. That said, observations made in the first section of the research laid a foundation for the second section. Data gathered during the second phase of the research, including observations, journal prompts, and the focus group examined more fully the impact of the andragogical

training after the workshops. This compiled data formed much of the content of this

chapter. The three participants are labeled, for the sake of their anonymity, as P1, P2, and

P3. P1 served in congregation site S1, P2 served at congregation S2, and P3 served in

congregation S3.

Research Questions
1. How will pastors react to instruction in the principles of andragogical theory and

   design?

2. What changes, if any, will occur when andragogical teaching strategies are

   implemented by pastors in Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Bible classes?

3. What is the relationship between the instructors' self-perceptions regarding their

   instructional strategies with their learners when compared to observations made

   by the researcher?

4. In what ways, if any, are the Bible study participants' experiences in class

   different after the pastor received andragogical training?

5. What, if any, new instructional strategies have emerged as a result of the pastor's

   receiving andragogical training?

6. To what extent, if any, does the instructor in the Adult Bible classes utilize any of

   the Six Assumptions and Eight Processes espoused by Malcolm Knowles?

   Research question one.

   The first research question was: how will pastors react to instruction in the

principles of andragogical theory and design? The researcher compiled most of the data

for this research question from participant statements and researcher observations during

the workshops, and the reflections of the participants during the final focus group. After

the second workshop, the researcher noticed the participants benefitted from the lecture

parts of the workshops. In these lecture sections of the workshop, the researcher

expounded on andragogical theory and design but benefitted more from their

collaborative discussion together.

Overall, the researcher felt that the participants were receptive to the ideas of

andragogy. The researcher observed the theme of the researcher termed The Appeal of

Flexibility among the participants during their training in andragogical theory and design

The researcher observed that the learners were especially receptive to the researcher's

prompting that this study was designed to see what impact this teaching may have had on

their Bible class rather than the researcher pushing this theory as the optimal way to

teach. The researcher concluded that this approach to presenting andragogy as one theory

among many put the participants at ease, allowing them to more openly critique and

consider the theory as they were learning it in the workshops and contemplating its use in

their Bible classes.

The researcher also observed the theme of what the researcher titled Andragogy's

Compatibility with Pedagogy as a factor in the participant's receptivity to their

andragogical training. The researcher noticed that the participants seemed put at ease by

the concept that andragogy built upon the assumptions of pedagogy rather than replacing

them, and that according to the theory, each learner is on a continuum between the two

sets of assumptions. Principally in the second workshop on andragogical design theory,

the participants related their doubts to the utility of the Eight Processes in a Bible class

setting. Despite these doubts, the participants each identified aspects of andragogical

design that they could find useful. P1, the least talkative and experienced of the

participants, thanked the researcher after the workshops and expressed a desire to utilize

what he had learned. P2 was engaged in the learning process and, though the researcher

had previously witnessed in observations that he used the most andragogical elements in

his teaching of the three, noted at several times how he would benefit from using

andragogical principles in his teaching. P3, the most pedagogical in his teaching

approach, as observed by the researcher, respectfully expressed the most amount of

concern towards certain aspects of andragogy in the workshops. Notably, P3 made the

extended comment that the researcher included here in full. P3 commented:

> in the andragogical approach, not to disparage it . . . it reminds me so much of
>
> reader-response theory which I have no patience for. But I can see where this
>
> applies a lot more for like humanities and also for, just you know, individual
>
> learning stuff, and it applies here too. I'm not saying that it doesn't apply. But just
>
> like [P2] was saying, we run the spectrum. How do you balance the need for the
>
> pedagogical approach because theology is pedagogical in all its fundamentals and
>
> foundations . . . its dogma. Then the application for life, the wisdom parts they are
>
> getting out of it, the growth in the spiritual life, that's going to be individualistic
>
> and the application of it then for their lives is going to be much more on the
>
> andragogical side and knowing where that line is, and when I shift from one to the
>
> other, that becomes a challenge. And we need both for sure.

At the same time, P3 also vocalized the most about the benefits of other aspects of

andragogy, and the researcher noticed in P3s reflections during the workshops how he

sought to synthesize the new learning with his previous experiences to better his teaching.

Another theme that emerged from the data was what the researcher termed

Professional Development. During the final focus group, the researcher asked the learners

to comment on how the training experience, if at all, made them more reflective of their

teaching. P3 immediately added that he "became more reflective, part of it was just

because I had to be because you asked questions that I had to answer. Which, of course,

is very positive a lot of times it's exactly what people need to grow, right?" After a bit of

laughter, P3 continued, "But on the other hand, it also it also really did help me think

about my intentionality about where I'm going with the questions." He indicated that

what he had learned was that in his teaching he should be, "Not just trying to show what

God's truth in general is with a given scripture or subject, but . . . what's God's truth for

these specific people, and what is it that they need to hear their life?" To this, P2 added

that having the journal questions each week kept the andragogical training in the

forefront of his mind. He also stated that "just having the class at the beginning it helps

you to start thinking about 'Okay, why am I doing what I'm doing right now? Is what I'm

doing here is this the best way to be approaching it?'" P1 finally reflected that the

andragogical training made him more aware of how others whom he observed and

worked with taught adults. He stated, "they do that, I can do that a little bit better. I need

to pay attention to that, so you know those kind of things are helpful."

Another theme that arose from the data was the what the researcher termed the

Applicability of Andragogy to Future Teaching. Near the conclusion of the focus group,

the researcher asked how the participants were going to proceed after the study. All three

participants expressed a desire to think of their adult learning in more contractual terms.

P3 added that a more contractual attitude would help build buy-in and community for

new members, especially if he asked them what they wanted to learn before and assessed

what they learned after. P1 stated that he would want to use mutual planning with his

classes in the future, planning that he would "figure out exactly what they want to learn what their goals are, how they envision that class actually preparing them for their walk of faith and what they envision that to look like." P2 elaborated on what he had learned from integrating some mutual planning in his new member class and considered ways he might integrate that into his future.

Overall, the participants reacted well to their instruction in andragogical theory and design. Themes that emerged from this training were, as identified by the researcher: The Appeal of Flexibility, Andragogy's Compatibility with Pedagogy, Professional Development, and Applicability of Andragogy. To a certain extent, the researcher thought this might be the case as all three participants volunteered to participate in the training and the study. In that light, the researcher concluded that these participants would likely be more receptive to learning than those who would not volunteer for such training. That said, the participants' reaction to andragogical theory was, at first, mixed. At the workshops, different participants expressed a certain amount of skepticism towards not only the theory of andragogy but its utility in a Bible class setting. Though respectful, they had questions about andragogy. Throughout the study, the researcher observed how the influence of andragogy in teaching strategies and learner experiences was subtle and nuanced. The participants did not completely change course from their plans after their instruction. Nevertheless, the different participants used different facets, assumptions, and processes from andragogy in their various ways to enhance their instruction. In the end, at the focus group, the participants appeared enthusiastic by what they had learned. The participants also expressed how the training had not only expanded

their views on the nature of adult learning but also had given them some new tools and strategies to use in the future.

Research question two.

The second research question was: what changes, if any, will occur when andragogical teaching strategies are implemented by pastors in Lutheran Church— Missouri Synod Bible classes? As this research question was in many ways a summary of the findings of research questions four through six, the researcher did not report many details here but instead summarized the major themes that emerged from the andragogical instruction. More specific details, quotes, and comments from the participants were recorded later in this chapter. Significant themes that emerged when pastors implemented andragogical teaching strategies in LCMS Bible classes were: Learner Interaction, The Use of Questions, Perceptions of Adults as Learners, and Developing Personal Reflectivity.

An emerging theme that arose from the data over the course of the study was a change in Learner Interaction. Specifically, the researcher observed a shift in amount of interaction between the learners during Bible class sessions. Significant andragogical assumptions include the assumption that adult learners see themselves as self-directed and responsible for their learning, and that learners come with a wealth of experience that they desire to share. After the workshops, P1 increased the amount of small group table interactions from about one per session to three or four. This change decreased the amount of time he spent lecturing in the class and encouraged more time in discussion and sharing of experiences among the learners. The researcher observed that P2 directed his opening questions, after the workshops, to the direct knowledge and experience of the

learners. These questions drew on their understandings and structured the rest of the

class. These opening questions elicited more group sharing and collaboration. In fact,

after one of his opening questions, every single learner in the group volunteered their

answer. In this case, the learners built their answers off of each other. After the

workshops, the researcher observed that P3 began to ask more open-ended questions in

his sessions. During the final focus group, P3 admitted that these open-ended questions

that emerged after the workshops were intended to increase learner interaction with each

other. He commented that after the workshops "one of the things that I've found is

happening more at least I'm noticing more, is trying to get them to become closer as a

group," and that even though it was a large group, he desired "that they feel like they

know each other better at the end of class than they did before." He also stated that he

was more intentionally trying to build community. After the training, P3 stated that he

more intentionally observed how "every person there is there because they want to be

there and these are our brothers and sisters are walking together" and that "it's not just me

telling him what to think . . . but that we're all together as God's children sitting before

Jesus speaking these truths to us as the Word."

Another theme that the researcher observed from the data was The Use of

Questions. In particular, over the course of the study the researcher observed an increase

in the amount of teacher-directed questions from the participants, as well as increased

class time dedicated to life application. P1 increased the amount of time in class for small

group interaction and often directed his questions more towards how the learners would

apply their learning to their lives. In the focus group, P1 stated that his training made him

more aware that when teaching adults, "there's a different level of respect that you have

for the learner in the sense of you're bringing something with you and I need to honor

that." He stated that the increased awareness of learners' motivation to learn, as espoused

by Knowles, helped him realize that his learners were bringing their "own motivations,

your own purposes. It's not just that I [the pastor] have got something I want to tell you,

and here it is." He also commented that having the respect for adult learners helped him

dig not only into life application as part of the class, but instead that adult learners have

"an expectation of the class and so it was helpful to me to kind of see, I need to honor

that in some way, not necessarily always the same way, but to see that [application]

through in the class." P2 began his lessons, after the workshop, by asking his learners to

reflect on their own knowledge, or lack thereof, of the topic, and then share that with the

class. This change helped structure the entire learning experience for the session around

life application, as the learners shared their own experiences and appeared to the

researcher much more eager to find answers to their questions or comments throughout

the class. After the workshops, P3 intentionally shifted his questions, especially in the

second half of his lessons, towards more open-ended life application. Examples of

questions after the interventions included, "What is Jesus saying here," "What's the

equivalent today," and "Is this still a concern for us today?" In the focus group, P3

confirmed that these changes in asking questions that correlated to more life applications

were a result of the andragogical training. He stated that the conversational tone in class,

"the give and take questioning, people conversing with each other where I'm kind of

facilitating even at certain points, that's been more frequent in the last several months

versus much more of a lecture-style format." P3 also noted that he had intentionally used

"a few more leading questions, versus just kind of dictating how things go. It seems to

have been appreciated I had from the feedback I've received here and there from stuff posted normally." He also stated that he thought this change "had some positive impact on for those for the listener and for the receiver, not just for me."

Another theme that the researcher observed, which arose from the andragogical training was a change in the participants' Perceptions of Adults as Learners. In the focus group, both P2 and P3 shared how they, after the workshops, tried to use open-ended questions with their seventh and eighth-grade students in different classes. They both shared how middle-school learners reacted differently than adults. P2 reflected that "what it showed me that before I just thought you know adults know more, or developmentally they can handle more or something like that. But this showed me, that experience showed me, that they also just learn differently." To this, P3 added that in the educational world, "you learn the cognitive stages that are different from people and like little kids and concrete stage and all that kind of stuff," but the perception is that adults are "just bigger older kids or something, right?" P3 further reflected that this training helped him realize that "one of the differences between my seventh graders and my adults is my adults really want to be there. A lot of my seventh graders aren't necessarily excited to be there, right?" P3 concluded that he learned that "yeah, that there is a different way to teach adults than there is children, even more than just that buy-in."

Another theme that emerged throughout the study was what the researcher termed Developing Personal Reflectivity. Put another way, the researcher observed, from the participants, an increased desire to incorporate more intentional learner reflection into their lessons. During the focus group, P2 stated that at the beginning of the unit, he had asked the participants what "they wanted to get out of it . . . this was a review class for

some of them. [Others] were new members. So, they said a number of different things

about what they wanted to get out of it." P2 then went on to say that "at the end of the

class I came back to 'did [we] see these things or if they had a question that they wanted

to have answered [did] we answer that?'" P2 continued that "if they said 'Oh yeah yeah

yeah' then I would ask them 'Okay how did we answer that question?'" Though he was

unsure how intentional this mutual evaluation was, he did state that he thought this would

be a good practice for other classes also, "asking ahead 'what do you want to get out of

this, and then to reflect back, 'so did you get something out of it? What was it, and where

did that happen?'" To these comments, both P1 and P3 expressed a desire to use the same

technique in their classes in the future to include more mutual evaluation at the end of

their units of instruction. Though this was a new technique that emerged for P2, it was

also a change in attitude for all three participants as they expressed a changed attitude

towards evaluating their learners at the end of a unit of instruction.

   Research question three.

   The third research question was: what is the relationship between the instructors'

self-perceptions regarding their instructional strategies with their learners when compared

to observations made by the researcher? Data collected from interviews of the three

participants before their observations offered some unique insights into the pastors' self-

concept as educators. Comments gathered from the interviews provided valuable insight

into how the pastors perceived themselves as teachers, but also how they perceived their

groups of Bible study participants. These observations also included what the pastors

believed about their participants' views of them, which the researcher later used to

compare to the observational data of the learners' interactions with the pastors. This

section of the research question involved evaluating the participants' prior knowledge in education and educational theory, then investigating the participants' perceptions of the state of their Bible class, the participants' satisfaction with the state of their Bible classes, the participants reflections on their impressions of their learners' perceptions of their teaching, and finally the participants' perceptions of their most significant challenges and opportunities for their Bible classes.

During their interviews, all three participants indicated that, though they had no specific education in the field of adult education or andragogy, each had some prior education in different educational fields. Assessing this was important to the researcher for understanding how each participant felt about his teaching practice. P1 shared that his experience in teaching was as an adult instructor in the military for seven years. He commented, "when you're going to go teach for [the military] it's a three-month instructor school they send you to. And that is just classroom education, and then you demonstrate that to them a bit." P2 reported that he had some undergraduate training in Christian education. He stated that he did the minor at his undergraduate institution that made up the core of the DCE curriculum, including a course on teaching the faith and another course he could not remember. He then stated that "aside from that, I've slept a lot of the time since then, but had a minor in Psychology, so you get into child development and those sort of things which kind of go hand in hand with that." When asked about his training in education, P3 remarked that he had earned his bachelor's degree in secondary education with endorsements in math, English, writing, and computer science. From there, he taught a couple of undergraduate classes at one graduate school when he was there. Since beginning graduate school at the seminary, P3

did a lot of tutoring and occasional guest lecturing. He concluded, "I'm still in different

teaching milieus, and I've kept teaching even before I became a pastor, but outside of my

degree, I have not spent a lot of time on theory."

As for the current climate of the Bible classes, P1 and P2 made comments, while

P3 did not. P1 stated that, for the numbers in Bible class, "I think we're doing okay in that

respect," in regards to the ratio of Bible class attenders to weekly attenders constituting

roughly one out of every five participates in Bible class. P1 added about the nature of his

learners that the "group of 30 or some people are my cheerleaders." He later added,

concerning his learners, that "some of them can be brutally honest, but they want to see

this church succeed, they want to see me succeed, and it just comes away being a very

good experience most Sundays." About the state of Bible Class, P2 commented, "In

general attendance is, for the size of the congregation, is pretty good, because across that

we probably have about 70 or so in attendance total." P2 had been in a previous

congregation and had been at S2 for nine years.

The pastors also made some observations about the people who attended their

Bible classes. P1 made some comments about the variety of backgrounds of people in his

congregation, specifically, "In this neck of the woods you're just as likely as not to have

quite a few people who didn't grow up Lutheran. But they really want to get active in

your church." When asked about the kinds of people who participate in his Bible class,

P2 stated that his congregational community was somewhere between city and county,

and that "the makeup of the congregation kind of looks like that too . . . you get a mixture

of everything from country, blue-collar, white-collar, suburban, so you get a cross-section

in that kind of way." About the population of people who attend his Sunday morning

class, P2 stated, "if I have a group of 35 that are there on a given Sunday, there might be a total of 45 who come, and two-thirds of them are always there, and everybody else kind of floats in and out." P3 commented that his class constituted a "wide group of learners, between people who are unfamiliar with the material and people who are incredibly familiar with the material, and also a great dynamic mix of backgrounds and the kinds of questions they have." P3 then commented about the general makeup of his class, stating, "The average age, if you took an average age, is probably in their fifties, but you have people from their early twenties to the mid-eighties in there." He then added, "We have folks that are PhDs and graduate people of various kinds, lawyers and things, and I also have mechanics and blue-collar guys in the trades, so people from all walks of life."

When asked, "in your opinion, do your learners see you as a teacher in the same way you see yourself as a teacher," all three participants struggled to respond. P1 stated, "I definitely think we have a couple of different camps." He talked about the challenges of following a previous pastor who was well-loved. "The pastor before me [was] a very smart guy," P1 continued, "There's no pulling off that guy, and there's nothing to do about that . . . Definitely for them, sometimes I'm not as intellectual as they wish I could be." P1 then added, "there are other people that will say, he was always over our heads." P1 then called himself his own worst critic, saying

> I don't like a lot of what I do, and the level to which I do it. And yet there are people who, I think the majority of my class, enjoys the way I teach. I question still, even when I get those compliments . . . so I doubt myself sometimes . . . Most of the time, I think I'm a worse teacher than they think I am.

When asked to reflect upon whether or not he believed his learners saw him as a teacher the way he saw himself as a teacher, P2 stated, "I tend to think so. I think . . . I should say that differently. They probably think more highly of me than I do." P2 noted how, in his congregation, there were not as many highly educated people as in other parts of the city. He said, "lots of people are very smart; they just don't have as many degrees behind their name." He also stated, "there's not the same push back, which in some ways is easy. I mean, so I can just give answers, but it doesn't help people think through things as much unless I give them space to do so as such." P2 expressed his perception that his learners often think that the pastor "knows the right answers, so we got to ask pastor, and he'll take care of it." In contrast, P2 stated that he did not immediately think the same about himself.

When asked, in his opinion, if learners see him as a teacher the same way he would see himself, P3 firmly stated, "I doubt it." He then added, "Well, for two reasons. One: my self- understanding is never going to be the same as peoples' perception of me. That's just psychological reality, right?" P3 continued that, based on Lutheran theology of the Holy Spirit, he was uncertain of how any of his learners would perceive his teaching as that was out of his hand. "So for me to believe I'm teaching a certain thing and to believe that that's exactly what they got out of it would be pretty naive," P3 noted, "in the same way that when I'm preaching a sermon, someone comes up to me and says they really like a part of my sermon and the part they relate was not in the sermon." He added his belief that the connections people made on their experiential level would not always be correctly addressing the topics that he was addressing in class. He added that he would

give them the things that they need about the material that we're talking about on

that day . . . but how that interacts with where they're at in life and how God uses .

. . I always think of the Word as the Spirit's toolbox.

With that in mind, P3 stated that he should not believe that because even when he had

taught something well, that was not necessarily what anyone is going to get out of it. "But

these are the things that I believe need to be taught," he stated, "these are the truths that I

believe pertain to our congregation and the people there at this point, so I want to make

sure I trust those things." He concluded his belief that "there's always room for the Holy

Spirit's action to work to grow people in ways that are beyond my comprehensions or

understanding."

Researcher observations from learners.

Throughout the observations, the researcher looked for and noted different learner

experiences. During these observations, two primary themes emerged. First, the

researcher observed how, in all three cases, the learners viewed the participants as what

the researcher named Subject Matter Experts. Second, the researcher noticed how, after

the workshops, the participants tended to encourage more interactivity, sharing of

experience, and life application, a theme which the researcher titled Learner Interaction.

In all three cases, the researcher observed how the learners considered the pastors

to be subject matter experts, which related to each participants' self-perceptions

differently. During the interviews, P1 commented on his fear that the learners did not see

him as intellectual enough, yet in his observations, the researcher never once perceived

that the learners hesitated to ask him questions or trust his advice. On one occasion, a

learner asked him a difficult question about a difficult doctrine, and though P1 did not

answer right away, he came back in a future class and addressed the issue with

confidence. During the final focus group, P1 continued to express doubts in his teaching

ability due to a lack of experience. In his interview, P2 stated that he believed his learners

saw him as more competent than he did. The researcher observed, in his sessions, how P2

often used self-deprecating humor. At the same time, however, the learners continually

treated P2 as an expert, not hesitating to ask difficult questions. During his interview, P3

stated that he saw his job as a teacher as a guide to direct learners to the truth. In the

observations of P3, the researcher saw that the learners considered P3 a content expert,

and P3 structured the class periods to allow for ample time to answer learner queries,

often giving mini-lectures for extended periods. Overall, the researcher observed how

P1's and P2's self-perception as content experts did not align with observations from the

learners, while P3's perception as a content expert aligned with observations from the

experiences of the learners.

Also, the researcher observed how, after the workshops, the participants' self-

perception of their teaching strategies allowing greater learner interaction and greater

opportunity for learners to apply the content to their lives. The researcher observed how

this increase in learner interaction after the training better aligned the participants' self-

perceptions as teachers of adults with what was observed. In the interviews, both P2 and

P3 stated how they desired, in their teaching, to allow space for the learners, by the power

of the Holy Spirit, to apply the text to their own lives. The researcher observed, after the

workshops, how all the participants gave their learners increased opportunities to share

their reflections in either small or large groups. After the workshops, P1 encouraged more

small group time among his learners, P2 used learner feedback at the beginning of class

to frame the rest of the class, and P3 asked more open-ended questions to elicit more personal reflection. In each one of these cases, the participants gave their learners more opportunities to share their applications. In this respect, the researcher observed how the workshops helped to better align the participants' self-perceptions of their teaching strategies to the experience of the learners.

Research question four.

Research question four was: In what ways, if any, are the Bible study participants' experiences in class different after the pastor received andragogical training? In order to investigate this research question, the researcher observed each of the sites. The researcher utilized a template for observations that included a space for general field notes, a column for noting comments, a column for observations on those comments, a column for recording the times of comments and observations, and a space for recording researcher questions. For the sake of this study, the researcher compiled and coded the data from these observational templates, organizing observations on learner experience by site and participant. Due to the outbreak of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, Bible studies were shut down, and all research was suspended in March, seven months into the nine months of observations. In total, the researcher was able to observe 21 of the planned 27 times. Despite this, the researcher was able to use the available observations to compile data about learner experiences. Themes that emerged from data for this research question included what the researcher named: Grouping Strategies, Learner Interaction, Developing Personal Reflectivity, and The Use of Questions to assist in life application. The researcher observed these different themes the different sites, and discussed them more fully in Chapter Five.

Observations of learners' experiences from S1.

The researcher observed P1 three times before the completion of both workshops. Overall, learner experience at S1 before the training was mixed. P1 used a video curriculum, purchased from CPH on the topic of the book of Revelation, for the first two sessions. The researcher observed that the learners were mostly passive, with some scattered interaction. For these, many of the questions P1 asked revolved around one-word answers from the curriculum. These questions provided few opportunities for learners to share their experiences. The researcher observed how the set questions mostly had one set answer, like "How does the millstone serve as an illustration of God's justification in Rev. 18?" P1 read off questions from the official study guide quickly, followed by reading notes off the PowerPoint. Throughout the lesson, P1 kept asking questions from the PowerPoint screen, and the large group shouted out answers, and some learner comments added in. The videos did not involve much content about the experience of daily life outside the church. Instead, the talking head on the video mostly just explained the content of the Bible text. The content, to the researcher, appeared advanced in its theological breadth, including many references in the video to other Scripture passages, narratives, and themes that work under assumptions of background knowledge. The format was back and forth between watching video clips and P1 covering the questions, almost exclusively reading off the answers to the discussion questions quickly from the PowerPoint. For the third session, with the different topic and format, P1 allowed more room for learners to share their experiences. The new class unit covered topics related to the family. Overall, the researcher noticed the participants seemed much more attentive to what P1 was saying than in previous weeks, most likely

due to the more relevant topic. The researcher noticed that there were often too many questions to discuss in the time allotted, so P1 appeared rushed. Forty-five minutes into the lesson, P1 said, "I'll give you some time at your tables to talk about this question. I gave out the notebooks last time." At this, P1 stepped back. Every person seemed engaged in a lively group discussion at their tables, and volume and energy elevated in the room when talking at the tables. Overall, before the workshops, the researcher noticed how P1 directed the conversation, asked the questions, and considered himself to be the content matter expert. For all three sessions, learners were mostly passive in their experience.

After the interventions, the researcher observed S1 a total of four times. Overall, the learning experience at S1 was markedly different before and after the interventions. After the workshops, P1 utilized more grouping strategies in the form of small group discussions much more frequently than before and appeared to the researcher to be more self-consciously aware of the different learning needs of his learners by asking them with more frequency to share their experiences and less on sharing the content answer from the purchased curriculum. For example, during one of the observations, P1 asserted, "Let's skip ahead to this next question and talk at our tables," which the researcher observed as an apparent move away from merely covering the questions to allocating more time to group discussion and learner interaction. After this, the group was very active in talking and sharing, and the volume level of the room increased significantly. The researcher observed how learners who elected not to speak and share with the large group were doing so in the small groups. In a different session, P1 began by reading a Biblical account and continuing with, "This is a very common story. Could you tell me

some things that grab you about this story?" This question prompted four people to shout

out responses right away. P1 then instructed the learners to discuss a question at their

tables. The prompt was, "Let's go to the tables. Brainstorm a list of different people

whom you rely on every day." The researcher noticed how the learners were engaged and

animated in their sharing and discussion after the use of questions to prompt them to

share their experiences. P1 sat at the one table with only one learner who was sitting

alone. The researcher observed how the first third of the time for the day focused on

group and self-reflection, incorporating the assumption of readiness to learn and

orientation to learning more intentionally than he had observed before. During the group

debrief after the original discussion, the researcher observed how many people were

willing to shout out and share their reflections. The researcher counted, between the

opening question and the table discussion, 11 of the 18 learners volunteered and

answered out loud. P1's journal observations reinforced this change in P1 to write

questions that called on learners to share their experiences. P1 noted that after the

workshops, "It is becoming automatic for me to word questions with what I know about

their interests and experiences . . . When they know what they want to learn and why the

questions really fly." The researcher noted that the different curriculum from before and

after the workshops likely added to these changes. The overall learning experience,

however, was much more collaborative after the workshops, where P1 appeared to

intentionally add more small group time for sharing as advanced in andragogy.

Observations of learners' experiences from S2.

The researcher observed P2 twice before the completion of both workshops.

Overall, before the workshops, the researcher observed that P2 was comfortable and

confident in facilitating group discussions. P2 demonstrated lots of humor in his

discussion, mostly self-deprecating humor. The researcher noticed that the group of

learners was vocal and comfortable. P2 spent about half the time talking and half the time

listening or giving people a chance to talk in small groups during the first half of the

class, while the second half of the lesson was much more teacher talk. For example, in

one session with about 10 minutes left, P2 asked the question "Question two is something

for you all to look at individually, take a minute, in what areas of your life do you pride

yourself in? After that think of areas in your life when you're not in control." P2 then

took a step back from talking to allow small group discussion among the learners at their

tables, to which P2 sat up front, watching for a few minutes. In another session, P2 began

class by pointing the learners to a survey they completed during the summer, and adding

that the questions on the survey were "What difficult problems do you deal with, and do

you think these are easier for you than they were for previous generations?" He then told

the learners to "take a few minutes and see what sticks out to you." After the question,

the learners, around their tables, engaged in a robust table discussion. They were looking

at their previous felt needs now laid out in the survey. The learners in the groups were

familiar with each other and eager to share their thoughts. P2 walked around during the

discussion, checking in on people. They talked around their tables with people sitting

nearby. To the researcher, it appeared that no learners were left out of the discussion.

Overall, P2 planned his lessons around a mix of both large group and small group

discussions, and his questions were often reflective in nature and open-ended. The learner

experience was reasonably informal and fluid, and though a few learners dominated

discussion, P2 encouraged different people to add their thoughts to the overall learner experience.

After the interventions, the researcher observed S2 a total of five times. Though the learning experience was collaborative for the learners at S2 before the interventions, the level of sharing experiences and learner input increased after the andragogical training. After the workshops, P2 began adding a question to the beginning of the lesson. In the use of questions, the learners would share their experience and knowledge with him and the group. P2 recorded those answers and used them to guide the discussion. For example, during one session, P2 began the learning experience by asking each learner to write down their own experience with what they know of the Holy Spirit. After this, P2 asked the learners, "I asked you this. If I asked you the same question about Jesus, how long would it take? Why is it so hard to come up with these things about the Holy Spirit?" To this, each one of the learners volunteered to share a response. This case of learner interaction was the only instance in the researcher's observations when all the participants elected to share with the group. As P2 used this new format, throughout the class, addressed those comments one at a time, the researcher observed that most if not all of the learners were not only actively listening to P2 teach, but were more frequent in asking further questions or volunteering more of their experiences. In another instance, P2 entered the room at the class time start and said, "We still have a few minutes, but as you wait, fill out the papers for the questions." After saying this, P2 left, leaving the five learners at the time to talk a bit with each other as they wrote. One said forgiveness is hard because "we're human," while another commented out loud that "the question is a hard one." It appeared to the researcher that perhaps P2 had left intentionally to allow the

learners to respond to the question on their own for developing personal reflectivity. The

researcher observed how the learner experience changed with the teaching strategy, with

the learners reflecting on a question and talking together before class. As the class began,

P2 asked, "What answers did you come up with for the question about forgiveness?" As

five of the eight learners volunteered responses, P2 wrote these thoughts on the

whiteboard. Responses included "pain," "pride," "I'm innocent," "it's hard not to hold a

grudge," and "forgiving yourself." The researcher observed that the other three sat and

listened to others share their experiences. During the focus group, P2 admitted that he felt

comfortable letting the learners set the agenda through their questions during this time,

and the technique of having learners begin each class with sharing and inviting further

collaboration and interaction with him and each other was intentional and influenced by

his of andragogical training.

Observations of learners' experiences from S3.

The researcher observed P3 twice before the completion of both training

workshops. Overall, the learner experience at S3 was formal, yet with plenty of

opportunities for learners to voluntarily share their thoughts and experiences. With the

learners sitting in rows of chairs, the learner interaction was almost entirely directed

towards P3 and not to other learners. For example, after P3 asked any question, the

researcher observed how little time was given for reflection before fielding answers, and

there did not appear to be any intentional personal reflection time built into the session.

P3 lectured from the front, fielding questions as they arose from the learners. The learners

appeared engaged in listening to P3. The questions that P3 gave generally had one or

two-word answers that checked for recall of content more than personal introspection.

Applications of the text to life were generally volunteered by learners who raised their

hands and interrupted the flow of teaching. For example, during one session, P3 asked,

"why do you think it is that God is wrestling?" To this question, one learner replied, "Is it

because . . . ?" to which P3 answered "[Learner name] that's really insightful. Then we

see that his whole life . . . " The researcher also noticed how, during the more back and

forth parts of the first half of the lesson, several side conversations started apart from the

main discussion, and people seemed stimulated by the conversation. These side

conversations illustrated the researcher's observations that, while the overall learner

experience was formal and lecture-style, P3 allowed for opportunities for learners to give

comments or ask questions, followed by P3 respectfully answering comments.

After the interventions, the researcher observed S3 a total of five times. Overall,

the learning experience at S3 differed subtly, though importantly, after the andragogical

workshops. Before the interventions, P3 spent most of the sessions lecturing content and

fielding questions volunteered from the learners. Most of the questions P3 asked before

the workshops were intended to check for learner understanding of the content. Though

P3 still primarily lectured after the workshops, he also more directly asked questions that

tied into the daily lives of the learners, asking them to also reflect on their learning and

experience. For example, in one post-workshop session, about 20 minutes in, P3 paused

to ask for some more open reflections. Four people spoke up, and P3 intentionally

affirmed one as she spoke up. After this, P3 asked, "What is Jesus saying here? What's

the point?" Once P3 asked this question, the researcher noticed how more and more

people chimed in with reflections to add to the thoughts. Learner responses included "I

see it as a way that we . . . " and "What's the equivalent today?" In another session P3,

about halfway through the session, paused the lecture, and asked the class, "Is this still a concern for us today? It is important for us to know why we do what we do." The discussion that flowed from this dominated the rest of the class, and focused on life experiences, and developing personal reflectivity, with one learner even sharing a personal experience of attending a wedding in Singapore with many Muslims in attendance, and how the episode opened her eyes to new experiences. The researcher observed that most of the questions the learners asked revolved around their immediate life experiences, and the more learner interaction occurred and the learners shared their experiences with each other and with P3, the less formal and structured the class became. In his journal, P3 reflected that after the workshops "personalizing the encouragement of questions to continue to foster inquiry and ownership is becoming more regular as a habit," and "we spent a good portion of this class on what [the text] means, practically, for our daily lives. There was a lot of conversation and give and take."   This intentionality in drawing more on the learner experience through questions was further reinforced in the focus group, where P3 commented that andragogical theory, especially the idea of contractual learning, helped him "make more specific examples about how these things meet daily life and spend less time just on the upper theological level and a little more on to the how that theology actually meets our practice" This shift in the kinds of questions he asked after the interventions, usually about halfway through the sessions, drew more personal reflective feedback from the learners overall than before.

Research question five.

Research question five was: what, if any, new instructional strategies have

emerged as a result of the pastor's receiving andragogical training? Data for this research

question were compiled primarily from two sources: interviews and researcher

observations. The interviews revealed, from the words of the participants themselves,

their preferred instructional strategies. The observations provided data relating to the

actual instructional strategies employed in the Bible class setting. Together, these data

presented a more robust picture of the participants' use of instructional strategies before

the two workshops. Also, the researcher then investigated notes from the participants'

journal prompts. These functioned as self-reflections by the participants each week on

what the participants did well and what they thought they needed to improve. The

researcher then compared these to his notes from the observations to identify similarities

and differences. Themes that emerged from the data were what the researcher termed as

the use of Grouping Strategies, Learner Interaction, Developing Personal Reflectivity,

and The Use of Questions. The researcher observed how many of the themes from

research question four correlated directly with research question five.

Observations of teaching strategies from S1.

The researcher observed S1 three times for teaching strategies before the

completion of both workshops. In summary, the researcher noticed how P1 in his

teaching strategies often relied heavily on the study questions. The researcher observed

how this was in a certain amount of conflict with P1's preferred teaching style, which he

noted in the interview. This strategy likely arose, at least partially, from P1's choice of

curriculum for the pre-workshop observations. For the first two sessions on the video-

based Revelation study, P1 appeared concerned about covering the material in time and

primarily taught in quick questions and answers to get through the material. P1 had a

clicker to go through PowerPoint slides and walked back and forth a bit as he led

discussions. The questions and PowerPoint slides appeared to be a purchased program,

and P1 did not deviate much from following the questions and language of the program.

Most of the questions from the program were checking questions with just one answer,

addressed to the group. For the third session, P1 also generally kept to his set questions,

asking the large group, and getting an answer or two. The researcher noticed that the tone

of the class was much more on applicability as P1 introduced a new unit on roles in

marriage and parenting. Participants seemed much more locked into what P1 was saying.

P1 did not use a PowerPoint or video and instead used a handout that was a multi-week

booklet with questions. P1 walked around the space, expounding on the questions from

lesson handout. He began with some explanation, talking about the importance of family.

He then turned to the booklet and the thirteen questions in the booklet on the topic. Each

question for the topic had a Bible verse or two and a follow-up question. The questions

were generally one-answer checking questions, like "What do these two verses tell us

about God's love?" P1 finished the class by going over some new questions, most leading

to a specific answer, and P1 asked and answered the questions quickly himself.

Afterward, P1 informed the researcher that the study and the questions from the study

were a product of collaboration between him and another pastor. The questions were

based on the felt and seen needs of the pastors in the congregation. As the questions in

the third session were written by himself and another pastor, they had more of a bend

towards applicability. Even so, the teaching strategies employed by P1 almost entirely

revolved around looking at a piece of content, followed by large group questions and

answers, with only once over the three observations having the learners break into small

groups for discussion.

After the interventions, the researcher observed S1 a total of four times. In

summary, several new teaching techniques emerged from P1's andragogical training.

First, P1 used more small group work in his grouping strategies, breaking his learners

into small groups and having them discuss several times per class before returning to

large group reflection. This technique honored the assumptions of self-directedness and

the role of experience. The researcher also observed how, as opposed to the previous

observations, P1 usually pressed for more people to answer than before. In one instance,

instead of just taking one answer, like in this case, he followed up several times by

saying, "What else?" The researcher noticed how P1 seemed to take on the role of group

facilitator more. To a question about heritage, one learner talked about how grandparents

pass on their heritage as "story keepers" for their grandchildren. This teaching strategy

utilizing **the use of questions** more intentionally appeared to, at least in this one case,

prompt more learners to share their experiences in class. On one occasion, the learners at

different tables were consolidated, forcing all learners to interact with each other and

share their experiences. In this instance, the opening reflection question was about

sharing their favorite teacher. P1 walked around the room and made sure people were in

groups, even asking two individuals at one table to move to a different table with others

so they could share. This grouping strategy was a new development and teaching strategy

the researcher had not yet seen. During the entire class, P1 had the group talk at tables

three times. Also, especially near the end of the period the researcher observed P1 reword

the questions he was using to encourage more direct application from the learners. At one

point, he altered the printed question, which he asked the learners, from "In your opinion,

what purpose might this little side narrative serve in telling the overall narrative of Jesus'

resurrection?" From "How might that same purpose apply to God's people today?" to

"What might this side narrative show us about opposition we might receive when telling

the Gospel?" An example of this was when P1 commented on this further in his journal,

where he remarked, "I am getting more comfortable facilitating discussion and guiding it

to a learning goal rather than just teaching," and that he was trying to "look ahead so I

can end class with lead-in questions about next week so I can better aim at their

understanding of what they think is a more immediate need." This insight was a change

as, prior to the workshops, P1 stuck very close to the questions of the curriculum he was

using and did not deviate. The deviations, or rewording, of the questions, appeared to the

researcher to honor the learners' readiness to learn. What the researcher observed P1

teaching was closer to the preferred teaching style that P1 had indicated in the pre-

workshop interview. It was unclear how much this variance arose from the choice of

curriculum used, the andragogical training received, or both.

Observations of teaching strategies from S2.

The researcher observed the teaching strategies of P2 twice before the completion

of both workshops. In summary, P2's teaching style before the workshop revolved

around a lot of open-ended questions for the facilitation of group discussion, followed by

limited periods of direct instruction or mini-lecture before returning to group discussion.

He used no whiteboard or PowerPoint but did use Bibles on tables and handouts with

study questions. For example, in one session, P2 walked around during the class,

answering questions either through asking for volunteers or calling on people specifically. In this case, after a brief review, P2 began the lesson with a small group discussion, using open-ended questions. The researcher noticed how most people were talking during this small group discussion. The table set up, with people facing each other in rows, was conducive for group discussion. About halfway through, P2 transitioned to the handout sheet. As P2 had mentioned in the interview, this teaching style developed over years of trying to get as many people engaged in the learning process as possible, as some learners are more comfortable sharing in small groups rather than large groups. Though P2 did show a depth of knowledge of the content, it appeared to the researcher that P2 would prefer to help the group process big questions together than rely on a lecture. Despite this, however, from his journal prompts, the researcher noticed how P2 was critical of himself for not allowing the participants more individual processing time. In one of his journals, P2 recorded, "I'm probably giving too much time to the discussion of the lists. We're not getting to the application at the end of the study. These answers were very personal and I needed to give time for people to process." He also recorded, "I'm glad people are able to open up about painful events in their past in class. It gives a good opportunity for all to hear the Gospel applied to a very personal situation."

After the interventions, the researcher observed S2 a total of five times. In summary, several new teaching strategies emerged after P2's andragogical training. Before the workshops, P2 already used the most andragogical techniques, including mutual planning with learners on the units and a higher emphasis on learners sharing their experiences in small groups. After the training, the researcher observed P2 teach in a different setting, namely a small group of new members. As such, breakouts for small

group discussions, like he had done before in the larger class, was a less viable option as the entire class might constitute a small group. Instead, P2 utilized mutual planning differently, developing personal reflectivity by beginning each class with having each learner write down their response to a question and then using those reflections as the general outline for the entire class. An example of this question was, "Good morning! On the pieces of paper write down 3 things you know about the Holy Spirit." In his journal, P2 reflected further on his use of this new technique. He noted that the most significant change to his teaching after the andragogical training "comes from looking for ways for adults to have "buy-in" to what we are doing." He also wrote that "in order to have the group feel a responsibility and, therefore a deeper connection, I asked them to all write down a question, and what they wanted to get out of the class." Later on, in his journals, P2 reflected that:

> I understand what Knowles means by 'evaluations are primarily an active way to
> diagnose learning needs.' The questions that I am asking at the outset of the class
> both engage the learners and give a sense of where we may need to go.

Another new technique that emerged was that P2 began with each learner reflecting on the set question for the day before P2's arrival to the room. To the researcher, this honored the learners' sense of self-directedness. On one occasion, the researcher observed how the learners not only wrote down their answers to the question on the whiteboard before P2 arrived in class but also began a discussion amongst themselves on the question before class began. P2 was sensitive to how much he expected the learners to share openly, as in his journals, he reflected that he did not "have them share their answers for something like this because I want the class to use it as a

check on what they personally know. I want to avoid embarrassment as that would tend

to drive an adult learner away." In the final focus group, P2 mentioned how he

intentionally implemented these new techniques after his andragogical training. He stated

that "in the past, that [adult instruction] was an exceedingly lecture-based class, and at

parts it still was but the fact that they had more input into it and directed more of the

conversation, it had more opportunities." These opportunities included increased learner

interaction, learner ownership, and engagement by the learners, something that P2 noted

"doesn't necessarily happen as much in my experience."

Observations of teaching strategies from S3.

The researcher observed P3 twice before the completion of both workshops.

Overall, the researcher noticed how P3 was comfortable in his teaching style. He

lectured, with intermittent questions which he had prepared and handed out on sheets to

the learners prior, leading the learners through the Biblical text section by section. He

used a podium and a whiteboard in his lecturing but often paced back and forth in front as

he spoke. P3 intentionally used questions to check for understanding, and the questions

made by the learners were often to clarify. An example of this was "Jesus is God. Is this

person here Jesus?" The researcher did notice, though, that P3 was willing to take the

teaching at a variable pace and was not committed to covering any set amount of content

for the day. P3 demonstrated this willingness, on one occasion, by deviating the text for

half a class after a learner had a question about the text used in the sermon that morning.

During this deviation, however, P3 still primarily relied on his teaching style of

expounding on a text and fielding questions from the learners as they reflected on that

textual exposition.

After the interventions, the researcher observed S3 a total of five times. In summary, the researcher observed some subtle but apparent changes in the teaching strategy of P3 after the workshops. The main difference was that, for most of the post-workshop lessons, P3 stopped simply lecturing at around the halfway mark and started using more open-ended questions. This break in tone and pace in the use of questions was not noticeable in the pre-workshop classes. For example, in one instance, P3 asked, "What's Jesus teaching in this parable, you think?" Different learners spoke up with responses that applied to their life situations. P3 encouraged people in different parts of the room to share their reflections. After a couple of responses from one corner of the room, he added, "What about you guys over here?" He then asked the question if anyone else had questions about this. The researcher observed that P3 spent about 30 minutes in direct teaching on the lesson, then actively worked to open the class to develop personal reflectivity. He intentionally slowed down a bit to open the room to more interactive questions. In total, during this time, seven people asked questions to which P3 responded. This time it took up about 20 minutes of class, but as the questions were more or less related to the teaching, the researcher observed that almost everyone in the room was engaged in listening to the dialogue. Overall, in the post-workshop sessions, P3 used the second half of the class to field the learners' reflections on the text, honoring their experience. Though the questions P3 asked did not necessarily speak to the learners' readiness to learn or orientation to learning, the learners themselves would often speak to their own experiences or situations in life, including family issues, current events, or dealing with other religions. P3 spoke to this shift in his teaching strategy in the focus group when he talked about how the andragogical training prompted him to think of the

learning experience as a kind of contract. He stated that after the training, he prepared for

his teaching by imagining some of his learners and considering, "okay, what kind of buy-

in would they want? What kinds of things might I assume here? So, I kind of made up an

imaginary contract with people." This shift was demonstrated in P3's teaching strategies,

especially how he formed open-ended questions. Also, P3 indicated in his journals how

he planned to continue to assist the learners to get further buy-in and ownership of their

learning in the future. He wrote, "I am developing a self-assessment they can be[sic] back

to me about the class themes to see how well they receive the theme."

Research question six.

Research question six was: to what extent, if any, does the instructor in the Adult

Bible classes utilize any of the Six Assumptions and Eight Processes espoused by

Malcolm Knowles? Data for this research question were compiled from observation. The

researcher, in these observations, used his best judgment to observe notable instances

where the participants either demonstrated the use of the Six Assumptions and Eight

Processes or acted in a way that ran counter to these core principles of andragogy. The

organization for this research question was arranged by assumptions and processes. The

correlation to themes to different assumptions and learning processes, as observed from

the data by the researcher, was included in Table 1 and Table 2 at the end of Chapter

Four.

Knowles's Six Assumptions.

The first assumption of andragogy is that adult learners need to know

why they need to learn something before undertaking to learn it. Before the workshops,

the researcher observed very little explicit attention given to why the learners needed to

know what the participants were teaching. The only instance prior to the workshops

occurred when P1 began one session by showing a visual of his grandfather's Bible. He

then explained that, though he had the Bible, he had never heard his grandfather pray,

that they had never had a Christian conversation. He continued, "Our family believes, but

it wasn't because my grandfather passed on his faith. That is why we need to have this

conversation. If you do not pass the faith on to your family, nobody else will." After the

workshops, there was little change among the participants. In one instance at S3, P3

commented, halfway through the lesson, that "the focus of the lesson is that God won't

leave you with problems. We are to focus on Christ first, then focus on problems in life."

Overall, the researcher observed little change in the participants' use of language in

communicating why the learners needed to know what they were teaching from before

and after the interventions.

The second of Knowles's Six Assumptions is that adult learners have a self-

concept of being responsible for their own decisions, for their own lives. Before the

interventions, P1 and P3 emphasized the assumption of self-concept in a limited capacity,

instead choosing to primarily lecture at their learners. P2 displayed some preference for

the assumption of self-concept. On one occasion, P2 began the class by going over a

survey he had given the learners in a previous session, spending a considerable amount of

time during the session in allowing the learners to look over the survey and draw

conclusions for themselves in small groups. After the workshops, all the participants

displayed a heightened awareness and use of this assumption in their language and

teaching. For example, during one session P1 began the class discussion by commenting,

"Today, kids are seen as a checklist item . . . how does seeing children as a gift change

this? I don't have an answer I'm looking for. I'm looking to you." In another example, P3 encouraged a discussion near the end of class where he asked the question, "In parables, there's always a moment of exaggeration, what is it here?" This question led to a prolonged discussion that included heaven, country music, study notes, and Kobe Bryant. The researcher noted how this type of open-ended question emerged more frequently from P3 after the workshops. This awareness was reinforced by all three participants in the final focus group, who all indicated that the andragogical training encouraged them to honor their learners as being more self-directed.

The third assumption of andragogy is that adult learners come into an educational activity with both a higher volume and a different quality of experience from that of youths. Before the workshops, the researcher noticed how the adult learners in the sessions in all three sites tended to volunteer their experiences frequently throughout the class. The altered teaching strategies that emerged across the sites after the workshops encouraged an increased level of the sharing of experiences. The increase in small group discussions at S1 after the workshop allowed for more significant opportunities for learners to share their reflections, and at different times at S1 the researcher noticed how some participants who would not volunteer to share their experiences to a large group were active in sharing with their tables in the small groups. At S2, after the workshops, P2 frequently used shared experiences from the learners, gleaned at the beginning of the session, as the framework for teaching the session. At S3, P3's added emphasis on open-ended questions after his initial lecture time led to a wealth of learners sharing their experiences, where on multiple occasions, the researcher observed over a dozen learners

sharing their experiences with the large group when before the workshops there were only a few.

The fourth andragogical assumption is that adult learners become ready to learn those things they need to know and be able to do in order to cope effectively with their real-life situations. In the context of the adult Bible class, the researcher found this assumption a difficult one to observe. Besides the first observation of P2's class, where the learners discussed a needs survey they all took, the rest of the content of the classes at all three sites was based on a Biblical narrative, topic, or theme instead of a particular life issue. During the first of the two workshops, while reflecting on this assumption, P3 summarized the challenge of teaching Bible classes where topics tend to be broad and based more on a Bible text than a life issue. He stated that the assumption, to him, felt like a truism that was difficult to teach. He said, on the one hand, it had little to do with his teaching but had everything to do with what is motivating the people. P3 did say, however, that taking this assumption to mind may mean trying to get people to wrestle with something in their lives. He said that unless people come to him with problems, he did not know what to teach. The researcher observed the same challenge during the study. The researcher did observe, however, that as learners had more opportunity to share in small groups or to the class as a large group, they were better able to and more willing to share their concerns or anxieties in life.

The fifth andragogical assumption is that adult learners are motivated to learn to the extent that they perceive that learning will help them perform tasks or deal with problems that they confront in their life situations. The researcher observed how this particular assumption shared many of the same issues in an adult Bible class as the

assumptions of readiness to learn and motivation to learn insofar as Bible classes were

generally organized by Biblical text or topic rather than a particular life or vocational

skill. At the same time, the researcher observed subtle changes in the participants'

responsiveness to learners' needs from before and after the workshops. For instance, both

P1 and P3, before the workshops, frequently talked with learners in the minutes

immediately after the class. In the focus group at the end, they both stated how, after the

workshops, they paid more attention to what they heard their learners talk about

throughout the week and tried to incorporate what came up in those conversations more

intentionally in their lesson plans. The researcher also observed how P2, after the

workshops, would frequently end the class with a call for learner input for the next class.

For example, on one occasion, P2 concluded the class by saying, "If there's anything else

we haven't talked about, bring that next time. That will be the question on the board at the

beginning of next week." These subtle changes indicated to the researcher how the

andragogical training made the participants more aware of listening to the immediate

needs and issues of their learners and find ways to incorporate those into their teaching.

      The sixth andragogical assumption is that adult learners are responsive to some

external motivators (better jobs, promotions, higher salaries, and the like), but the most

potent motivators are internal pressures (the desire for increased job satisfaction, self-

esteem, quality of life, and the like). The researcher, in his observations, had difficulty

identifying changes in the participants' understandings of adult learner motivation. In the

final focus group, however, all three of the participants indicated how their andragogical

training helped them better understand and honor the motivations of their learners. P2

stated, "with adults, there's a different level of respect that you have for the learner in the

sense of you're bringing something with you, and I need to honor that. That you're

bringing with you your own motivations, your own purposes." To this, P3 added that one

of the things he had become more aware of through the process was "that every person

there is there because they want to be there . . . walking together." P1 continued that the

training had "helped [him] kind of identify what [the learners] need or fill the need for

spiritual growth and attend to those issues." From this, the researcher concluded that the

andragogical training had an impact on the participants' understanding of adult learner

motivation.

Knowles's Eight Processes.

The first of Knowles's Eight Processes is that adult learners' benefit from their

facilitator providing additional preparation in the andragogical process as they begin their

learning experiences. Throughout the post-workshop observations, the researcher never

observed any of the participants intentionally explaining why they implemented the

changes they did.

The second of Knowles's Eight Processes is that adult learners' benefit from their

facilitator setting an educational climate supportive of the more informal and

collaborative nature of the andragogical process. For all three participants, the researcher

observed no change in the physical setting from before to after the interventions that

would not have otherwise taken place. One notable feature of each site was the

refreshments offered at the Bible classes. At S1, there was a large area for refreshments

in the front. Space was sometimes well stocked with food and beverages, something like

a basic breakfast buffet with rolls, fruit, donuts, coffee, and juice, and at other times there

was only coffee served. S2 usually only served coffee and some cookies or bars as

volunteers brought them. S3 was the most consistent of the three sites with refreshments, offering coffee, donuts, and other beverages consistently. The researcher noticed how, if there were no refreshments or few refreshments at the beginning of class, many of the learners at S1 and S2 would regularly walk back to the area where they were served and check, or if any refreshments came after the class had already begun, learners would stop their involvement in the lesson, go back to get refreshments and miss some of the class. The researcher observed that consistent refreshments helped to create a physical, educational climate of learning and engagement with fewer interruptions, and of the three sites, S3 offered the most consistent refreshments and the least disruption to the class.

Another feature of setting the climate was the physical spaces all three participants used to teach. P1 had indicated in his interview that he had inherited his setup from the previous pastor and did not want to change it as he had not been pastor there long. The room set up with P1 was eight round tables, with a whiteboard and projector up front where P1 sometimes showed PowerPoint presentations. In his interview, P2 indicated that the space for his Bible class, the church basement, was the only space he could use due to limitations. At S2, P2 had the class sit around a series of rectangular tables in a u-shape, with him standing by a whiteboard up front. After the workshops, P2 taught in a smaller room where all the learners, eight to 10 a week, sat around one large table. When the researcher began his observations, P3 taught in the gym, a temporary space while the parish fellowship hall was being remodeled. When class resumed at S3, P3 taught in his regular location in the fellowship hall. Here, the learners sat in long rows of chairs, behind narrow tables, in front of the P3, who lectured and took notes on a whiteboard. Though there were no substantial changes to the learning space that the

researcher observed as part of the workshops, the researcher did observe that the

participants (P1 and P2) who expected learners to share experiences in small groups or

pairs used spaces where the learners naturally faced each other. At S3, P3 did not ask the

learners to turn and share their experiences, which would have been more difficult in

their space as all the learners sat facing the same direction. It was unclear to the

researcher whether P1 and P2 intentionally utilized the learning activities involved with

sharing because of their room setup or whether it was more their preference.

Another factor of setting the climate were the rituals that different participants

instituted before and after class. P1 began each class with announcements and ended each

class by announcing birthdays and anniversaries in the group, then singing to celebrate

with them. This practice was consistent, and learners appeared ready to share whatever

birthdays or announcements they knew of in the group. P3 began each class by singing a

hymn with his learners, and occasionally would let people give announcements. P2 did

not give announcements in such a formal way before his sessions. All three participants

prayed before and after each session.

The third of Knowles's Eight Processes is that adult learners benefit from their

facilitator implementing mechanisms for mutual educational planning. Before the

workshops, the researcher observed some use of this process by P2, but not intentionally

by P1 or P3. For P2, during his first observation, the researcher observed how P2 had

taken a survey of topics that the learners wanted to cover, compiled them, and then talked

about them with his learners during the class. During the pre-study interview, P2 had

mentioned that he did this intentionally to help plan out the course of his studies for the

year, eliciting feedback from the learners. After the interventions, however, the content

covered by P2 at S2 was organized by content unit directed by P2. After the workshops, the researcher noticed how P1 used comments made by learners to help direct the learning. For example, during one session P1 fielded a difficult question about the problem of evil. He responded to the learner that "I don't want to go down that rabbit trail, perhaps you can suggest doing the topic of why bad things happen to good people for another class." In another instance, when asked about the Lutheran liturgy, P1 replied that the topic "might be a great one-off Bible study." The researcher observed from these comments, and others, that after the workshops, P1 made a more conscious effort to use learner feedback to plan for future learning.

The fourth through sixth processes assert that adult learners benefit from their facilitator involving them in the process of diagnosing their learning needs, setting objectives by mutual negotiation, and designing their learning experiences mindful of their readiness to learn rather than by content unit. After the workshops, P2 used these processes, indirectly, by asking the learners to answer reflection questions at the beginning of class, recording their comments, and using those to frame the discussion. Though not explicit negotiation, the researcher noticed how even this amount of learner feedback helped create an air of ownership by the learners who were able to get their questions answered in class. Despite this, all three participants, after the workshops, set the learning plans, content unit, and objectives for the classes independent of the learners.

Each of the participants indicated, in different venues, why they set the learning plans, content unit, and objectives independently rather than by mutual negotiation. Both before and after the workshops, P3 taught on the same subject, a procedural walk through the book of Luke. During his interview, P3 stated he spent about half the available time

each year walking through a book of the Bible with his learners, with the other half begin

split between a doctrinal topic and a topic in Church history. As P3 was teaching in the

middle of a pre-determined unit both before and after the workshops, he did not alter his

process for designing content units during the study to align with andragogical design

theory. For much of the time of the study after the workshops, P2 conducted a new

member adult Bible class. The new member class had a set time limit, scope, and

sequence that aligned with Lutheran doctrine. As such, most of the content unit planning

and lesson objective planning was established before the outset of the class. For most of

the post-workshop observation, P1 taught a curriculum that aligned with the Sunday

School lessons used by the children in their Sunday School classes. In this instance, P1,

by his choice of curriculum, adhered to a set scope and sequence that had been pre-

determined by the children's Sunday School curriculum. It appeared to the researcher that

P2 and P3 set the learning plan for the post-workshop sessions before the beginning of

the study. The researcher also believed this might have also been the case for P1.

The seventh of Knowles's Eight Processes is that adult learners benefit

from participating in learning activities that align with andragogical assumptions.

Overall, the learning activities in all three sites differed little before and after the

workshops. Most of the learning activities in all sites revolved around large group lecture

with some discussion, and this did not change after the workshops. Even so, as has been

noted elsewhere in this study, the researcher observed how after the workshops P1

included more small group discussion into his lessons, P2 involved the learners more

directly in self-reflection at the beginning of the class, and P3 used more open-ended

questions to help more learners try to apply their learning to their lives. Though not

drastic changes, these alterations to all three participants' standard teaching practices were noticed by the researcher after the interventions.

Knowles's Eighth Process is that adult learners benefit from a mutual evaluation of learning with the facilitator. Both before and after the workshops, the researcher did not observe any explicit use of evaluation or assessment by the participants or the learners. In the focus group that followed the observations, however, P2 revealed how he had implemented a new kind of mutual evaluation with his new member class. The researcher did not observe this happen as he did not observe all the classes. In the focus group, P2 stated that at the beginning of the unit, he had asked what they wanted to get out of the class. He added, "this was a review class for some of them; they were new members. So, they said a number of different things about what they wanted to get out of it." P2 then went on to say that at the end of the class he once again asked the question "did you . . . see these things or if they had a question that they wanted to have answered [did] we answer that?" He added that "if they said 'Oh yeah yeah yeah' then I would ask them 'Okay how did we answer that question?'" Though P2 was unsure how intentional this mutual evaluation was, he did state that he would like to use this teaching strategy in the future by "asking ahead 'what do you want to get out of this and the to reflect back 'so did you get something out of it, what was it, and where did that happen?'" To these comments, both P1 and P3 expressed a desire to use the same technique in their own classes in the future as a way to include more mutual evaluation at the end of their units of instruction.

Table 1

Themes from the Study Aligned with Knowles's Six Assumptions

Assumption	Themes
Need to Know	Andragogy's Compatibility with Pedagogy, Perceptions of Adults as Learners
Self-Directedness	The Appeal of Flexibility, Learner Interaction, The Use of Questions, Perception of Adults as Learners, Developing Personal Reflectivity, Subject Matter Experts, Grouping Strategies
Role of Experience	Professional Development, Learner Interaction, The Use of Questions, Grouping Strategies, Developing Personal Reflectivity
Readiness to Learn	The Use of Questions, Learner Interaction
Orientation to Learning	Applicability of Andragogy, The Use of Questions
Motivation	Professional Development

Table 2

Themes from the Study Aligned with Knowles's Six Assumptions

Assumption	Themes
Need to Know	Andragogy's Compatibility with Pedagogy, Perceptions of Adults as Learners
Self-Directedness	The Appeal of Flexibility, Learner Interaction, The Use of Questions, Perception of Adults as Learners, Developing Personal Reflectivity, Subject Matter Experts, Grouping Strategies
Role of Experience	Professional Development, Learner Interaction, The Use of Questions, Grouping Strategies, Developing Personal Reflectivity
Readiness to Learn	The Use of Questions, Learner Interaction
Orientation to Learning	Applicability of Andragogy, The Use of Questions
Motivation	Professional Development

Conclusion

In summary, the researcher believed that data obtained for this qualitative case study provided sufficient evidence that training in andragogical theory made an impact on pastors in adult Bible Classes in LCMS congregations in the St. Louis area. By gathering data on the three participants through interviews, workshops, observations, journals, and a focus group, the researcher concluded that the training impacted both the participants' teaching strategies and their attitudes towards their adult learners.

The researcher identified the impact on teaching strategies in a variety of ways. The training in andragogical theory and design did not drastically alter the participants' choice of curriculum, as it was still chosen and implemented by the participants without input from the learners. Instead, after the workshops, data showed that the training influenced pastors to increase the amount of interaction between their learners as well as the amount of teacher-directed questions focused on individual life applications. Also, observations made before and after the workshops, in conjunction with journals made by the participants, showed an impact on the amount of sharing of learner experience in class. This increase in learner sharing, along with the honoring of adults as self-directed learners, indicated that the training in Knowles's Assumptions and Processes influenced the participants' teaching strategies. The impact on the teaching strategies further influenced the learner experience, which made the classroom time more interactive between learner and teacher and learner and learner. The impact on teaching strategies also extended to the participants' being able to better align their self-concepts as facilitators of discussion to their actual teaching practices.

Data gathered by the researcher also led him to conclude that the andragogical training impacted participant attitudes towards adults as learners. The data, primarily the personal reflections made by the participants, also showed that the andragogical training made an impact on the participants' understanding of the nature of adult learners, as well as increased the desire in the participants for more intentional reflection by their learners. Personal reflections from the journal entries, transcribed conversations from the workshops, and data gathered from the focus group revealed that the training impacted the participants' view of adults not merely as more experienced children, but as different in their motivations and needs. The impact on participant attitudes was further demonstrated by each of the participants' plans on continuing to implement andragogical principles into their Bible class instruction after the study had concluded.

Chapter Five: Discussion

This qualitative case study used observations, interviews, journals, and a focus group to explore the impact of andragogical teaching methods, broadly conceived, used by pastors in adult Bible Classes in Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) congregations in the St. Louis area. The researcher sought to determine what changes, if any, would occur in LCMS Bible classes after pastors participated in training that focused on implementing andragogical teaching methods in their Bible classes.

Through this research project, the researcher aimed to add valuable insight into the impact of andragogical teaching principles and methods on LCMS pastors and adult education in their congregations. The researcher desired, in this qualitative study, to investigate what changes, if any, would occur when LCMS pastors were made aware of adult-learning theory and trained in its implementation. The researcher interpreted the results of this study to offer insight as to what may or may not assist pastors in the LCMS in developing more effective teaching for adults. Also, any insights and conclusions gleaned from this research were intended to help religious educators in other church bodies better evaluate their pastoral education or continuing education priorities. The information obtained through this study was intended to add to the knowledge base regarding teaching strategies used with Bible class participants in a group environment, more particularly as these strategies relate to the principles of andragogy. In this chapter, the researcher revisited the study limitations, discussed the findings of the study on the research questions, then explored the implications of these findings for teachers of adults, especially LCMS pastors, then added his conclusions from the study.

Research Questions

1. How will pastors react to instruction in the principles of andragogical theory and design?

2. What changes, if any, will occur when andragogical teaching strategies are implemented by pastors in Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Bible classes?

3. What is the relationship between the instructors' self-perceptions regarding their instructional strategies with their learners when compared to observations made by the researcher?

4. In what ways, if any, are the Bible study participants' experiences in class different after the pastor received andragogical training?

5. What, if any, new instructional strategies have emerged as a result of the pastor's receiving andragogical training?

6. To what extent, if any, does the instructor in the adult Bible classes utilize any of the Six Assumptions and Eight Processes espoused by Malcolm Knowles?

Discussion on Research Questions

The first research question was: how will pastors react to instruction in the principles of andragogical theory and design? Data gathered from the different portions of the study, especially the workshops, journals, and the final focus group, showed that the pastors in the study reacted overall positively to their andragogical training. At first, during the workshops, they showed some skepticism to the more humanistic nature of andragogical theory and design and even questioned its usability in an adult Bible class setting. After some discussion with the researcher and each other, however, all three participants grew to appreciate the flexibility of the andragogical assumptions and

processes and implemented different aspects of the andragogical model into their different settings. By the final focus group, all three participants expressed some desire to continue to try different teaching strategies based on the experiences they had already had, and the strategies used by their fellow participants. At the outset of the study, the researcher was unsure of how the participants, each a trained pastor out in the field, would respond to this training that espoused very different ideas about teaching and learning from the more traditional pedagogical model. The researcher was honestly surprised at how receptive the participants were to the training and their ongoing appreciation of the researcher. This may imply that other LCMS pastors in the field may be open and receptive to continuing education in andragogical theory and design, even if it may challenge their beliefs and practices in adult Christian education. Additionally, this may show that LCMS pastors, overall, may desire additional training in the art and science of teaching adults, and are not necessarily content with the more common pedagogical approach they use.

The second research question was: what changes, if any, will occur when andragogical teaching strategies are implemented by pastors in Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Bible classes? In looking back at the original design of the study, the researcher observed that this question was extensive and, in many ways, a summary of research questions four through six. If this study were replicated in the future, the researcher would recommend editing this question to be more specific and better differentiated from research questions four through six. In chapter four the researcher concluded, based on the data, that the significant changes were an increase in the amount of interaction between the learners, the amount of teacher-directed questions focused on

individual life application, an increased understanding of the nature of adult learners, and

an increased desire in the participants for more intentional reflection by their learners.

These changes were subtle rather than substantial. The participants did not choose to

completely restructure their lesson plans, their learning environments, or their seating

arrangements based on their andragogical training. Instead, they all slightly changed the

manner and the timing of their questions and how they used those questions in the

learning experience. The researcher concluded that this incremental shift away from

pedagogy was the most logical way for pastors in Bible classes to experiment with and

begin to use andragogy. The researcher was curious about what further incremental

changes, if any, the participants would continue to implement in their Bible classes in the

future. The most significant change, overall, that the researcher observed in the

participants was an increased awareness of adults as learners. Whereas the participants,

before the study, had thought of adults as larger and more experienced versions of

children, after the study, they were more aware of adults as learners with different

motivations and needs as children. Thus, their participation in the study challenged and

changed their attitudes towards adults as learners, which the researcher hypothesized

would impact their future teaching of adult Bible classes.

   The third question was: what is the relationship between the instructors' self-

perceptions regarding their instructional strategies with their learners when compared to

observations made by the researcher? This research question, based on the qualitative

data gathered in this study, had a limited scope. Since data gathered focused on the

participants, not the adult learners in their classes, the researcher found this question

challenging to answer comprehensively. If the researcher had broadened the scope of the

research to include interviews and journals from the adult learners in the adult Bible

classes rather than just the pastors, then triangulation of subjective perceptions might

have been more comprehensive. Regardless, the researcher did discover some themes

when comparing the participants' self-perceptions of themselves as teachers in the

interviews and journals to observations made by the researcher. First, the participants,

overall, had doubts about their ability to teach adults. The implications of this for the

future of pastoral formation in the LCMS are immense. Pastors in the LCMS often spend

many hours during the week either teaching or preparing to teach adults. Though doubt in

one's ability to teach is natural for any teacher, the researcher believed that more could be

done and should be done to prepare pastors for teaching adults. The one or two classes

currently offered for education at the two LCMS seminaries, CSL and CTSFW, may not

be enough to prepare pastors for the varied challenges of teaching, especially teaching

adults. Second, though the researcher observed that the participants perceived their

teaching strategies as allowing for learner interaction and discussion, much of time spent

in adult Bible classes before the andragogical instruction was large group lecture, with

many of the questions asked by the participants checking for comprehension of the topic

rather than inquiry or reflection. After the interventions, the researcher observed how

each of the participants altered many of their questions and questioning techniques to

allow for more significant interaction between the learners and more personal, open-

ended reflection. This change after the andragogical instruction, in the observation of the

researcher, helped to align the participants' self-perceptions of their teaching to their

actual teaching strategies. This change further implied that the introduction of andragogy

and andragogical theory perhaps helped to better actualize in the participants their own perception of how they desired to teach adults.

Research questions four through six dealt with specific changes made during the adult Bible class period because of the andragogical training. Specifically, they concerned what ways the Bible study experience was different, what new instructional strategies emerged, and how the instructors utilized any of the Six Assumptions and Eight Processes of Malcolm Knowles as a result of their andragogical training. Data for these questions were primarily gathered through seven months of researcher observation and reflection. All three of these questions were related to what happened in the class period, and as the participants considered the different assumptions and processes of Knowles, that impacted their instructional strategies, which in turn affected the learner experience. Of the Six Assumptions of Knowles, the participants increased their awareness of the role of learner experience, self-concept, and orientation to learning the most. By allowing learners to share their experiences with each other and with the pastors in small and large groups, the learners were able to bring their immediate thoughts and issues into the conversation. The assumptions of need to know, readiness to learn, and motivation were addressed less by the pastors, who still, overall, directed the content, topics, and flow of the units. As addressed above, the researcher reflected that these more subtle additions of andragogical theory and design into their adult Bible classes might have stemmed from the participants' lack of experience in adult education and desire to experiment with it in their pre-existing classes than from skepticism of andragogy. The researcher was again interested to see in what ways, if any, the participants would continue to add andragogical elements to their adult Bible classes in the future.

Apart from P2, very few of Knowles's Eight Processes were intentionally used by the participants, and when they were, as noted in the themes in Chapter Four, their use was limited. This lack did not surprise the researcher, as the Eight Processes present a substantial departure from the way adult parish education is typically planned and executed. Another potential reason for this was that implementing different aspects of the Eight Processes, specifically mutual planning elements required more top-down structural changes to the way parish education was planned. The researcher observed how the andragogical workshops, conducted in the winter, came after the time of educational planning, which typically happened in congregations in the summer. The researcher wondered how the participants might utilize more of the Eight Processes for mutual planning during the next season of parish education, beginning in the summer. P1 added, in the focus group, how he desired to use more of the mutual planning processes in the future. Perhaps, in the future, the participants would consider factors like setting the climate, mutual planning, learning experiences, and evaluation more seriously as they continued to adopt andragogical design into their adult Bible classes.

Implications of Study for Andragogy in Adult Bible Classes

The literature review presented a broad-to-narrow account of literature needed to understand not only the use of andragogy in LCMS settings but to also identify the gaps in its current understanding and usage in pastor-led adult Bible classes. Also, the chapter identified what potential impact training in andragogical theory and design might have on group facilitators in these settings. After the completion of this study, the researcher returned to some of these themes and presented some implications for the results of this

study on andragogy in adult Bible classes, especially for pastor-led adult Bible classes in

LCMS congregations.

As investigated in Chapter Two, the researcher noted how, though Knowles could

no longer be its chief proponent, others had stepped up to advocate for andragogy's

usefulness. Though the theory continued to have those that doubt its validity as a theory

and treat it more as an ideology, many in the adult education field still sought to find

ways to incorporate andragogical principles into their teaching. In this study, the

researcher desired to do the same. Instead of presenting andragogy as a monolithic

philosophy, the researcher presented the participants with andragogy as an alternative set

of assumptions to the more traditional assumptions of pedagogy. This presentation

allowed the participants to seek ways to adapt andragogical principles as they saw fit into

their adult Bible classes. The researcher agreed with more contemporary proponents of

andragogy that it should be used and viewed more as a tool for assisting in the teaching

of adults rather than an absolute necessity for all adults (Rachal, 2002). The researcher

also concluded that andragogy is best viewed on a continuum with pedagogy, and that

teachers and trainers of adults should seek to find the best ways to identify what

techniques would best serve their learners based on experience and context. This

conclusion mirrored Knowles's later conclusions on the place of andragogy in the field of

education (Knowles, 1993).

In the literature review, the researcher studied the use of andragogy in the field of

religious education. The researcher concluded that, in the field of religious education,

research into the impact of andragogy has been relatively sparse in general. This scarcity

continued to surprise the researcher, as andragogy's emphasis on more informal or non-

formal learning aligns more with the informal or non-formal learning of adult Christian

education. The researcher also concluded, however, that this lack of research into

andragogy in Christian education perhaps stemmed from an ongoing skepticism to

secular learning theories in congregations, especially those that arose from more

modernist and humanist traditions like andragogy (Beard, 2017). Though the researcher,

a pastor himself, understood the reluctance, he also believed this to be a significant loss

for the Church. What the researcher learned during the study opened his eyes to different

beneficial aspects of andragogy that could undoubtedly be appreciated by adult educators

in many different adult Christian education settings. This insight further implied that

those in the Church, while being wary of false doctrine and psychology that runs counter

to the Bible, should also seek to be aware of and utilize different components and theories

in educational psychology to fulfill their vocations as teachers as faithfully as possible.

The researcher also investigated the potential use and benefits of andragogy

within the LCMS. He discovered that, within the history of Lutheran Bible interpretation,

the emphasis of individualized learning of the Word was and has continued to be central.

Several vital doctrines of the Lutheran perspective, especially the doctrines of the

priesthood of all believers and vocation, correlated strongly to specific principles of

andragogy. In agreement with Kane (1994), the researcher concluded that the lack of

pastoral training in adult educational theories like andragogy hindered the ability of

pastors in the LCMS to fully equip learners in their adult Bible classes to live out their

vocations in daily life. It is one thing for pastors to teach content related to daily

discipleship, it is another for them to equip their learners with the skills, understandings,

and habits of the Christian life. From the researcher's observations, the educational

technique of lecture with intermittent questions that check for understanding may be an excellent way to convey information, but it did not necessarily build self-reflection or skills. Similarly, it is one thing for a pastor to tell someone how the text applies to their life, it is another to teach them how to apply a text to their life. According to Knowles (2005), the assumptions of andragogy begin with the idea that adults, overall, are more responsible for their own lives and their learning. As such, the researcher concluded that for most adult andragogy, and its emphasis on self-concept and experience, aligned better with the Lutheran doctrines of vocation and the priesthood of all believers than pedagogy. The researcher believed that the use of andragogy to help equip adult learners in Bible classes for their daily lives should be investigated further.

Another potential implication of andragogy on pastor-led Bible classes in the LCMS that the researcher did not see implemented fully was the benefit of using Knowles's Eight Processes in designing learning experiences. In the focus group at the end of the study, all three participants expressed the benefits of thinking of the Bible class as a kind of learning contract. Though the participants spoke of how they listened to learners before and after class and throughout the week, aside from some teaching methods used by P2, the participants never fully embraced the Eight Processes as a way for planning adult education in the parish. Again, with the LCMS' emphasis on the doctrines of the priesthood of all believers (Commission on Theology & Church Relations, 2018). and vocation (Pless, 2015), among others, the researcher firmly believed that using the Eight Processes more intentionally throughout the parish educational system would help bring these doctrines to the forefront. Lutherans hold that God calls each person to serve their neighbor in their different vocations in life and that

no single vocation is more God-pleasing than any other. At the same time, each person is

continuously juggling different vocations, and as they move through life, these vocations

change. When pastors unilaterally choose the topics of study, units of study, objectives,

and techniques in their adult Bible classes, as the researcher has seen to be mostly the

case, they miss out on the opportunity to speak into the ever-changing circumstances of

their learners. Though Lutherans hold that the Word of God is unchanging, how the truths

of the Word directly and specifically apply to the lives of those who receive it changes

with the learners' circumstances. Knowles's Eight Processes, in theory, were designed to

create a system whereby the learners contribute their needs, motivations, and experiences

into the process of planning, executing, and evaluating their learning experiences. In the

opinion of the researcher, where andragogy truly benefits the process of planning in

Christian education is the concept of mutual negotiation or contract learning. In

andragogy, particularly using the strategy of a learning contract (Anderson, Boud, &

Sampson, 1998), the teacher negotiates with the learner or learners to create a learning

plan. It is not just one or the other. In Lutheran theology, the pastor is called and ordained

into the public ministry to faithfully preach God's Word and rightly administer the

Sacraments in his parish. At the same time, the pastor serves on behalf of the people who

have their own needs and motivations. The Eight Processes espoused by Knowles present

an unusual way for this understanding of ministry in congregations to be actualized. The

researcher desired to see this investigated further.

Personal Reflections

Aside from the above discussion and implications, the researcher had some

personal thoughts from the study. These reflections revolved first around different

additions that might have benefitted the data and second around what the researcher learned about himself and his own biases during the study.

First, the length of the qualitative study allowed for the gathering of substantial and meaningful data but might have benefitted from more. The qualitative data helped the researcher sufficiently address the research questions. That said, the researcher also felt that the study would have benefitted from the addition of some additional qualitative and quantitative data as well. In particular, the researcher was curious as to the perceptions of the learners in the adult Bible classes as to what impact, if any, the andragogical training had on their classes. This additional research could have been conducted via a quantitative survey before and after the training, as well as some interviews for those learners. The researcher was aware, however, that as the learners in these classes attended inconsistently from week to week, and with the additional consent needed from these learners, such addition was impractical for this study. Instead, this study focused on the pastors as participants and less on the learners. The researcher was curious about what a similar study, but from the perspective of the learners instead of the pastors, would yield.

Also, the researcher reflected that the length of the study was likely not necessary. The study itself, due to the outbreak of a pandemic and the subsequent shutdown of research, was shortened by two months from the initial plan and produced sufficient data. What the researcher observed in four or five observations post-workshop was likely enough to show any patterns that revealed the impact of andragogy on adult Bible classes. That said, the researcher was grateful that the original study was scheduled for the full length that it was, as it was shortened by the pandemic.

The researcher also reflected on how the small number of participants limited the scope of the findings, as having three participants, though a practical choice for the researcher, made the results narrow. The researcher reflected that other LCMS pastors, in different contexts, cities, ethnic populations, and congregational sizes, would have likely given more nuance and variety to the results. Though not necessarily practical for one study, the researcher reflected on how this study, if replicated by different researchers in different contexts, could provide more robust results.

Finally, throughout this study, the researcher also learned a great deal about his own biases. The researcher entered the study fully convinced that the teaching strategy of small group interaction was almost entirely superior to lecture as it allowed for higher levels of participant engagement. Though the researcher still preferred more interactive class settings at the conclusion of the study, over the course of the research, he gained a higher level of appreciation for the use of lecture in conjunction with open-ended questions. Whereas before the study, the researcher believed andragogy the most appropriate method to approaching adult learners, after the study, the researcher appreciated more the concept of pedagogy and andragogy existing side by side on a continuum. As such, for the researcher, andragogy became less of a pure model to aspire towards and more of a tool in his mental toolbox. Throughout the study, the researcher observed the participants engaged in highly informative lectures, adding andragogical elements before, during, or after these lectures to engage the learners. As such, andragogical elements, designed to draw on learner experience, self-concept, motivation, and mutual assessment of needs, augmented and enriched more pedagogical practices rather than replaced them.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the researcher believed the information obtained from the study presented meaningful insight into the impact of andragogical training on adult Bible classes in LCMS congregations in the St. Louis area. There was enough evidence to show that the andragogical training, based primarily on Knowles's Six Assumptions and Eight Processes and viewed through the lens of Lutheran theology, made an impact on how the pastors conducted their adult Bible classes. This, in turn, impacted the learners' experiences, which changed to be more reflective and interactive than before the andragogical workshops. The three participants reacted favorably to the training, and in their reflections, they spoke of how the study changed their perceptions of their adult learners. The impact was also demonstrated when the participants made plans to further their use of andragogical theory and design in the future.

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Appendix A

Research Study Consent Form

LINDENWOOD

Research Study Consent Form

An Investigation of Andragogy in Adult Bible Classes in Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod Congregations in St. Louis

Before reading this consent form, please know:

- Your decision to participate is your choice
- You will have time to think about the study
- You will be able to withdraw from this study at any time
- You are free to ask questions about the study at any time

After reading this consent form, we hope that you will know:

- Why we are conducting this study
- What you will be required to do
- What are the possible risks and benefits of the study
- What alternatives are available, if the study involves treatment or therapy
- What to do if you have questions or concerns during the study

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Basic information about this study:

- We are interested in learning about any possible impacts on adult Bible classes in Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod after pastors are trained in andragogical theory and teaching methods.
- You will attend two workshops, complete a short weekly journal, and be observed in your teaching once a month for 11 months.
- Risks include providing us with information that may identify you. Every effort will be made to keep your information secure. Only members of the research team will be able to see any data that may identify you.

LINDENWOOD

Research Study Consent Form

An Investigation of Andragogy in Adult Bible Classes in Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod Congregations in St. Louis

You are asked to participate in a research study being conducted by Rev. Peter Jurchen under the guidance of Dr. Giuseffi at Lindenwood University. Being in a research study is voluntary, and you are free to stop at any time. Before you choose to participate, you are free to discuss this research study with family, friends, or a physician. Do not feel like you must join this study until all of your questions or concerns are answered. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form.

Why is this research being conducted?
We are doing this study to investigate the impact of training in andragogical theory and teaching methods on pastor-led Bible classes in LCMS congregations. We will be asking about two other people to answer these questions.

What am I being asked to do?
You will participate in an introductory interview with the researcher. Then, over two months, you will be observed teaching your Bible class once a month. During this time, after your Bible class, you will complete a short journal entry highlighting your teaching experience and multiple takeaways for the week. Following these two months, you will participate in two morning-long workshops in andragogical theory and teaching techniques. Following these workshops, over the next nine months you will be observed in your teaching once per month. During this time, after your Bible class, you will complete a short journal entry highlighting your teaching experience and multiple takeaways for the week. At the conclusion of this final observation, you will participate in a morning focus group with the other participants in the study.

How long will I be in this study?

You will participate in this study for a total of eleven months.

What are the risks of this study?

> We are collecting data that could identify you, such as journal entries and observation reports. Every effort will be made to keep your information secure. Only members of the research team will be able to see any data that may identify you.

What are the benefits of this study?

You will receive no direct benefits from participating in this study. We hope what we learn may benefit other people in the future.

Will I receive any compensation? At the end of the study you will receive a pastoral ministry book out of gratitude for your participation.

What if I do not choose to participate in this research?

It is always your choice to participate in this study. You may withdraw at any time. You may choose not to answer any questions or perform tasks that make you uncomfortable. If you decide to withdraw, you will not receive any penalty or loss of benefits. If you would like to withdraw from a study, please use the contact information found at the end of this form.

What if new information becomes available about the study?

During the course of this study, we may find information that could be important to you and your decision to participate in this research. We will notify you as soon as possible if such information becomes available.

How will you keep my information private?

We will do everything we can to protect your privacy. We do not intend to include information that could identify you in any publication or presentation. Any information we collect will be stored by the researcher in a secure location. The only people who will be able to see your data are: members of the research team, qualified staff of Lindenwood University, representatives of state or federal agencies.

How can I withdraw from this study?

Notify the research team immediately if you would like to withdraw from this research study.

Who can I contact with questions or concerns?

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research or concerns about the study, or if you feel under any pressure to enroll or to continue to participate in this study, you may contact the Lindenwood University Institutional Review Board Director, Michael Leary, at (636) 949-4730 or mleary@lindenwood.edu. You can contact the researcher, Pete Jurchen, directly at 515-490-0197 or pj551@lindenwood.edu. You may also contact Dr. Giuseffi at FGiuseffi@lindenwood.edu.

I have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I will also be given a copy of this consent form for my records. I consent to my participation in the research described above.

_____   _____

Participant's Signature   **Date**

_____

Participant's Printed Name

_____   _____

Signature of Principle Investigator or Designee   **Date**

_____

Investigator or Designee Printed Name

Appendix B

Participant Interview Questions

1. Please tell me about your congregation and your experience with teaching Bible class there.

    a. How many?

    b. Any history?

    c. Your satisfaction with how Bible class is going and why?

2. Are you familiar at all with the term andragogy and/or the researcher Malcolm Knowles? If so, what?

    a. Are you familiar with other adult education theorists? If so, who?

    b. Would you please describe for me the extent with which you've been trained in college, seminary, or other professional development, in the art and science of teaching.

3. What adult teaching strategies (if any) do you use in your adult Bible classes?

    a. What is your typical adult Bible class like?

    b. How do you choose to go about preparing and teaching your classes?

4. In what ways, if any, have your adult Bible class learners expressed to you how they've benefited from your Bible classes?

    a. What factors, do you believe, contribute most to your learners' satisfaction with your Bible class?

    b. Have your learners ever expressed a desire for change in format? If so, what is that?

    c. What, ideally, would you like your learners' experiences to be in class?

d. What, ideally, would be the changes in your learners' lives that you would like to see happen as a result of their participation in your class?

5. In your opinion, do your learners see you as a teacher the same way you see yourself as a teacher?

a. Why is that?

b. How would you know?

6. How would you like to improve as an adult educator?

a. What do you see as the biggest challenge to your adult Bible class participation?

b. What do you see as the greatest opportunity for your adult Bible class?

c. What, in particular, would be the main need in your teaching of Bible class that you'd like to see improved upon? Why is that?

Appendix C

Observation Template

Observation Template for Site _____   Date _____   Pg. # _____

Field Notes:

Time:	Comments:	Observations:

Questions:

Appendix D

Workshop 1 Outline: Andragogical Learning Theory

1. Collect journal entries over the previous two months

2. Introductions of self and participants

3. Facilitate a group learning contract for clarifying expectations

4. Opening reflection on the personal experiences with adult education as LCMS

   pastors

   a. Personal reflection

   b. Group discussion

5. Mini-lecture on history of andragogy

   a. Andragogy in history

   b. Andragogy seen in Biblical teaching (Jesus, Apostles)

   c. Andragogy in adult Bible studies, trends etc.

   d. Andragogy in the LCMS, pastoral training, continuing education, etc.

   e. Group reflection on mini-lecture

6. Break

7. Facilitate learning experiences on andragogy, focused primarily on the Six

   Assumptions, or the learning theory of andragogy while demonstrating

   andragogical teaching techniques to the participants. Begin with personal

   reflection on the implications of the assumption for conducting an adult Bible

   class, followed by group brainstorming for each assumption.

   1. Adult learners need to know why then need to learn something before

      undertaking to learn it;

2. Adult learners have a self-concept of being responsible for their own decisions, for their own lives;

3. Adult learners come into an educational activity with both a greater volume and a different quality of experience from that of youths;

4. Adult learners become ready to learn those things they need to know and be able to do in order to cope effectively with their real-life situations;

5. Adult learners are motivated to learn to the extent that they perceive that learning will help them perform tasks or deal with problems that they confront in their life situations;

6. Adult learners are responsive to some external motivators (better jobs, promotions, higher salaries, and the like), but the most potent motivators are internal pressures (the desire for increased job satisfaction, self-esteem, quality of life, and the like).

8. Facilitate individual participant application of Six Assumptions to a current class, how each has acknowledged and not acknowledged each of the Six Assumptions and has not. Each learner will create a plan for how to further implement each of the Assumptions into one of his settings and present this to the group with input.

9. Review opening group learning contract, close with prayer.

10. Leave with a packet of examples for use of Six Assumptions in future adult Bible classes.

Workshop 2 Outline: Andragogical Design Theory

1. Introductions and housekeeping/prayer and devotion

2. Review of/addendum to group learning contract for clarifying expectations

3. Reflection on the previous learning experience on the history of andragogy and
   the Six Assumptions

   a. Personal reflection

   b. Group discussion

4. Facilitate learning experiences on andragogy, focused primarily on the Eight
   Processes, or the design theory of andragogy while demonstrating andragogical
   teaching techniques to the participants. Begin with personal reflection on the
   implications of the process for conducting an adult Bible class, followed by group
   brainstorming for each assumption.

   a. Preparing the learner;

   b. Setting the climate;

   c. Mutual planning;

   d. Diagnosis of learning needs;

   e. Setting learning objectives;

   f. Designing the learning experience;

   g. Learning activities

   h. Evaluating the learning

5. Break

6. Facilitate individual participant application of Eight Processes to a current class,
   how each has implemented and not implemented each of the Eight Processes.

Each learner will create a plan for how to further implement each of the Processes into one of his settings and present this to the group with input.

7. Review

   a. Learning contract

   b. The two-day workshop, pros and cons

   c. How the learners plan to use or not use the Six Assumptions and Eight Processes in their adult Bible classes moving forward.

8. Prayer

9. Leave with a packet of examples for use of Eight Processes in future adult Bible classes as well as pointing them to journal prompts for next period.

Appendix E

Focus Group Questions

1. What changes, if any, did you experience in your Bible classes after your training in andragogical theory and teaching methods?

2. What adult teaching strategies did you primarily use before and after this study?

    a. Was there a difference? If so, what?

    b. In what ways, if any, did the andragogical training inspire you to critically evaluate your own teaching methods?

    c. Did your training inspire you to do any further research into adult learning? If so, what was it?

3. In what ways, if any, do you believe the adult Bible class learners benefited from your training?

    a. What feedback, if any, did you receive from your learners after your training?

    b. What insights, if any, into your own teaching did you gain from your training and implementation?

4. Do you believe that the way you see yourself as an adult educator is the same as how your learners see you as an adult educator? Please explain why and how you know that?

    a. In what ways, if any, did your andragogical training benefit how you perceive your learners' learning experiences?

5. What potential benefits do adults enjoy due to their participation in your adult Bible classes?

    a. Beyond learning, what other benefits do they experience from attending?

    b. Did the andragogical training reveal any of these potential benefits to you? If so, what?

6. What, if any, learning styles or learning experiences have emerged as a result of this study?

    a. In what ways, if any, the andragogical training has helped you improve as an adult educator?

7. To what extent, if any, did you, in your adult Bible class utilize any of the Six Assumptions and Eight Processes espoused by Malcolm Knowles?

    a. Please explain how you utilized the Six Assumptions?

    b. Please explain how you utilized the Eight Processes?

Vitae

Rev. Peter Jurchen is an editor of curriculum resources at Concordia Publishing House. Prior to that, he served for nearly eight years as Associate Pastor at two different LCMS congregations: Hope Lutheran Church in Des Moines, Iowa, and Immanuel Lutheran Church in Columbus, Nebraska. In 2004 he earned a BSE in Secondary Education with a Lutheran Teacher Diploma from Concordia University in Seward, Nebraska. He earned an MDiv from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri in 2009, and an MSE from Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, in 2012. He enrolled in the Lindenwood University EdD program in 2017 to continue to pursue his education. While serving at Concordia Publishing House, he has been the lead editor on catechisms and confirmation material, as well as a writer and developer for Sunday School and other Lutheran education materials. for He is author of the book *Timeless Truth: An Essential Guide for Teaching the Faith*, published by Concordia Publishing House in 2018.

He is honored to serve the congregations of the LCMS by equipping and partnering with its pastors and congregations in engaging their God-given vocations and encouraging the Church in her teaching mission.