LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

JOHN W. RAWLINGS SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

A SURVEY OF TEACHING METHODS USED TO RELATE

TO GENERATION ALPHA CONGREGANTS

IN CENTRAL TEXAS

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

by

Shawna Mischell Dixon

Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

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ABSTRACT

The evolution of time and approaches to addressing the learning styles of students were influential in designing and redesigning educational programming to meet the needs of each generation. The theory that guided this study was the Strauss-Howe generational theory which proposes that each generation has a personality and characteristics that shape how they learn. However, literature described current-day youth congregants as being taught with the same or very similar teaching methods as those that were implemented to teach previous generations. The purpose of this quantitative descriptive study was to discover the teaching methods being used by youth ministry leaders and teachers that serve Generation Alpha within Christian churches in Central Texas. Further, this study sought to determine if there was an association between the teaching methods being used and Generation Alpha learning styles as well as between those teaching methods and select church, survey participant, and youth group demographic variables. A researcher-designed online survey instrument was used. Invitations were electronically mailed to 342 Christian churches, comprised of 39 religious affiliations, in the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas. A sample of 24 youth leaders participated in the study. Results showed the five most commonly used teaching methods were service-learning, technology, student presentations, question-and-answer, and student peer teaching. An analysis map demonstrated that the most commonly used teaching methods accommodate Generation Alpha learning styles. There was a statistically significant association between the commonly used teaching methods and certain church, survey participant, and youth group demographic variables.

Keywords: Generational theory, generations, learning styles, youth ministry, teaching methods

Dedication

This is the LORD's doing; It is marvelous in our eyes.
Psalm 118:23 (NASB)

To my Great-Grandparents and Grandparents, who have gone on before
Willie Sr., Rosie, Cremolia, Allen Sr., Bessie, Frank Jr., and Mildred
The glimmer in your eyes always reflected your hopes and dreams for me.
Your silent prayers have always covered me.
Your wisdom has always guided me.

To my Parents
Barbara and Jerome
The pulse of your heart has always resounded your desires for me as your seed.
Your love has always propelled me to pursue more and achieve greater.
Your unwavering support has always carried me.

To my Sister-Friends
Katrina and Natosha
Our sisterly soul ties have rooted us through the seasons of life.
Your looking up to me as your big sister has always encouraged me to be the best me.
Your reassurances have always reiterated my life's purpose and gave me that extra push forward.

To my Husband
Dwight
You have always been in my corner, supporting all the ventures and aspirations I have pursued.
You have prayed me through the late night and early morning writing sessions.
Your unconditional love has undergirded me in every way imaginable.

To my Sons
Dwght Jr. and Stephen, whom I have always endeavored to be an example to in love, in life, and
in the pursuit of higher education toward fulfilling God's purpose for your life.
You are my dearhearts.

To my Daughter-in-Love
Arin, your love and words of encouragement were always timely in pushing me through my
writer's block.

To my Uncle and Aunties
To my Family, Friends, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Sisters, and Marlboro Heights Church Family
Your love, support, and prayers have been an encouragement to me from the first day I started
this doctoral journey.
Your presence in my life, during this season of my life, has been a blessing.

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List of Abbreviations

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

King James Version of the Holy Bible (KJV)

Research Hypothesis (H0)

Research Question (RQ)

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)

Visual, Auditory, Reading/Writing Preference, and Kinesthetic (VARK)

Youth Ministry Teaching Methods (YMTM)

CHAPTER ONE: RESEARCH CONCERN

Introduction

Since its introduction in the 1780s, Sunday School has been the primary format by which Christian churches deliver systematic biblical instruction to their congregants in age-related classroom settings (Anthony & Benson, 2011; Leal 2018). Although the biblical message to be taught has not changed, the evolution of time and approaches to addressing the learning styles of students has influenced the design and redesign of the churches' Christian educational programming for children. A Barna Group (2005) study revealed that the children currently attending Sunday School "have an experience similar to that which their grandparents would have had decades ago" (para. 1). This raised the question to this researcher of why this would be the case. While the pedagogy of educational institutions has changed with time, the question remains, where is the church's youth educational programming on the continuum of adopting and adapting to current pedagogical approaches to meet today's youth congregant learning styles?

The current youth congregant is part of a vastly different generation from that of their parents and grandparents (Seemiller & Grace, 2017). Differences are especially seen in generational preferences that coincide with chosen approaches to classroom instruction. The Silent Generation preferred a formal presentation of information (McCrindle, 2012; Panopto, 2019); therefore, lectures were the instructional method used (Panopto, 2019). Lectures continued to be the primary teaching method for the Boom Generation and Generation X (McCrindle, 2012, 2019a). However, with Generation X, the increased usage of computers began the transition to interactive teaching methods (McCrindle, 2012). Generation Y presented significant challenges to educational institutions to adapt their methods of approach to teaching

this generational cohort (Seemiller & Grace, 2017). With Generation Y and Generation Z, classrooms became less instructor-centered through lectures and more student-centered through collaborative learning (Lynch, 2015; McCrindle, 2012; Price, n.d.).

The characteristics of a generation influence their learning styles, and it is the student's learning style that influences the educational programming and practices for that generation. William Strauss (2005) stated, "each generation brings something new and important to teaching and learning. That's why it's so important for school administrators to understand, respect and address the generational differences in today's schools" (p. 14). This study explored the relevance of Strauss' statement to Christian education within the confines of the church setting and its application to youth ministry programming.

This chapter begins with a discussion of the research problem. An outline of the purpose for this study, the research questions guiding this study, assumptions and delimitations surrounding this study, and the definition of terms relevant to this study follows. Finally, the significance of the study is expressed, and a summary of the research design the study followed is given.

Background to the Problem

As a new generational cohort enters the educational setting, the crucial question for leaders and teachers to ask themselves is whether or not they are reaching this cohort and relating the instructional content in a manner that is relevant to them (Collins, 2001). This section explores the theological, historical, sociological, and theoretical background of how teaching methods evolved to coincide with the unique traits of the generation of youth being served and, most importantly, how teaching methods were adapted to address the differences in the educational needs of the youth.

Theological Background

The Bible conveys God's intentions for biblical instructions to be passed from one generation to the next generation for directing them on how to live and navigate life in alignment with the principles and practices of their faith (Anthony & Benson, 2011; Davidson, 2016). The biblical instruction of children about their life of faith was initiated as the responsibility of parents and remained as such throughout the early times of the history of God's people through the initial days of the organized church in the first century (Buzzell, 1985; Ross, 2017; Strong, 2014). This responsibility was carried out in a manner that the children were able to relate to the content being conveyed (Senter, 1992).

Over time the parental and societal perspective of where the responsibility for the biblical instruction of children resides shifted (Barna Group, 2019a; Ross, 2017). A study conducted by the Barna Group (2020a) revealed that 72% of parents who are actively engaged in their church view the church as responsible for the spiritual formation of their children and, therefore, they rely on the church and its leaders to facilitate such learning. Whether it is parents or church leaders providing biblical instruction to children, God's intentions and subsequently His expectations remain for teaching the content of one's faith in a relatable and relevant manner. However, many churches are reportedly using the same model of educational programming from generation to generation (Barna Group, 2005; Ross, 2017). As such, youth reportedly are becoming disengaged and subsequently disconnected from youth ministry, and ultimately from the church (Moser & Nel, 2019; Strong, 2014).

The words of the Apostle Paul to Timothy to teach "so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work" (King James Version, 2009, 2 Timothy 3:16-17) conveys the charge to ministry leaders and teachers to facilitate the spiritual formation of those

entrusted to their oversight. As such, it begs for youth ministry leaders and teachers to consider what factors may contribute to the disengagement and decline of youth ministry participants. Moser and Nel (2019) inquired, "Is there a connection between the failure to produce longevity in the lives of Christian young people and the means we have used to attract these youth (those both inside and outside the church) to our youth programs?" (p. 2).

The content of the instruction youth ministry leaders provide is to be theologically grounded (Howard, 2017; Kelly, 2016; Strong, 2015). However, the means, methods, and mediums employed to facilitate the spiritual formation of the youth should be evaluated on occasion and subsequently adjusted to aid in the mission of ministering to youth (Senter, 1992). Aziz (2019) stated:

> [While] the gospel of Jesus Christ and the biblical message does not change, the message should be given in a 'language and form' that can be understood. The gospel message should never be forced or coerced without engaging the context of the young person. (p. 1)

The adapting of one's methodology to meet the needs of the youth population being ministered to patterns after the teaching methodology of Jesus. One making the message being conveyed relevant and relatable to youth also patterns after Jesus' teaching methods. Jesus is highly acclaimed for his teaching methods and his ability to place the principles of the lessons he sought to convey in a generational and cultural context. This Jesus did by employing the appropriate teaching method to make the content he presented relevant and relatable to those he ministered to (James et al., 2015).

Historical Background

In their book, *Exploring the History and Philosophy of Christian Education: Principles for the 21st Century*, Anthony and Benson (2011) traced the history of Christian education and its evolution from its Hebrew origins to the current 21st century. The introduction to each

chapter included a synopsis of key historical world events that give further insight into the influences on the adjustments and advancements of Christian education in the era of discussion. As time progressed, the educational methodologies changed to not only coincide with the era but to address the variation in learning styles that came about because of the era. Additionally, when observations relayed that the methodology being used for youth ministry lacked relevance to the culture of the current day and, therefore, was no longer effective in facilitating the spiritual formation of youth, a restructuring of youth ministry programming was necessitated (Richmann, 2018; Senter, 1992).

Sociological Background

With the Millennial Generation came an increase in those who identify as religious "nones" (i.e., those who do not claim a religious affiliation) (Reed, 2016, p. 154). Surveys of American citizens show that the number of persons who classify themselves as religiously unaffiliated continues to rise while the number of persons who identify as Christian is declining. In 2009, a Pew Research Center study discovered that approximately 178 million out of 233 million adults identified as Christian, equating to 77% of the adult population. In 2019, approximately 167 million out of 256 million adults identified as Christian, which is 65% of the adult population. During the same studies, the approximately 39 million adults who identified as religiously unaffiliated in 2009 rose to 68 million in 2019 (Pew Research Center, 2019). This was a 12% decrease in the number of Christians and a 17% increase in the number of those religiously unaffiliated in the United States.

The different perspectives about religion and its role in daily life contribute to this increase in religious "nones." Millennials, who make up a large portion of the demographic that identify as a religious "none," cite "wanting to figure out how to follow Jesus in the day-to-day

aspects of their lives" and expressed a "desire to follow Jesus in a way that connects with the

world they live in" (Barna Group, 2013, para. 13).

Generation Z is considered the first post-Christian generation in the West (White, 2017).

This is to say that while most persons of Generation Z believe in the existence of God, there is "a

lack of Christian identity, belief, and practice" (Barna Group, 2019b, para. 2). This pattern of a

decline in Christian identity and practice of Christian values suggests "the younger the

generation, the more Post-Christian it is" (White, 2017, p. 36). The perspective that Millennials

have on religion, its role, and relevance to one's daily life will influence how they parent their

children who are the population of Generation Alpha, is an added component to this pattern of a

decline in Christian identity and practices (White, 2017). These factors bring challenges to the

church in adapting their methodology to reach this demographic in their evangelism efforts and

then make relevant the biblical teachings in their discipleship of this demographic. This is to say

that churches must assess whether or not the teaching methodologies of their Christian

educational programming are a contributing factor to the rise of the religious "nones" or the post-

Christian generation (Ross, 2017).

Theoretical Background

The years designated to a generation differ by researcher and are defined within the

context of the study they are conducting. However, the guiding concept of generational theory is

upheld across the various studies surrounding cohort analysis (Dimock, 2019). Moore (2007)

captures the essential thought behind generational theory in the statement that:

> Each generation is shaped by its own biography, where the biography comprises a series
> of events to which people with common birth years relate and around which they develop
> common beliefs and behaviors. It is these commonly held beliefs and behaviors that form
> the "personality" of that generation. (p. 41)

Participants in youth ministry are typically middle school and high school students

(Štěch, 2016) which places current-day youth ministry attendees among the members of Generation Z and Generation Alpha (McCrindle, 2020a). The era in which Generation Z and Generation Alpha were born has an impact on their learning style. The lives of both Generation Z and Generation Alpha are inundated with the technology of the world they were born into as well as with new technologies that develop. Consequently, every aspect of their daily life, including how they are taught, is heavily influenced by their level of exposure to technology. Therefore, churches must ensure the methodologies of their youth educational programming are not only relevant but also relatable to this generational cohort and subsequently to the next generations to come.

Statement of the Problem

Generational traits are believed to be influencers in educational programming and practices; however, institutions and educators continue to use teaching methods developed three or more generations ago. In her book, *Basics of Christian Education*, Tye (2000) admonished institutions, inclusive of churches, that they should not have a "one-size fits all approach" to Christian education programming, but each approach must be uniquely designed to its purpose and the needs of the population it seeks to serve (p. 10). Ross (2017) conveyed that while most youth leaders work tirelessly to carry out their mission to teach and train youth in the principles of their faith, "by employing a sixty-year-old model of youth ministry, the great majority of church teenagers are not becoming world-changing disciples as adults" (p. 103). Sixty years ago, the Boom Generation made up the youth population and the classroom lecture was the preferred teaching method for this generation (McCrindle, 2012, 2019a). However, the current generation of youth, which is Generation Alpha, had their life inundated with technology from the time they were born (McCrindle, 2019c). As such, the classroom lecture is not an effective teaching

method with Generation Alpha as compared to teaching methods that are engaging, visual, multimodal, and hands-on (McCrindle, 2020b).

For religious educator Thomas Howard, social science had been the primary informer of his approach to the methodology he used in the religious education of youth. Howard (2017) expressed his belief that as youth culture changes one's methods of teaching youth should also change. Thus, key findings and educational applications from the discipline of neuroscience have "provoked a paradigm shift [for him] as a religious educator" (p. 34).

While industries and academic institutions were using the findings of cohort analysis for "strategic planning, marketing, and education" (LifeCourse Associates, n.d.b, para. 10) as well as to understand and solve institutional and workplace problems, it did not appear these findings were permeating many educational programs within the churches of Central Texas or influencing their teaching methods. Although there may be many Christian K-12 educators who also serve as youth ministry workers in their local congregations, the literature did not convey that the methods these educators used in the academic classrooms of Generation Alpha were being translated to implementation in the educational component of the church setting.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative descriptive study was to discover the teaching methods utilized among youth ministries that serve Generation Alpha within Christian churches in Central Texas. Further, this study sought to identify if a relationship exists between those teaching methods and the generational traits and learning styles of Generation Alpha as well as participant and church demographic variables. The theory that guided this study was generational theory, as presented by William Strauss and Neil Howe (1991). Strauss-Howe generational theory recognizes that persons born within a specified timeframe have shared experiences of key

historical events and social trends during the same period or age timespan of their life, which shape and form the character traits, beliefs, and behaviors of the generation (Allen & Ross, 2012; LifeCourse Associates, n.d.a; Moore, 2007).

Research Questions

RQ1. What are the most common teaching methods being used in the educational programming for youth ministries by youth leaders and teachers in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas?

RQ2. To what degree, if any, are the most common teaching methods being used by youth leaders and teachers in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas linked to Generation Alpha learning styles?

RQ3. What, if any, is the significance of church demographic variables of religious affiliation, congregation size, and the number of youth congregants to the most common teaching methods being used by the youth leaders and teachers of the churches in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas?

RQ4. What, if any, is the significance of participant demographic variables of gender, age, position serving in, and years serving in youth ministry to the most common teaching methods being used by youth leaders and teachers of the churches in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas?

RQ5. What, if any, is the significance of youth group demographic variables of grade level, class size, and how often the youth leaders and teachers meet with the youth group to the most common teaching methods being used by youth leaders and teachers of the churches in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas?

Assumptions and Delimitations

Research Assumptions

Several research assumptions were foundational to this study. The first assumption was that Generational Theory accurately classifies the character traits and learning styles of generational cohorts. This researcher assumed specific teaching methods were designed to address specific cognitive developmental needs by which the student may learn and gain knowledge.

While churches adjusted their delivery format as they put measures in place to align with

the recommended safety protocols of the Center for Disease Control and local city governance in response to the COVID-19 global pandemic, this researcher assumed the core design of the church's youth ministry educational programming exists in some form of what it was before the COVID-19 global pandemic.

This researcher assumed that Central Texas churches strive to deliver Christian content to their youth congregants. It was further assumed that Central Texas churches ascribe to a teaching methodology regardless of doctrinal or denominational beliefs.

Lastly, this researcher assumed the format and design of the church's youth educational program were established and determined by the pastoral leadership under the direction of the Holy Spirit. Thus, this researcher assumed youth ministry workers apply teaching methods under the guidance and direction of pastoral leadership.

Delimitations of the Research Design

To gain a more comprehensive understanding of teaching methods being used to relate Christian content to Generation Alpha congregants, this study delimited Children's Ministry for youth congregants of pre-school, kindergarten, and elementary school age. This study included Youth Ministries that serve youth congregants of middle school, junior high school, and high school age.

The research population was comprised of churches of Christian faith in Central Texas; therefore, this study may not be generalizable to churches outside of the Central Texas area or to churches of non-Christian faiths.

Both denominational and non-denominational churches comprised the research population. Although demographic variables of the churches were part of the data analysis, this study may not be generalizable to a particular religious affiliation or transferable to a certain

doctrinal belief.

This research study focused on teaching methods used by churches. A review of the curriculum used or aspects of the church liturgy was delimited to this study. Therefore, this study may not be generalizable to a youth ministry curriculum or infer relationships to the effectiveness of the youth ministry educational curriculum.

This research study focused on teaching methods used to relate to and reach Generation Alpha; therefore, this study may not be generalizable to previous generations or transferable to future generational cohorts.

Definition of Terms

1. *Generation*: A cohort of the population born within a specified range of years.

2. *Generational Characteristics*: The traits that describe the common personality and behaviors of a generational cohort.

3. *Generation Y*: The generational cohort of persons born between 1981 and 1996 (Dimock, 2019).

4. *Generation Z*: The generational cohort of persons born between 1997 and 2012 (Dimock, 2019).

5. *Generation Alpha*: The generational cohort of persons with birth years beginning with 2010 and with an expected ending birth year of 2025 (McCrindle, 2014).

6. *Learning Styles*: The visual, auditory, kinesthetic, or multisensory perceptual mode that is the student's preferred way to absorb, process, comprehend and retain information (Fleming & Mills, 1992).

7. *Generational Learning Styles:* A generational cohort's approach to learning resulting from generational characteristics and influences of cultural phenomena such as social, demographic, and technology (Fleming & Mills, 1992).

8. *Millennial*: The alternate title used for the generational cohort of persons born between 1981 to 1996 (Dimock, 2019).

9. *Teaching Methodologies*: The teaching strategies and methods utilized to relate content to the student, inclusive of the manner in which that content is delivered.

10. *Youth Ministry*: The church's programming that is designed to present the gospel to youth congregants of middle school, junior high school, and high school age and

provide further instruction in Christian principles and practices geared toward promoting their personal and spiritual growth.

11. *Middle School:* An intermediate school between elementary school and high school consisting of Grades 6-8 (Education Encyclopedia, n.d.; Tucker, n.d.).

12. *Junior High School:* The alternative name used by some school districts for the intermediate school consisting of Grades 6-8 (Education Encyclopedia, n.d.; Tucker, n.d.).

13. *High School:* A secondary school consisting of Grades 9-12 (Education Encyclopedia, n.d.; Tucker, n.d.).

Significance of the Study

Anthony and Benson (2011) emphasize the importance of being able to "determine how and when changes in methodology should take place and be able to make the necessary adjustments" (p. 411). Studies indicate industries consistently assess and reassess their strategic plans and subsequently apply the research findings pertaining to the population that comprises their company or organization as well as those of the population they serve (LifeCourse Associates, n.d.b). This study sought to broaden the research in the field of generational learning styles and youth ministry teaching methodologies.

Chapter Two will demonstrate, that while the biblical content of the church's educational programming will not change, presenting the content in a relevant and, most of all, relatable manner requires knowledge of generational learning styles and the appropriate methodologies for meeting their educational needs. In his research, Ross (2017) discovered multiple studies emphasize that 40%-50% of youth will drift from God and the faith community after they graduate from high school. Ross posed the question, "Is the church willing to give up comfortable youth ministry and consider a radically new model that is likely to lead many more teenagers to lifetime faith?" (p. 103). In his conference paper presented at the 2016 Religious Education Association Annual Meeting, Crutchfield (2016) emphasized the need for critical

pedagogy in churches. Crutchfield stated that "reaching 'the next generation' is gaining insight into that generation's world" (p. 3). This study sought to demonstrate the implications these studies proposed as the first step youth ministry leaders and teachers should take in order to determine which teaching methods will be most effective in fulfilling their purpose.

This study also sought to expound upon the literature base on generational theory and learning styles as they relate to the Christian education of youth congregants. Lastly, this study sought to aid pastors and youth ministry workers in understanding the application of generational learning styles in the church setting for the purpose of advancing their ministry efforts and increasing their impact on the youth generation.

Summary of the Design

This study was conducted using quantitative descriptive survey research. In order to discover the most common teaching methods that were being used in the educational programming of youth ministries in Central Texas Christian churches and to determine if there was any significance between the teaching methods being used and the learning styles of Generation Alpha, this researcher developed the Youth Ministry Teaching Methods (YMTM) Survey (see Appendix J). The research instrument, based on implications derived from the precedent literature, was comprised of 17 questions pertaining to youth ministry teaching methods, activities, and demographics. The survey was validated by an expert panel comprised of experienced educators who were working with youth in the academic classroom setting at the time of this study. After the expert panel review, the survey was pilot-tested by a group of select individuals. Once the survey was sufficiently validated, it was distributed to the sample population via an electronically mailed link.

The population selected for this study were youth ministry leaders and teachers of

Christian churches in Central Texas. This researcher used a convenience sample comprised of the Christian churches within the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas. Using the most recent print edition of the Greater Killeen - Fort Hood telephone directory and online resources comprised of the church directories published by the local newspapers and the Student Spiritual Life departments of the colleges and universities located in the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas, as well as the Chamber of Commerce Business Directory in those areas, this researcher identified 342 Christian churches comprised of 39 religious affiliations. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the teaching methods being used by youth ministries, all 342 Christian churches were invited to participate in the study.

This researcher used the online platform of Qualtrics Survey Software to design and administer the survey as well as to analyze the data. IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Statistical Software was also used to analyze the data. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency counts, measures of central tendency, and measures of association. Appropriate tables, charts, and graphs were created to visually display the survey responses and statistical values relevant to each research question.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

Many educational institutions use the findings of current research on generational traits and learning styles to make changes in their teaching methodology. It would reason that the teaching methodologies being used in primary and secondary academic classrooms would be incorporated into the church's youth educational programming in that they are serving the same population of students. It was of interest to this researcher that while biblical content as the curriculum of the church's educational programming will not change if the teaching methods being employed were presenting the content in a relevant manner and, most of all, relatable manner to the generation of youth they were serving. Therefore, the literature review explores research relevant to the theological, theoretical, and related concepts of generational theory and its influences on learning styles and teaching methods. Through the literature review, one will be able to gain insight into the rationale for the study and the gap in the literature.

Theological Framework for the Study

The beginning of humanity also began the existence of generations and subsequently the practice of teaching. The purpose of this study was to discover the teaching methods that were being used among youth ministries that serve Generation Alpha. The theological framework of this literature review analyzes biblical text and corresponding literature on the biblical foundation of instructing one in the life of faith. A biblical perspective of generations is reviewed relative to the expectation of passing on one's life of faith through teaching it to the next generation of Christ-followers.

Teaching

The concept of teaching may be collectively viewed as the primary means of instructing

someone on a subject. The act of teaching is generally defined as the means by which information and knowledge are conveyed to another person (Ababio, 2013). For persons who profess the Christian faith in Jesus Christ, teaching is essential in evangelism and discipleship. Jesus stated:

> Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (KJV, Matthew 28:19-20)

The first rendering of the word teach as used in the phrase "teach all nations" speaks to evangelizing in the form of sharing information about the birth, life, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus (Arndt et al., 2000; Swanson, 1997b). The second form of the word teach in the phrase "teaching them to observe all things" pertains to discipleship as it relates to instructing those who have professed faith in Jesus' salvific work as the established standards and expectations for their life as a Christ-follower (Arndt et al., 2000; Huizing & James, 2018; Swanson, 1997b).

Teaching the Life of Faith

Tracing back to the Old Testament era of the Bible, the importance of educating one in the things of their faith is exhibited in the lives of the patriarchs. The words of Genesis 2:16 (KJV) that say "the Lord God commanded the man" convey God as the first teacher to man in covenant living. The word command in this verse means to "tell, instruct, [and] give direction" (Swanson, 1997a, entry 7422). When combined with the implications from the phrase "the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day" in Genesis 3:8 (KJV), there are two important observations regarding teaching. The first observation is that teaching someone about the life of faith is an intentional endeavor (Elwell & Beitzel, 1988; Stein, 1994) as displayed in God communing with Adam in fellowship at an established time of the day. The

second observation is that teaching involves being exact in what is being instructed about the life

of faith (Stein, 1994) as demonstrated in God communicating with Adam about how to live in a

covenant relationship with Him.

Collectively, these observations contribute to a modern-day understanding of Christian

education. From her work with students and local congregations over time, Tye (2000) derived

four ways of understanding Christian education: religious instruction, socialization process,

personal development approach, and process of liberation (pp. 10-12). The first description of

Christian education as religious instruction speaks to teaching someone about their life of faith.

From this description, Tye defined Christian education as "deliberate and intentional efforts by

the church to transmit the knowledge and practices of the Christian faith" (p. 10).

Anthony and Benson (2011) expressed that God has expectations of man to teach others

just as He has instructed man in how to live in a covenant relationship with Him. Genesis 18:19

(KJV) stated:

> For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they
> shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon
> Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

The same Hebrew word for command as used in Genesis 2:16 (KJV) is used in the

preceding verse as well implying that Abraham is to "tell, instruct, [and] give direction"

(Swanson, 1997a, entry 7422) to his descendants. This is to say that Abraham was expected to

"teach his offspring righteousness and justice" (Ross, 1985, p. 59) as it relates to a life of faith.

As Abraham advanced in his faith, he was to teach the life of faith to his children and their

children down through future generations that were born during his lifetime. Anthony and

Benson (2011) stated, "God's desire has always been to see His children mature in their faith and

pass that faith on to subsequent generations" (p. 17).

Teaching the Next Generation

In the early era of humanity's history, the Christian education of children was the honored privilege of the parent. Parents took pride in being the ones to lay the foundation of their children's spiritual life and cultivate the same in shaping the child's moral and ethical values. In each of the Hebrew, Greek, and Roman cultures, the parent took the responsibility of having initial influence in educating their children in religious matters (Anthony & Benson, 2011; Davidson, 2016). These early models in the Hebrew culture of parents taking the primary responsibility in teaching the life of faith to their children became the tradition in Jewish homes (Buzzell, 1985).

The responsibility to teach biblical principles and practices to the next generation was not only God's intention but His expectations. The expectation for one generation to teach the next generation is expressed in God's instructions to the Israelites as conveyed in the words of Moses:

> Now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. (KJV, Deuteronomy 6:1, 7)

These verses convey that one is expected to be intentional in the methods and manner by which they teach the next generation about the life of faith. Also, these verses express that one is expected to teach the specifics of God's expectations regarding the life of faith (Stein, 1994).

Buzzell (1985) stated, "parents in ideal Jewish homes taught their children God's Law" (p. 908). King Solomon exemplified biblical instructions being passed from one generation to the next generation. Having been taught by his father King David to "keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses" (KJV, 1 Kings 2:3), King Solomon passed

the teachings to his son. King Solomon carried out his intentions to continue the passing of the teachings he received to his son in the words, "my son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother" (KJV, Proverbs 1:8).

The Jewish tradition of parents instructing their children in the life of faith carried over into the New Testament as an expectation for those who profess the Christian faith in Jesus Christ (Bengtson et al., 2013). The Apostle Paul stated, "and, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (KJV, Ephesians 6:4). The words nurture and admonition refer to the Christian teaching, training, and instruction of one's children (Arndt et al., 2000). Current-day leaders recognize that God's intentions and expectations remain for parents to be the primary teacher of the life of faith to their children. Ross (2017) stated:

> Most youth leaders now acknowledge that God's primary plan for moving the faith down through the generations is the home. They would say that God's primary plan for getting truth into the lives of teenagers is at the feet of their parents. (p. 94)

When talking with children about God's commands, statutes, and judgments as did Moses with his generation, and when instructing one's children as did King Solomon, it is assumed that words, phrases, and examples that the youth can relate to are used. Teaching the next generation about the life of faith entails ensuring they understand the teachings so that they may correctly apply the teaching (Deere, 1985).

Teaching to the Generation

Scripture communicates God's intentions and subsequently His expectations for teaching the content of one's faith in a relatable and relevant manner. The importance of teaching someone about their life of faith cannot be overstated. In like manner, the significance of teaching someone about their faith in a manner receptive to their generation cannot be

overlooked. This is to say, the goal of teaching one's life of faith to the next generation is not just to relay information but so the generation becomes knowledgeable in how what is being taught is relevant and applicable to their everyday life. Christian educational programming must not be the rote learning of scriptures and biblical facts but should be the teaching of how biblical truths apply to issues that are prevalent in the society in which one resides (Maddix & Estep, 2017).

The significance of the preceding paragraph is highlighted in two studies for which the methodologies of youth ministries were evaluated and subsequently, suggestions were offered for application in enhancing youth ministry programming. The first study is that of Martin-Paulichenko (2015) geared toward youth ministries posed to evangelize Canadian Aboriginal youth. In his study, Martin-Paulichenko (2015) stressed the importance of youth ministry workers understanding the history, daily realities, life experiences, and cultural values of Aboriginal youth and their families. Studies of Aboriginal education indicated the significance of incorporating Aboriginal culture into their program and curriculum (Martin-Paulichenko, 2015). Subsequently, Martin-Paulichenko (2015) recommended that youth ministry workers seek to apply the results of such studies in their efforts to reach Canadian Aboriginal youth and offered nine suggestions to "help youth workers better understand and work with urban Aboriginal adolescents" (p. 71). One suggestion Martin-Paulichenko (2015) offered is for youth ministry workers to "look for ways to be culturally relevant…[and] should also look for ways for adolescents to incorporate their own expressions of their culture into the ministry" (p. 72).

The second study is that of McCorquodale (2021) geared toward charting a path forward for current-day Catholic youth ministries. In her study, McCorquodale (2021) tracked the evolution of Catholic youth ministry and the subsequent evolution of the role and responsibilities of youth ministry leaders. McCorquodale (2021) presented catechetical methodology and

discipleship-and-accompaniment as two approaches that have been taken to Catholic youth

ministry to address social and cultural changes. The focus of catechesis was the question-and-

answer approach in the 1950s and 1960s. In the 1970s and 1980s, a shift was made to an

instructional-schooling approach that included new learning models and methods. McCorquodale

(2021) stated, "this swing saw a focus more on experiential learning models and a move away

from a sole focus on doctrine" (p. 2). In the 1990s, Catholic youth ministry began to focus on

discipleship (McCorquodale, 2021). The current approach has progressed the discipleship focus

to that of accompaniment (i.e., forming disciples). This is to say, the programmatic approach to

youth ministry is not just one where youth are recipients of ministry, but they become "agents of

ministry, inviting their family and peers to faith" (McCorquodale, 2021, p. 3). Additionally,

McCorquodale (2021) acknowledges the current global pandemic has pushed approaches to

youth ministry from solely in-person gatherings to more digital solutions.

  The psalmist articulated the religious teaching of the next generation in the words, "one

generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts" (KJV, Psalm

145:4). This verse of scripture expresses the expectation for continual teaching to the next

generation the content of their Christian faith and relationship with God. Teaching the next

generation is to be in a manner that they can comprehend its relevance to them and that they can

grasp how to apply the teachings to their life.

  Jesus is revered for teaching content that was both in a generational context and culturally

relatable (Stein, 1994). The example of Jesus' use of illustrations to make relevant biblical truths

continued with the apostles and into many formats of current church educational programming.

A primary goal of current religious instruction is to be able to relate to the person and to make

the biblical teachings relevant to their everyday life. In discussing the church's response to the

spiritual needs of youth resulting in the formation of modern-day youth ministry, Kelly (2016)

stated that "to be relevant, theology must be integrated into culture" (p. 18). Kelly further stated,

"the church exists within human culture and must determine how best to present the message of

the gospel within the cultural soup in which it exists" (p. 5).

Distinguishing the Generations

The first biblical reference to a person being part of a generation is to that of Noah in

Genesis 6:9 (KJV) which says, "these are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and

perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God." The first use of the term generations in

this verse refers to one's family line of descendants (Allen & Ross, 2012; Popescu, 2019). This

rendering of the term generation is in the form as has been discussed regarding teaching one's

faith to their children (i.e., the next generation). The second use of the term generation in this

verse is in the context of someone belonging to a generation (Allen & Ross, 2012; Popescu,

2019). The definition of the word generation in this aspect speaks to "a group of people living at

the same time and belonging to the same age/class as [it] relates to creating the next generation"

(Brown et al., 1977, p. 190; Swanson, 1997a, entry 1887).

The next notable instance of classifying persons into generations is that of distinguishing

between persons who would and who would not enter the land promised to Abraham's

descendants. The placing of persons into a generation was done according to the person's age.

Those in the generation that "were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from

twenty years old and upward" (KJV, Numbers 14:29, 32:11) would not enter the promised land,

and that "generation" died in the wilderness (KJV, Numbers 32:12). A distinction in generations

by generational theorists and researchers in the current day is guided by the definition given to

the term generation to be that of a group of people born over a span of roughly fifteen to twenty

years (LifeCourse Associates, n.d.a; Pew Research Center, 2015).

Generational Theory

King Solomon stated, "one generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth forever" (KJV, Ecclesiastes 1:4). The first part of this verse of scripture establishes a context for theorists and researchers to define generations as well as provide a biblical foundation for the interest in studying generational characteristics of former and present generations (Ogden & Zogbo, 1998). Generational theorists give recognition that differences in the generations shape the generation (Pew Research Center, 2015).

In his study of the theology of generational theory, Harper (1994) stated, "each generation, being fallen, will need instruction and correction. Each generation, being faithful, will have unique insights and strengths" (p. 11). Harper's study further suggested that biblical teachers must be a student of the word of God as well as a student of "generationally-specific issues" that were prevalent in culture (p. 9). Addressing the subject of Christian education programming, Tye (2000) asserted that it should not be a "one-size fits all approach" (p. 10) but that religious instruction must be uniquely designed to its purpose and the needs of the population it seeks to serve.

The multiple teaching methods of Jesus demonstrate the usage of generational context to make the principles of the lessons he sought to convey relevant and relatable. Jesus' teaching methods also demonstrate the usage of culturally related content to make the principles of the lessons he sought to convey relevant and relatable. Jesus' teaching methodologies included but were not limited to the use of hyperboles, similes, metaphors, proverbs, question-and-answer, parables, and case studies (James et al., 2015; Stein, 1994). Jesus did not consistently use all of the student engagement methods for each learning experience. Jesus was acquainted with many

teaching methodologies, yet he "selected which methods would be most effective for both the learner and the context. He taught by using different strategies to meet the needs of his 'students'" (James et al., 2015, p. 151).

Ministry to Youth

Teaching children about their life of faith was the respectable privilege of parents in the early times of human history through the initial days of the organized church. The integration of the Sunday School format into church programming shifted the religious instruction of children to the organized church. In 1781, Sunday School was originally designed to instruct impoverished children in the basic subjects of "reading, writing, morals, and manners" as well as in "church catechism" for the evangelizing of children who did not know Christ (Anthony & Benson, 2011, pp. 263-264; Leal, 2018). During this period, these days of instruction were held on the day of the week that the children were not working (i.e., Sunday), and became known as Sunday school (Anthony & Benson, 2011). In the 1930s, Catholic Bishop Bernard Sheil observed a rise in criminal activity in his neighborhood and formed the Catholic Youth Organization to guide young Catholic boys to live a Christian life (McCorquodale, 2021). Programming geared toward youth in the American Lutheran church emerged in the late nineteenth century and was called Luther Leagues and Walther Leagues (Richmann, 2018). The focuses of these programs were doctrinal, moral, and cultural purity and their purposes were that of "keeping young people in the true Lutheran Church" (Richmann, 2018, p. 399).

Sunday School became a prevalent means of Christian education and was quickly adopted by many churches. Church denominations across the world utilize its format as the basis of their in-house Christian education program for both adults and children. From the time of its inception to the current day, children remain a primary audience of the Sunday School

movement with the focus being on their spiritual formation (Cloete, 2012; Leal, 2018).

The curriculum of the first Sunday School program was designed to meet the needs of the children in the 1780s. The advancement of time and new approaches to child psychology ushered in new teaching methodologies (Riding & Rayner, 1998). Along with these advancements, the Sunday School curriculum was redesigned to meet the needs of children of the particular generation being taught (Anthony & Benson, 2011). Campbell and Garner (2016) stated, "Christ's command to go and make disciples of all nations become a mandate to use whatever media available" (p. 30). Therefore, the progression of time and the advancement of technology has given rise to other means and methodologies that aid in teaching persons about their life of faith and subsequently contribute to their spiritual formation.

Summary of Theological Framework

Both Old Testament and New Testament scripture convey the importance and expectation for Christian parents and leaders to instruct the next generation in content related to their life of faith (Bengtson et al., 2013). Teachings in the life of faith must be in a manner that youth can understand and subsequently apply to their everyday life (Harper, 1994). Biblical persons exemplify the religious instruction of children as conveyed in such narratives as those about Abraham instructing his descendants, Moses instructing the Israelites, Solomon teaching his son, Jesus training the disciples, and the apostles instructing the New Testament believers in Christ.

Persons are considered part of a specific generation based on their birth years. Churches being concerned with the spiritual formation of all congregants, teaching in a relevant and relatable context is especially important for the youth congregant in aiding their spiritual formation (Cloete, 2012). Teaching the life of faith to the next generation should employ the

available mediums that will facilitate instruction in the proper application of God's standards and expectations to their everyday life (Campbell & Garner, 2016).

Theoretical Framework for the Study

Generational theory has multiple implications on how individuals are influenced by their respective generation as well as how it influences their learning. The purpose of this researcher's study was to discover the teaching methods that are being used among youth ministries that serve Generation Alpha. The theoretical framework will review precedent literature on the origin and development of generational theory and learning styles. Literature significant to the living generations as well as generational characteristics will be reviewed as well. A theoretical perspective of generations and learning styles will be reviewed relative to its theory, definition, and implications for the biblical instruction of Generation Alpha.

Generational Theory

The age of a person is a demographic variable used by researchers. Age as a research variable "allows researchers to employ an approach known as cohort analysis to track a group of people over the course of their lives" (Pew Research Center, 2015, para. 2). Cohort analysis is the consideration of groups based on shared characteristics (Okros, 2020). The combined components of age and cohort analysis form the premise for generational theory.

Karl Mannheim

German sociologist Karl Mannheim is the first known to academically study generations and is widely considered the father of generational analysis (Knight, 2009; McCourt, 2012). Using biological and sociological phenomena as constructs for his study, Mannheim brought recognition to the sociology of generations as a field of research (Popescu, 2019). Originally published in the 1920s, Mannheim's work is the primary lens through which others study the

sociology of generations (Connolly, 2019).

Mannheim (1970) referred to generations as "a particular kind of identity of location, embracing related age groups embedded in a historical-social process" (p. 382). The concept of identity of location speaks to individuals sharing a common location in the social and historical process and therefore they experience key historical events during the same phase of their life. Additionally, persons give recognition to having experienced key historical events as well as significant social movements during the same phase of life and, therefore, affiliate themselves with that particular generation (Knight, 2009; LifeCourse Associates, n.d.a; Mannheim, 1970).

William Strauss and Neil Howe

William Strauss and Neil Howe expanded upon the work pioneered by Karl Mannheim and others such as Jose Ortega y Gasset and developed the concept of generations occurring in cyclic patterns (Knight, 2009; Strauss & Howe 1991). Strauss and Howe (1991) define a generation to be "a cohort-group whose length approximates the span of a phase of life and whose boundaries are fixed by peer personality" (p. 34). Strauss and Howe (1991) emphasize that each living generation is in a different lifecycle relative to their age-location in history. Thus, as time moves forward each generation moves to a different phase in life. This movement is referred to as a "generational diagonal" that permits the study of how historical events, age, and generational behavior is connected over time (Strauss & Howe, 1991, p. 34).

Although the living generations at any point in time are in different phases of life when experiencing the same historical events, collectively each living generation contributes to the social movement of the day which in turn "helps to shape and define history – and hence, new generations" (Strauss & Howe, 1991, p. 35). This aspect of one's age location in history contributed to the notion that an individual's phase of life will determine how an event will shape

the personality of the age group. Strauss and Howe's study of history through the lens of generations revealed that the personality of the age group is retained as that generation grows older. Consistent with the idea of a generational diagonal, it is seen that what an age group experience at one phase in life will influence their behavior at a later phase of their life (Strauss & Howe, 1991).

Individuals having an age-location in history coupled with the view of generations contributing to the shaping and defining of history form the crux of Strauss and Howe's (1991) theory of generational cycles. Going back to the Puritan birth year of 1584, Strauss and Howe (1991) studied the history of the United States of America from a generational perspective. Adopting a historical perspective of generations, Strauss and Howe studied not only how events in history shape a generation but also how the generations themselves shape history (Knight, 2009; LifeCourse Associates, n.d.b; Okros, 2020).

Strauss and Howe's (1991) age-location perspective of history identified four distinct cycles that describe a pattern of the societal and socioeconomic transitions throughout American history. These four patterns are referred to as turnings and are named to be that of High, Awakening, Unravelling, and Crisis (Strauss & Howe, 1991). Strauss and Howe (1991) propose that these four turnings form a pattern of four archetypes or peer personalities that repeat in sequence with the turnings (see Table 1). In this sense, peer personality is defined as "a generational persona recognized and determined by common age location, common beliefs and behavior, and perceived membership in a common generation" (Strauss & Howe, 1991, p. 64). These four archetypes are Idealist, Reactive, Civic, and Adaptive. Extended descriptions of the four archetypes are Prophet, Nomad, Hero, and Artist respectively (Strauss & Howe, 1991). Strauss and Howe's (1991) study concluded that each generation is born during a turning which

then dictates the corresponding archetype of that generation.

Table 1

Summary of Strauss and Howe Four Turnings and Archetypes

Turning	Archetype of the Generation born during the Turning
High: society seeks strong institutions in response to the crisis but at the expense of individualism	**Idealist (Prophet):** grow up increasingly indulged as children and youth, which imparts a sense of narcissism to this generation. Self-discovery and authenticity are valued by Prophets throughout their lives, and they feel passionate about the morals, principles, and ideas they hold dear.
Awakening: seeks to move from social cohesiveness towards personal, spiritual, and cultural autonomy	**Reactive (Nomad):** are born and nurtured during a spiritual Awakening and grow up as unprotected children. Nomad children are left to find their own norms and are exposed to the world of adult dangers and anxieties at a young age. Consequently, Nomad children grow up fast and often engage in risky behavior. Their early exposure to the realities of adult life gives them strong survival skills and a fierce independent streak that makes them well-suited to navigate the societal Unraveling that surrounds them.
Unraveling: institutions continue to weaken and begin to become volatile; the civic order begins to decay as society moves closer to Crisis	**Civic (Hero):** grow up as increasingly protected. Community and teamwork are instilled in Heroes at a young age. They are confident, ambitious, and optimistic about life, even in tough times.
Crisis: in response to a new cataclysm, authority and institutions are restored, while individualism gives way to a communitarian view of society and societal institutions are rebuilt	**Adaptive (Artist):** grow up overprotected by adults during a Crisis. Children are expected to stay out of the way and be well-behaved. Artists enter adulthood as one of the most conformist but also most well-off youth generations.

Note. Okros, 2020; Strauss & Howe 1991.

Distinguishing Between the Generations

The words of Ecclesiastes 1:4 (KJV) which state, "one generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth forever," speaks to a consistent transition from one generation to another. The natural life cycle of birth, aging, and death gives way to there

being a "continuous emergence of new age groups" (Mannheim, 1970, p. 383). Thus, a

distinction in generations is made and subsequently named to depict its turning and archetype.

Persons who study the sociology of generations agree there is no exact science to

designating the beginning and ending birth years of a generation (Dimock, 2019; Strauss &

Howe, 1991). The years designated to a generational cohort may vary by one or more on either

side of birth years (Dimock, 2019; McCrindle, 2019c). However, the basis of the concept of the

sociology of generations is upheld as each researcher defines the range of years for generations

to be used in their study (McCrindle, 2019c; Pew Research Center, 2015; Strauss & Howe,

1991). This commonly held concept in designating the range of years for generations is that:

> Each generation is shaped by its own biography, where the biography comprises a series
> of events to which people with common birth years relate and around which they develop
> common beliefs and behaviors. It is these commonly held beliefs and behaviors that form
> the "personality" of that generation. (Moore, 2007, p. 41)

The Seven Living Generations

Generational characteristics mostly referenced in this study are from the works of Strauss

and Howe (1991), Dimock (2019), and McCrindle (2020a). See Table 2 for a summary of the

range of years each of these referenced works has designated to the seven living generations. The

seven living generations at the time of this study were G.I., Silent, Boom, Thirteenth, Millennial,

Homeland, and Alpha. As Table 2 shows, the major difference in the years designated to

generations by the different researchers is that of determining the range of years for Generation Z

and subsequently the naming of the generation that will follow.

Table 2

Seven Living Generations

Generation Name	Range of Birth Years			Generation Personality
	Strauss and Howe	Pew Research Center		Strauss and Howe
			McCrindle	
	LifeCourse Associates	Fry and Parker Dimock		
G.I. (Greatest)	1901 – 1924	before 1928	*(not referenced)*	Civic (Hero)
Silent (Builder)	1925 – 1942	1928 – 1945	1925 – 1946	Adaptive (Artist)
Boom	1943 – 1960	1946 – 1964	1946 – 1964	Idealist (Prophet)
Thirteenth (Generation X)	1961 – 1981	1965 – 1980	1965 – 1979	Reactive (Nomad)
Millennial (Generation Y)	1982 – 2004	1981 – 1996	1980 – 1994	Civic (Hero)
Homeland (Generation Z)	2005 – 2025	1997 – ?	1995 – 2009	Adaptive (Artist)
Generation Alpha	*(not referenced)*	*(not referenced)*	2010 – 2024	*not referenced but predicted to be Idealist (Prophet)*

Note. Dimock, 2019; Fry & Parker, 2018; LifeCourse Associates, n.d.c; McCrindle, 2020a; Pew Research Center, 2015; Strauss & Howe, 1991.

Pew Research Center uses a span of 16 years in their research for designating the Millennial Generation, which is equivalent in age span to that applied to the preceding generation, Generation X (Dimock, 2019). Fry and Parker (2018) use those parameters for designating an ending birth year of 2012 for Generation Z in their study. However, published reports by the Pew Research Center at the time of this study did not definitively identify an ending birth year for Generation Z or reference a new generational cohort.

Strauss and Howe (1991) used the length of a phase of life to base the range of years they ascribe to a generation. Being that the typical length of a phase of life is 22 years (Strauss & Howe, 1991), the birth years of Generation Z will be from 2005 to roughly 2025. According to Strauss and Howe's (1991) cyclic pattern of turnings and archetypes, the generation following Generation Z is predicted to be the Idealist (Prophet) archetype.

Although the previously mentioned researchers have not definitively identified the

seventh generation at the time of this study, each researcher has a process by which they will determine the historical events and social trends that depict a change in the "beliefs, values, and attitudes" that are commonly held by persons of the same generation (Allen & Ross, 2012, p. 145; Moore, 2007, p. 42) and thus signal the existence of a new generation.

Australian researcher Mark McCrindle (2019c) recognized a "decade ago that a new generation was about to commence" (para. 7). McCrindle (2020) embarked upon naming the youngest generational cohort stating:

> In keeping with the scientific nomenclature of using the Greek alphabet in lieu of the Latin, and having worked our way through Generations X, Y and Z, I settled on the next cohort being Generation Alpha - not a return to the old, but the start of something new. (p. 5)

Distinct Generational Characteristics

Cohort analysis has rendered significant insight and information on the differences in character traits, beliefs, attitudes, opinions, and values. Strategies from the implications of cohort analysis studies have been formulated and used by various industries and leaders. Industries and leaders have used those strategies for "strategic planning, marketing, and education" as well as to understand and solve institutional and workplace problems (LifeCourse Associates, n.d.b, para. 10).

Millennials

Generation Y, commonly referred to as Millennials, are considered community and team-oriented (McCrindle, 2012). They are described as doers and they like to volunteer (McCrindle, 2012). Millennials have peer-enforced codes of conduct and a strong sense of generational community (Allen & Ross, 2012).

Millennials do not want to receive information without understanding why they need it (Crutchfield, 2016). They seek the relevance and application of what they are being taught

(Crutchfield, 2016). Crutchfield stated that for Millennials, "teaching and learning must be experiential" (p. 6). They are "looking for answers to the whys of their lives. Attracting millennials requires allowing them to put things together with their skills, ideas, and resources" (pp. 5-6).

Generation Z

Generation Z has never known a world without a computer or mobile device nor without constant, immediate, and convenient access to the internet (McCrindle, 2012). They multitask across five screens at a time, have shorter attention spans, think spatially and in 4D, lack situational awareness, and communicate with symbols, speed, and images (McCrindle, 2012; White, 2017).

Generation Z seek education and knowledge but mostly from social media and other internet platforms; however, they do not take the time to determine the reliability of the information they find on the internet (McCrindle, 2012). Although Generation Z does not mind cooperative learning, Seemiller and Grace (2017) discovered that they are intrapersonal learners meaning that they prefer to work on their own first, get an understanding of the material, and then share it with others.

Generation Alpha

Generation Alpha is the only generation born and shaped fully in the 21st century. They will be the most technologically literate generation. Screens were placed in their hands at the earliest of their age to be "pacifiers, entertainers and educational aids" (McCrindle, 2019c, para. 6). McCrindle (2014) stated:

> It's a world of Screenagers where not only do they multi-screen and multi-task, but where glass has become the new medium for content dissemination and unlike the medium of paper, it is a kinesthetic, visual, interactive, connective and portable format. (para. 9)

As a result, they have shorter attention spans, schools incorporate gamification into education, and their social formation has been impaired (McCrindle, 2019c). Despite the impact of technology on their development in their formative years, the technology of Generation Alpha makes them the "most globally connected generation ever. They are deemed social, global and mobile as they work and study" (Generation Alpha, n.d., para. 1).

Learning Styles Theory

Strauss (2005) stated, "each generation brings something new and important to teaching and learning. That's why it's so important for school administrators to understand, respect and address the generational differences in today's schools" (p. 14). This is to say that if generational traits are influencers to educational programming and practices, then classroom adaptations that were made to address the learning styles of Millennials will be insufficient to reach and relate to Generation Alpha students (Seemiller & Grace, 2017).

The term "learning styles" refers to the concept that "individuals differ in regard to what mode of instruction or study is most effective for them" (Pashler et al., 2008, p. 105). Learning styles speak to the view that students, thus collectively every generation that each student comprises, learns differently (Kolb, 1984). Learning styles refer to the preferential way that a student and the generation in which they belong "absorbs, processes, comprehends and retains information" (Teach, 2020, para. 4). Most learning style theories are considered type theories in that they classify people into distinct groups (Pashler et al., 2008). Psychiatrist and psychoanalyst Carl Jung (1964) is considered to be the first to apply such typological theorizing when he classified psychological types.

Neil Fleming

Noticing that people give directions in different ways, Neil Fleming wondered if different

people prefer to be given directions in different ways (Fleming & Baume, 2006). From this

research inquiry, Fleming expanded upon the work of Stirling's three categories of visual, aural,

and kinesthetic modal preferences and developed the VARK model of Student Learning

(Fleming, n.d). VARK concerns modality preferences (i.e., the preferences that each person has

for receiving and demonstrating their learning) (Fleming, n.d). VARK is an acronym for the four

types of learning styles: visual, auditory, reading/writing preference, and kinesthetic. (Fleming &

Mills, 1992). Table 3 displays the four learning styles along with their defining modality

preferences.

Table 3

VARK Learning Styles

Learning Style	Characteristic
Visual	Preference for using visual resources such as diagrams, pictures, and videos. Like to see people in action.
Auditory	Need to talk about situations and ideas with a range of people; enjoy hearing stories from others.
Reading/Writing Preference	Prolific note-taker; textbooks are important; extensive use of journals to write down the facts and stories.
Kinesthetic	Preference for hands-on experience within a 'real' setting and for global learning.

Note. Robertson et al., 2011.

VARK is ultimately about people and how they learn (Fleming, n.d.). An individual can

have one or more modal preferences of learning (Fleming & Baume, 2006). Each learning style

can be matched with learning strategies (Teach, 2020).

Summary of Theoretical Framework

Generational theory conceptualizes the notion that there "are differences in age-related

groups of people due to a cyclical pattern driven by changing values and attitudes of each

generation" (Allen & Ross, 2012, p. 145). Generational characteristics influence an individual's

beliefs and behaviors as well as impact the way an individual learns. Strauss (2005) stated, "new generations come and go, and we shouldn't be surprised that each thinks differently from the previous" (p. 10). Thus, learning style preferences should influence the learning strategies used to teach the targeted generation.

Related Literature

Generational theory outlines that there are differences in the educational needs of each new generation. The purpose of this study was to discover the teaching methods that are being used among youth ministries that serve Generation Alpha. Related literature on missiology as it relates to teaching has been reviewed. The learning styles and corresponding teaching methods of each generation have also been discussed. Literature significant to recommended teaching strategies for relating to Generation Alpha has been reviewed as well. The related literature has been examined from a perspective of the practical application of how the characteristics of generations shape the way they learn and what methodologies facilitate their learning.

Fulfilling One's Mission in Christ

The above literature review of the theological framework established the essentiality of the practice of teaching to one engaged in fulfilling the mandate of Christ as set forth in Matthew 28:19-20. Jesus stated:

> Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (KJV, Matthew 28:19-20)

This mandate is in all intents and purposes the guiding mission of Christian leaders and teachers. As a multidisciplinary field, missiology speaks to how studies in social sciences play a role in Christian leaders and teachers carrying out this mission (Newell, 2019). Missiology is defined as the "reflective discipline that undergirds and guides the Church's propagation

endeavors as it advances the knowledge of the gospel in all its fullness to every people, everywhere" (para. 3).

In the context of this study, missiology serves to guide Christian leaders and teachers in evaluating the appropriateness of teaching methods that are suggested by social science research for usage in the youth ministry classroom. Newell (2019) stated, "one of the tasks of missiologists is to evaluate contemporary trends, ideas, issues, and influences to determine if they align with the biblical mission entrusted to the Church" (para. 6). Thus, youth ministry leaders and teachers could consider the teaching methods that are being used in intermediate and secondary academic classrooms and assess what value those teaching methods add to the effectiveness of the church's youth educational programming (Tye, 2000; White, 2017).

The evaluative process of academic classroom teaching methods must not result in one incorporating any teaching methods at the expense of compromising the theological or practical interpretation of scriptures nor conflict with any Christian principles and practices (Newell, 2019; Strong, 2015). The evaluative process of teaching methods that could be employed in the church's youth educational programming, however, must be for the benefit of relating to youth in order to minister to them (Harper, 1994; McCrindle, 2020b). The ultimate end of incorporating any teaching method must be to aid in the progression of the youth's spiritual formation (Aziz, 2019; Senter, 1992).

Researchers have reported a decline in the number of youth who are engaged in the church (Crown College, 2018; Pinckney, 2001; Reed, 2016). The timeframe of one's high school graduation seems to be a major turning point in their faith. Ross (2017) stated, "about half of those in youth groups will leave the church after high school, and most will never return" (p. 90). A Barna Group (2020c) report indicated that among those 18-25 years of age, the percentage

exiting the church increased from 59% to 64% over the past decade. When considering this is the

age at which these youth would have transitioned from the church's youth ministry program, this

brings to question what may be possible factors contributing to such disengagement. A Crown

College (2018) study quoted Dr. Castor, stating:

> I would contend that they aren't 'leaving,' but rather they weren't drawn into the fabric of the church community in the first place. Strategic churches equip young people to practice vibrant faith, and also include young people in significant practices of ministry leadership before they graduate from high school. (para. 8)

Additionally, over half of pastors surveyed reported one of their largest challenges was

ministry to the youth in their church and how to engage the youth of their church (Barna Group,

2020b, 2020c). One observation derived from the Barna Group (2020b) report indicated youth

leaders and teachers must be innovative in responding to the needs of the current generation of

youth. Other conclusions the Barna Group (2020c) drew to address these elements of concern

regarding ministry to youth is that:

> The future of ministry to young adults, teens and children—and, when needed, the parents who raise them—continues to evolve. It is more important now than ever for leaders to check in with the young people in their church to understand what they are facing right now and how best to engage with and disciple future Church leaders. (para. 16)

The Need to Get to Know the Generation

Leaders are often considered to be the one who influences those under their leadership on

what they are to do and how they are to accomplish the same (Tye, 2000). Educators are

considered to be the influencer of their students and not the other way around (Crutchfield,

2016). However, in the quest to adapt methodologies being used so that new methodologies can

be adopted for relating to the next generation, leaders and educators must posture themselves to

be influenced by those they are trying to reach (Crutchfield, 2016; McCrindle, 2019b). Leaders

and educators must become students of the target generation relative to learning the character

traits of that generational cohort (McCrindle, 2019b). Crutchfield (2016) stated that "reaching 'the next generation' is gaining insight into that generation's world" (p. 3). This is to say, that leaders and educators must learn of that which pertains to the target generation in order for them to implement methodologies to reach and thereby teach that generation. The curriculum that leaders and educators undertake in this regard is generational relatability; the goal is that the characteristics of the generation shape and form the methods leaders and educators use to reach and ultimately relate to the generation (Bauman et al., 2014; Crutchfield, 2016).

Teaching and Learning of the Generations

Being that the purpose of this study was to discover the teaching methodologies being employed to relate to generations, it was not the intent of this researcher to place significant emphasis on the differences in the birth years that various researchers use to define a generational cohort. This study intended to highlight that a distinction in generations has been determined and named accordingly. To this end, the characteristics of the named generation to which they are collectively referred will be reviewed. For the purpose of reviewing the literature related to how each generation learns and the subsequent methodologies that were employed to teach the generation respectively, this researcher has utilized the birth year designations as referenced by McCrindle (2020a). The inclusion of the birth years of the generational cohort in the review was for the purpose of connecting the generation's location in the historical and social process to the teaching and learning format for that generation (Mannheim, 1970; Strauss & Howe, 1991).

G.I. Generation

The G.I. Generation, persons born between 1901 and 1924 (Strauss & Howe, 1991), grew up without modern conveniences and remembers life without airplanes, radio, and television.

They were upbeat, with a team-playing nature and are known as the heroic and builder generation (Allen & Ross, 2012). Friesner (2014) described this generation as one that was assertive, energetic doers, excellent team players, community-minded, strongly interested in personal morality, and near-absolute standards of right and wrong. They had a strong sense of personal civic duty and a strong loyalty to jobs, groups, and schools (Friesner, 2014).

Silent Generation

The Silent Generation, persons born between 1925 and 1946, are characterized to be good listeners (McCrindle, 2012). They are considered to be open and fair-minded (McCrindle, 2012). Members of this generation are disciplined and adhere to rules (Friesner, 2014). As such, they prefer a formal presentation of the information that is being taught as well as for the teaching design to be instructive (McCrindle, 2012; Panopto, 2019). Classroom lecture is the preferred teaching methodology of the Silent Generation (Panopto, 2019).

The learning style of the Silent Generation is formal (McCrindle, 2019a). Wiedmer (2015) summarized this to be that they "learn best through traditional, instructor-led instruction; generally prefer tangible items for recognition or reward, such as certificates, plaques, or trophies" (p. 52). The preferred environment of the Silent Generation that will facilitate their learning is one that is military-style, didactic, and disciplined (McCrindle, 2012).

Boom Generation

The Boom Generation, persons born between 1946 and 1964, was the first generation to be introduced to television (McCrindle, 2012). Members of the Boom Generation are considered to be self-righteous, self-centered, optimistic, driven, and team-oriented (Friesner, 2014). The learning style of the Boom Generation is structured and the formal classroom continued to be an effective setting for this generation to learn (McCrindle, 2012, 2019a). However, the team-

oriented nature of the Boom Generation brought a preference for "in-class participation, reflection, and feedback to bring them more directly into the process" (Panopto, 2019, para. 7). Members of the Boom Generation expect teaching to be personally-focused to coincide with the transformational learning they desire (Panopto, 2019).

Generation X

Generation X, persons born between 1965 and 1979, was the first generation to be introduced to computers, media videos, and video games (McCrindle, 2012). Generation X is regarded as independent, resourceful, and realistic about life (Allen & Ross, 2012). Members of Generation X are considered to be entrepreneurial, very individualistic, self-reliant, and self-absorbed (Friesner, 2014).

The introduction of computers during the middle school and high school years of Generation X ushered in several transitions in the classroom. The first notable transition was from learning through tangible written books to gaining knowledge from digital mediums (Friesner, 2014). The classroom setting also transitioned from being that of a formal structure to that of a round-table style. This is to say that the learning environment became more relaxed, setting the platform for student discussion and interaction as dictated by their participative learning style (McCrindle, 2012, 2019a).

The transition to the use of computers for gaining knowledge as well as the relaxed classroom structure affected the teaching methods being used to instruct Generation X (McCrindle, 2012). The classroom lecture of the previous generations, although still present, became the less preferred method of teaching as interactive methodologies began to emerge (McCrindle, 2012).

The use of computers, as well as the introduction of video games into their life,

heightened the desire of Generation X for interactive learning (McCrindle, 2012). Yet, interactive learning does not negate the individualistic nature of members of Generation X and the need for them to be self-directed in their education or to work independently on projects (Panopto, 2019; Wiedmer, 2015). Generation X desires that teaching and learning be a healthy balance of their independent nature and engagement opportunities (Lynch, 2015) that allow them "a chance to learn, explore and make a contribution" (Friesner, 2014, para. 5).

Generation Y

Generation Y, commonly referred to as Millennials, are persons born between 1980 and 1994. Generation Y was the first generation to be introduced to the internet (McCrindle, 2012; Panopto, 2019). Members of Generation Y are considered to be doers, community-oriented, and team-oriented (McCrindle, 2012). Generation Y schedules everything they intend to undertake, prefers digital learning, and envisions the world as a place that is continuous and always accessible without disruption or downtime (Crutchfield, 2016; Friesner, 2014).

Generation Y is comfortable with technology and appears to have innate abilities concerning technology (McCrindle, 2012). This is to say that technology is second nature to Generation Y; as such, they have become known as "digital natives" (White, 2017, p. 31). Widely available access to the internet and consistent connection to mobile devices are the norms for Generation Y, keeping them constantly engaged (Price, n.d.). To this end, Generation Y gets all their information and most of their socialization from the internet (Friesner, 2014). The internet also contributes to their expectations for flexibility and on-demand access to information (Panopto, 2019). Members of Generation Y seek authenticity in their teachers and leaders for which there is open and frequent communication (Crutchfield, 2016; Price, n.d.). Collectively, these expectations shape their views of major institutions (Echelon Insights, 2018).

Growing up in a digital environment and having never known a world without computers (Friesner, 2014), Generation Y learns through multi-sensory formats for which the visual sensory is dominant (McCrindle, 2012). Therefore, lectures became less and less a part of the teaching format, and a variety of active learning methods became more prevalent (McCrindle, 2012; Price, n.d.). Hayhurst (2018) defines active learning:

> Getting your students to be engaged in class, if they're taking content from the class and problem-solving with their peers, and if they're learning how to apply what they get in that classroom to real-world, workplace situations—that, to us, is active learning. (para. 20)

Connections and relationships are central to Generation Y (Crutchfield, 2016). The learning style of Generation Y is interactive (McCrindle, 2019a). Therefore, the learning environment became less formal and more comfortable, setting the classroom atmosphere for students to informally interact with their teachers and with one another (Price, n.d.). The teaching methodologies accommodating Generation Y are multi-modal and are comprised of a variety of methods of instruction for which collaborative learning is central to the team-oriented nature of Generation Y (Lynch, 2015; McCrindle, 2012; Price, n.d.). Music is also recognized to be an integral part of learning for Generation Y (McCrindle, 2012).

Generation Z

Generation Z, persons born between 1995 and 2009, is the first fully digital generation and have never known a world without computers and cellular phones (Friesner, 2014; The Center for Generational Kinetics, 2018; White, 2017). Members of Generation Z multitask across five screens at a time, have shorter attention spans, think spatially and in 4D, lack situational awareness, and communicate with symbols, speed, and images (White, 2017).

With the increased use of computers as well as the increased acceptance of web-based learning, members of Generation Z put aside toys at a younger and younger age (Friesner, 2014).

Most persons of Generation Z began receiving some type of digital learning device, such as a LeapPad or a MyPad, as gifts at an early age and were kept occupied and engaged with these devices or by watching videos and playing games on their parent's cellular telephone (McCrindle, 2012).

Born into a world of computers and cellular phones, Generation Z does not know a world without constant, immediate, and convenient access to the internet (White, 2017). As such, Generation Z is known as the "internet-in-its-pocket" generation (p 31). This is to say that Generation Z has ready access to digital devices and can find the information they want without ever going to a library or getting help from a teacher (Wiedmer, 2015). They seek education and knowledge from the internet and use social media for research (White, 2017). However, Generation Z typically does not take the time to assess the reliability and validity of the sources of information they get from the internet (Wiedmer, 2015). Therefore, a new task of educators is to help Generation Z students evaluate the resources they are searching on their digital devices and subsequently the reliability of the information provided (White, 2017; Wiedmer, 2015).

Generation Z was born into technology; consequently, technology impacts how they communicate and learn (Preville, 2018). Members of Generation Z are kinesthetic learners (McCrindle, 2012). Subsequently, they are "driven by graphics, disliking lecture-test classrooms, expecting instant feedback, and preferring customized learning" (Wiedmer, 2015, p. 56). The teaching methodologies and subsequently the learning environment to facilitate learning for Generation Z are student-centered (McCrindle, 2012) and engage students in "collaborative reflection, problem-solving, listening and discussion" (Hayhurst, 2018, para. 2).

Collaboration is one teaching methodology that sprung up with Generation Y that remained an effective method for teaching Generation Z (Hayhurst, 2018; Kozinsky, 2017;

Preville 2018; Wiedmer, 2015). However, its implementation was reformatted, and its purpose refocused with Generation Z's traits in mind relative to their preference to work on their own first, get an understanding of the material, and then share it with others (Seemiller & Grace, 2017).

The learning style of Generation Z is multi-modal (McCrindle, 2019a). The learning environment and teaching methods that facilitate learning for Generation Z provide active learning opportunities (Wiedmer, 2015, p. 56). Being that Generation Z learns best by doing, an active learning environment is what they want, and even expect, in order to be engaged and part of the learning process (Wiedmer, 2015). A Generation Z student interviewed by Seemiller and Grace (2017) for their study described the ideal learning environment as "need[ing] to be actively doing the learning to obtain the most information" (p. 22).

For the learning environment to be multi-stimulus (McCrindle, 2012) for Generation Z, the use of gamification in education increased and took on new forms (Martí-Parreño et al., 2016) in making lessons interactive to "encourage critical thinking while making the learning process fun in a modern way" (Shatto & Erwin, 2017, p. 26).

Generation Alpha

Generation Alpha, beginning with persons born in 2010, is the first generation born and shaped fully in the 21st century for which technology is rapidly advancing (McCrindle, 2020b). Generation Alpha is also the first generation in which the entirety of its members have technology seamlessly integrated into their lives (Bologna, 2019; McCrindle, 2020b). Portable digital devices are placed in front of members of Generation Alpha at the youngest of age, consequently affecting their formative years of development (McCrindle, 2020b). According to the Rush Neurobehavioral Center, screens affect the development of the 21st century brain by

producing "shorter attention spans, an emphasis on immediate rewards, breadth over depth, staccato communication, reduced efficiency, neural pathway brownout, and possible long-term memory deficits" (Howard, 2017, p. 34).

For Generation Alpha, technology "is not something separate from themselves, but rather, an extension of their own consciousness and identity" (Bologna, 2019, para. 22). Glass, (i.e., screens of the multiple versions of digital devices), is the medium that Generation Alpha "touch, talk, and look at" and therefore glass is the medium by which content is disseminated to them (McCrindle, 2020b, p. 9). Technology being widespread and constantly present, Generation Alpha has increased screen time and thus an increased digital literacy (McCrindle, 2020b). However, the constant saturation of Generation Alpha with digital devices is producing within them shorter attention spans and less social formation (Bologna, 2019; McCrindle, 2020b).

The form and format for which technology is consistently advancing subsequently shifts how Generation Alpha is engaged educationally (McCrindle, 2019a, 2020b). The learning style of Generation Alpha is virtual. As a result, the gamification of education continues to evolve and schools are "switching from structural and auditory learning to engaging, visual, multimodal and hands-on methods of educating this emerging generation" (McCrindle, 2020b, p. 12).

Educating Generation Alpha

The defining characteristics of Generation Alpha suggest that technology is an essential component in educating this generation, yet its usage must be made relevant to them (McCrindle, 2019b). Looking ahead to Generation Alpha entering higher education, Hughes (2020) suggests that learning for this generational cohort must be personalized and targeted, shifting more and more from lectures to online learning modules, video content incorporated into the curriculum, and real-world learning. These ways by which Generation Alpha learn require educators to adapt

as well (Hughes, 2020).

When asked what parents, teachers, leaders, and others involved in developing this emerging generation into leaders can do, McCrindle (2019b) suggests the three Es: engage them, equip them, and entrust them. To engage Generation Alpha, McCrindle stated, "we've got to connect with them and make sure we communicate in ways that speak their language" (para. 6). Generation Alpha is technologically savvy, but they lack life skills as well as people skills (Bologna, 2019; McCrindle, 2019c, 2020b). There is an increasing awareness of the isolationism and anti-social impact that being consistently engrossed in digital devices has on Generation Alpha (McCrindle, 2020b). Generation Alpha will have to interact with others in school, and later when they enter the workforce; thus, McCrindle (2019b) conveys those involved in teaching and training Generation Alpha have to equip them with people skills. Lastly, McCrindle's (2019b) suggestion for leaders to entrust Generation Alpha express that this generation must be given the opportunity and chance to apply the teaching and training they receive.

The basis of Strauss and Howe's (1991) cycle of generational theory that there is "a fourfold cycle of generational types and recurring mood eras in American history" (LifeCourse Associates, n.d.b, para. 1) guided the foundational work of researchers Willard and Whitt (2012) by which they made assumptions of certain characteristics and behaviors that Generation Alpha is expected to have. Willard and Whitt (2012) determined what would be the cyclic generational traits of Generation Alpha and made four recommendations on how school districts can prepare for teaching this generation as summarized in the following sections.

Leverage The Use of Technology

Generation Alpha is technologically savvy, and they have learned and are learning to receive information in that format. The research of Willard and Whitt (2012) recommended

school districts provide students with technology and subsequently teachers who can "facilitate instruction via web-based tools and internet applications" (p. 93). It was further recommended that lecturing be timely and dispersed throughout the lesson and not the primary method of teaching the content.

Harness Parental Involvement

In his study, Martin-Paulichenko (2015) noticed a common theme that emerged in the literature that explored successful school practices which was that of parent relationships. The parents of Generation Alpha are largely members of Generation Y who are expected to have a "strong visual and verbal presence in their child's school" (Willard & Whitt, 2012, p. 94) as well as be highly involved in their child's education. Therefore, Willard and Whitt (2012) recommend schools develop the knowledge and tools to engage parents efficiently, effectively, and purposefully in the education of their children. Martin-Paulichenko (2015) acknowledges the importance of engaging parents in their child's education: "a positive relationship between parents and teachers significantly increases the potential for educational success" (p. 69).

Diversify Learning for the Diversity of Learners

The projected demographics of Generation Alpha is that the majority of this population will be members of a minority ethnic group (McCrindle, 2019a). The demographical diversity of this generation suggests the need for a learning model that has multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression (McCrindle, 2019a; Willard & Whitt, 2012). Willard and Whitt (2012) recommend schools adopt a diversification of instruction and assessment that "takes into account the multiple mechanisms that a diverse population of students will need in order to comprehend and retain content and acquire skills necessary to succeed in the 21st century" (pp. 94-95).

Incorporate Service Learning

The parents of Generation Alpha are expected to "want their children to be educated for a specific brand of work that revolves around objective and possibly civic-oriented, global accomplishments" (Willard & Whitt, 2012, p. 95). Willard and Whitt recommend that school districts incorporate a service-learning program and curriculum that include topics of both local and global focus that educate students on problems and issues in society. The researchers believe that "early exposure to learning how to help with these situations will prepare students for careers in helping improve society at the local and global scale" (p. 95).

Summary of Related Literature

Researchers have given recognition to the tremendous difference in experiences and characteristics of generational cohorts (McCrindle, 2019c). Generational theory implies the teaching and learning of each generation will be unique to the characteristics of each respectively (Strauss & Howe, 1991). Subsequently, the learning environment and teaching methodologies transitioned to coincide with the learning styles of each generational cohort (McCrindle, 2012). Having studied the characteristics of Generation Alpha and projecting how the characteristics of this generation will evolve, researchers have proposed methodologies by which educators can facilitate the education of Generation Alpha (McCrindle 2020a; Strauss & Howe, 1991). Missiology suggests a responsibility of Christian leaders and teachers is to consider proposed methodologies and the value of such methodologies in fulfilling The Great Commission (Newell, 2019).

Rationale for Study and Gap in the Literature

The literature review focused on three major frameworks concerning the topic of generational theory and its influences on learning styles and teaching methodologies. The first

section explored the theological framework of generational theory and biblical teaching. The second section reviewed relevant philosophies of generational theory and learning styles theory. In the last section, the influences of generational theory and learning styles theory on teaching methods were discussed. This section will explore the rationale of the study which was based upon the applicability of generational theory and learning styles theory to the church's educational program. Further, this section identifies a gap in the literature for which this study sought to address.

Rationale for the Study

Generational theory indicates that "changes in human attitudes and behavior and in the social mood over time" marks the transition from one generation to another (LifeCourse Associates, n.d.b, para. 1). Although the common perception is that all youth and young adults of the current day (i.e., anyone born after 1980) are Millennials, researchers have identified three generational cohorts among this population (McCrindle, 2020a; Strauss & Howe, 1991). The literature presented in this study reiterated that no one generation continues for an indefinite time. Generations are designated by a range of years that mark their differences. This is to say that the oldest member of the Millennial Generation "may not have much in common" (Caumont, 2014, para. 5) with the very youngest American living today who is presumed to be a member of the same generation. As such, the differences between the Millennial Generation and the generation that follows them subsequently warrant a difference in the teaching methodologies geared toward those generations.

It has been this researcher's observation that the landscape of pedagogies in the academic arena has and continues to evolve to meet the needs of the current generation it is serving. Many academic institutions utilize the most current research on child psychology and learning styles

and in turn, evaluate their methodologies to remain appealing to their audience and beyond that, be able to relate to them (Crutchfield, 2016; Hughes, 2020). However, many churches reportedly were using the same model of educational programming from generation to generation (Barna Group, 2005). Although there may be many Christian K-12 educators who also serve as a youth ministry worker in their local congregation, it appeared the methodologies these educators were using in their academic classrooms to reach and relate to Generation Alpha were not being translated to implementation within the church educational programming geared toward the same population of youth. It would reason those methodologies of the two worlds would coincide for the very purpose of relating to and reaching that generational cohort.

If Christian leaders fail to consider Generation Alpha separate from the preceding generation, they will likely face similar challenges that were present for leaders at the onset of the educational years of Millennials (White, 2017). Thus, this study aimed to explore to what extent were the churches in Central Texas using the methodologies suggested in order to facilitate the biblical teaching of Generation Alpha participating in their youth ministry programming.

Gap in the Literature

The evolution of time and unique characteristics of generational cohorts usually usher in the designing and redesigning of pedagogical practices. In reviewing precedent literature, it was evident that much research has been conducted on the generational traits of Millennials that gave rise to much of what is being implemented in current academic classrooms. Millennials are well into adulthood and the youngest generational cohort is beginning to receive consideration as a separate generational cohort and subsequently how pedagogies should equally evolve to their unique generational traits just as it was for their predecessors.

Generational theory proposes that each generation has a personality that shapes how they learn yet much of the methodologies in use with the Post-Millennial Generations are carryovers from what was implemented to address the changing dynamics of education when the Millennial Generation entered the classroom. However, Millennials no longer make up the student population of grade schools nor are they the attendees of youth ministry classes and activities of churches.

A review of the precedent literature revealed how industries were using the findings of generational theory to adapt their marketing and services to capture the interest and attention of Generation Alpha (McCrindle, 2020b). However, a review of the literature did not reveal Christian leaders incorporating generational theory and the research on Generation Alpha into their Christian education programming to advance their ministry efforts and increase their impact among the current youth congregants, who are members of Generation Alpha cohort.

In her dissertation, Djajalaksana (2011) conducted a national survey for which she investigated what was the most common of 52 instructional strategies being used across the information systems discipline. While her dissertation is similar to this study in seeking to identify the most common teaching methods being used, Djajalaksana (2011) sought to identify those teaching methods of a certain discipline at the university level. This researcher did not discover any similar studies to identify common teaching methods for teaching biblical content to secondary students or for teaching in the church setting.

In his dissertation, Pinson (2012) examined generational differences and explored some contemporary models of student ministry such as involvement, discipleship, and purpose-driven. In Pinson's (2012) exploration of biblical strategies for student discipleship, the survey he conducted inquired about the participant's philosophy of youth ministry as well as their usage of

curriculums, technology, and service opportunities regarding their efforts in student discipleship. However, the study did not touch on additional teaching methods being used to disciple youth.

A study by Rackley (2013) analyzed factors and key strategies that will benefit high school ministry. Rackley (2013) acknowledged successfully using learning styles and active learning strategies in his instruction of the bible to youth for which he notes such methods were beneficial in facilitating the youth's comprehension and application of the biblical principles he was teaching. However, his study did not include the assessment of learning styles and active learning strategies as influential factors to youth ministry programming (Rackley, 2013).

In his survey of youth ministers for what factors influence their youth ministry practices, Buchanan's (2015) study focused on assessing the personal aspects of beliefs, convictions, educational training, and the example of fellow youth ministers as factors guiding their approach to youth ministry. Although Buchanan (2015) discovered that the youth minister's desire to make disciples of the youth ranked fourth of the predominant factors identified, the study did not explore the process by which the youth ministers employ or the teaching methods they used to influence their youth ministry practices in this regard.

These studies explored factors influencing one's approach to youth ministry and some of the practices they employed in discipling students; however, no current studies or information was located that examined generational learning styles and corresponding teaching methods as integral aspects of one's approach to youth ministry. This study aimed to fill this gap by exploring to what extent were generational learning styles an influential factor to youth ministry leaders and teachers in Central Texas as evidenced in the teaching methods being used.

Profile of the Current Study

Ecclesiastes 1:4 states, "one generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but

the earth abideth forever" (KJV). As generations come and go, the expectation remains for one generation to pass along the teachings of the principles and practices of their life of faith to the next generational cohort. Teaching the next generation about the life of faith has to be done in a relatable and relevant manner.

The concepts of generational theory facilitate the process of accessing generational characteristics and subsequently prescribing the appropriate teaching methods for teaching the generational cohort. Okros (2020) summarized generational theory in the words:

> The premise of generational theory is that those of a similar age share formative experiences that can produce important and widespread commonalities in personal traits and that there probably will be a degree of meaningful differentiation in comparison to groups of different ages. (p. 34)

Relative to education, different generations require different teaching methodologies (Crutchfield, 2016). Thus, generational theory also implies educators must learn about the generation they are teaching as well as learn from them about how they learn best. Mannheim (1970) stated, "as generations are in a state of constant interaction…not only does the teacher educate his pupil, but the pupil educates his teacher too" (p. 392). Crutchfield (2016) further conveyed that "reaching 'the next generation' is gaining insight into that generation's world" (p. 3).

Learning about how generational cohorts learn leads to adapting existing teaching methodologies and subsequently adopting new methodologies that correspond to the learning style of the generational cohort. Research indicated that schools and various industries were using the findings of generational theory to adapt their teaching methodologies (LifeCourse Associates, n.d.c, Wiedmer, 2015). This study proposed that youth ministries should employ the concepts of generational theory to adapt existing teaching methodologies to ones that will facilitate them being relatable and relevant to the youth congregant they are serving.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the teaching methods being used among youth ministries of Christian churches in the Central Texas area. The theological, theoretical, and related literature review provided a synopsis of prescribed teaching methodologies according to generational character traits and generational learning styles. This literature review also serves as a foundation for which to compare the data and assess to what extent recommended teaching methodologies for Generation Alpha were being employed among Christian churches in the Central Texas area. Invitations were electronically mailed to 342 Christian churches, comprised of 39 religious affiliations, in the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas. A sample of 24 youth leaders participated in the study. Descriptive statistics and crosstabs producing gamma, lambda, and p-values were used to analyze the data.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter will present an overview of the quantitative descriptive research design and methodology that was used to gather and analyze the data for exploring the relationships between teaching methods being used in youth ministry educational programming and the learning styles of Generation Alpha. Details of the process and procedures that governed the course of this study are discussed as well as the population and sample that was involved in this study. A description of the research instrument used in the study is presented along with how the data was treated and considered. Finally, ethical considerations and limits of generalizations regarding this research are also discussed.

Research Design Synopsis

The Problem

Anthony and Benson's (2011) review of Christian education within its historical and philosophical context captured the notion of teaching methodologies changing to align with the generational traits and cultural trends of the day. Strauss (2005) stated, "each generation brings something new and important to teaching and learning. That's why it's so important for school administrators to understand, respect and address the generational differences in today's schools" (p. 14). To this end, generational traits are believed to influence educational programming and practices. Industries and academic institutions were using the findings of cohort analysis for "strategic planning, marketing, and education" (LifeCourse Associates, n.d.a, para. 10) as well as to aid them in understanding and subsequently solving institutional and workplace problems.

While some academic institutions were using the most current research on child psychology and learning styles, and in turn evaluating their methodologies to relate to their student population, it did not appear that the methodologies arising from such research were

permeating many Christian educational programs within the churches of Central Texas (Barna Group, 2005). Although there may be many Christian K-12 educators who also serve as a youth ministry worker in their local congregation, it was not yet apparent if the teaching methods from cohort analysis that these educators were using in their academic classrooms comprised of Generation Alpha were influencing the teaching methods being used in the youth ministry educational programming or being translated to implementation in the church educational setting (Barna Group, 2005). When considering that the students in the academic classrooms were the same students participating in the church's Christian education programming, it would reason those methodologies of the two worlds would coincide for the very purpose of relating to and reaching that generation of youth (McCrindle, 2020b).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative descriptive study was to discover the teaching methods utilized among youth ministries that serve Generation Alpha within Christian churches in Central Texas. Further, this study sought to identify if a relationship exists between those teaching methods and the generational traits and learning styles of Generation Alpha as well as participant and church demographic variables. The theory that guided this study was generational theory, as presented by William Strauss and Neil Howe (1991). Strauss-Howe generational theory recognizes that persons born within a specified timeframe have shared experiences of key historical events and social trends during the same period or age timespan of their life, which shape and form the character traits, beliefs, and behaviors of the generation (Allen & Ross, 2012; LifeCourse Associates, n.d.a; Moore, 2007).

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Questions

RQ1. What are the most common teaching methods being used in the educational programming for youth ministries by youth leaders and teachers in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas?

RQ2. To what degree, if any, are the most common teaching methods being used by youth leaders and teachers in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas linked to Generation Alpha learning styles?

RQ3. What, if any, is the significance of church demographic variables of religious affiliation, congregation size, and the number of youth congregants to the most common teaching methods being used by the youth leaders and teachers of the churches in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas?

RQ4. What, if any, is the significance of participant demographic variables of gender, age, position serving in, and years serving in youth ministry to the most common teaching methods being used by youth leaders and teachers of the churches in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas?

RQ5. What, if any, is the significance of youth group demographic variables of grade level, class size, and how often the youth leaders and teachers meet with the youth group to the most common teaching methods being used by youth leaders and teachers of the churches in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas?

In quantitative research, hypotheses serve as predictions about what the researcher might discover regarding relationships among the variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Leedy & Ormrod, 2018). The following research hypotheses have been connected to the guiding concepts comprised in their respective research question.

Research Hypotheses

H01: There are no common teaching methods among the educational programming for youth ministries.

H02: There is no link between the most common teaching methods being used and Generation Alpha learning styles.

H03: There is no significant relevance between the most common teaching methods being used and the church demographic variables of religious affiliation, congregation size, and the number of youth congregants.

H04: There is no significant relevance between the most common teaching methods being used and the participant demographic variables of gender, age, position serving in, and years serving in youth ministry.

H05: There is no significant relevance between the most common teaching methods being used and the youth group demographic variables of grade level, class size, and how often the youth leaders and teachers meet with the youth group.

Research Design and Methodology

This study sought to discover the most commonly used teaching methods employed by youth ministry workers and to draw conclusions as to whether any relationships existed between the research variables. In that the conclusions drawn from this study were not intended to infer any cause-and-effect relationships among the research variables, a descriptive research design was appropriate for this type of pursuit. Leedy and Ormrod (2018) describe descriptive research designs as forms of research by which the researcher can "draw conclusions about the current state of affairs regarding a situation or issue but not about cause-and-effect relationships" (p. 414).

The descriptive research design selected for this study was survey research. Creswell and Creswell (2017) define survey research as a design that "provides a quantitative description of trends, attitudes, and opinions of a population, or tests for associations among variables of a population, by studying a sample of that population" (p. 147). The survey research design is ideally suited for answering descriptive questions and inquiries about the relationships between variables both of which classify the research questions that guided this study (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Further, as a quantitative method of inquiry, the survey research design yielded participant responses in a format that could be quantified and subsequently produced data useful to achieve the purpose of the research inquiry.

Population

The population for this study was leaders and teachers currently serving in youth ministries of Christian churches in Central Texas. The locale of Central Texas from which the identified population resides spans 20 counties and covers about 17,400 square miles (Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, 2020). According to the 2010 United States Census, the population of Central Texas was 1,118,361. The Central Texas population was estimated to have increased to 1,238,101 in the year 2019 (Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, 2020; United States Census Bureau, n.d.). The uniqueness of the Central Texas region is that it has three economic centers, which are the cities of Killeen, Waco, and College Station (Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, 2020).

Without canvassing all churches in the Central Texas region, the total number of youth ministry leaders and teachers in Central Texas could not be known or identified. Therefore, due to geographical size, all youth ministry leaders and teachers in Central Texas were not included in the study. Christian churches within the vicinity of the three metropolitan statistical areas of Central Texas provided a better chance of locating youth ministry leaders and teachers that were serving the population of Generation Alpha at the time of this study. The three metropolitan statistical areas of Central Texas are Killeen-Temple, Waco, and College Station-Bryan (Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, 2020).

The Association of Religion Data Archives (n.d.b) collects data on religion from reputable religious scholars and research centers in which the data is archived and made accessible to researchers of religion in America and internationally. Their most recent report based on data from the 2010 United States Religious Census indicated 1,134 churches throughout the three metropolitan statistical areas of Central Texas with a total of 435,540

congregants, inclusive of children and youth (The Association of Religion Data Archives, n.d.b).

The membership profile of the churches in the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas was

246,865 Evangelical Protestants, 12,293 Black Protestants, 60,112 Mainline Protestants, 86,281

Catholic, 252 Orthodox, and 29,737 Other Religions (The Association of Religion Data

Archives, n.d.b). Reducing this initial count of 1,134 churches reported being in the three

metropolitan statistical areas of Central Texas by the real data count of 196 churches this

researcher discovered to have dissolved or not have a youth ministry brings the population for

this study to 938.

Sampling Procedures

For this study, a convenience sampling method was used to answer the research

questions. In a convenience sample, participants are selected based on their accessibility to the

researcher for conducting various aspects of their study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2018). Thus, in the

original design of this study, this researcher selected the Christian churches within the vicinity

of the city of Killeen, Texas, one of the three metropolitan statistical areas of Central Texas

(Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, 2020), to comprise the research sample.

Because of the unknown overall population of leaders and teachers that were serving in

youth ministries of Christian churches in the 20 counties of Central Texas at the time of this

study, this researcher used the most recent number of churches reported to be in the three

metropolitan statistical areas of Central Texas to calculate the sample size. At the time of this

research, The Association of Religion Data Archives (n.d.b) indicated there were 1,134 churches

throughout the three statistical metropolitan areas of Central Texas. This researcher assumed that

each church was multigenerational; therefore, it was assumed that each church would have at

least one family with a youth attending for which the church would employ efforts to religiously

engage, and, thus, appoint a leader or teacher to serve in that capacity. These assumptions established the initial population size to be 1,134 Christian youth ministry leaders and teachers.

This researcher created a list of contact information of the Christian churches within Central Texas. An internet search was conducted of each Christian church listed in the church directories used to determine if there existed a church website in which to cross-reference the information published in the church directories. A review of the church websites was conducted to obtain contact information that was not contained in the printed or online church directories used, such as the names and email addresses of the pastor, administrator, and youth ministry leader.

While gathering contact information, this researcher discovered 131 churches from the initial research sample of the 383 churches identified within the vicinity of Killeen, Texas, that could no longer be counted as part of the assumed population size (see Table 4).

Table 4

Summary of Researcher's Initial Contact Information Gathering Efforts

Contact Method	Researcher's Discovery	Killeen-Temple Area
Telephone Conversation	Self-reported that the church dissolved	7
Telephone Attempts and Online Search	The telephone number was either out of service or the wrong number and/or there was no online presence through which the church could be contacted	114
Telephone Conversation	Self-reported that the church does not have a youth ministry	10

Subtracting this real-time data on the status of Christian churches within the vicinity of Killeen, Texas, from the assumed population of 1,134 brought the population size for this study to 1,003. Given the population size of 1,003, a sample size of 141 was necessary to achieve a confidence level of 80% with a confidence interval of 5 (Maple Tech International LLC, 2008).

Given the sample size of 141, a response rate of 50% would produce an 80% level of confidence with a confidence interval of 5 (Maple Tech International LLC, 2008).

During the course of administering the research survey, the research sample was expanded to include the Christian churches within the vicinity of the other two metropolitan statistical areas of Central Texas, which are the cities of Waco, Texas, and College Station-Bryan, Texas (Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, 2020), in order to achieve the minimum number of responses needed for the study. While collecting contact information, this researcher discovered an additional 25 churches that could no longer be counted as part of the assumed population size of 1,134. Table 5 provides a summary of this discovery.

Table 5

Summary of Researcher's Additional Contact Information Gathering Efforts

Contact Method	Researcher's Discovery	Waco Area	College Station-Bryan Area
Online Search	No telephone number and/or no online presence through which the church could be contacted	25	0

Subtracting this real-time data of the status of Christian churches within the vicinity of Waco, Texas, from the calculated population of 1,003 brought the population size for this study to 978. This reduction in population size did not have an impact on the sample size needed for this study. Given the population size of 978, the necessary sample size remained to be 141 to achieve a confidence level of 80% with a confidence interval of 5 and a response rate of 50% (Maple Tech International LLC, 2008).

This researcher used several resources to identify 385 Christian churches within the vicinity of the three metropolitan statistical areas of Central Texas comprised of 39 religious affiliations. For the Killeen-Temple metropolitan statistical area, this researcher used the Greater Killeen - Fort Hood printed telephone directory (Hibu, Inc., 2019), the Central Texas Church

Directory published online by the Killeen Daily Herald (2021) local newspaper, the Temple

Telegram Church Directory published online by the Temple Daily Telegram (2021) local

newspaper, the Temple Chamber of Commerce (n.d.) online church directory, and the Local

Churches Directory published online by University of Mary Hardin-Baylor Spiritual Life (2022).

This researcher identified 252 Christian churches to include in the sample population from these

resources. Chapels on the military installation of Fort Hood, located in the vicinity of Killeen,

Texas, were excluded from this study.

For the Waco metropolitan statistical area, the Local Churches directory published online

by Baylor Spiritual Life (n.d.) was used. Denominational-sponsored campus ministries located

on the grounds of Baylor University were excluded from this study. This researcher identified 99

Christian churches to include in the sample population from this resource.

For the College Station-Bryan metropolitan statistical area, the Bryan-College Station

Chamber of Commerce (n.d.) online church directory, the Local Churches directory published

online by Impact Ministries (Impact Retreat, n.d.), and the Worship Directory published online

by The Eagle (2022) local newspaper were used. Denominational-sponsored campus ministries

located on the grounds of Texas A&M University were excluded from this study. This researcher

identified 34 Christian churches to include in the sample population from these resources.

Each of the churches was presumed to have at least one youth leader or teacher to

comprise the convenience sample. To gain a comprehensive assessment of the teaching methods

being used by youth ministries in the sample population, this researcher hoped for no less than

80 respondents (Maple Tech International LLC, 2008). Assuming a response rate of 50% or less,

this researcher extended an invitation to the entire convenience sample of 385 to participate in

the study.

Limits of Generalization

The research population was comprised of churches of the Christian faith in Central Texas. Therefore, this study is not generalizable to churches outside of the Central Texas area or to churches of a non-Christian faith. This study is also not generalizable to a particular religious affiliation or transferable to a certain doctrinal belief.

Para-church organizations were not included in the population. Therefore, this study is not generalizable to para-church organizations that have programs geared toward the evangelism or Christian education of middle school, junior high school, and high school students.

The curriculum or liturgy components of the youth ministry were not assessed as part of the study. Therefore, this study is not generalizable to a particular youth ministry curriculum or its publisher nor infer a relationship to the effectiveness of the youth ministry curriculum.

This study focused on teaching methodologies to relate Christian doctrine, principles, and practices to middle school, junior high school, and high school members of Generation Alpha. Therefore, this study is not generalizable or transferable to members of Generation Alpha not in these age categories at the time of the study. This study is also not generalizable to previous generational cohorts or transferable to future generational cohorts.

Ethical Considerations

Ethics is generally understood to be the moral principles and standards that are the appropriate conduct one should have whether professionally, socially, or personally (Resnik, 2020). Theologian William Shedd (2003) defined ethics to be "the science of morals or duties" (p. 51). In the field of research, ethics is concerned with the proper treatment of individuals, the appropriate handling of the data, and the accurate reporting of the research findings (Biddix, 2018; United States Department of Health and Human Services: Department of Health,

Education, and Welfare, 1979). The basics of ethics being the morals or values that direct one's

conduct, this researcher ensured full approval and clearances were obtained from Liberty

University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) and her Dissertation Supervisor as necessitated.

As a foundation for ethical research, no data was collected before receiving IRB approval.

To uphold the integrity of the researcher's intent, parameters were set to guide the

conversation of the introductory phone call placed to churches and no collection of data took

place during those phone calls. This researcher followed the proper protocols of making official

contact with the pastor or church administrator and did not discuss any part of the survey process

with persons she was acquainted with that also attend a church in the sample group or who

served as a youth leader or teacher in a church in the sample group.

Participants were youth ministry leaders and teachers aged 20 and above. Therefore,

minors were not surveyed. Informed consent was obtained from participants in an electronic

format. The objectives of the study were clearly outlined in the electronic letter. Participants

were advised that their participation was anonymous and voluntary, and they reserved the right

to withdraw from the study at any time.

The study focused on teaching methods being used in youth educational programming.

Therefore, this researcher took care to phrase the survey questions in a manner that survey

participants reported on the teaching methods being used but did not provide their opinion or

assessment of the teaching methodology of their respective youth educational programming.

The study used Qualtrics Survey Software. This online survey platform has measures in

place to protect and secure its customer's data (Qualtrics, 2021). Only information pertinent to

the research was collected. All data collected throughout this study were maintained in

password-protected electronic storage, accessible only by this researcher.

This study involved minimal risk to participants, risks that were no greater than one would encounter in everyday life. The risks of feeling uncomfortable with the study and with sharing information were mitigated by this researcher's initiative to make personal contact with churches at the onset of the survey process. During her contact, this researcher emphasized that the purpose of the survey was to assess the teaching methods being used and was not a judgment of their youth educational programming.

Instrumentation

The instrumentation that was used for this study was a survey developed specifically for this research. Leedy and Ormrod (2018) define survey research as "a study designed to determine the incidence, frequency, and distribution of certain characteristics in a population" (p. 92). Creswell and Creswell (2017) further explain that survey research can be a cross-sectional study by which data is collected at one point in time or a longitudinal study whereby data is collected over a period of time. Thus, a survey allowed this researcher to get a snapshot of youth ministry educational programs and to describe aspects of the programs as they existed at the time of the study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2018; Williams, 2007). The rationale for developing and using a researcher-created survey was that it would best meet the specific purpose and objectives of the study. The survey instrument was designed by this researcher and reviewed by the IRB.

Based on Generation Alpha learning styles and corresponding teaching methodologies, the Youth Ministry Teaching Methods (YMTM) Survey research instrument was constructed for use in surveying participating youth ministry leaders and teachers. Qualtrics Survey Software survey design tool was used to construct the survey, allowing this researcher to select the question type, content type, response requirement, and question behavior. The YMTM Survey consisted of multiple-choice questions, dropdown menu questions, matrix table questions, and

open response questions suited for the type of response solicited.

Multiple choice questions allowed respondents to select one or more options from a list of predetermined options. Respondents had the ability to view all response choices for the question and select the choice that best represented their experience (Leedy & Ormrod, 2018; SurveyMonkey, n.d.). This researcher acknowledged there may have been teaching methods and experiences outside of those identified. Therefore, when appropriate, a none-of-the-above option was included and respondents were presented with a follow-up open-ended question allowing them to provide a response describing their experience.

Open-ended questions allowed respondents to provide answers in their own words. The free-form nature of open-ended questions did not confine respondents' answers to a set of predetermined options (Schonlau, et al., 2021). The input from respondents provided the researcher with insight into the trend being studied and helped the researcher see the data from a different perspective (SurveyMonkey, n.d.).

Responses to the follow-up open-ended question provided this researcher with insight into their particular experiences relative to the research variables. The survey technique of pairing closed-ended questions with open-ended questions is beneficial to aid researchers in better understanding and addressing the quantitative data (Schonlau et al., 2021; SurveyMonkey, n.d.). The multiple-choice format of questioning provided structured survey responses that yield straightforward data for analysis. The corresponding open-ended responses were reviewed to be appropriately classified to produce quantitative data for analysis. Upon review of the open-ended responses, this researcher determined that what the respondent had written as an open-ended response was consistent with the multiple-choice answer they had selected. Therefore, it was not necessary to use n-gram variables to classify the open-ended responses for data analysis

(Schonlau et al., 2021).

Dropdown menu questions allowed respondents to view a scrollable list of responses from which to choose (SurveyMonkey, n.d.). The dropdown menu format of questioning also provided the respondents with useful context for the question. In addition, the dropdown menu questions served to focus the respondent's consideration of the question on a consolidated list of responses where there may have otherwise been a plethora of ways to respond, which could have potentially caused the respondent to become overwhelmed in attempting to categorize their answer (SurveyMonkey, n.d.).

Matrix table questions are two-dimensional versions of multiple-choice questions that allowed respondents to view the question and corresponding response options in a tabular format. As such, matrix table questions are classified as rating scales that allow for the questions to be placed on the left side of the table and the answer options to be placed at the top (Qualtrics, n.d.b.; QuestionPro, n.d.). The matrix table form of questioning is beneficial when several questions have the same set of response options for which they will be evaluated on the same continuum scale (Leedy & Ormrod, 2018; Qualtrics, n.d.b.).

Four multiple choice questions prescreened participants to ensure they met the criteria for participating. The two matrix table questions and one multiple choice open-ended question combination assessed teaching methods related to the inquiry of RQ1. The two matrix table questions related to RQ1 combined with one additional matrix table question assessed the teaching methods being used as they related to generational learning styles regarding the inquiry of RQ2. Three dropdown menu questions and one open-ended question gathered church demographics related to the inquiry of RQ3. One multiple choice question, two dropdown menu questions, and two open-response questions gathered participant demographics related to the

inquiry of RQ4. One multiple choice question and two dropdown menu questions gathered youth

group demographics related to the inquiry of RQ5. The combined responses of two of the matrix

table questions provided a comprehensive inquiry into the research problem that guided this

study.

Survey Design

Upon opening the survey link, participants were presented with a welcome message

conveying this researcher's appreciation for their willingness to participate in the study and the

approximate amount of time anticipated to complete the survey. Willing participants who

proceeded to the next page to view the consent form (see Appendix B) had the option of clicking

the consent form document linked to the survey page to download according to their reading or

printing preference. By proceeding to the next page, willing participants were giving their

consent to participate in the study and were presented with the prescreening questions.

Participant instructions, inclusive of the objective for the questions in that particular section,

were provided for each part of the survey.

Participant age, affiliation with a Christian church that has a youth ministry program, and

their involvement with said youth ministry program were screening criteria for participating in

this study. To participate, respondents:

1. Had to be 20 years of age or older.

2. Their church of membership must have been of the Christian faith.

3. Their church of membership must have had an identifiable and separate ministry for
    middle school, junior high school, or high school aged students.

4. Must have been serving middle school, junior high school, or high school aged
    students as a leader, teacher, or assistant within the youth ministry of their church of
    membership at the time of their participation in the study.

These participant criteria were presented as four multiple choice questions with answer

choices of yes or no (see Appendix I). Using skip logic, only those who answered yes to each of the four questions were allowed to proceed to the next page of the survey; those who answered no to any of the questions were taken to the end of the survey and presented with a message thanking them for their time and consideration to be part of the study.

The first part of the YMTM Survey included a multiple-choice question, two dropdown menu questions, and two open response questions to gather demographic information on the gender, age, and youth ministry experience of the respondent. The multiple-choice question solicited the respondent's selection of a standard response for gender (male or female). The dropdown menu question format gathered demographic information on age and youth ministry leadership classification. The age category selection consisted of ranges 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70-79, and 80 and above. The leadership classification selection was that of youth pastor, youth minister (other than youth pastor), youth ministry leader, youth ministry teacher, youth ministry assistant, and youth ministry worker/volunteer. The open-ended questions allowed respondents to enter the number of years they have been a youth leader or teacher at the ministry in which they were serving at the time of the study and the total number of years they have been a leader or teacher in a church youth ministry program.

The second part of the YMTM survey included three dropdown menu questions and one open response question to gather demographic information on denominational affiliation, congregation size, and the number of youth congregants of the church for which the respondent served as a youth ministry leader or teacher. The dropdown menu question format gathered information on the church's denominational affiliation, congregation size, and the number of youth congregants.

Church denominational affiliation category was comprised of those named in the

directory from which contact information was derived. The church affiliation categories were
that of common affiliation per denomination (Hibu, Inc., 2019; Killeen Daily Herald, 2021). An
option of other was included in the dropdown menu and respondents were allowed to provide an
open-ended response if their church affiliation was not among those listed in the dropdown
menu.

Church congregation size as used in the context of this study was that of the average
attendance to the church's weekend services (Fillinger, 2011). The dropdown menu consisted of
the following categories with their clarifying descriptions: emerging small church (50 or fewer
attendees), small church (between 51-249 attendees), medium church (between 250-499
attendees), large church (between 500-999 attendees), emerging megachurch (between 1,000-
1,999 attendees), megachurch (between 2,000-9,999 attendees), and gigachurch (10,000 or more
attendees) (Fillinger, 2011; Schrag, n.d.; The Association of Religion Data Archives, n.d.a).

The dropdown menu question regarding the number of youth congregants had the
following category responses: 1-10 youth congregants, 11-24 youth congregants, 25-49 youth
congregants, 50-100 youth congregants, and 100 or more youth congregants (Barna Group,
2016).

The third part of the YMTM survey included one multiple choice question and two
dropdown menu questions to gather demographic information on the grade level, number of
youth, and frequency of the respondent's encounter with the youth group for which the
respondent primarily led or taught. The multiple-choice question allowed for the respondent's
selection of the grade level of the youth group they led or taught. The grade level classification
selection consisted of middle school (Grades 6-8), junior high school (Grades 6-8), and high
school (Grades 9-12). Two dropdown menu questions followed to gather demographics on the

class size and frequency of the respondent's meeting with that particular youth group. The class size category selection consisted of ranges 1-10 youth, 11-20 youth, 21-30 youth, 31-40 youth, 41-50 youth, 51-99 youth, and 100 or more youth. The frequency of meeting categories was a time span continuum appropriate for the population, ranging from twice a week to twice a year or less.

The fourth part of the YMTM survey was comprised of three matrix table questions and a multiple-choice open response combination question to assess the classroom settings and teaching methods that participating youth leaders and teachers were using. The literature review was pursued in a manner to discover the generational traits and learning styles of Generation Alpha as well as the suggested teaching methods for this generational cohort and previous generations. Answer choices and their descriptions were comprised of teaching methods associated with Generation Y, Generation Z, and Generation Alpha as derived from the literature review. The rationale for including teaching methods related to these three generational cohorts in the questionnaire stemmed from a Barna Group (2005) report that churches were using the same model of youth educational programming from generation to generation. Having possible answer choices comprised of generationally identified teaching methods provided this researcher with data beneficial in addressing the research questions to describe the teaching methods being used relative to Generation Alpha learning styles.

The answer options that were listed at the top of each matrix table were a time span continuum of never, weekly, every two weeks, monthly, quarterly, and yearly. The descriptions for classroom settings that were listed on the left side of their respective matrix table were the following (Holly, 2021; Yale Poorvu Center, n.d.):

1. *Formal Style*: Rows/columns of individual seats facing the presenter.

2. *Auditorium/Theatre Style*: Rows of seats lined up facing the presenter.

3. *Chevron Style*: Rows of seats facing the presenter with an aisleway down the middle.

4. *Classroom Style*: Rows of tables and seats lined up facing the presenter.

5. *Pairs*: Two-person group.

6. *Roundtable*: Three or more person group.

7. *Circle*: All seats are arranged in one circle.

8. *Conference Room Style*: Single table seating all attendees.

9. *Flexible Seating*: Different seating options for student choice such as tables, chairs, sofas, ottomans, and floor pillows.

10. *Virtual*: Live, synchronous setting using a video conferencing platform.

The descriptions for the teaching methods that were listed on the left side of their respective matrix table were the following (Djajalaksana, 2011):

1. *Lecture*: Instructor presentations lasting most of the class session.

2. *Interactive Lecture:* The instructor presents information in small time blocks with brief periods of structured interaction in between mini-lectures.

3. *Interactive Lesson/Hands-On:* The instructor incorporates engagement triggers and breaks the lecture at least once per class to have students participate in an activity that lets them work with the content.

4. *Question-and-Answer:* Students participate in the lecture by responding to questions/statements.

5. *Student Peer Teaching:* Students, in pairs or groups, teach designated content to fellow students.

6. *Student Presentations:* Students make presentations to the class.

7. *Think/Pair/Share:* Students prepare a brief response to a question, then share their response with a peer, followed by a large group discussion.

8. *Small Group Discussions:* Students engage in sustained conversation within small groups.

9. *Whole Group Discussion:* The instructor facilitates sustained conversation and/or question-and-answer segments with the entire class.

10. *Brainstorming/Reflection:* Students complete a brief writing task in which they write down everything they know about a specified topic.

11. *Collaborative/Team-based Learning:* Students work together in groups or teams.

12. *Modeling/Demonstrations:* The instructor does demonstrations of selected content or skills.

13. *Role Play/Dramatization:* Students become actors performing roles in an identified situation or context.

14. *Experiential Learning:* Students put things together with their skills, ideas, and resources as well as perform problem-solving with peers.

15. *Service-Learning:* Students participate in and learn from community service activities that are connected to essential lesson objectives.

16. *Music:* The instructor incorporates playing musical instruments, singing, or audio recordings into the lesson.

17. *Technology:* Students use digital devices to access part of the lesson content.

18. *Visual:* The instructor incorporates visual resources such as diagrams and pictures into the lesson.

19. *Visual Video Content:* The instructor incorporates video resources into the lesson.

20. *Games/Simulations:* Students learn while playing games such as Jeopardy, Family Feud, etc., or do a simulation of real situations.

21. *Online Lecture:* Instructor presentations delivered in online media through real-time streaming video/audio or offline video/audio recordings.

22. *Online Learning Modules/Self-Directed Learning:* Students use the computer at their convenient time to study the materials provided on an online platform.

23. *Background Knowledge Probe:* The instructor poses written questions online to assess students' understanding of lesson content prior to a class.

24. *Online Discussions:* Students participate in online discussions of lesson content.

25. *Reflective Blogs:* Students create reflective online journal entries in a personal weblog/blog.

26. *Participation in Social Networking:* The instructor uses social networking as a tool to communicate with students.

27. *Online/E-Portfolio:* Students document their own learning in an online/electronic portfolio.

28. *Computer-Based Learning Exercises/Games/Simulations:* Students complete interactive computer-based learning exercises.

A multiple-choice question allowed respondents to select what they perceived to be their three most frequently used teaching methods. An open response question followed, and respondents subsequently were afforded the opportunity to share any teaching methods they frequently used that were not included on the list provided.

Validity

Validity describes the extent to which the study yield credible findings (Leedy & Ormrod, 2018). Creswell and Creswell (2017) state that "establishing the validity of the scores in a survey helps researchers to identify whether an instrument might be a good one to use in survey research" (p. 153). In essence, testing the research instrument for validity tells the researcher how accurately the research instrument measures the research variables (Middleton, 2020).

The research instrument was evaluated for face validity. Face validity is an informal, subjective assessment of the research instrument (Leedy & Ormrod, 2018). The purpose of testing the research instrument for face validity was to determine if, on the surface, the content of the research instrument was suitable for its goal and would yield an accurate assessment of what it aimed to measure (Leedy & Ormrod, 2018; Middleton, 2020).

To accomplish face validity of the research instrument and the types of teaching methods geared toward Generation Alpha learning styles, an expert panel was invited to give feedback. Leedy and Ormrod (2018) express the significance of an expert panel to scrutinize the research

instrument, provide their informed opinions about the validity of the research instrument to assess what it was designed to assess, and offer recommendations on aspects of the research instrument that could be improved. The expert panel for this study was comprised of five experienced educators who were working with middle school, junior high school, and high school aged youth in the academic classroom setting at the time of this study (see Appendix L). The expert panelists were electronically mailed individual invitations to participate; therefore, they were not knowledgeable of the identity of the other panelist. The expert panel was asked to evaluate the classroom settings, teaching methods, and instructional activities listed on the three matrix tables as to whether they were accurate measures of the methods and frequency of use by teachers of middle school, junior high school, and high school students. Three weeks were allotted for the expert panelist to conduct their review. Each expert panelist affirmed the classroom settings, teaching methods, and instructional activities listed on the survey instrument reflected what was being used by classroom teachers at the time of this study and they did not have any recommendations or suggestions that required any changes to the survey instrument.

Once the expert panel validated the survey, a pilot test was conducted with a group of select individuals to verify the efficacy of the survey questions. The pilot test group was electronically mailed individual invitations to participate; therefore, they were not knowledgeable of the identity of the other members of the pilot test group. Two weeks were allotted for the pilot test group to take the survey on the online platform and further validate the survey by providing input on the clarity of the instructions and questions (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Leedy & Ormrod, 2018). The pilot test targeted 25 select individuals. The survey collected 14 responses. However, six answered no to at least one of the prescreening questions and, therefore, did not qualify to participate in the study, and four did not proceed past the opening

page or consent form. Thus, out of the 14 pilot study responses only four were completed and
produced valid results for analysis. Then, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)
Statistical Software version 28 (IBM Corporation, 2021) was used to summarize the data
collected (see Table 6).

Table 6

Pilot Test Summary

Cases	N	%
Valid	4	28.6
Excluded[a]	10	71.4
Total	14	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Cronbach's Alpha was run to determine the internal consistency of the pilot test. This test
produced a Cronbach's Alpha value of .781, which indicated a high level of internal consistency
(see Table 7). The number of items that made up the scale was 38 which represented the number
of variables contained in survey questions 13 through 15 of the YMTM.

Table 7

Pilot Test Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.781	.831	38

Qualtrics Survey Software was used to summarize the demographics of the pilot test
responses received. The profile of survey participants that participated in the pilot study and their
represented churches and youth groups are displayed in Table 8.

Table 8

Profile of Participants, Churches, and Youth Groups in Pilot Study

Variable	Values	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	2	50.0
	Female	2	50.0
Age	20-29 years old	2	50.0
	50-59 years old	2	50.0
Leadership Classification	Youth Ministry Assistant	2	50.0
	Youth Ministry Worker/Volunteer	2	50.0
Years Serving Current Youth Ministry	0-5 years	3	75.0
	6-10 years	1	25.0
Total Years Serving Youth Ministry	0-5 years	2	50.0
	6-10 years	2	50.0
Church Affiliation	Assembly of God	2	50.0
	Missionary Baptist	2	50.0
Congregation Size	Medium Church (between 250-499 attendees)	4	100.0
Number of Youth Congregants	11-24 youth congregants	2	50.0
	25-49 youth congregants	1	25.0
	50-100 youth congregants	1	25.0
Youth Group Grade Level	Middle School (grades 6-8)	4	28.6
	Junior High School (grades 6-8)	0	0.0
	High School (grades 9-12)	2	14.3
Number of Youth in Participants Group	1-10 youth	3	75.0
	41-50 youth	1	25.0
Frequency Participant Meets with Youth Group	Every week for youth ministry session	1	25.0
	Twice every week (day of corporate worship service and ministry session)	1	25.0
	Three weeks during the month on day of corporate worship service	1	25.0
	At least once every two months	1	25.0

Due to an insufficient number of complete responses collected in the pilot study, only the descriptive statistics of percentages were performed on the primary survey variables of interest as assessed via the YMTM survey questions 13 through 15. The percent of the pilot study respondents using the instructional settings are displayed in Table 9, in-class instructional methods in Table 10, and online instructional methods in Table 11.

Table 9

Classroom Setting in Use by Pilot Study Participants

Classroom Setting	Use Percentage					
	Never	Weekly	Every Two Weeks	Monthly	Quarterly	Yearly
Formal Style	25.0	0.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	0.0
Auditorium/Theatre Style	25.0	25.0	0.0	25.0	25.0	0.0
Chevron Style	50.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Classroom Style	50.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0
Pairs	50.0	25.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Round-Table	50.0	25.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Circle	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	0.0	0.0
Conference Room Style	50.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0
Flexible Seating	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Virtual	25.0	0.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	0.0

Table 10

In-class Activities in Use by Pilot Study Participants

In-class Activity	Use Percentage					
	Never	Weekly	Every Two Weeks	Monthly	Quarterly	Yearly
Lecture	50.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	25.0	0.0
Interactive Lecture	25.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0
Interactive Lesson/ Hands On	0.0	50.0	25.0	0.0	25.0	0.0
Question & Answer	0.0	50.0	25.0	0.0	25.0	0.0
Student Peer Teaching	25.0	25.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Student Presentations	25.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	25.0	0.0
Think/Pair/Share	0.0	25.0	50.0	25.0	0.0	0.0
Small Group Discussions	25.0	75.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Whole Group Discussion	0.0	75.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0
Brainstorming/Reflection	25.0	25.0	0.0	25.0	25.0	0.0
Modeling/Demonstrations	25.0	50.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Role Play/Dramatization	25.0	0.0	25.0	25.0	0.0	25.0
Experiential Learning	25.0	25.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Service Learning	0.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	75.0	0.0
Music	25.0	50.0	0.0	25.0	0.0	0.0
Technology	25.0	75.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Visual	25.0	50.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Visual Video Content	25.0	25.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Collaborative/Team-based Learning	25.0	25.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Games/Simulations	0.0	25.0	50.0	0.0	25.0	0.0

Table 11

Online Activities in Use by Pilot Study Participants

Online Activity	Use Percentage					
	Never	Weekly	Every Two Weeks	Monthly	Quarterly	Yearly
Online Lecture	50.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Online Learning Modules/Self-Directed Learning	50.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0
Background Knowledge Probe	50.0	25.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Online Discussions	50.0	25.0	0.0	25.0	0.0	0.0
Reflective Blogs	50.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0
Participation in Social Networking	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	0.0	0.0
Online/E-Portfolio	50.0	0.0	25.0	0.0	25.0	0.0
Computer-Based Learning Exercises/Games/Simulations	50.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

The pilot study data did not reflect teaching methods that ranked in the top three among the participants. Table 12 displays the ranking of the most frequently used teaching methods as reported by the pilot test participants.

Table 12

Most Frequently Used Teaching Methods by Pilot Study Participants

Teaching Method	N	%
Interactive Lesson/ Hands On	2	14.3
Question & Answer	2	14.3
Interactive Lecture	1	7.1
Think/Pair/Share	1	7.1
Small Group Discussions	1	7.1
Whole Group Discussion	1	7.1
Experiential Learning	1	7.1
Collaborative/Team-based Learning	1	7.1
Games/Simulations	1	7.1
The rest of the 19 strategies	0	0.0

No recommendations or suggestions were submitted by the pilot test group that required any changes to the survey instrument. Being that no changes or revisions to the survey instrument were recommended from the expert panel review or necessitated from the pilot test conducted, this researcher was permitted to move forward with distributing the survey to the sample population.

Reliability

Creswell and Creswell (2017) describe reliability as referring to "the consistency or repeatability of an instrument" (p. 153). Reliability indicates to what degree the research instrument will yield the same results when administered to the same sample under the same conditions (Leedy & Ormrod, 2018; Middleton, 2021). In essence, testing the research instrument for reliability tells the researcher if the research instrument is consistent at measuring the research variable each time it is administered (Middleton, 2021).

This study determined the internal consistency reliability of the research instrument. Internal consistency reliability is the degree to which all of the items on the research instrument behave in the same way and, in turn, yield similar results (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Leedy & Ormrod, 2018). To perform an informal test for internal consistency, no additional testing was needed but entailed comparing the answers in the data set to see if they all agree (Salkind, 2010; Trochim, n.d.).

The Cronbach's Alpha statistic is the most widely cited index to determine internal consistency reliability. Cronbach's Alpha is "mathematically equivalent to the average of all possible split-half estimates" (Trochim, n.d., para 14). Split-half reliability entails randomly dividing the data that measures the same construct into two sets and calculating the correlation between the two sets (Salkind, 2010; Trochim, n.d.). Values of Cronbach's Alpha range between 0 and 1, with ideal values to indicate reliability falling in the range between .7 and .9 (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This researcher used IBM SPSS Statistical Software to run the Cronbach's Alpha test.

The internal consistency reliability of the three categories into which the instructional strategies fall ranged from .307 to .835 (see Table 13). Cronbach's Alpha for the in-class activities was .835. Although the classroom settings and online activities did not achieve the .7 level, the values of .307 and .603 were reasonable given the number of items listed in their respective scale.

Table 13

Subscale Reliability Statistics

Instructional Strategy	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
Classroom Setting	.593	.559	10
In-Class Activities	.835	.834	20
Online Activities	.307	.495	7

The number of items that made up the scale to measure the underlying construct of instructional strategies indicated a high level of internal consistency, as determined by a Cronbach's Alpha value of .84 (see Table 14).

Table 14

YMTM Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.840	.813	37

Research Procedures

Upon successful defense and approval of the Research Prospectus, this researcher submitted the appropriate application and proposed documents to be used for aspects of the study to the IRB of Liberty University. During the timeframe for which the IRB application was being reviewed, this researcher consulted several resources to compile a list of churches in the vicinity of Killeen, Texas, inclusive of the pastor or church administrator's name, phone number, and email contact information. The process of compiling a list of churches and contact information did not involve any contact or conversation with prospective research participants; therefore, there were no ethical concerns in this procedural step of the study. Additionally, during the timeframe of the IRB application being reviewed, this researcher followed Liberty University's procedures for creating an account on the Qualtrics Survey Software online platform. Once the account was established, this researcher used the

preliminary survey instrument and began designing the survey questionnaire in Qualtrics.

Once IRB approval had been received (see Appendix A), the letter of solicitation was electronically mailed to seven prospective panelists (see Appendix C). Upon receiving confirmation of one's willingness to be part of the expert panel, the letter of instructions (see Appendix D) with corresponding attachments of the YMTM Survey (see Appendix J) and the table showing how the research questions were related to the YMTM questions (see Appendix K) was electronically mailed to five individuals who agreed to be on the expert panel. The expert panelist was given three weeks for their review and upon receipt of their evaluations, they were electronically mailed a thank you letter for their service as an expert panelist (see Appendix E). Neither expert panelist had any recommendations or suggestions that required changes to the survey instrument; therefore, this researcher was permitted to move forward with the next phase of the study.

The preliminary survey as inputted into Qualtrics was adjusted to conform to the IRB approved survey and was submitted to the doctoral Program Director for approval to be distributed. After making a few design changes to improve the readability of the matrix table questions, approval was granted. The recruitment letter (see Appendix G) was electronically mailed to 25 select individuals inviting them to be part of the pilot test group. The pilot test group was given two weeks to complete the online survey.

During the timeframe allotted for the pilot test group to participate, introductory phone calls were made to the churches on the contact list this researcher had created to solicit their church's participation in the research study. In the course of the conversation (see Appendix F), this researcher solicited the email address for sending the information for participation if such information was not available during the process of creating the list of church contact

information. The church contact list was created using Microsoft Excel; therefore, this researcher used the same spreadsheet to track her communication efforts with each church and the responses received. The results of these contact efforts have been displayed in Table 4.

Once the pilot test had concluded, the recruitment letter (see Appendix G) was electronically mailed to 252 churches in the vicinity of Killeen, Texas, regardless if successful contact was made via telephone. The letter solicited their participation in the research study and included the prescreening questions by which the recipient could determine if they had a youth ministry program that served the target members of Generation Alpha at the time of the study. Included in the letter was the link to the online survey by which churches that had an identifiable youth ministry program serving the target members of Generation Alpha could proceed with having their youth ministry leaders and teachers participate in the study. Instructions included in the letter requested of the pastor or designated administrator distribute the link to the online survey to the individual leaders and teachers within their youth ministry program. Once participants opened the survey link, they were taken to a page containing a welcome message, the objectives of the study, and an informed consent agreement where they could choose to continue to participate or exit the survey. Using skip logic, only those who agreed to the terms of the informed consent were allowed to progress to the next page of the survey; those who did not agree were exited from the survey. Participants were given four weeks to take the survey.

After three weeks from the time the survey was distributed, the reminder notification (see Appendix H) was electronically mailed to 217 churches within the vicinity of Killeen, Texas. Table 15 shows the accounting for the difference in the number of recruitment invitations sent and the number of reminder notifications sent to the churches within the

vicinity of Killeen, Texas. Although the initial efforts were to survey the Christian churches

within the vicinity of Killeen, Texas, due to a low response rate to the initial recruitment

letter, this researcher had to expand the sample size to include the other two metropolitan

areas of Central Texas and began to compile a list of contact information of the churches

within the vicinity of Waco, Texas, and College Station-Bryan, Texas. The recruitment letter

was electronically mailed to 99 churches in the vicinity of Waco, Texas, and 34 churches in

the vicinity of College Station-Bryan, Texas. After two weeks from the time the survey was

distributed to the extended sample population, the reminder notification was electronically

mailed to 91 churches within the vicinity of Waco, Texas, and 34 churches in the vicinity of

College Station-Bryan, Texas. Table 15 shows the accounting for the difference in the number

of recruitment invitations sent and the number of reminder notifications sent to the churches

within the vicinity of Waco, Texas, and College Station-Bryan, Texas.

Table 15

Summary of Responses to Recruitment Letter

Response	Killeen-Temple Area	Waco Area	College Station-Bryan Area
Recruitment Letters Sent	252	99	34
Undeliverable emails	-20	-3	0
Responded to email that they do not have a youth ministry	-5	-1	0
An email address was not provided; recruitment letter was sent through the contact form on the church website	-10	-4	0
Reminder Notifications Sent	217	91	34

The survey remained open for a total of 10 weeks after which it was closed,

disallowing access when it was determined sufficient data had been collected to confidently

answer the research questions.

The final accounting shows there was a net of 342 participants who were successfully contacted after subtracting the number of prospective participants that had undeliverable e-mails and those who indicated they did not have a youth ministry at the time the study was conducted. In total, 45 responses to the survey were received and 24 were completed for a 13% response rate out of 342 successfully contacted. This response rate fell below the range of the average 25-35% response rate for an online survey (Cook et al., 2000; Lindemann, 2021) but fell within the typical range of a 5-30% response rate for a survey (Willott, 2019).

The Qualtrics online survey platform was used to design the survey, host the survey, administer the survey, and perform general descriptive statistics analysis on the data. The data analysis tool feature of Qualtrics Survey Software was used to generate counts and frequency of the various survey variables. Responses to the survey simultaneously produced data that was immediately collected and archived in the Qualtrics Survey Software secure server. This data was downloaded from the Qualtrics server and imported into the IBM SPSS Statistical Software version 28 where additional descriptive statistics and crosstabs were performed on the data. Assistance from a statistician was used to aid this researcher in identifying the statistical tests that were appropriate for answering the research questions.

The raw data of responses and statistical analysis of the data were exported from the Qualtrics Survey Software and the statistical analysis of the data was exported from IBM SPSS Statistical Software and maintained in a password-protected electronic file. Notes compiled during the data analysis phase were equally stored in a password-protected electronic file.

Data Analysis and Statistical Procedures

Data Analysis

The sample of participants came from a list of Christian churches that was compiled by

this researcher. A link to the survey was included in the recruitment letter that was electronically mailed to the sample group. Recipients of the survey self-identified if they met the criteria for participating in the study. Those who met the criteria could voluntarily participate by clicking the link in the recruitment letter to proceed to the Qualtrics Survey Software platform to complete the survey.

The survey was divided into four parts. The first collected demographic information on the respondent. The second collected demographic information on the church where the respondent served at the time of the study. The third collected demographic information on the youth group that the respondent led or taught. The fourth assessed the teaching methods the respondent used as a youth ministry leader or teacher. Participants self-reported their teaching methods and frequency of use by responding to a series of matrix tables and multiple-choice questions.

Qualtrics Survey Software collected and stored each participant's response to the individual survey questions. Both the numerical value and choice text of the survey responses were exported and stored in a password-protected electronic file. The numerical value of the survey responses represented the recoded values generated by Qualtrics Survey Software that associated each answer choice option in a question with a numerical value (Qualtrics, n.d.a.). The choice text was the answer choice text that participants saw when they completed the survey (Qualtrics, n.d.a.).

The entire survey was statistically analyzed using tests to determine measures of frequency, central tendency, and association. Leedy and Ormrod (2018) state that the three things most researchers employing a quantitative descriptive study want to know are "points of central tendency, amount of variability, and the extent to which two or more variables are associated

with one another" (p. 315). Frequency aided in providing counts regarding certain aspects of the information collected in the survey such as the number of survey respondents that selected a particular teaching method. Measures of central tendency provided statistics that identified the most common responses for the research variables. Measures of association provided statistics that determined relationships among the research variables (Bhandari, 2021; Leedy & Ormrod, 2018).

The Qualtrics Survey Software data analysis feature and IBM SPSS Statistical Software were used to perform calculations on the data. The choice text export was filed for record-keeping purposes and was not used for data analysis.

For RQ1, calculations of frequency and the measures of central tendency of the teaching methods were used to determine which teaching methods were most commonly used by youth ministry leaders and teachers. This was performed on each survey question designed to answer RQ1. Frequency counts, percentages, and mean of the responses to questions designed to answer RQ1 were tabulated and graphically displayed.

For RQ2, the most common teaching methods identified from the data analysis of RQ1 were classified under the learning style it accommodated as indicated by the literature review. The frequency counts and percentages of the results of the data analysis for the most common teaching methods were used to explain any relational similarities or differences to the suggested teaching methods for Generation Alpha indicated in the literature review and were displayed in comparison charts and diagrams.

For RQ3, RQ4, and RQ5, measures of association were used to explain relationships between the teaching methods being used by youth ministry leaders and teachers and each of the demographic variables collected on the church, survey participant, and youth group. Data

analysis for RQ3, RQ4, and RQ5 entailed crosstabulations of the most common teaching

methods identified from the data analysis of RQ1 across the different church, survey participant,

and youth group demographic variables. Each significance level was tabulated and graphically

displayed.

Statistical Procedures

Thompson (2006) stated that "descriptive statistics address the question 'which one

number can I use to stand for or represent all my data?'" (p. 33). Leedy and Ormrod (2018)

further explain descriptive statistics as the best values to use for describing what the data look

like as it relates to "where their center or midpoint is, how broadly they are spread, and how

closely two or more variables within the data are associated with one another" (p. 310). Thus,

descriptive statistics was best suited for accomplishing this study's purpose to describe

characteristics of the data collected on the teaching methods that were being used and to

determine relationships among the research variables (Bhandari, 2021).

Frequency values represent the number of times a variable appears in the data set

(Bhandari, 2021). A frequency count was conducted on the responses for each answer choice and

the demographic data. The results of the frequency counts on each answer responded to aid in

determining the most common teaching method for answering RQ1 as well as was used in the

analysis for answering RQ2. Frequency counts of the demographic data provided values for

describing certain aspects of relationships between the teaching methods being used and the

respondent, churches, and youth groups for expounding upon the results of the data analysis for

RQ3, RQ4, and RQ5.

The two most common central tendency descriptive statistics that were used in the data

analysis of this study were mode and mean. The mode represents the most frequently scored

research variable, and the mean describes the arithmetic average of a certain research variable (Bhandari, 2021; Leedy & Ormrod, 2018; Thompson, 2006). The calculated mode and mean on answer responses aided in determining the most common teaching method for answering RQ1.

Descriptive statistics that measure association describe the nature and strength of the relationships between the variables (Leedy & Ormrod, 2018). Measures of association reflect how similar two or more of the research variables are. The two most common measures of association that were used in the data analysis of this study were gamma and lambda. Gamma measures the strength and direction of association between two ordinal variables while lambda measures the strength of association between two nominal variables (Laerd Statistics, 2016a, 2016b). These calculations aided in discovering relationships among the research variables for answering RQ3, RQ4, and RQ5.

While descriptive statistics were used to describe the characteristics of the data, inferential statistics were used to draw conclusions about the data. Leedy and Ormrod (2018) explain inferential statistics as that which:

> Provide a way of helping us make reasonable guesses about a large, unknown population by examining a small sample that is known. In the process, they also allow us to test hypotheses regarding what might be true for that large population. (p. 310)

Thus, inferential statistics aided this researcher in deciding if the data confirmed or refuted the research hypotheses and if the results were generalizable to a larger population (Bhandari, 2021). The statistical test that was run to generate the values of gamma and lambda also produced the p-value (Laerd Statistics, 2016a, 2016b). The p-value represents the level of statistical significance between the variables and aided this researcher in deciding if the data rejected or failed to reject the research hypothesis (McLeod, 2019).

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided the methodological design that was followed for this quantitative descriptive study. The design employed was structured to facilitate this researcher's understanding of any relationships between teaching methods being used in youth ministry programs and the learning styles of Generation Alpha as well as select church, survey participant, and youth group demographic variables. Firstly, essential details of the quantitative descriptive research design and methodology selected for this study were given. Secondly, the research population, research sample, and research limitations was discussed. Finally, a description of the research instrumentation, research procedures, data analysis procedures, and statistical procedures by which the study was conducted, and the data was collected and analyzed were outlined in this chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this quantitative descriptive study was to discover the teaching methods

used among youth ministries that serve Generation Alpha within Christian churches in Central

Texas and to identify if a relationship existed between those teaching methods and the

generational traits and learning styles of Generation Alpha as well as between select

demographic variables. This chapter restates the research questions and hypothesis and

summarizes the compilation protocol and statistical measures used to collect and analyze the

data. A description of the demographics of the sample data for the study is also given. The

research findings are discussed and displayed according to each research question and its

corresponding hypothesis. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the strengths and

weaknesses of the research design that was used in this study.

Research Questions

RQ1. What are the most common teaching methods being used in the educational
programming for youth ministries by youth leaders and teachers in the vicinity of the three
metropolitan areas of Central Texas?

RQ2. To what degree, if any, are the most common teaching methods being used by
youth leaders and teachers in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas linked
to Generation Alpha learning styles?

RQ3. What, if any, is the significance of church demographic variables of religious
affiliation, congregation size, and the number of youth congregants to the most common teaching
methods being used by the youth leaders and teachers of the churches in the vicinity of the three
metropolitan areas of Central Texas?

RQ4. What, if any, is the significance of participant demographic variables of gender,
age, position serving in, and years serving in youth ministry to the most common teaching
methods being used by youth leaders and teachers of the churches in the vicinity of the three
metropolitan areas of Central Texas?

RQ5. What, if any, is the significance of youth group demographic variables of grade
level, class size, and how often the youth leaders and teachers meet with the youth group to the
most common teaching methods being used by youth leaders and teachers of the churches in the

vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas?

Null Hypothesis

H01: There are no common teaching methods among the educational programming for youth ministries.

H02: There is no link between the most common teaching methods being used and Generation Alpha learning styles.

H03: There is no significant relevance between the most common teaching methods being used and the church demographic variables of religious affiliation, congregation size, and the number of youth congregants.

H04: There is no significant relevance between the most common teaching methods being used and the participant demographic variables of gender, age, position serving in, and years serving in youth ministry.

H05: There is no significant relevance between the most common teaching methods being used and the youth group demographic variables of grade level, class size, and how often the youth leaders and teachers meet with the youth group.

Compilation Protocol and Measures

This study followed a quantitative descriptive design by way of survey research. Data for this study came from youth ministry leaders, teachers, and assistants; all of which worked with the target generation for this study. Churches that allowed their youth ministry leaders, teachers, and assistants to participate provided them with the link to the online YMTM survey. Data from respondents to a 17-question online survey were collected through the Qualtrics Survey Platform and exported to an excel spreadsheet as well as an SPSS Statistical Data Document. The data were imported directly into SPSS (IBM Corporation, 2021) for manipulation. Within the IBM SPSS Statistical Software, metadata variables that were not of interest, such as the latitude and longitude of the respondent, timestamp, and IP addresses, were deleted. Also, within SPSS, the string-formatted data (i.e., word responses) were coded into a numeric format with respective numerical scales. Additionally, within SPSS, the research variables were classified as numeric or

string variables, and each was designated as to whether the variable was measuring scale, ordinal, or nominal data.

Descriptive statistical measures of frequency counts, percentages, and mean were employed to determine the most common teaching methods being used. Additionally, descriptive statistical measures of crosstabs producing gamma, lambda, and p-values were computed to determine the significance of the church, survey participant, and youth group demographics to those common teaching methods.

The research variables of interest were independent variables, of a categorical nature, and produced either nominal or ordinal data. The most common teaching methods of interest were dependent variables. Thus, gamma, lambda, and p-values were the best statistical measures for determining significance between the independent and dependent variables.

The value of Goodman and Kruskal's Gamma measures the strength and direction of association between two ordinal variables with values ranging from -1 to +1 (Laerd Statistics, 2016a). Goodman and Kruskal's Lambda measures the strength of association between two nominal variables where there is a distinction between dependent and independent variables (Laerd Statistics, 2016b). Goodman and Kruskal's Lambda values range from 0 to +1 and are used to make predictions based on modal categories (Laerd Statistics, 2016b). The modal category is the category of the dependent variable that occurs most frequently and can be considered the best guess (Laerd Statistics, 2016b).

The p-value produced during the calculation of gamma and lambda values presents the level of statistical significance between the variables. A p-value ≤ 0.05 indicated the results were statistically significant and a p-value > 0.05 indicated the results were not statistically significant (McLeod, 2019). The results of the statistical analysis are presented in this chapter through

tables, figures, and other visual aids.

Demographic and Sample Data

The research population consisted of youth ministry leaders, teachers, and assistants of the Christian faith in the Central Texas area. It was assumed that all 342 churches in the research sample had a youth ministry; therefore, an invitation was extended to all churches to invite their youth ministry leaders, teachers, and assistants to participate. A total of 45 responses were received, which is a 13% response rate. Of the 45 responses to the online survey, eleven respondents did not consent to participate in the study, and seven respondents consented but did not meet the screening criteria. Three cases were missing too many variables and were not included in the data analysis. This resulted in the responses from 24 participants being used in the data analysis.

The first part of the survey solicited demographic data on the youth ministry leader, teacher, and assistant responding to the survey. Two questions requested personal demographic information and three questions were related to the respondent's youth ministry experience. Characteristics of the 24 participants of the study are summarized in Table 16. The participants were predominantly male (62.5%), fell within the age range of 30-39 years old (37.5%), and were mostly youth pastors (70.8%).

Table 16

Demographics of Survey Participants

Participant Demographic	Values	N	Percentage
Gender	Male	15	62.5
	Female	9	37.5
Age	20-29 years old	5	20.8
	30-39 years old	9	37.5
	40-49 years old	6	25.0
	50-59 years old	1	4.2
	60-69 years old	2	8.3
	70-79 years old	1	4.2
	80 years and above	0	0.0
Leadership Classification	Youth Pastor	17	70.8
	Youth Minister (other than Youth Pastor)	1	4.2
	Youth Ministry Leader	3	12.5
	Youth Ministry Teacher	3	12.5
	Youth Ministry Assistant	0	0.0
	Youth Ministry Worker/Volunteer	0	0.0
Years Serving Current Youth Ministry	0-5 years	17	70.8
	6-10 years	2	8.3
	11-15 years	1	4.2
	16-20 years	2	8.3
	21-25 years	0	0.0
	26-30 years	1	4.2
	31 or more years	1	4.2
Total Years Serving Youth Ministry	0-5 years	10	41.7
	6-10 years	5	20.8
	11-15 years	0	0.0
	16-20 years	2	8.3
	21-25 years	3	12.5
	26-30 years	3	12.5
	31 or more years	1	4.2

Participants had an average of 7.7 years of service in youth ministry at their church of membership at the time of this study (range 1 to 38 years of service) and an average of 13.3 total years of service in youth ministry (range 1 to 46 total years of service) as displayed in Table 17.

Table 17

Survey Participant Years of Service

Years of Service	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Current Years	24	1.0	38.0	7.688	9.8387
Total Years	24	1.0	46.0	13.333	12.0024
Valid N (listwise)	24				

The second part of the survey solicited demographic data on the respondent's church of membership. Four questions requested church demographic information related to denomination, congregation size, and youth congregants. Of the 39 church denominations of the Christian faith identified for the study, participants of the study were associated with 11 denominations as summarized in Table 18. The majority of participants were of the Baptist denomination, with a total of 45.9% identifying as one of the denominations under the Baptist tradition and 16.7% identifying as simply Baptist. The majority of participants attended a medium-size church with an average of 250-499 attendees per week (37.5%) and had a total of 11-24 youth congregants (33.3%).

Table 18

Demographics of Participating Churches

Church Demographic	Values	N	Percentage
Church Affiliation	Assembly of God	1	4.2
	Baptist	4	16.7
	Fundamental Independent Baptist	1	4.2
	Missionary Baptist	3	12.5
	Southern Baptist	3	12.5
	Bible Church	2	8.3
	Catholic	3	12.5
	Episcopalian	1	4.2
	United Methodist	1	4.2
	Nazarene	1	4.2
	Non-Denominational	4	16.7
	The rest of the 28 denominations	0	0.0
Congregation Size	Emerging Small Church (50 or fewer attendees)	0	0.0
	Small Church (between 51-249 attendees)	6	25.0
	Medium Church (between 250-499 attendees)	9	37.5
	Large Church (between 500-999 attendees)	4	16.7
	Emerging Megachurch (between 1,000-1,999 attendees)	4	16.7
	Megachurch (between 2,000-9,999 attendees)	1	4.2
	Gigachurch (10,000 or more attendees)	0	0.0
Number of Youth Congregants	1-10 youth congregants	3	12.5
	11-24 youth congregants	8	33.3
	25-49 youth congregants	5	20.5
	50-100 youth congregants	2	8.3
	100 or more youth congregants	6	25.0

The third part of the survey solicited demographic data on the youth group that the survey respondent led, taught, or assisted with. Three questions requested youth group demographic information related to the grade level, class size, and frequency of the survey respondent's meeting with the youth group. Characteristics of the youth group that the participants of the study led, taught, or assisted with are summarized in Table 19. The majority of participants led, taught, or assisted with both middle and junior high and high school aged youth congregants (66.7%). The majority of participants of the study had either 1-10 youth or 11-20 youth in their group (each category at 25.0%) and met with their group twice a week (70.8%).

Table 19

Demographics of Survey Participant's Youth Group

Youth Group Demographic	Values	N	Percentage
Youth Group Grade Level	Middle/Junior High School (grades 6-8)	5	20.8
	High School (grades 9-12)	3	12.5
	Both Middle and High School	16	66.7
Number of Youth in Participants Group	1-10 youth	6	25.0
	11-20 youth	6	25.0
	21-30 youth	2	8.3
	31-40 youth	3	12.5
	41-50 youth	0	0.0
	51-99 youth	3	12.5
	100 or more youth	4	16.7
Frequency Participant Meets with Youth Group	Every week on the day of corporate worship service	3	12.5
	Every week for youth ministry session	4	16.7
	Twice every week (day of corporate worship service and ministry session)	17	70.8
	The rest of the 12 meeting times	0	0.0

Data Analysis and Findings

Each research question was analyzed using descriptive statistics and crosstabs. This section provides a description and analysis of the data. The findings relative to each research question and hypothesis are explained and graphically displayed.

Research Question One

The first research question sought to answer what were the most common teaching methods being used by youth ministry leaders and teachers in Central Texas. The YMTM was comprised of four questions to collect the data related to the teaching methods that youth ministry leaders, teachers, and assistants were using. The questions were comprised of 38 instructional methods grouped into three categories: classroom settings, in-class activities, and online activities. The frequencies of use of the classroom settings are displayed in Table 20, online activities in Table 21, and in-class activities in Table 22.

Table 20

Frequency of Classroom Settings

Classroom Setting	N					
	Never	Weekly	Every Two Weeks	Monthly	Quarterly	Yearly
Formal Style	12	10	0	0	1	1
Auditorium/Theatre Style	17	5	0	1	1	0
Chevron Style	13	7	0	0	4	0
Classroom Style	21	3	0	0	0	0
Pairs	20	0	2	1	1	0
Round-Table	7	9	1	5	2	0
Circle	9	10	2	2	1	0
Conference Room Style	19	3	1	0	1	0
Flexible Seating	8	13	2	0	1	0
Virtual	19	3	0	0	2	0

Table 21

Frequency of Online Activities

Online Activity	N					
	Never	Weekly	Every Two Weeks	Monthly	Quarterly	Yearly
Online Lecture	19	3	0	0	2	0
Online Learning Modules/Self-Directed Learning	23	1	0	0	0	0
Background Knowledge Probe	17	3	0	3	1	0
Online Discussions	20	2	0	2	0	0
Reflective Blogs	23	0	0	1	0	0
Participation in Social Networking	8	13	1	1	0	1
Online/E-Portfolio	24	0	0	0	0	0
Computer-Based Learning Exercises/Games/Simulations	21	2	0	1	0	0

Table 22

Frequency of In-class Activities

In-class Activity	N					
	Never	Weekly	Every Two Weeks	Monthly	Quarterly	Yearly
Lecture	7	10	3	3	0	1
Interactive Lecture	5	13	1	3	1	1
Interactive Lesson/ Hands On	8	10	1	2	2	1
Question & Answer	0	15	0	5	4	0
Student Peer Teaching	9	4	0	3	8	0
Student Presentations	11	2	0	1	7	3
Think/Pair/Share	11	4	1	1	6	1
Small Group Discussions	2	17	1	1	3	0
Whole Group Discussion	3	15	2	0	4	0
Brainstorming/Reflection	12	3	1	3	5	0
Modeling/Demonstrations	10	6	0	3	5	0
Role Play/Dramatization	11	1	1	5	4	2
Experiential Learning	12	4	0	3	5	0
Service Learning	8	1	0	6	6	3
Music	6	11	2	1	4	0
Technology	6	6	1	2	9	0
Visual	3	14	3	3	1	0
Visual Video Content	4	9	4	5	1	1
Collaborative/Team-based Learning	7	7	3	3	3	1
Games/Simulations	3	13	2	4	0	2

Instructional methods were ranked based on the mean score computed by the frequency of use scores where Never, Weekly, Every Two Weeks, Monthly, Quarterly, and Yearly were coded 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 consecutively. The most common teaching methods being used were determined based on the ranked order of their mean scores. The analysis was first done on the 38 instructional methods as organized by the three categories of classroom settings, in-class activities, and online activities. This was followed by an analysis of the 38 instructional methods that focused on the most and the least commonly used teaching methods. Based on these analyses, the survey data revealed the following.

Classroom Settings

The descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation for the classroom settings are displayed in Table 23. The five most frequently used classroom settings, as presented in Table 24, were the round-table, circle, chevron style, flexible seating, and formal style. The five least frequently used classroom settings as presented in Table 25 were auditorium/theatre style, pairs, virtual, conference room style, and classroom style.

Table 23

Descriptive Statistics of Classroom Settings

Classroom Setting	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Formal Style	24	1.79	1.250
Auditorium/Theatre Style	24	1.50	1.022
Chevron Style	24	1.96	1.459
Classroom Style	24	1.13	0.338
Pairs	24	1.46	1.103
Round-Table	24	2.42	1.349
Circle	24	2.00	1.103
Conference Room Style	24	1.38	0.924
Flexible Seating	24	1.87	0.900
Virtual	24	1.46	1.141
Valid N (listwise)			

Table 24

Five Most Frequently Used Classroom Settings

Classroom Setting	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Round-Table	24	2.42	1.349
Circle	24	2.00	1.103
Chevron Style	24	1.96	1.459
Flexible Seating	24	1.87	0.900
Formal Style	24	1.79	1.250

Table 25

Five Least Frequently Used Classroom Settings

Classroom Setting	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Auditorium/Theatre Style	24	1.50	1.022
Pairs	24	1.46	1.103
Virtual	24	1.46	1.141
Conference Room Style	24	1.38	0.924
Classroom Style	24	1.13	0.338

In-class Activities

The descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation for the in-class activities are displayed in Table 26. The five most frequently used in-class activities as presented in Table 27 were service-learning, technology, student presentations, question-and-answer, and student peer teaching. The five least frequently used in-class activities as presented in Table 28 were visual, experiential learning, interactive lecture, interactive lesson/hands-on, and lecture.

Table 26

Descriptive Statistics of In-class Activities

In-class Activity	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Lecture	24	2.25	1.260
Interactive Lecture	24	2.37	1.313
Interactive Lesson/ Hands On	24	2.29	1.459
Question & Answer	24	2.92	1.248
Student Peer Teaching	24	2.88	1.801
Student Presentations	24	3.00	2.106
Think/Pair/Share	24	2.58	1.840
Small Group Discussions	24	2.42	1.139
Whole Group Discussion	24	2.46	1.250
Brainstorming/Reflection	24	2.42	1.692
Modeling/Demonstrations	24	2.46	1.641
Role Play/Dramatization	24	2.83	1.903
Experiential Learning	24	2.37	1.689
Service Learning	24	3.42	1.932
Music	24	2.42	1.381
Technology	24	3.08	1.717
Visual	24	2.38	1.013
Visual Video Content	24	2.71	1.334
Collaborative/Team-based Learning	24	2.63	1.555
Games/Simulations	24	2.63	1.377
Valid N (listwise)	24		

Table 27

Five Most Frequently Used In-class Activities

In-class Activity	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Service Learning	24	3.42	1.932
Technology	24	3.08	1.717
Student Presentations	24	3.00	2.106
Question & Answer	24	2.92	1.248
Student Peer Teaching	24	2.88	1.801

Table 28

Five Least Frequently Used In-class Activities

In-class Activity	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Visual	24	2.38	1.013
Experiential Learning	24	2.37	1.689
Interactive Lecture	24	2.37	1.313
Interactive Lesson/ Hands On	24	2.29	1.459
Lecture	24	2.25	1.260

Online Activities

The descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation for the online activities are displayed in Table 29. The four most frequently used online activities as presented in Table 30 were participation in social networking, background knowledge probe, online lecture, and online discussions. The four least frequently used online activities as presented in Table 31 were computer-based learning exercises/games/simulations, reflective blogs, online learning modules/self-directed learning, and online/e-portfolio.

Table 29

Descriptive Statistics of Online Activities

Online Activity	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Online Lecture	24	1.46	1.141
Online Learning Modules/Self-Directed Learning	24	1.04	0.204
Background Knowledge Probe	24	1.67	1.239
Online Discussions	24	1.33	0.868
Reflective Blogs	24	1.13	0.612
Participation in Social Networking	24	1.96	1.122
Online/E-Portfolio	24	1.00	0.000
Computer-Based Learning Exercises/Games/Simulations	24	1.21	0.658
Valid N (listwise)	24		

Table 30

Four Most Frequently Used Online Activities

Online Activity	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Participation in Social Networking	24	1.96	1.122
Background Knowledge Probe	24	1.67	1.239
Online Lecture	24	1.46	1.141
Online Discussions	24	1.33	0.868

Table 31

Four Least Frequently Used Online Activities

Online Activity	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Computer-Based Learning Exercises/Games/Simulations	24	1.21	0.658
Reflective Blogs	24	1.13	0.612
Online Learning Modules/Self-Directed Learning	24	1.04	0.204
Online/E-Portfolio	24	1.00	0.000

Table 32 displays the rank order of the most frequently used teaching methods based on mean scores. Surprisingly, all eight teaching methods classified as online activities ranked as those rarely used.

Table 32

Rank of Teaching Methods Based on the Frequency of Use

Teaching Method	Percentages						
	Type	Mean	Never	Weekly	Every Two Weeks	Monthly	Quarterly	Yearly
Service Learning	In-Class	3.42	33.3	4.2	0.0	25.0	25.0	12.5
Technology	In-Class	3.08	25.0	25.0	4.2	8.3	37.5	0.0
Student Presentations	In-Class	3.00	45.8	8.3	0.0	4.2	29.2	12.5
Question & Answer	In-Class	2.92	0.0	62.5	0.0	20.8	16.7	0.0
Student Peer Teaching	In-Class	2.88	37.5	16.7	0.0	12.5	33.3	0.0
Role Play/Dramatization	In-Class	2.83	45.8	4.2	4.2	20.8	16.7	8.3
Visual Video Content	In-Class	2.71	16.7	37.5	16.7	20.8	4.2	4.2
Collaborative/Team-based Learning	In-Class	2.63	29.2	29.2	12.5	12.5	12.5	4.2
Games/Simulations	In-Class	2.63	12.5	54.2	8.3	16.7	0.0	8.3
Think/Pair/Share	In-Class	2.58	45.8	16.7	4.2	4.2	25.0	4.2
Modeling/Demonstrations	In-Class	2.46	41.7	25.0	0.0	12.5	20.8	0.0
Whole Group Discussion	In-Class	2.46	12.5	62.5	8.3	0.0	16.7	0.0
Brainstorming/Reflection	In-Class	2.42	50.0	12.5	4.2	12.5	20.8	0.0
Music	In-Class	2.42	25.0	45.8	8.3	4.2	16.7	0.0
Small Group Discussions	In-Class	2.42	8.3	70.8	4.2	4.2	12.5	0.0
Visual	In-Class	2.38	12.5	58.3	12.5	12.5	4.2	0.0
Experiential Learning	In-Class	2.37	50.0	16.7	0.0	12.5	20.8	0.0
Interactive Lecture	In-Class	2.37	20.8	54.2	4.2	12.5	4.2	4.2
Interactive Lesson/ Hands On	In-Class	2.29	33.3	41.7	4.2	8.3	8.3	4.2
Lecture	In-Class	2.25	29.2	41.7	12.5	12.5	0.0	4.2
Participation in Social Networking	Online	1.96	33.3	54.2	4.2	4.2	0.0	4.2
Background Knowledge Probe	Online	1.67	70.8	12.5	0.0	12.5	4.2	0.0
Online Lecture	Online	1.46	79.2	12.5	0.0	0.0	8.3	0.0
Online Discussions	Online	1.33	83.3	8.3	0.0	8.3	0.0	0.0
Computer-Based Learning Exercises/Games/Simulations	Online	1.21	87.5	8.3	0.0	4.2	0.0	0.0
Reflective Blogs	Online	1.13	95.8	0.0	0.0	4.2	0.0	0.0
Online Learning Modules/Self-Directed Learning	Online	1.04	95.8	4.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Online/E-Portfolio	Online	1.00	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Top Three Teaching Methods Selected by Participants

Participants were asked to indicate the three teaching methods they perceived they used most frequently. Participants could choose among the 28 teaching methods classified under in-class activities and online activities, or if they did not find what they used most often, they could

write in their preferred teaching methods. The responses are presented in Table 33 and show the three most frequently used teaching methods as perceived by the survey participants were interactive lecture, small group discussion, and lecture.

Table 33

Perceived Three Most Frequently Used Teaching Methods

Teaching Method	Count	Percentage
Interactive Lecture	13	54.2
Small Group Discussions	13	54.2
Lecture	10	41.7
Question & Answer	7	29.2
Whole Group Discussion	6	25.0
Music	4	16.7
Visual	4	16.7
Service Learning	3	12.5
Interactive Lesson/ Hands On	2	8.3
Games/Simulations	2	8.3
Student Presentations	1	4.2
Think/Pair/Share	1	4.2
Brainstorming/Reflection	1	4.2
Role Play/Dramatization	1	4.2
Experiential Learning	1	4.2
Technology	1	4.2
Visual Video Content	1	4.2
Participation in Social Networking	1	4.2
The rest of the 10 teaching methods	0	0.0

One important note was that the rank presented in this section reflected the participant's description of their frequency of use of the 28 teaching methods. By being limited to only their three most frequently used teaching methods, participants were forced to choose from a wide range of possibilities. This might explain some of the differences between the frequently used teaching methods based on the frequency of use and those the participants perceive to be their frequently used teaching methods.

Only one of the five perceived most frequently used teaching methods identified by participants were also among the most frequently used teaching methods based on the frequency of use. That teaching method was question-and-answer, and it was ranked fourth on both lists. Two of the five perceived most frequently used teaching methods identified by participants were ranked among the least frequently used teaching methods based on the frequency of use. Those teaching methods were interactive lecture and lecture. Finally, two of the five perceived most frequently used teaching methods was not ranked among the top frequently used teaching methods based on the frequency of use even though both had the two highest percentage of use on a weekly basis among the 28 teaching methods, that being small group discussions (70.8%) and whole group discussion (62.5%).

Comparison of Two Rankings of Frequently Used Teaching Methods

Table 34 displays a comparison between the ranking of teaching methods based on the frequency of responses and the ranking based on the participant's perceived three most used teaching methods. Only one teaching method fell on both lists which was the question-and-answer teaching method.

Table 34

Comparison of the Five Most Frequently Used Teaching Methods

Five Most Frequently Used Teaching Methods (based on the frequency of use)			Five Most Frequently Used Teaching Methods (as perceived by participants as their Three Most Frequently Used)		
	Type	Mean		Type	Mean
Service Learning	In-Class	3.42	Interactive Lecture	In-Class	2.37
Technology	In-Class	3.08	Small Group Discussions	In-Class	2.42
Student Presentations	In-Class	3.00	Lecture	In-Class	2.25
Question & Answer	In-Class	2.92	Question & Answer	In-Class	2.92
Student Peer Teaching	In-Class	2.88	Whole Group Discussion	In-Class	2.46

Reject Null Hypothesis One

Results showed seven teaching methods had more than 50% of participants using them

on a weekly basis; therefore, this researcher rejected the null hypothesis that there were no common teaching methods among the educational programming for youth ministries.

Research Question Two

The second research question sought to answer to what degree, if any, were the most common teaching methods being used by youth leaders and teachers in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas linked to Generation Alpha learning styles.

The literature review revealed Generation Alpha learning styles to be kinesthetic, visual, interactive, virtual, and service-learning (McCrindle 2014, 2020b). The five most frequently used classroom settings identified in Table 24 were the round-table, circle, chevron style, flexible seating, and formal style. Of the five most frequently used classroom settings, three were conducive to facilitating lessons compatible with Generation Alpha learning styles. Those were the round-table, circle, and flexible seating; all of which allow the youth ministry leader or teacher to engage Generation Alpha congregants kinesthetically and interactively. On a weekly basis, 37.5% used the round-table as their seating preference, 41.7% used a circle as their seating preference, and 54.2% used flexible seating (see Figure 1). Noticeably, there was an equal percentage of those that used a circle as their seating preference and those that used formal style seating (41.7%). While a circle seating arrangement accommodates Generation Alpha learning styles, the formal style seating is a classroom setting that was geared more toward the Boom Generation and their predecessor's learning style than that of Generation Alpha (McCrindle, 2012, 2019a).

Figure 1
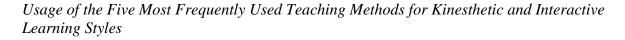
Weekly Percentage of Use of the Five Most Frequently Used Classroom Settings

Kinesthetic and Interactive Learning Styles
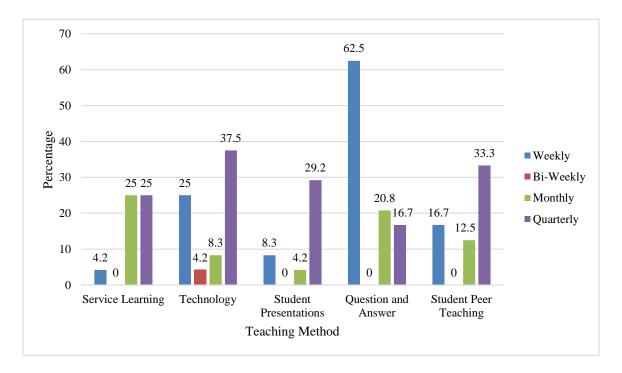
The Generation Alpha learning style of kinesthetic calls for teaching methods that engage students. The Generation Alpha learning style of interactive calls for teaching methods that allow students to be multimodal and involved in hands-on activities. The five most frequently used teaching methods based on the frequency of use identified in Table 34 were service-learning, technology, student presentations, question-and-answer, and student peer teaching. Each of the five most frequently used teaching methods based on their frequency of use accommodates the kinesthetic and interactive learning styles.

Service learning was used mostly on both a monthly and quarterly basis at 25% each. Technology was used mostly on a quarterly basis at 37.5%. Student presentations were used mostly on a quarterly basis at 29.2%. Question-and-answer teaching methods were used mostly on a weekly basis at 62.5%. Student peer teaching was used mostly on a quarterly basis at 33.3%. Technology was the only teaching method used bi-weekly (4.2%). Figure 2 graphically displays the frequency of use of the most common teaching methods for the kinesthetic and

interactive learning styles.

Figure 2

Usage of the Five Most Frequently Used Teaching Methods for Kinesthetic and Interactive Learning Styles

Visual and Virtual Learning Styles
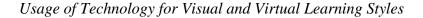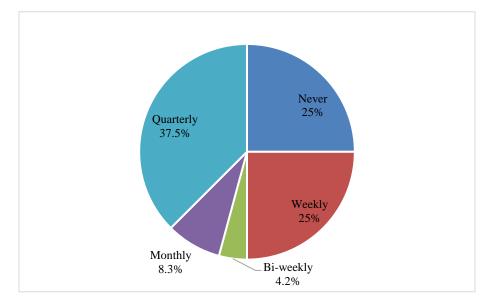
The Generation Alpha learning style of visual calls for teaching methods that use visual aids or video content, while the Generation Alpha virtual learning style calls for teaching methods that use online or other digital mediums to deliver the content.

Without the youth leaders and teachers disclosing the content or format of their service-learning activities, student presentations, question-and-answer sessions, or student peer teaching sessions, this researcher could only classify technology, by virtue of its definition and design, as the most frequently used teaching method based on the frequency of use that accommodates the visual and virtual learning styles. Technology was used mostly on a quarterly basis (37.5%) (see

Figure 3). Noticeably, technology was equally never used and used on a weekly basis, at 25% each.

Figure 3

Usage of Technology for Visual and Virtual Learning Styles

An additional observation made was that many of the visual and virtual teaching methods had a high percentage of never being used by the survey participants. Table 35 shows that 79.2% never used the virtual classroom setting.

Table 35
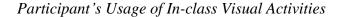
Participants Using Virtual Classroom Setting
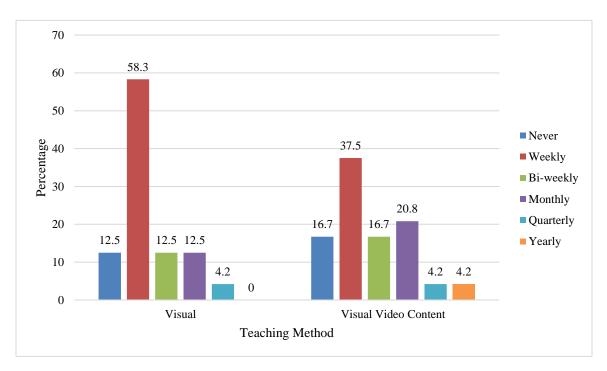
	N	%
Never	19	79.2%
Weekly	3	12.5%
Quarterly	2	8.3%

The two in-class activities that would cater to the visual learning style were visual and visual video content. While visual video content ranked in the middle of in-class activities, visual
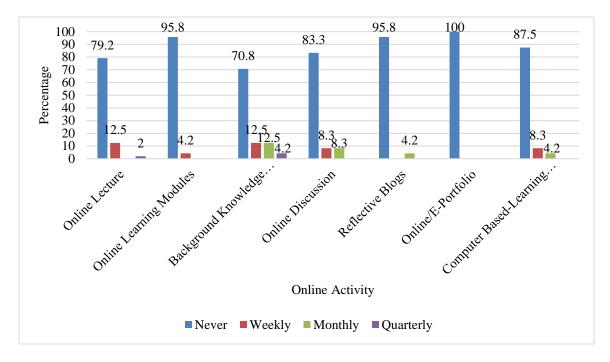
fell among the five least frequently used in-class activities (see Table 28). Figure 4 shows that

12.5% never used the visual teaching method and 16.7% never used visual video content.

Figure 4

Participant's Usage of In-class Visual Activities
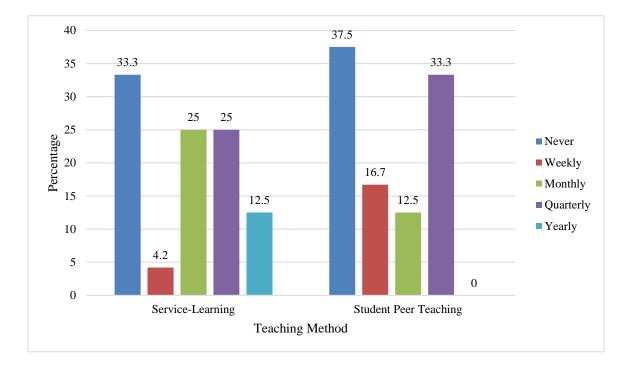
All eight online teaching methods that would accommodate the virtual learning style

ranked as those rarely used amongst all the teaching methods as identified in Table 32. Figure 5

shows that 79.2% never used online lectures, 95.8% never used online learning modules/self-

directed learning, 70.8% never used background knowledge probes, 83.3% never used online

discussions, 95.8% never used reflective blogs, and 100% never used online/e-portfolio. These

results seem to logically flow from the little to no usage of the virtual classroom setting.

Figure 5

Participant's Usage of Online (Virtual) Activities

Service-Learning Learning Style
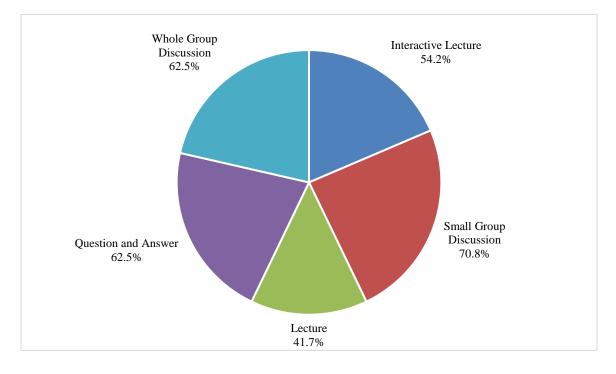
The Generation Alpha learning style of service-learning calls for teaching methods that place students in real-world learning situations. Two of the five most frequently used teaching methods based on frequency of use accommodate the service-learning style. They were service-learning and student peer teaching. Figure 6 shows that service learning was being used mostly on both a monthly and a quarterly basis at 25% each; however, 33.3% never used service-learning. Student peer teaching was being used mostly on a quarterly basis at 33.3%; however, 37.5% never used student peer teaching.

Figure 6

Usage of Service-Learning and Student Peer Teaching for Service-Learning Learning Style
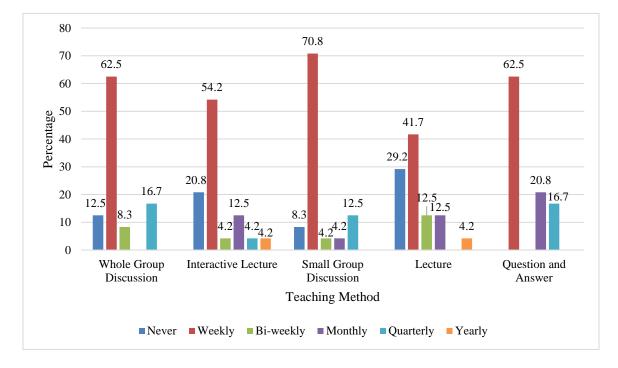
Perceived Most Frequently Used and Generation Alpha Learning Styles

The five most frequently used teaching methods as perceived by participants to be their three most frequently used as identified in Table 34 were interactive lecture, small group discussion, lecture, question-and-answer, and whole group discussion. On a weekly basis, 70.8% used small group discussions, 62.5% used question-and-answer, 62.5% also used whole group discussions, 54.25 used interactive lectures, and 41.7% used lectures (see Figure 7).

Figure 7

Weekly Percentage of Use of the Perceived Five Most Frequently Used Teaching Methods

Without the youth leaders and teachers disclosing the content or format of their whole group discussion, interactive lecture, small group discussion, or question-and-answer, this researcher could only classify four of the five perceived most frequently used teaching methods as accommodating Generation Alpha's kinesthetic and interactive learning styles. Those teaching methods that accommodate the kinesthetic and interactive learning styles were interactive lectures, small group discussions, question-and-answer, and whole group discussions. Figure 8 shows that each perceived frequently used teaching method was being used mostly on a weekly basis with small group discussions at 70.8%, whole group discussions at 62.5%, question-and-answer also at 62.5%, and interactive lectures at 54.2%.

Figure 8

Usage of the Perceived Most Frequently Used Teaching Methods for Generation Alpha Learning Styles

Although 41.7% perceived lectures to be their most frequently used teaching method, the lecture teaching method was not a preferred teaching method conducive to facilitating learning among Generation Alpha students (McCrindle, 2012, 2019a). The lecture was a more preferred teaching method geared toward the learning style of Generation X and the generations before them (McCrindle, 2012, 2019a).

Reject Null Hypothesis Two

The literature review indicated that Generation Alpha learning styles are kinesthetic, visual, interactive, virtual, and service-learning (McCrindle 2014, 2020b). All five of the most frequently used teaching methods based on frequency of use accommodate the kinesthetic and interactive learning styles, one accommodates the visual and virtual learning styles, and two accommodates the service-learning learning style. Therefore, this researcher rejected the null

hypothesis that there was no link between the most common teaching methods being used and Generation Alpha learning styles.

Research Question Three

The third research question sought to answer what, if any, was the significance of church demographic variables of religious affiliation, congregation size, and the number of youth congregants to the most common teaching methods being used by the youth leaders and teachers of the churches in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas.

Crosstabs of directional measures and symmetrical measures were run to determine the significance of each of the church demographic variables to each of the five most frequently used teaching methods based on the frequency of use. Those five most frequently used teaching methods based on frequency of use as discovered in the data analysis for answering RQ1 were service learning, technology, student presentation, question-and-answer, and student peer teaching (see Table 34).

Religious Affiliation

The church demographic variables of religious affiliations were coded as follows: 1 = Adventist, 2 = Apostolic, 3 = Assembly of God, 4 = Baptist, 5 = American Baptist, 6 = Fundamental Independent Baptist, 7 = Independent Baptist, 8 = Missionary Baptist, 9 = Southern Baptist, 10 = Bible Church, 11 = Catholic, 12 = Christian Church (Disciple of Christ), 13 = Christian Fellowship, 14 = Church of Christ, 15 = United Church of Christ, 16 = Church of God, 17 = Church of God in Christ, 18 = Cowboy, 19 = Episcopalian, 20 = Full Gospel, 21 = Holiness, 22 = Independent, 23 = Inter-Denominational, 24 = Jehovah's Witness, 25 = Latter-Day Saints, 26 = Lutheran, 27 = Evangelical Lutheran, 28 = Methodist, 29 = African Methodist Episcopal, 30 = United Methodist, 31 = Nazarene, 32 = New Testament Christian, 33 = Non-

Denominational, 34 = Pentecostal, 35 = United Pentecostal, 36 = Presbyterian, 37 = Reformed,

38 = Trans Denominational, and 39 = Unitarian (Universalist).

Crosstabs with Goodman and Kruskal Lambda were run to determine the significance of

religious affiliation to the usage of the service learning (see Table 36), technology (see Table

37), student presentations (see Table 38), question-and-answer (see Table 39), and student peer

teaching (see Table 40) teaching methods. The results showed there was a statistically significant

moderate association between religious affiliation and the usage of service learning (lambda =

.333, p = .011), the usage of technology (lambda = .314, p = .019), the usage of student

presentations (lambda = .303, p = .004), and the usage of question-and-answer (lambda = .207, p

= .040). There was a moderate association between religious affiliation and the usage of student

peer teaching (lambda = .257, p = .053); however, this association was not statistically

significant.

Table 36

Directional Measures of Church Affiliation and Usage of Service Learning

			Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.333	.116	2.558	.011
		Church Affiliation Dependent	.200	.141	1.309	.190
		Service Learning Dependent	.500	.140	2.954	.003
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Church Affiliation Dependent	.181	.039		.399[c]
		Service Learning Dependent	.507	.042		.218[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 37

Directional Measures of Church Affiliation and Usage of Technology

			Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.314	.118	2.347	.019
		Church Affiliation Dependent	.200	.126	1.477	.140
		Technology Dependent	.467	.176	2.115	.034
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Church Affiliation Dependent	.171	.029		.504[c]
		Technology Dependent	.445	.064		.429[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 38

Directional Measures of Church Affiliation and Usage of Student Presentations

			Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.303	.088	2.907	.004
		Church Affiliation Dependent	.200	.089	2.191	.028
		Student Presentations Dependent	.462	.160	2.353	.019
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Church Affiliation Dependent	.176	.027		.449[c]
		Student Presentations Dependent	.500	.061		.238[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 39

Directional Measures of Church Affiliation and Usage of Question and Answer

			Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.207	.091	2.058	.040
		Church Affiliation Dependent	.100	.067	1.477	.140
		Question & Answer Dependent	.444	.166	2.191	.028
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Church Affiliation Dependent	.090	.024		.418[c]
		Question & Answer Dependent	.510	.060		.267[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 40

Directional Measures of Church Affiliation and Usage of Student Peer Teaching

			Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.257	.120	1.935	.053
		Church Affiliation Dependent	.150	.153	.920	.357
		Student Peer Teaching Dependent	.400	.146	2.353	.019
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Church Affiliation Dependent	.121	.038		.583[c]
		Student Peer Teaching Dependent	.409	.053		.559[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Based on chi-square approximation

Congregation Size

The church demographic variables of church congregation sizes were coded as follows: 1

= Emerging Small Church (50 or fewer attendees), 2 = Small Church (between 51-249 attendees), 3 = Medium Church (between 250-499 attendees), 4 = Large Church (between 500-999 attendees), 5 = Emerging Megachurch (between 1,000-1,999 attendees), 6 = Megachurch (between 2,000-9,999 attendees), and 7 = Gigachurch (10,000 or more attendees).

Crosstabs with Goodman and Kruskal Lambda were run to determine the significance of congregation size to the usage of the service learning (see Table 41), technology (see Table 42), student presentations (see Table 43), question-and-answer (see Table 44), and student peer teaching (see Table 45) teaching methods. The results showed a weak association between congregation size and the usage of service learning (lambda = .161, p = .181), the usage of technology (lambda = .100, p = .545), the usage of student presentations (lambda = .179, p = .238), and the usage of student peer teaching (lambda = .133, p = .337); all of which were not statistically significant. However, there was a moderate association between congregation size and the usage of question-and-answer (lambda = .250, p = .140), which was not statistically significate.

Table 41

Directional Measures of Congregation Size and Usage of Service Learning

			Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.161	.113	1.338	.181
		Congregation Size Dependent	.133	.124	1.022	.307
		Service Learning Dependent	.188	.149	1.166	.244
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Congregation Size Dependent	.122	.059		.795[c]
		Service Learning Dependent	.113	.060		.844[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 42

Directional Measures of Congregation Size and Usage of Technology

			Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.100	.160	.605	.545
		Congregation Size Dependent	.067	.193	.334	.738
		Technology Dependent	.133	.176	.715	.475
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Congregation Size Dependent	.086	.044		.951[c]
		Technology Dependent	.094	.050		.927[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 43

Directional Measures of Congregation Size and Usage of Student Presentations

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda Symmetric	.179	.141	1.180	.238
	Congregation Size Dependent	.200	.158	1.166	.244
	Student Presentations Dependent	.154	.173	.828	.408
Goodman and Kruskal tau	Congregation Size Dependent	.168	.058		.491[c]
	Student Presentations Dependent	.167	.074		.500[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 44

Directional Measures of Congregation Size and Usage of Question and Answer

			Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.250	.150	1.477	.140
		Congregation Size Dependent	.267	.161	1.477	.140
		Question & Answer Dependent	.222	.196	1.022	.307
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Congregation Size Dependent	.172	.091		.045[c]
		Question & Answer Dependent	.277	.145		.120[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 45

Directional Measures of Congregation Size and Usage of Student Peer Teaching

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal Lambda by Nominal	Symmetric	.133	.131	.961	.337
	Congregation Size Dependent	.067	.170	.379	.705
	Student Peer Teaching Dependent	.200	.158	1.166	.244
Goodman and Kruskal tau	Congregation Size Dependent	.094	.056		.733[c]
	Student Peer Teaching Dependent	.140	.071		.648[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Based on chi-square approximation

Total Number of Youth Congregants

The church demographic variables of the total number of youth congregants were coded as follows: $1 = 1$-10 youth congregants, $2 = 11$-24 youth congregants, $3 = 25$-49 youth congregants, $4 = 50$-100 youth congregants, and $5 = 100$ or more youth congregants.

Crosstabs with Goodman and Kruskal Gamma were run to determine the significance of the total number of youth congregants to the usage of the service learning (see Table 46), technology (see Table 47), student presentations (see Table 48), question-and-answer (see Table 49), and student peer teaching (see Table 50) teaching methods. The results showed a weak positive association between the total number of youth congregants and the usage of service learning (gamma = .131, p = .507), the usage of technology (gamma = .060, p = .781), and the usage of student peer teaching (gamma = .185, p = .391), each of which was not statistically significant. The results also showed a moderate positive association between the total number of youth congregants and the usage of student presentations (gamma = .325, p = .139) as well as

between the total number of youth congregants and the usage of question-and-answer (gamma = .246, p = .407), each of which was not statistically significant.

Table 46

Symmetric Measures of Number of Youth Congregants and Usage of Service Learning

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Ordinal by Ordinal	Gamma	.131	.196	.664	.507
N of Valid Cases		24			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Table 47

Symmetric Measures of Number of Youth Congregants and Usage of Technology

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Ordinal by Ordinal	Gamma	.060	.214	.278	.781
N of Valid Cases		24			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Table 48

Symmetric Measures of Number of Youth Congregants and Usage of Student Presentations

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Ordinal by Ordinal	Gamma	.325	.212	1.481	.139
N of Valid Cases		24			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Table 49

Symmetric Measures of Number of Youth Congregants and Usage of Question and Answer

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Ordinal by Ordinal	Gamma	.246	.282	.829	.407
N of Valid Cases		24			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Table 50

Symmetric Measures of Number of Youth Congregants and Usage of Student Peer Teaching

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Ordinal by Ordinal	Gamma	.185	.214	.857	.391
N of Valid Cases		24			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Null Hypothesis Three

The results between the most common teaching methods and congregation size as well as the results between the most common teaching methods and the number of youth congregants were not statistically significant ($p > .05$). However, the results showed statistical significance ($p \leq .05$) between four of the five most common teaching methods and religious affiliation. Therefore, this researcher rejected the null hypothesis that there was no significant relevance between the church demographics variable of religious affiliation and the most common teaching methods being used. However, this researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis that there was no significant relevance between the most common teaching methods being used and the church demographic variables of congregation size and the number of youth congregants.

Research Question Four

The fourth research question sought to answer what, if any, was the significance of participant demographic variables of gender, age, position serving in, and years served in youth ministry to the most common teaching methods being used by youth leaders and teachers of the churches in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas.

Crosstabs of directional measures were run to determine the significance of each of the participant demographic variables to each of the five most frequently used teaching methods based on the frequency of use. Those five most frequently used teaching methods based on frequency of use as discovered in the data analysis for answering RQ1 were service-learning, technology, student presentation, question-and-answer, and student peer teaching (see Table 34).

Gender

The participant demographic variables of gender were coded as 1 = Male and 2 = Female. Crosstabs with Goodman and Kruskal Lambda were run to determine the significance of the participant's gender to their usage of the service learning (see Table 51), technology (see Table 52), student presentations (see Table 53), question-and-answer (see Table 54), and student peer teaching (see Table 55) teaching methods. The results showed there was a weak association between the participant's gender and their usage of service learning (lambda = .040, p = .561), their usage of technology (lambda = .083, p = .140), and their usage of student presentations (lambda = .091, p = .723); each of which was not statistically significant. However, there was no association between the participant's gender and their usage of question-and-answer (lambda = .000, p = .000) or the usage of student peer teaching (lambda = .000, p = .000).

Table 51

Directional Measures of Gender and Usage of Service Learning

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda Symmetric	.040	.067	.581	.561
	Gender Dependent	.111	.181	.581	.561
	Service Learning Dependent	.000	.000	.[c]	.[c]
Goodman and Kruskal tau	Gender Dependent	.133	.118		.547[d]
	Service Learning Dependent	.030	.033		.598[d]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Cannot be computed because the asymptotic standard error equals zero.

d. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 52

Directional Measures of Gender and Usage of Technology

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda Symmetric	.083	.052	1.477	.140
	Gender Dependent	.222	.139	1.477	.140
	Technology Dependent	.000	.000	.[c]	.[c]
Goodman and Kruskal tau	Gender Dependent	.170	.048		.417[d]
	Technology Dependent	.020	.024		.764[d]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Cannot be computed because the asymptotic standard error equals zero.

d. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 53

Directional Measures of Gender and Usage of Student Presentations

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal Lambda by Nominal	Symmetric	.091	.249	.354	.723
	Gender Dependent	.111	.347	.302	.763
	Student Presentations Dependent	.077	.245	.302	.763
Goodman and Kruskal tau	Gender Dependent	.155	.125		.467[c]
	Student Presentations Dependent	.069	.069		.172[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 54

Directional Measures of Gender and Usage of Question and Answer

			Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.000	.000	.[b]	.[b]
		Gender Dependent	.000	.000	.[b]	.[b]
		Question & Answer Dependent	.000	.000	.[b]	.[b]
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Gender Dependent	.061	.092		.497[c]
		Question & Answer Dependent	.040	.060		.399[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Cannot be computed because the asymptotic standard error equals zero.
c. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 55

Directional Measures of Gender and Usage of Student Peer Teaching

			Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.000	.000	.[b]	.[b]
		Gender Dependent	.000	.000	.[b]	.[b]
		Student Peer Teaching Dependent	.000	.000	.[b]	.[b]
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Gender Dependent	.020	.054		.929[c]
		Student Peer Teaching Dependent	.007	.020		.924[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Cannot be computed because the asymptotic standard error equals zero.

c. Based on chi-square approximation

Age

The participant demographic variables of age were coded as follows: 1 = 20-29 years, 2 = 30-39 years, 3 = 40-49 years, 4 = 50-59 years, 5 = 60-69 years, 6 = 70-79 years, and 7 = 80 years and above.

Crosstabs with Goodman and Kruskal Lambda were run to determine the significance of the participant's age to their usage of the service-learning (see Table 56), technology (see Table 57), student presentations (see Table 58), question-and-answer (see Table 59), and student peer teaching (see Table 60) teaching methods. The results showed there was a statistically significant moderate association between the participant's age and their usage of technology (lambda = .333, p = .012). The results also showed a moderate association between the participant's age and their usage of service learning (lambda = .226, p = .178) as well as between the participant's age and their usage of question-and-answer (lambda = .208, p = .181); these associations were not statistically significant. However, there was a weak association between the participant's age and their usage of student presentations (lambda = .143, p = .190) as well as between the

participant's age and their usage of student peer teaching (lambda = .133, p = .307); these

associations were not statistically significant.

Table 56

Directional Measures of Age and Usage of Service Learning

			Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.226	.154	1.348	.178
		Age Dependent	.200	.179	1.022	.307
		Service Learning Dependent	.250	.171	1.309	.190
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Age Dependent	.164	.064		.534[c]
		Service Learning Dependent	.202	.051		.546[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 57

Directional Measures of Age and Usage of Technology

			Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.333	.113	2.513	.012
		Age Dependent	.333	.122	2.513	.012
		Technology Dependent	.333	.144	2.048	.041
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Age Dependent	.271	.066		.053[c]
		Technology Dependent	.278	.083		.181[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 58

Directional Measures of Age and Usage of Student Presentations

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal Lambda by Nominal	Symmetric	.143	.099	1.309	.190
	Age Dependent	.133	.176	.715	.475
	Student Presentations Dependent	.154	.100	1.477	.140
Goodman and Kruskal tau	Age Dependent	.148	.038		.650[c]
	Student Presentations Dependent	.215	.032		.472[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 59

Directional Measures of Age and Usage of Question and Answer

			Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.208	.142	1.338	.181
		Age Dependent	.200	.103	1.852	.064
		Question & Answer Dependent	.222	.240	.828	.408
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Age Dependent	.168	.041		.036[c]
		Question & Answer Dependent	.298	.089		.187[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 60

Directional Measures of Age and Usage of Student Peer Teaching

			Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.133	.125	1.022	.307
		Age Dependent	.067	.144	.449	.653
		Student Peer Teaching Dependent	.200	.158	1.166	.244
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Age Dependent	.115	.042		.583[c]
		Student Peer Teaching Dependent	.204	.041		.520[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Based on chi-square approximation

Position

The participant demographic variables of the position they were serving in at the time of the study were coded as follows: 1 = Youth Pastor, 2 = Youth Minister (other than Youth Pastor), 3 = Youth Ministry Leader, 4 = Youth Ministry Teacher, 5 = Youth Ministry Assistant, and 6 = Youth Ministry Worker/Volunteer.

Crosstabs with Goodman and Kruskal Lambda were run to determine the significance of the participant's leadership position to their usage of the service-learning (see Table 61), technology (see Table 62), student presentations (see Table 63), question-and-answer (see Table 64), and student peer teaching (see Table 65) teaching methods. The results showed there was a statistically significant weak association between the participant's leadership position and their usage of technology (lambda = .182, p = .028). However, there was a weak association between the participant's leadership position and their usage of service-learning (lambda = .130, p = .398), their usage of question-and-answer (lambda = .063, p = .307), their usage of student presentations (lambda = .050, p = .307), and their usage of student peer teaching (lambda = .136, p = .433); each of which was not statistically significant.

Table 61

Directional Measures of Position and Usage of Service Learning

			Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.130	.143	.844	.398
		Position Dependent	.000	.000	.[c]	.[c]
		Service Learning Dependent	.188	.203	.844	.398
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Position Dependent	.187	.090		.378[d]
		Service Learning Dependent	.197	.043		.113[d]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Cannot be computed because the asymptotic standard error equals zero.
d. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 62

Directional Measures of Position and Usage of Technology

			Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.182	.068	2.191	.028
		Position Dependent	.286	.171	1.477	.140
		Technology Dependent	.133	.088	1.477	.140
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Position Dependent	.333	.076		.028[c]
		Technology Dependent	.149	.032		.320[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 63

Directional Measures of Position and Usage of Student Presentations

			Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.050	.046	1.022	.307
		Position Dependent	.000	.000	.[c]	.[c]
		Student Presentations Dependent	.077	.074	1.022	.307
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Position Dependent	.171	.086		.463[d]
		Student Presentations Dependent	.176	.031		.181[d]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Cannot be computed because the asymptotic standard error equals zero.
d. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 64

Directional Measures of Position and Usage of Question and Answer

			Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.063	.057	1.022	.307
		Position Dependent	.000	.000	.[c]	.[c]
		Question & Answer Dependent	.111	.105	1.022	.307
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Position Dependent	.104	.042		.302[d]
		Question & Answer Dependent	.198	.019		.166[d]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Cannot be computed because the asymptotic standard error equals zero.
d. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 65

Directional Measures of Position and Usage of Student Peer Teaching

			Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.136	.163	.784	.433
		Position Dependent	.000	.000	.[c]	.[c]
		Student Peer Teaching Dependent	.200	.231	.784	.433
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Position Dependent	.199	.085		.132[d]
		Student Peer Teaching Dependent	.163	.050		.259[d]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Cannot be computed because the asymptotic standard error equals zero.
d. Based on chi-square approximation

Current Years in Youth Ministry

The participant demographic variables of the number of years they had been at the youth ministry they were serving at the time of the study were coded as follows: $1 = 0\text{-}5$ Years, $2 = 6\text{-}10$ Years, $3 = 11\text{-}15$ Years, $4 = 16\text{-}20$ Years, $5 = 21\text{-}25$ Years, $6 = 26\text{-}30$ Years, and $7 = 31$ or more years.

Crosstabs with Goodman and Kruskal Lambda were run to determine the significance of the number of years the participant had served at their current youth ministry to the usage of the service-learning (see Table 66), technology (see Table 67), student presentations (see Table 68), question-and-answer (see Table 69), and student peer teaching (see Table 70) teaching methods. The results showed there was a statistically significant weak association between the number of years the participant had served at the current youth ministry and the usage of service-learning (lambda = .174, p = .028). The results also showed there was a weak association between the number of years the participant had served at the current youth ministry and the usage of technology (lambda = .136, p = .244) as well as between the number of years the participant has served at the current youth ministry and the usage of student peer teaching (lambda = .136, p =

.064); each of which was not statistically significant. The results also showed there was a

moderate association between the number of years the participant had served at the current youth

ministry and the usage of student presentations (lambda = .200, p = .083), which was not

statistically significant. However, there was no association between the number of years the

participant had served at the current youth ministry and the usage of question-and-answer

(lambda = .000, p = .000).

Table 66

Directional Measures of Years Serving Current Youth Ministry and Usage Service Learning

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal Lambda by Nominal	Symmetric	.174	.066	2.191	.028
	Years Serving Current Youth Ministry Dependent	.000	.000	.[c]	.[c]
	Service Learning Dependent	.250	.108	2.191	.028
Goodman and Kruskal tau	Years Serving Current Youth Ministry Dependent	.123	.069		.822[d]
	Service Learning Dependent	.199	.033		.568[d]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Cannot be computed because the asymptotic standard error equals zero.
d. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 67

Directional Measures of Years Serving Current Youth Ministry and Usage of Technology

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal Lambda by Nominal	Symmetric	.136	.106	1.166	.244
	Years Serving Current Youth Ministry Dependent	.000	.000	.[c]	.[c]
	Technology Dependent	.200	.158	1.166	.244
Goodman and Kruskal tau	Years Serving Current Youth Ministry Dependent	.159	.083		.565[d]
	Technology Dependent	.189	.031		.625[d]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Cannot be computed because the asymptotic standard error equals zero.
d. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 68

Directional Measures of Years Serving Current Youth Ministry and Usage of Student Presentations

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal Lambda by Nominal	Symmetric	.200	.100	1.732	.083
	Years Serving Current Youth Ministry Dependent	.143	.132	1.022	.307
	Student Presentations Dependent	.231	.117	1.852	.064
Goodman and Kruskal tau	Years Serving Current Youth Ministry Dependent	.211	.059		.231[c]
	Student Presentations Dependent	.215	.043		.472[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 69

Directional Measures of Years Serving Current Youth Ministry and Usage of Question and Answer

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T	Approximate Significance
Nominal Lambda by Nominal	Symmetric	.000	.000	.[b]	.[b]
	Years Serving Current Youth Ministry Dependent	.000	.000	.[b]	.[b]
	Question & Answer Dependent	.000	.000	.[b]	.[b]
Goodman and Kruskal tau	Years Serving Current Youth Ministry Dependent	.087	.056		.440[c]
	Question & Answer Dependent	.117	.069		.866[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Cannot be computed because the asymptotic standard error equals zero.
c. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 70

Directional Measures of Years Serving Current Youth Ministry and Usage of Student Peer Teaching

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal Lambda by Nominal	Symmetric	.136	.064	1.852	.064
	Years Serving Current Youth Ministry Dependent	.000	.000	.[c]	.[c]
	Student Peer Teaching Dependent	.200	.103	1.852	.064
Goodman and Kruskal tau	Years Serving Current Youth Ministry Dependent	.101	.055		.704[d]
	Student Peer Teaching Dependent	.165	.030		.723[d]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Cannot be computed because the asymptotic standard error equals zero.
d. Based on chi-square approximation

Total Years in Youth Ministry

The participant demographic variables of the total number of years they had served in

youth ministry were coded as follows: 1 = 0-5 Years, 2 = 6-10 Years, 3 = 11-15 Years, 4 = 16-20

Years, 5 = 21-25 Years, 6 = 26-30 Years, and 7 = 31 or more years.

Crosstabs with Goodman and Kruskal Lambda were run to determine the significance of the total number of years the participant had served in youth ministry to the usage of the service-learning (see Table 71), technology (see Table 72), student presentations (see Table 73), question-and-answer (see Table 74), and student peer teaching (see Table 75) teaching methods. The results showed there was a statistically significant moderate association between the total number of years the participant had served in youth ministry and their usage of service learning (lambda = .367, p = .014) as well as their usage of student peer teaching (lambda = .345, p = .012). The results also showed there was a moderate association between the total number of years the participant had served in youth ministry and their usage of technology (lambda = .207, p = .090) as well as between the total number of years the participant had served in youth ministry and their usage of student presentations (lambda = .222, p = .090); these associations were not statistically significant. However, there was no association between the total number of years the participant had served in youth ministry and their usage of question-and-answer (lambda = .000, p = .000).

Table 71

Directional Measures of Total Years Serving Youth Ministry and Usage of Service Learning

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal Lambda by Nominal	Symmetric	.367	.126	2.462	.014
	Total Years Serving Youth Ministry Dependent	.286	.148	1.732	.083
	Service Learning Dependent	.438	.141	2.654	.008
Goodman and Kruskal tau	Total Years Serving Youth Ministry Dependent	.313	.052		.015[c]
	Service Learning Dependent	.360	.070		.033[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 72

Directional Measures of Total Years Serving Youth Ministry and Usage of Technology

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal Lambda by Nominal	Symmetric	.207	.111	1.697	.090
	Total Years Serving Youth Ministry Dependent	.143	.132	1.022	.307
	Technology Dependent	.267	.140	1.732	.083
Goodman and Kruskal tau	Total Years Serving Youth Ministry Dependent	.190	.046		.349[c]
	Technology Dependent	.211	.064		.492[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 73

Directional Measures of Total Years Serving Youth Ministry and Usage of Student Presentations

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal Lambda by Nominal	Symmetric	.222	.117	1.697	.090
	Total Years Serving Youth Ministry Dependent	.214	.110	1.852	.064
	Student Presentations Dependent	.231	.178	1.166	.244
Goodman and Kruskal tau	Total Years Serving Youth Ministry Dependent	.223	.052		.177[c]
	Student Presentations Dependent	.212	.083		.488[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 74

Directional Measures of Total Years Serving Youth Ministry and Usage of Question and Answer

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T	Approximate Significance
Nominal Lambda by Nominal	Symmetric	.000	.000	.[b]	.[b]
	Total Years Serving Youth Ministry Dependent	.000	.000	.[b]	.[b]
	Question & Answer Dependent	.000	.000	.[b]	.[b]
Goodman and Kruskal tau	Total Years Serving Youth Ministry Dependent	.022	.015		.990[c]
	Question & Answer Dependent	.066	.046		.981[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Cannot be computed because the asymptotic standard error equals zero.
c. Based on chi-square approximation

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Table 75

Directional Measures of Total Years Serving Youth Ministry and Usage of Student Peer Teaching

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal Lambda by Nominal	Symmetric	.345	.114	2.513	.012
	Total Years Serving Youth Ministry Dependent	.286	.148	1.732	.083
	Student Peer Teaching Dependent	.400	.146	2.353	.019
Goodman and Kruskal tau	Total Years Serving Youth Ministry Dependent	.274	.062		.007[c]
	Student Peer Teaching Dependent	.322	.063		.102[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Based on chi-square approximation

Fail to Reject Null Hypothesis Four

The results showed a statistical significance ($p \leq .05$) between some of the five most common teaching methods and the participant's demographic variables of gender, age, position serving in, and years served in youth ministry. The results also showed there was no statistical significance ($p > .05$) between the remaining five most common teaching methods and the participant's demographic variables of gender, age, position serving in, and years served in youth ministry. Therefore, this researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis that there was no significant relevance between the most common teaching methods being used and the participant demographic variables of gender, age, position serving in, and years served in youth ministry.

Research Question Five

The fifth research question sought to answer what, if any, was the significance of youth group demographic variables of grade level, class size, and how often the youth leaders and teachers met with the youth group to the most common teaching methods being used by youth

leaders and teachers of the churches in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas.

Crosstabs of directional measures and symmetrical measures were run to determine the significance of each of the youth group demographic variables to each of the five most frequently used teaching methods based on the frequency of use. Those five most frequently used teaching methods based on frequency of use as discovered in the data analysis for answering RQ1 were service-learning, technology, student presentation, question-and-answer, and student peer teaching (see Table 34).

Grade Level

The demographic variables of the grade level of the youth group the survey participant led or taught were coded as follows: 1 = Middle School, 2 = High School, and 3 = Both Middle and High School.

Crosstabs with Goodman and Kruskal Gamma were run to determine the significance of the grade level of the youth group to the survey participant's use of the service-learning (see Table 76), technology (see Table 77), student presentations (see Table 78), question-and-answer (see Table 79), and student peer teaching (see Table 80) teaching methods. The results showed there was a very strong positive association between the grade level of the youth group and the survey participant's use of service-learning (gamma = .643, p = .008), student presentations (gamma = .694, p = .009), and question-and-answer (gamma = .781, p = .007); each of which was statistically significant. The results also showed there was a strong positive association between the grade level of the youth group and the survey participant's use of student peer teaching (gamma = .524, p = .056) and a moderate association between the grade level of the youth group and the survey participant's use of technology (gamma = .298, p = .201), each of

which was not statistically significant.

Table 76

Symmetric Measures of Youth Group Grade Level and Usage of Service Learning

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Ordinal by Ordinal	Gamma	.643	.210	2.640	.008
N of Valid Cases		24			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Table 77

Symmetric Measures of Youth Group Grade Level and Usage of Technology

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Ordinal by Ordinal	Gamma	.298	.227	1.278	.201
N of Valid Cases		24			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Table 78

Symmetric Measures of Youth Group Grade Level and Usage of Student Presentations

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Ordinal by Ordinal	Gamma	.694	.217	2.598	.009
N of Valid Cases		24			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Table 79

Symmetric Measures of Youth Group Grade Level and Usage of Question and Answer

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Ordinal by Ordinal	Gamma	.781	.205	2.680	.007
N of Valid Cases		24			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Table 80

Symmetric Measures of Youth Group Grade Level and Usage of Student Peer Teaching

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Ordinal by Ordinal	Gamma	.524	.251	1.912	.056
N of Valid Cases		24			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Class Size

The youth group demographic variables of the class size the survey participant led or taught were coded as follows: 1 = 1-10 youth, 2 = 11-20 youth, 3 = 21-30 youth, 4 = 31-40 youth, 5 = 41-50 youth, 6 = 51-99 youth, and 7 = 100 or more youth.

Crosstabs with Goodman and Kruskal Lambda were run to determine the significance of the class size to the survey participant's use of the service-learning (see Table 81), technology (see Table 82), student presentations (see Table 83), question-and-answer (see Table 84), and student peer teaching (see Table 85) teaching methods. The results showed there was a moderate association between class size and the survey participant's use of service-learning (lambda = .235, p = .017) as well as their usage of student presentations (lambda = .226, p = .008); each of which was statistically significant. The results also showed there was a moderate association

between the class size and the survey participant's use of student peer teaching (lambda = .273, p

= .075) and their usage of technology (lambda = .212, p = .161); however, these associations

were not statistically significant. There was a weak association between the class size and the

survey participant's use of question-and-answer (lambda = .074, p = .140); which was not

statistically significant.

Table 81

Directional Measures of Youth Group Class Size and Usage of Service Learning

			Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.235	.090	2.376	.017
		Group Size Dependent	.222	.098	2.191	.028
		Service Learning Dependent	.250	.133	1.732	.083
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Group Size Dependent	.180	.045		.413[c]
		Service Learning Dependent	.237	.053		.350[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 82

Directional Measures of Youth Group Class Size and Usage of Technology

			Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.212	.139	1.401	.161
		Group Size Dependent	.167	.152	1.022	.307
		Technology Dependent	.267	.214	1.095	.273
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Group Size Dependent	.176	.043		.443[c]
		Technology Dependent	.263	.080		.233[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 83

Directional Measures of Youth Group Class Size and Usage of Student Presentations

			Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.226	.072	2.654	.008
		Group Size Dependent	.167	.113	1.395	.163
		Student Presentations Dependent	.308	.128	2.191	.028
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Group Size Dependent	.169	.030		.497[c]
		Student Presentations Dependent	.276	.050		.188[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 84

Directional Measures of Youth Group Class Size and Usage of Question and Answer

			Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.074	.047	1.477	.140
		Group Size Dependent	.111	.074	1.477	.140
		Question & Answer Dependent	.000	.000	.[c]	.[c]
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Group Size Dependent	.068	.036		.649[d]
		Question & Answer Dependent	.148	.080		.742[d]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Cannot be computed because the asymptotic standard error equals zero.
d. Based on chi-square approximation

Table 85

Directional Measures of Youth Group Class Size and Usage of Student Peer Teaching

			Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.273	.140	1.778	.075
		Group Size Dependent	.222	.139	1.477	.140
		Student Peer Teaching Dependent	.333	.163	1.772	.076
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Group Size Dependent	.167	.051		.203[c]
		Student Peer Teaching Dependent	.261	.076		.262[c]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Based on chi-square approximation

Meeting Time

The demographic variables of the time the survey participant met with the youth group they led or taught were coded as follows: 1 = Every week on the day of corporate worship service, 2 = Every week for youth ministry session, 3 = Twice every week (day of corporate worship service and ministry session), 4 = Three weeks during the month on the day of corporate worship service, 5 = Three weeks during the month for youth ministry session, 6 = Three weeks during the month, twice every week, 7 = Two weeks during the month on the day of corporate worship service, 8 = Two weeks during the month for youth ministry session. 9 = Two weeks during the month, twice every week (day of corporate worship service and a mid-week session), 10 = One week during the month on the day of corporate worship service, 11 = One week during the month for youth ministry session, 12 = One week during the month, twice that week (day of corporate worship service and a mid-week session), 13 = At least once every two months, 14 = At least once a quarter, 15 = Twice a year or less, 16 = Substitute or volunteer when needed only, and 17 = Volunteer with special events only.

Crosstabs with Goodman and Kruskal Gamma were run to determine the significance of

the time the survey participant met with the youth group to their usage of the service-learning (see Table 86), technology (see Table 87), student presentations (see Table 88), question-and-answer (see Table 89), and student peer teaching (see Table 90) teaching methods. The results showed there was a strong positive association between the youth group meeting time and the survey participant's use of student presentations (gamma = .591, p = .045), which was statistically significant. The results also showed there was a moderate positive association between the youth group meeting time and the survey participant's use of service-learning (gamma = .327, p = .244) as well as their usage of technology (gamma = .253, p = .414); each of which was not statistically significant. There was a weak positive association between the youth group meeting time and the survey participant's use of student peer teaching (gamma = .089, p = .751) and a weak negative association between the youth group meeting time and their usage of question-and-answer (gamma = -.120, p = .722); each of which was not statistically significant.

Table 86

Symmetric Measures of Youth Group Meeting Time and Usage of Service Learning

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Ordinal by Ordinal	Gamma	.327	.276	1.166	.244
N of Valid Cases		24			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Table 87

Symmetric Measures of Youth Group Meeting Time and Usage of Technology

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Ordinal by Ordinal	Gamma	.253	.300	.816	.414
N of Valid Cases		24			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Table 88

Symmetric Measures of Youth Group Meeting Time and Usage of Student Presentations

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Ordinal by Ordinal	Gamma	.591	.267	2.007	.045
N of Valid Cases		24			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Table 89

Symmetric Measures of Youth Group Meeting Time and Usage of Question and Answer

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Ordinal by Ordinal	Gamma	-.120	.324	-.356	.722
N of Valid Cases		24			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Table 90

Symmetric Measures of Youth Group Meeting Time and Usage of Student Peer Teaching

	Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Ordinal by Ordinal Gamma	.089	.285	.317	.751
N of Valid Cases	24			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Fail to Reject Null Hypothesis Five

The results showed a statistical significance ($p \leq .05$) between some of the five most common teaching methods and the youth group demographic variables of grade level, class size, and meeting time. The results also showed there was no statistical significance ($p > .05$) between the remaining five most common teaching methods and the youth group demographic variables of grade level, class size, and meeting time. Therefore, this researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis that there was no significant relevance between the most common teaching methods being used and the youth group demographic variables of grade level, class size, and how often the youth leaders and teachers met with the youth group.

Evaluation of the Research Design

The research design employed for this study was tailored specifically to the goals and desired outcomes for a thorough inquiry into the types of teaching methods being used by youth ministry leaders and teachers. This researcher created a survey instrument and constructed a research design that would assist in obtaining the data for answering the research questions.

Utilizing a variety of resources to gather contact information was both a strength and a weakness of the research design. The resources proved to be a great starting point for this researcher to identify local churches; however, the resources were not comprehensive nor current

to the date of this research. Therefore, churches that had dissolved were included in the researcher's initial contact list and new churches that had formed were, perhaps, not identified nor included in the study.

Introductory phone calls placed to pastors were both a strength and a weakness of the research design. Although this researcher had a very low rate of actual person-to-person telephone contact with pastors or church administrators, those whom she did have the opportunity to speak with expressed their willingness to consider participation in the study or provided information regarding their inability to participate in the study. A weakness of making the introductory phone calls was that several hours were spent making unsuccessful telephone contacts in that many messages were left as well as many telephone numbers were out of order or were the wrong telephone number.

A revision to the process of collecting contact information as well as making introductory phone calls would be to narrow the target population and sample for the study. Targeting a vast population without having a direct avenue for assessing the population was a weakness of the research design. Although the researcher desired to include all Christian churches in the targeted area in the study, a revision to the research design could be to focus on one church denomination. Doing so would have revised the research design to contacting the national convention of that denomination to garner support for the study and subsequently gain contact information for that particular group of local churches.

Another revision to the research design could be to decrease the number of demographic variables under study. Although it was interesting to see in the data analysis the significance or nonsignificance of each demographic variable included to the primary research variables, this study could have been improved by focusing on a few demographic variables. Specifically, if the

research design had been focused on one church denomination, that would have afforded this

researcher the path to bring more meaning to the study and its connection to studies in the

literature review that focused on one church denomination.

      The online survey platform used for this study was a strength of the research design. The

Qualtrics online survey platform was easy to navigate when used to design the survey, perform

basic descriptive statistics with the data, and export the data as different file types for additional

analysis. The online survey platform was also a strength of the research design when used to

deliver the survey to participants. Another strength of the online survey in regard to the research

design was that the online survey platform was very user-friendly for participants that completed

the survey.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

Overview

This study explored the teaching methods used most frequently by youth ministry leaders and teachers and endeavored to ascertain whether those teaching methods were related to Generation Alpha learning styles as well as select demographic variables. This chapter summarizes the findings of the study and provides implications that can be drawn from the study. This chapter also outlines how this research can be appropriately applied by stakeholders in the teaching and training of youth congregants as well as how this research can serve as a springboard for further research on the topic. Further, threats to the internal and external validity of this study are discussed in this chapter.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this quantitative descriptive study was to discover the teaching methods used among youth ministries that serve Generation Alpha within Christian churches in Central Texas and to identify if a relationship existed between those teaching methods and the generational traits and learning styles of Generation Alpha as well as between select demographic variables.

Research Questions

RQ1. What are the most common teaching methods being used in the educational programming for youth ministries by youth leaders and teachers in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas?

RQ2. To what degree, if any, are the most common teaching methods being used by youth leaders and teachers in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas linked to Generation Alpha learning styles?

RQ3. What, if any, is the significance of church demographic variables of religious affiliation, congregation size, and the number of youth congregants to the most common teaching methods being used by the youth leaders and teachers of the churches in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas?

RQ4. What, if any, is the significance of participant demographic variables of gender, age, position serving in, and years serving in youth ministry to the most common teaching methods being used by youth leaders and teachers of the churches in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas?

RQ5. What, if any, is the significance of youth group demographic variables of grade level, class size, and how often the youth leaders and teachers meet with the youth group to the most common teaching methods being used by youth leaders and teachers of the churches in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas?

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Research Conclusions, Implications, and Applications

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This section highlights primary findings from the statistical analysis discussed in Chapter Four. The theoretical, empirical, and practical implications of those findings are provided as well as how the findings of this research can be applied by Christian leaders and those who serve in any capacity in a youth ministry program.

Research Conclusions

Research Conclusion One

The first research question examined the teaching methods being used by youth ministry leaders and teachers. For this research question, the findings of this study revealed that the survey participants used, at one time or another, all but one of the teaching methods assessed. The teaching method that was not used by any of the survey participants was online/e-portfolio. Even though the global pandemic that was prevalent at the time of this study had pushed approaches to youth ministry from solely in-person gatherings to more digital solutions (McCorquodale, 2021), surprisingly, all of the online activities ranked as those rarely used by the survey participants.

Based on mean scores, it was determined that the most common teaching method used was service-learning. The service-learning teaching method allows youth ministry attendees to apply the Christian principles and practices they are being taught to real-life situations through

participation in activities and programs that serve their community. Service-learning makes their faith real and relevant, which is what Generation Alpha desires (Maddix & Estep, 2017). Hence, the service-learning teaching method corresponds with the real-world learning that researchers suggest institutions implement as part of teaching Generation Alpha (Hughes, 2020; Willard & Whitt, 2012).

The second most common teaching method used was technology. The use of technology as a teaching method allows students to use their digital devices to access part of the lesson. Literature revealed that the lives of those who are part of Generation Alpha has been inundated with technology from the time they were born (McCrindle, 2019c). The findings of this study revealed that survey participants incorporated the use of technology into their lessons. Thus, survey participants' use of technology aligned with the suggestions of researchers for the lessons designed for Generation Alpha to be engaging, visual, multimodal, and hands-on (McCrindle, 2020b). Although technology was used on a weekly basis by 25% of survey participants, most used technology only on a quarterly basis (37.5%).

The third most common teaching method used was student presentations. The findings of this study revealed that 29.2% of the survey participants incorporated student presentations on a quarterly basis. The literature reviewed for this study emphasized the importance of Christian educational programming not being the rote learning of scriptures and biblical facts (Maddix & Estep, 2017). Therefore, the survey participants' use of student presentations aligned with what literature suggest of teaching youth how biblical truths apply to issues that were prevalent in the society in which they reside (Maddix & Estep, 2017). Also, the survey participants' use of student presentations coincide with the suggestions stemming from literature to provide youth with the opportunity to practice their faith (Crown College, 2018).

While over half of pastors surveyed by Barna Group reported that one of their largest challenges was determining how to engage the youth of their church (Barna Group, 2020b; Barna Group, 2020c), the fourth most common teaching method used was question-and-answer and the fifth most common teaching method used was student peer teaching. With 62.5% of survey participants reported using the question-and-answer teaching method on a weekly basis and 33.3% of survey participants reported using student peer teaching on a quarterly basis, survey participants from Central Texas appear to have been employing teaching methods that correspond with the engaging learning models researchers Willard and Whitt (2012) suggest for Generation Alpha.

Research Conclusion Two

The second research question examined if the most common teaching methods used by youth ministry leaders and teachers were linked to Generation Alpha learning styles. The theory undergirding this study expressed that each generation has unique traits, characteristics, and learning styles that necessitate teaching methods designed to meet the needs of that generation (McCrindle 2020a; Strauss & Howe, 1991). The literature review provided a synopsis of the learning styles of Generation Alpha as well as suggested teaching methods for this generational cohort.

Generation Alpha learns through means that are kinesthetic, visual, interactive, virtual, and service-learning (McCrindle 2014, McCrindle 2020b). The findings of this research yielded that the five most common teaching methods used by youth ministry leaders and teachers were service-learning, technology, student presentations, question-and-answer, and student peer teaching. Researchers convey that each learning style can be matched with learning strategies (Fleming, n.d.; Fleming & Baume, 2006; Teach, 2020). This researcher matched the most

common teaching methods used by survey participants to the learning styles of Generation Alpha (see Table 91) in which the mark of 'X' indicates that the teaching method accommodates that particular learning style. The findings for this research question revealed that the survey participants used teaching methods that accommodate Generation Alpha learning styles.

Table 91

Frequently Used Teaching Methods and Generation Alpha Learning Styles

	Kinesthetic	Visual	Interactive	Virtual	Service-Learning
Service-Learning	X		X		X
Technology	X	X	X	X	
Student Presentations	X		X		
Question and Answer	X		X		
Student Peer Teaching	X		X		X

Research Conclusion Three

The third research question examined if church demographics were significant to the most common teaching methods used by youth ministry leaders and teachers. Goodman and Kruskal Lambda tests demonstrated there was no statistically significant association between congregation size and the most common teaching methods used by survey participants. In other words, congregation size was unrelated to one's preference in teaching methods.

Goodman and Kruskal Gamma tests demonstrated there was no statistically significant association between the total number of youth congregants and the most common teaching methods used by survey participants. In other words, the total number of youth congregants was unrelated to one's preference in teaching methods.

That congregation size and the total number of youth congregants had no statistically significant association with the survey participant's use of teaching methods was consistent with the content of the literature reviewed for this study. The literature this researcher reviewed that

pertained to the teaching methods used in the ministry to youth were of studies that considered the Christian faith in general (Martin-Paulichenko, 2015) or of studies that focused on a particular religious affiliation such as the study on Catholic youth ministry (McCorquodale, 2021) and the study on Lutheran youth ministry (Richmann, 2018). Neither of the studies reviewed in the literature included the size of the church congregation or the number of youth congregants in their research variables or discussion of their findings.

Consistent with literature that addressed ministry to youth from either a general Christian perspective or religious affiliation focus, Goodman and Kruskal Lambda tests demonstrated there was a statistically significant association between religious affiliation and four of the five most common teaching methods used by survey participants. The findings for this research question revealed a statistically significant association between religious affiliation and the survey participant's use of service-learning, technology, question-and-answer, and student presentation teaching methods. However, there was not a statistically significant association between religious affiliation and the use of the student peer teaching method.

Although this researcher could conclude that religious affiliation was unrelated to one's preference to use the student peer teaching method, there were not enough survey participants for this researcher to confidently draw inferences about the statistical significance. Also, due to there not being enough survey participants, this researcher could not confidently draw conclusions about the statistical significance indication to what extent religious affiliation impacted the choice to use the service-learning, technology, student presentations, and question-and-answer teaching methods.

Research Conclusion Four

The fourth research question examined if survey participant demographics were

significant to the most common teaching methods used by youth ministry leaders and teachers. Goodman and Kruskal Lambda tests demonstrated there was no statistically significant association between the survey participant's gender and the most common teaching methods used by them. In other words, the gender of the survey participant was unrelated to the teaching methods one preferred.

This finding that the gender of the survey participant was not significant to their preference of teaching methods was consistent with the literature reviewed that pertained to the teaching methods used in ministry to youth in that those studies did not include the youth ministry leader's gender in their research variables or discussions of their findings (Martin-Paulichenko, 2015; McCorquodale, 2021; Richmann, 2018).

Regarding the participant demographic variable of age, Goodman and Kruskal Lambda tests demonstrated there was only a statistically significant association between the survey participant's age and the use of technology (lambda = .333, p = .012) as one of their teaching methods (see Table 92). Thus, the younger the survey participant, the likelihood of the use of technology increases. However, the age of the survey participant was unrelated to the use of service-learning, student presentations, question-and-answer, and student peer teaching methods.

Regarding the participant demographic variable of leadership position, Goodman and Kruskal Lambda tests demonstrated there was only a statistically significant association between the survey participant's leadership position and the use of technology as a teaching method (lambda = .182, p = .028). Thus, the leadership position of the survey participant was unrelated to the use of service-learning, student presentations, question-and-answer, and student peer teaching methods.

Table 92

Count of Age and Usage of Technology

Age	Frequency of Technology Use					
	Never	Weekly	Every Two Weeks	Monthly	Quarterly	Total
20-29 years	1	1	0	0	3	5
30-39 years	3	0	0	2	4	9
40-49 years	1	4	0	0	1	6
50-59 years	0	0	0	0	1	1
60-69 years	1	0	1	0	0	2
70-79 years	0	1	0	0	0	1
Total	6	6	1	2	9	24

In that the majority of the survey participants were youth pastors (n = 17, 70.8%; see Table 93), the statistical significance was a weak association. Therefore, there was not enough representation among the different leadership positions for this researcher to confidently draw inferences about the statistical significance and its indication of what extent one's leadership position impacted the choice to integrate technology into their teaching method.

Table 93

Count of Position and Usage of Technology

Position	Frequency of Technology Use					
	Never	Weekly	Every Two Weeks	Monthly	Quarterly	Total
Youth Pastor	4	5	0	0	8	17
Youth Minister (other than Youth Pastor)	0	0	0	0	1	1
Youth Ministry Leader	1	1	0	1	0	3
Youth Ministry Teacher	1	0	1	1	0	3
Total	6	6	1	2	9	24

Regarding the participant demographic variable of the number of years they had served at the youth ministry they were part of at the time of the study, Goodman and Kruskal Lambda tests demonstrated there was only a statistically significant association between the survey

participant's current years of service and the use of service-learning as a teaching method (lambda = .174, p = .028). Thus, the number of years the survey participant had served at the youth ministry they were part of at the time of the study was unrelated to the use of technology, student presentations, question-and-answer, and student peer teaching methods. However, the longer the survey participant had been with the youth ministry they were part of at the time of the study, the likelihood the use of service-learning more frequently increase (see Table 94).

Table 94

Count of Current Years Serving and Usage of Service-Learning

Years Serving Current Youth Ministry	Frequency of Service-Learning Use					
	Never	Weekly	Every Two Weeks	Monthly	Quarterly	Total
0-5 Years	7	1	3	4	2	17
6-10 Years	0	0	0	1	1	2
11-15 Years	0	0	0	1	0	1
16-20 Years	1	0	1	0	0	2
26-30 Years	0	0	1	0	0	1
31 or More Years	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total	8	1	6	6	3	24

Regarding the participant demographic variable of the total number of years they had served in youth ministry, Goodman and Kruskal Lambda tests demonstrated there was a statistically significant association between the total years the survey participant had served in youth ministry and the use of service-learning (lambda = .367, p = .014) and student peer teaching (lambda = .345, p = .012) as one of their teaching methods. Thus, the total number of years the survey participant had served in youth ministry was unrelated to the use of technology, student presentations, and question-and-answer teaching methods. However, the statistically significant association between the survey participant's use of the service-learning teaching

method and the total number of years they had served in youth ministry indicated that the longer

the survey participant had served in youth ministry, the likelihood the use of service-learning

more frequently increase (see Table 95).

Table 95

Count of Total Years Serving and Usage of Service-Learning

Total Years Serving Youth Ministry	Frequency of Service Learning Use				
	Never	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Total
0-5 Years	5	1	1	0	10
6-10 Years	0	0	0	3	5
11-15 Years	2	0	0	0	2
16-20 Years	0	0	2	0	3
26-30 Years	1	0	2	0	3
31 or More years	0	0	1	0	1
Total	8	1	6	3	24

Also, the statistically significant association between student peer teaching and the total

years the survey participant had served in youth ministry indicated that the longer the survey

participant had served in youth ministry, the likelihood the use of student peer teaching increased

(see Table 96).

Table 96

Count of Total Years Serving and Usage of Student Peer Teaching

Total Years Serving Youth Ministry	Frequency of Student Peer Teaching Use				
	Never	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Total
0-5 Years	6	1	3	0	10
6-10 Years	0	2	0	3	5
11-15 Years	0	1	0	1	2
16-20 Years	1	0	0	2	3
26-30 Years	2	0	0	1	3
31 or More years	0	0	0	1	1
Total	9	4	3	8	24

Research Conclusion Five

The fifth research question examined if the demographics of the survey participant's youth group were significant to the most common teaching methods used by youth ministry leaders and teachers.

Goodman and Kruskal Gamma test demonstrated a statistically significant association between the grade level of the survey participant's youth group and the use of service-learning (gamma = .643, p = .008), student presentations (gamma = .694, p = .009), and question-and-answer (gamma = .781, p = .007) teaching methods. However, there was not a statistically significant association between the grade level of the survey participant's youth group and the use of technology and student peer teaching methods. Thus, the grade level of the survey participant's youth group was unrelated to the use of technology and student peer teaching methods.

The statistically significant association between service-learning and the grade level of the survey participant's youth group indicated that the higher the grade level, the likelihood the use of the service-learning teaching method increase. This was especially true of survey participants that had both middle school and high school youth congregants in their group (see Table 97).

Table 97

Count of Grade Level and Usage of Service-Learning

Grade	Frequency of Service Learning Use					
	Never	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Yearly	Total
Middle School	3	0	1	1	0	5
High School	2	1	0	0	0	3
Both Middle and High School	3	0	5	5	3	16
Total	8	1	6	6	3	24

The statistically significant association between student presentations and the grade level of the survey participant's youth group indicated that the higher the grade level, the likelihood of the use of student presentations increase. This was especially true of survey participants that had both middle school and high school youth congregants in their group (see Table 98).

Table 98

Count of Grade Level and Usage of Student Presentations

Grade	Frequency of Student Presentation Use					
	Never	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Yearly	Total
Middle School	4	0	0	1	0	5
High School	2	1	0	0	0	3
Both Middle and High School	5	1	1	6	3	16
Total	11	2	1	7	3	24

The statistically significant association between question-and-answer and the grade level of the survey participant's youth group indicated that the higher the grade level, the likelihood the use of the question-and-answer teaching method increase. This was especially true of survey participants that had both middle school and high school youth congregants in their group (see Table 99).

Table 99

Count of Grade Level and Usage of Question and Answer

Grade	Frequency of Question and Answer Use			
	Never	Monthly	Quarterly	Total
Middle School	5	0	0	5
High School	2	1	0	3
Both Middle and High School	8	4	4	16
Total	15	5	4	24

Goodman and Kruskal Lambda tests demonstrated a statistically significant association between the size of the survey participant's youth group and the use of service-learning (lambda

= .235, p = .017) and student presentations (lambda = .226, p = .008) teaching methods.

However, there was not a statistically significant association between the class size of the survey participant's youth group and the use of technology, question-and-answer, and student peer teaching methods. Thus, the size of the survey participant's youth group was unrelated to the use of technology, question-and-answer, and student presentations as teaching methods.

The statistically significant association between service-learning and the size of the survey participant's youth group indicated that as the size of the group increase, the likelihood of the use of the service-learning teaching method also increases (see Table 100).

Table 100

Count of Class Size and Usage of Service-Learning

Group Size	Frequency of Service Learning Use					
	Never	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Yearly	Total
1-10 youth	4	1	0	0	1	6
11-20 youth	1	0	2	2	1	6
21-30 youth	0	0	0	1	1	2
31-40 youth	2	0	1	0	0	3
51-99 youth	1	0	1	1	0	3
100 or more youth	0	0	2	2	0	4
Total	8	1	6	6	3	24

The statistically significant association between student presentation and the size of the survey participant's youth group indicated that as the size of the group increase, the likelihood of the use of student presentations also increases (see Table 101).

Table 101

Count of Class Size and Usage of Student Presentations

Group Size	Frequency of Student Presentations Use					
	Never	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Yearly	Total
1-10 youth	4	0	0	1	1	6
11-20 youth	3	1	0	2	0	6
21-30 youth	0	0	0	2	0	2
31-40 youth	2	1	0	0	0	3
51-99 youth	2	0	0	0	1	3
100 or more youth	0	0	1	2	1	4
Total	11	2	1	7	3	24

Regarding how often the survey participant met with the youth group, Goodman and Kruskal Gamma tests demonstrated there was only a statistically significant association between how often the survey participant met with the youth group and the use of student presentations as one of their teaching methods (gamma = .591, p = .045). Thus, how often the survey participant met with the youth group was unrelated to the use of service-learning, technology, question-and-answer, and student peer teaching methods. However, the more often the survey participant met with the youth group during the week, the likelihood the use of student presentations increased (see Table 102).

Table 102

Count of Meeting Time and Usage of Student Presentations

Meeting Time	Frequency of Student Presentation Use					
	Never	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Yearly	Total
Every week on the day of corporate worship service	2	0	0	1	0	3
Every week for youth ministry session	3	1	0	0	0	4
Twice every week (day of corporate worship service and ministry session)	6	1	1	6	3	17
Total	11	2	1	7	3	24

Theoretical Implications

One of the uniqueness of Generation Alpha is that they are the first generation born and shaped fully in the 21st century, a century inundated with technology (McCrindle, 2019c). This, in turn, impacts the way Generation Alpha learn (McCrindle, 2020a; Pashler et al., 2008) and, therefore, necessitate teaching methods that not only guide them in absorbing the information but also engage them in activity and coach them in applying what they are learning to the real-world (Hughes, 2020; Willard & Whitt, 2012).

In order for this to occur, those educating Generation Alpha, whether in the academic classroom or a youth ministry setting, must be willing to adapt their teaching methods to those methods that best accommodate the youth they are serving as opposed to continuing to use time-honored methods (Hughes, 2020). This is especially applicable for youth ministry leaders and teachers who are responsible for facilitating the spiritual formation of young Christians (Richmann, 2018; Senter, 1992).

While the literature reviewed for this study conveyed that many youth ministry programs were using time-honored models from one generation of youth to the next (Barna Group, 2005;

Ross, 2017), this study's data found that some youth ministry leaders and teachers were employing teaching methods that best suited the youth group they were serving. In particular, two of the teaching methods that were recommended by researchers Willard and Whitt (2012) for institutions to incorporate into their program and curriculum geared toward Generation Alpha students ranked as the top two most common teaching methods that those who participated in this study were using. Those teaching methods were service-learning and technology.

The top teaching method used by those that participated in this study was service learning. Because service-learning may require the youth to be engaged in ways that may take them away from the place of their weekly youth ministry gathering, service-learning was mostly used on a monthly (25%) and quarterly (25%) basis. The use of service-learning mostly on a monthly and quarterly basis as opposed to less frequently also emphasize to youth the importance of rendering Christian service that is consistent as opposed to conducting one-off projects.

The second most used teaching method by those participating in this study was technology. That the use of technology was at the top of the list of commonly used teaching methods was not surprising given how technology is integrated into just about every aspect of modern-day life. It was equally not surprising to this researcher that survey participants who mostly used technology were between 20 and 49 years of age. Individuals that fell within these age categories would be considered a member of Generation X, Generation Y, or Generation Z at the time of this study (McCrindle, 2020a). It was Generation X that was first introduced to computers, media videos, and video games (McCrindle, 2012), it was Generation Y that was first introduced to the internet (McCrindle, 2012; Panopto, 2019), and technology was already a staple of life for Generation Z (White, 2017). Thus, their familiarity and comfortability with the

use of technology could have a bearing on the likelihood that if the youth ministry leader and teacher were a member of Generation X, Generation Y, or Generation Z, they were more likely to incorporate technology into their teaching methods as reflected in the statistical significance value of this study's data.

Thus, the reasoning this researcher raised that the teaching methods used in the academic classrooms of Generation Alpha should be translated to use in the church's youth education program for the very purpose of relating to and reaching the same generational cohort appears to have been occurring among some youth ministry leaders and teachers in Central Texas. This is significant in mitigating the disengagement of youth from youth ministry programs and decreasing the number of youth leaving the church upon graduation from high school (Moser & Nel, 2019).

Empirical Implications

This study's finding of survey participants' use of teaching methods that accommodate Generation Alpha learning styles was important from the aspect of the spiritual formation of the youth congregants that the youth ministry leaders and teachers were serving (Aziz, 2019; Tye, 2000). One of the privileged responsibilities of Christian leaders that serve in youth ministry is to pass on one's life of faith through teaching the generation of youth (Anthony & Benson, 2011; Davidson, 2016). Literature conveys the importance of facilitating the spiritual formation of youth in a manner that is relevant to the generation of youth (Kelly, 2016; Stein, 1994). As such, it is important for one fulfilling the role of teaching youth to not approach it in a manner as them only satisfying the directives of Jesus as conveyed in Matthew 28:19–20. Researchers express the importance of one fulfilling the role of teaching youth to be after the example of Jesus (James et al., 2015). By following the example of Jesus, those teaching youth will employ the

appropriate teaching methods that will make the content they present relevant and relatable to the youth being ministered to (James et al., 2015).

This study's finding of survey participant's use of teaching methods that accommodate Generation Alpha learning styles was also significant in that multiple studies reported that 40 to 50 percent of youth will drift from God and the faith community after they graduate from high school (Reed, 2016; Ross, 2017). As such, researchers began to shift their inquiry from the number of youth that was becoming unaffiliated with the church after their high school graduation to considering the necessity of adopting new models of approaching youth ministry to facilitate a lifelong commitment to their faith (Ross, 2017; Tye, 2000). By employing teaching methods that accommodate the learning styles of their Generation Alpha congregants, the survey participants were engaging youth in their faith and, ultimately, aiding the youth in remaining steadfast in their faith beyond their time of attendance in youth ministry programming. This is to say, that by employing teaching methods that were designed to address the unique learning style of Generation Alpha, survey participants were contributing to the leading of youth to a lifetime of faith that literature conveys should be the end goal of youth ministry (Ross, 2017).

Practical Implications

One of the end goals of generational theory and learning styles theory is for institutions to apply the information mined from the study of the character traits, beliefs, and behaviors of generations in order to better tailor their field of services to the targeted generation (LifeCourse Associates, n.d.b; McCrindle, 2020b). While it is understandable that some Christian leaders may be apprehensive about adopting methodologies originating from social science or other fields of study which they may deem secular, the Christian researchers included in the literature review for this study provide a compelling argument and evidence for the applicability of

methodologies resulting from the findings of such fields of study for the very purpose of reaching and relating to youth congregants (Aziz, 2019; Senter, 1992). In fact, fulfilling the Great Commission entails employing the appropriate means and methods that will relate biblical principles and practices to the hearer just as Jesus did in his ministry (James et al., 2015).

Religious educator Thomas Howard (2017) used studies from neuroscience to help inform him on methodologies he could employ while remaining biblically based and theologically sound. Missiology suggests that those charged with the responsibility of ministering to youth congregants can confidently look to studies in social science, just as Howard (2017) looked to neuroscience, to glean what methodologies they could employ in order to best serve the generation of youth they are ministering to (Newell, 2019). Thus, youth ministry leaders and teachers could use teaching methods stemming from social science studies and remain biblically based and theologically sound while teaching (Newell, 2019). The findings from this study suggest that some youth ministry leaders and teachers were also leading in this manner. Although the youth ministry leaders and teachers that participated in this study may not have consulted literature or research on generational learning styles, they appear to be cognizant of the characteristics of the generation of youth they were serving and, subsequently, were employing teaching methods that will make the biblical principles and practices they are teaching more relatable and relevant to those under their leadership.

This study's findings that the most commonly used teaching methods address the five learning styles of Generation Alpha by one means or another convey that the survey participants were incorporating teaching methods similar to what was being used in academic classrooms into their youth ministry classrooms. Thus, the survey participant's use of such teaching methods was consistent with other institutions that were applying findings from generational theory to

their respective areas (LifeCourse Associates, n.d.b).

Research Applications

Given the importance of the role of youth ministry leaders and teachers to teach and train youth congregants as well as the expectation of parents for this to be the reality in their church's youth programming (Barna Group, 2005; Ross, 2017), the following are some applications this study has for Christian leaders and those who serve in youth ministry with regards to generational learning styles and the spiritual formation of youth congregants.

The first application of this research is based on the theological literature review. The theological literature review conveyed the importance of Christian leaders using the available means and methods of the day in which they live as tools to enhance their approach to teaching biblical principles and practices (Campbell & Garner, 2016; James et al., 2015). This research can serve as a mechanism to settle any apprehensions Christian leaders may have about incorporating the suggestions stemming from literature into their youth ministry programming. Youth ministry leaders and teachers can be encouraged by this study to adapt any of the teaching methods they are accustomed to using that do not accommodate Generation Alpha learning styles and adopt teaching methods that are compatible with the generation of youth they serve in order to effectively disciple that particular generation of youth.

The second application of this research is based on the theoretical literature review. The theoretical literature review expressed the importance of Christian leaders ensuring the teaching tools they use address the learning style of the targeted generation, particularly those teaching youth (Richmann, 2018; Senter, 1992). Generation Alpha's characteristics and traits suggest their learning style preferences are kinesthetic, visual, interactive, virtual, and service-learning (McCrindle, 2014, 2020b). This research can serve as a prompt for youth ministry leaders and

teachers to be observant as they are teaching and, subsequently, evaluate if the methods used are

effective and engage the youth group they serve. As in the academic classroom, youth who

disengage from the lesson or who display other forms of disinterest or disruptive behavior while

in the youth group are generally signaling that the teaching methods being used are not capturing

their attention or retaining their interest in a manner for them to absorb and comprehend what is

being conveyed (Adelman & Taylor, 2012). Both scripture and research indicate the importance

of the Christian leader and teacher knowing their target audience in such a way that they can

tailor their teaching methods to accommodate how they learn (Bauman et al., 2014; Crutchfield,

2016).

The third application of this research is based on the implications of this study for

spiritual formation practices. The literature review conveyed that youth ministers want to be

effective and were looking for ways to engage the youth in their church (Barna Group, 2020b,

2020c). The literature review of this research can inform youth ministers on various teaching

methods that are being used for Generation Alpha students. This study's findings for RQ1 of the

most common teaching methods being used by those who participated in this study further

narrow the list of teaching methods presented to those that are perhaps more suitable for the

youth ministry setting and the frequency of time the youth group meets. Additionally, the

analysis conducted for RQ2 connected the teaching methods that were being used to the learning

styles of Generation Alpha. As youth leaders and teachers get to know the personalities and

preferences of the youth in their group, this analysis can further inform them on which teaching

methods they could incorporate into their lessons that will best suit the youth they serve.

Finally, as the youth ministry leaders and teachers that made up the population for this

study operate under the structure of the local church, this research can serve as a catalyst for

churches to conduct genuine reflection on their youth ministry programs. An application of this research for churches is to continually evaluate their youth ministry programming and ensure their youth ministry leaders and teachers are not continuing the use of time-honored methods but that they are addressing the unique learning styles of the generation of youth that are the current attendees to their youth ministry program and activities. Christian leaders should constantly examine their approach to discipling youth and consider the manner in how they teach and prepare youth congregants in their faith in light of the implications conveyed in the literature regarding youth who leave the church after high school may have not been engaged in the youth ministry program and activities when they were attending such (Crown College, 2018; Ross, 2017). Thus, this research can serve as a prompt for the leaders of churches to go beyond providing the curriculum materials for their youth ministry leaders and teachers to use and ensure they invest in the resources that will aid them in implementing the teaching methods that best facilitate learning for the generation of youth they serve.

Research Limitations

This study pursued the discovery of teaching methods used by Christian youth ministry leaders and teachers and to determine whether those teaching methods addressed Generation Alpha learning styles. Threats to the internal and external validity of this study are discussed in the following sections.

Threats to the Internal Validity

How the convenience sample used for this study was compiled posed the first threat to the internal validity of this study identified. Due to a lapse in time between the publication of the printed and online church directories used to gather church contact information and the time of this study, the internal threat exists that some individuals may have been inadvertently excluded.

This internal threat could have been mitigated by this researcher using a state or national database of church listings. Since churches are required to at least register their entity with the state they are operating in even if they have not filed 501c3 paperwork with the federal government, the public records of such state agencies may have provided a more comprehensive listing of churches in the targeted geographical area by which this researcher could have drawn the sample population. Further, this internal threat can be mitigated in replication and follow-up studies by tailoring the study to a particular denomination by which the state and national organization of that denomination could provide a more complete listing of churches.

The second threat to the internal validity of this study identified flows out of the first threat in regard to the compilation of the church contact information. Resulting from the lack of a comprehensive listing of local churches, the internal threat exists that this researcher was not able to contact, and therefore, not able to extend an invitation to participate in the study to 139 churches that were listed in the church directories. In some cases, there was no telephone number listed in the church directories or there was no online presence of the church for which contact information could have been derived for those churches. In other cases, the telephone number and email information listed were inaccurate. Again, this type of internal threat could have been mitigated by the researcher implementing procedures that would have provided a more complete and accurate accounting of churches in the sample population.

Although this researcher attempted to mitigate the next threat to internal validity identified by placing introductory phone calls to the pastor or church administrator prior to them receiving the official recruitment letter, one's perception of surveys and their willingness to respond posed the third threat to the internal validity of this study identified. Also, receiving the survey from someone they were not acquainted with, even though the researcher introduced

herself and the purpose of the survey in the recruitment letter, adds to this type of internal threat. Given that this researcher received a negative response from a survey participant expressing their displeasure of receiving the reminder communication about completing the survey, this negative response may be representative of the perspective of others which in turn may have contributed to the low response rate.

The fourth threat to the internal validity of this study identified stems from the manner in which this researcher chose to distribute the recruitment letter and survey link. Respecting the privacy of individual youth ministry leaders and teachers, this researcher did not solicit the names or personal email addresses of persons who serve in the church's youth ministry but depended on the pastor or church administrator to distribute the correspondence about the study and the survey link to those individuals. When considering the survey counts on the leadership positions of the survey participants and the size of the youth groups they reported serving, the internal threat exists that the survey may have only been distributed to the youth pastor or the church's equivalent of that position to complete the survey in fulfillment of the church's response of their willingness to participate in the study as opposed to the survey being distributed to all persons (ministers, leaders, teachers, assistants, and volunteers) working with the targeted generation as intended by the design of the study.

The survey was anonymous and did not collect data on one's church of membership for which this researcher could cross reference responses from any participants that were from the same youth ministry program. Therefore, this internal threat regarding the distribution of the survey is inferred from reviewing the raw survey data on those reporting as youth pastors, noting that they reported having a large number of youth congregants in the group they led or taught. Most large groups comprised of youth usually require the presence of more than one adult in

order to have proper supervision of the group. This, in turn, gives to the internal threat to validity identified concerning the possibility of limited distribution of the survey link.

The fifth threat to the internal validity of this study identified relates to one's interpretation of the teaching methods. Although descriptions and definitions of the teaching methods were included in the survey for respondents to refer to, the internal threat exists that their interpretation of the information that was provided may have contributed to their selection or frequency rating of a teaching method when it may not have been an accurate reflection of the method they use. Likewise, their interpretation of the information provided on the survey may have contributed to their non-selection of a teaching method when it may have very well been a method they use. An extension of this internal threat is one's previously conceived descriptions and definitions of the teaching methods listed on the survey to which may have been their default reference when completing the survey. This, also, may have contributed to their selection or non-selection of teaching methods they use as well as the rating or mis-rating of their frequency of use of the teaching methods listed on the survey.

The final threat to the internal validity of this study identified is the point in time that the study was conducted. One assumption made about the sample population was that, regardless of the point in time that the study was being conducted, they were providing youth ministry programs and activities to their youth congregations. Although this study was conducted two years after the height of the COVID-19 global pandemic, some churches, and subsequently their youth ministries reported they were still navigating the effects on their traditional delivery model of youth ministry programs. Contrary to another assumption made about the sample population being derived from multigenerational churches, some churches reported they did not have a separate youth ministry, which was most commonly due to the makeup of the congregation being

that of persons in the senior adult age category for which there were no families in the

congregation with children and youth in which to provide such ministry.

Other churches reported they had not restarted their youth ministry program and

activities, which was most commonly due to the church not having returned to their full course

of in-person activities or they were navigating the implementation of a virtual or hybrid model of

the youth ministry program they had in place before the COVID-19 global pandemic. These

factors pose an internal threat to the survey data being an accurate reflection of what are the most

commonly used teaching methods. This internal threat could have been mitigated by adding the

option of "not currently using but used before the COVID-19 global pandemic" to the time span

continuum on the matrix table for which the survey participant selected the teaching methods

they used.

Consequently, this internal threat of the point in time that the study was conducted also

speaks to the first threat to the external validity of this study identified. That external threat is the

effects of the COVID-19 global pandemic on the operation and implementation of youth

ministry programs and activities.

Threats to the External Validity

The COVID-19 global pandemic can be considered a disruptor to daily life, and it

presented an interruption to the implementation of youth ministry programs and activities. Thus,

the survey's data may not be an accurate reflection of the teaching methods of youth ministries

that were providing consistent and thriving programming for several years to their Generation

Alpha congregants before the COVID-19 global pandemic. Also, the survey's data may not be an

accurate reflection of the teaching methods these youth ministries were implementing for several

years that were also accommodating the learning styles of their Generation Alpha congregants. If

this study was conducted at a different time it may have produced different findings on what were the most common teaching methods. As such, the external threat to validity exists in applying the results and conclusions from the study to the research population. Although external factors such as a global pandemic cannot be mitigated by researchers, the impact that the global pandemic posed on the operations of youth ministries could have been factored into the research design. This type of external threat could have been mitigated by the researcher including the option of "not currently using but used before the COVID-19 global pandemic" to the time span continuum on the matrix table as mentioned above, and subsequently holding COVID-19 as a moderating variable during the data analysis.

The second threat to the external validity of this study identified pertains to the scope of information that was included in this study. It was beyond the scope of this study to inquire as to one's selection or non-selection of particular teaching methods based on their teaching philosophy or any denominational influences. Despite the presence of a significant statistical association between one's religious affiliation and the most common teaching methods used, this researcher was not able to delineate the exact nature of this association. Thus, the external threat to validity exists in future researchers inferring any denominational influences on the use or non-use of particular teaching methods.

The third threat to the external validity of this study that was identified pertains to the scope of the implementation stemming from this study in regard to the literature review. It was beyond the scope of this study to inquire about the effectiveness of the teaching methods used relative to the retention rates of attendees to their youth ministry programs. It was also beyond the scope of this study to survey former youth ministry attendees to inquire about the impact of the youth ministry program and its subsequent impact on deterring them from leaving the church

after their high school graduation as had been the trend reported in the literature. Although it was encouraging to discover that the survey participants were using teaching methods that accommodate the learning style of their Generation Alpha congregants, the external threat to validity exists in future researchers consulting the findings of this study and inappropriately classify this study among the literature addressing how youth ministries are curtailing the number of youth reportedly becoming disengaged from church.

The final threat to the external validity of this study identified relates to the delimitations and generalization of the research as identified in previous chapters. The sample for this study was Christian youth ministry leaders and teachers that were serving in a local church in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas at the time of the study. The external threat to validity exists in applying the findings of this study to youth ministry leaders and teachers not of the Christian persuasion, applying the findings of this study to youth ministry leaders or teachers of Christian churches in other geographical locations outside of those identified in the population for this study, or applying the findings of this study in other ways identified as limits to this study's generalization.

Further Research

This research study was an effort to discover the teaching methods that youth ministry leaders and teachers used for their Generation Alpha congregants and to determine whether there was an association between those teaching methods and Generation Alpha learning styles. The format of this study gave a quantitative glimpse of what teaching methods youth ministry leaders and teachers in Central Texas used. Further research that can be done includes:

1. Replicating the study with para-church organizations. While the church's youth ministry program is where most youth attending church with their family will be exposed to biblical teaching, some para-church organizations work in conjunction with community programs and after-school programs in efforts to expose those youth to the gospel of

Jesus Christ. Studying the teaching methods these organizations use could further inform youth ministries on effective teaching methods they could implement in their programming.

2. Repeating the study with a mixed-methods design. The quantitative portion could survey the sample population of the teaching methods they use. The qualitative portion could be conducted with interviews with a focus group to gain insight into how they implement those teaching methods. While having a listing of what teaching methods are being used adds to the literature on the topic, having information on ways to effectively implement those teaching methods would be beneficial to those consulting such a study in their efforts to enhance their ministry to youth.

3. Conducting observations. The most common teaching methods based on the frequency of responses were different than what the survey participants perceived to be their most commonly used teaching methods. While definitions of the teaching methods were provided to survey participants, their selection on the survey may or may not reflect what they are actually doing. Future researchers could conduct classroom observation to reveal possible insights from the observer's perspective of the types of teaching methods being used.

4. Exploring influencing factors on one using or not using certain teaching methods. This study found a statistical significance between the most common teaching methods being used and some of the demographic variables. Future research could focus on those demographic variables that showed statistical significance and study the influence of those demographic variables on the teaching methods of youth ministry leaders and teachers.

5. Designing the survey instrument around the teaching methods of a thriving youth ministry. The researcher could select a sample of youth ministries that are thriving and successfully engaging their youth congregants. Through interviews, the researcher could identify commonly used teaching methods among those thriving youth ministries. Those teaching methods could then be the basis of a survey instrument used to survey the sample population of youth ministry leaders and teachers to determine whether they are using those teaching methods.

6. Redesigning the survey instrument used in this study. The survey instrument used a rating scale to assess the frequency of use of each teaching method. The number of incomplete surveys from this study is perhaps a reflection of the fatigue some persons may experience when completing such types of survey questions. A differently designed survey instrument may benefit future researchers replicating this study.

Summary

This study sought to discover the teaching methods used by youth ministry leaders and teachers. The primary goal was to determine if the teaching methods being used addressed the

learning style of their Generation Alpha congregants and to examine if there were any statistically significant associations between the teaching methods used and select demographic variables. The study identified the five most common teaching methods used by the survey participants to be service-learning, technology, student presentations, question-and-answer, and student peer teaching; all of which address the learning styles of Generation Alpha. The statistical analysis showed a statistically significant association between the most common teaching methods used and select church, survey participant, and youth group demographic variables (see Figure 9).

Figure 9

Association of Five Most Common Teaching Methods and Demographic Variables

Service-Learning	Technology	Student Presentations	Question and Answer	Student Peer Teaching
• Religious Affiliation • Participant's Current Years Serving • Participant's Total Years Serving • Grade Level of Youth Group • Size of Youth Group	• Religious Affiliation • Participant's Age • Participant's Leadership Position	• Religious Affiliation • Grade Level of Youth Group • Size of Youth Group • How Often Youth Group Meets	• Religious Affiliation • Grade Level of Youth Group	• Participant's Total Years Serving

While the consideration of teaching methods and learning styles is customarily found in conversations centered around the academic classroom, this study sought to show the importance and essentiality of youth ministries applying teaching methods that address the learning styles of

their youth congregants. The findings of this study provide insight into teaching methods that were being used in academic classrooms that were fitting for the youth ministry classrooms.

With the ultimate role and responsibility to lead their Generation Alpha congregants and to facilitate their learning of biblical principles and practices, youth ministry leaders and teachers applying generationally appropriate teaching methods can be regarded as patterning one's approach to teaching after the methods of Jesus. As Jesus employed the teaching methods that best related to his hearer and effectively relayed the principles of his teaching, youth ministry leaders and teachers can be encouraged by this study to also use the means and methods available to them. Teaching methods that not only their youth congregants can relate to but will facilitate the receiving, comprehending, and ultimately applying of what they are being taught.

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APPENDIX A: IRB Letter of Approval

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

February 15, 2022

Shawna Dixon
Gary Bredfeldt

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY21-22-542 A Survey of Teaching Methods Used to Relate to Generation Alpha Congregants in Central Texas

Dear Shawna Dixon, Gary Bredfeldt,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:104(d):

Category 2.(i). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording).
The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

Your stamped consent form(s) and final versions of your study documents can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB. Your stamped consent form(s) should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document(s) should be made available without alteration.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,
G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP
Administrative Chair of Institutional Research
Research Ethics Office

APPENDIX B: Participant Consent Form

Title of the Project: A Survey of Teaching Methods Used to Relate to Generation Alpha
Congregants in Central Texas
Principal Investigator: Shawna M. Dixon, Doctoral Candidate, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be 20 years of age or
older, your church of membership must be of the Christian faith, your church of membership
must have an identifiable and separate ministry for middle school, junior high school, or high
school aged students, and you must be currently serving middle school, junior high school, or
high school aged students as a leader, teacher, or assistant within the youth ministry of your
church of membership. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in
this research.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of the study is to discover the teaching methods that are being used by youth
ministries within the Christian churches in Central Texas. The study aims to identify if the
teaching methods being used by youth ministry leaders and teachers are the same as or similar to
the recommended teaching methods for addressing the traits and learning styles of the current
generation of youth.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following:
1. Complete the Youth Ministry Teaching Methods Survey via Qualtrics, which should take
   you approximately 10 to 15 minutes.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include bringing awareness to Christian leaders and teachers of the
importance of considering the generational traits and learning styles of their youth congregants.
This could lead to youth ministry leaders and teachers understanding the application of
generational learning styles in the church setting. This could lead to youth ministry leaders and
teachers considering the generation of youth being served and subsequently select compatible
teaching methods to use in discipling that particular generation of youth. This could lead to youth
congregants being taught Christian doctrine, principles, and practices in a relatable and impactful
manner. This could lead to Christian leaders and teachers advancing their ministry efforts and
increasing their impact among the youth generation.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be anonymous.
- Data will be stored on in a password-protected electronic file and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time prior to submitting the survey without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please exit the survey and close your internet browser. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Shawna M. Dixon. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ and/or ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Gary Bredfeldt, at ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮.

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Consent

Before agreeing to be part of the research, please be sure that you understand what the study is about. You can print a copy of the document for your records. If you have any questions about the study later, you can contact the researcher using the information provided above.

APPENDIX C: Letter of Solicitation to Expert Panel

Dear [*Expert Panelist Name*],

Grace be unto you, and peace from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

I am a graduate student in the School of Divinity at Liberty University and conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Education in Christian Leadership. The purpose of my research is to discover the teaching methods that are being used by youth ministries within the Christian churches in Central Texas.

The thrust of this research will be to survey youth ministry leaders, teachers, and assistants who currently work with youth congregants that are in middle school, junior high school, or high school. The goal of the research will be to identify if the teaching methods being used by youth ministry leaders, teachers, and assistants are the same as or similar to the recommended teaching methods for addressing the traits and learning styles of the current generation of youth.

As a part of this process, I am inviting you to participate in this study as an expert panelist due to your expertise in the field of education and experience working with middle school, junior high school, or high school students in the academic classroom setting. The panel will help determine the validity of the Youth Ministry Teaching Methods Survey (YMTM) research instrument developed to assess the teaching methods youth ministry leaders, teachers, and assistants are using as well as provide input on the survey design and wording. All the associated work will take place online via email. I expect no more than two iterations of review by the expert panel members with each taking no more than 15-20 minutes of your time.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration of my request. Please do not hesitate to contact me at ███████████ or ███████████████ with any questions or concerns that you may have for which I can provide clarity that will aid in your decision and response to this invitation. If you accept this invitation, I will forward you a copy of the survey instrument as well as instructions outlining the aspects of your evaluative review. I will also include a copy of the research questions and how they relate to each survey question to aid in your evaluation of the survey instrument.

I look forward to hearing from you.

In Christ,
Shawna Dixon
Doctoral Candidate
Liberty University

APPENDIX D: Letter of Instructions to Expert Panel

Dear [*Expert Panelist Name*],

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a member of the expert panel in support of my dissertation research, *A Survey of Teaching Methods Used to Relate to Generation Alpha Congregants in Central Texas*.

The purpose of this study is to discover the teaching methods that are being used by youth ministries within the Christian churches in Central Texas. Youth ministry leaders and teachers currently working with middle school, junior high school, or high school aged youth congregants will participate in the study via an online survey. Through the data collected by the Youth Ministry Teaching Methods Survey (YMTM) research instrument, this researcher will be able to answer questions in the areas of assessing responses about teaching methods being used and determining if the teaching methods being used are the same as or similar to the recommended teaching methods for the current generation of youth. As members of the study's expert panel, your assistance will aid in determining the content validity of the YMTM instrument.

Please evaluate the YMTM in the following ways:

1. With regards to the question designed to assess the youth ministry instructional setting (question 13):

    a. In general, are the responses listed accurate measures of classroom settings for instructing middle school, junior high school, and high school students?
    b. In general, does the time scale listed represent varying degrees of frequencies of youth ministry instructional settings?

2. With regards to the question designed to assess youth ministry instructional methods and activities (question 14):

    a. In general, are the responses listed accurate measures of classroom activities for instructing middle school, junior high school, and high school students?
    b. In general, does the time scale listed represent varying degrees of frequencies of youth ministry instructional methods and activities?

3. With regards to the question designed to assess virtual youth ministry instructional methods and activities (question 15):

    a. In general, are the responses listed accurate measures of virtual classroom activities for instructing middle school, junior high school, and high school students?
    b. In general, does the time scale listed represent varying degrees of frequencies of virtual youth ministry instructional methods and activities?
4. Do the survey questions sufficiently address the issues of youth ministry teaching methods, frequency, and demographics?

Upon completion of this review, please send your responses and additional observations to the researcher via email to Shawna Dixon at ████████████████ no later than March 5, 2022.

I look forward to receiving your insight and input toward the refinement of the YMTM instrument.

Thank you, once again for your assistance in this portion of my dissertation research project.

In Christ,
Shawna Dixon
Doctoral Candidate
Liberty University

[Email Attachments] – YMTM Questionnaire, Link Between Research Questions and YMTM Questions Table

APPENDIX E: Thank You Letter to Expert Panel

Dear [*Expert Panelist Name*],

Grace be unto you, and peace from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

I want to sincerely thank you for being a part of the expert panel for my dissertation research project. Your review of the Youth Ministry Teaching Methods Survey (YMTM) research instrument is a major step in preparing the instrument for use. The feedback you have provided is greatly appreciated and will serve as a vital part in preparing the instrument for use to collect the data for my study.

My research will be completed in the coming months, and the results published by December 2022. Should you have any further questions or observations, please do not hesitate to contact me at ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ or ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮.

Thank you once again for your time and participation as an expert panelist in this project.

In Christ,
Shawna Dixon
Doctoral Candidate

APPENDIX F: Script for Introductory Phone Call to Pastors

Hello Pastor/Church Administrator,

I am a graduate student in the School of Divinity at Liberty University. I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Education in Christian Leadership. The purpose of my research is to discover the teaching methods that are being used by youth ministries within the Christian churches in Central Texas.

I am writing to request permission to ask members of your staff to complete an online survey. Participants will be asked to complete the attached survey. Participants will be presented with informed consent information prior to participating. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time.

Would you allow the youth ministry leaders, teachers, and assistants to participate? *[wait for respondents' answer]*

[Yes] - Great, could I confirm/get your email address so I can send you the link to the survey to distribute to each of the youth ministry leaders, teachers, and assistants in your church?

[No] – I understand. Thank you for your time, and may you have a blessed day.

APPENDIX G: Participant Recruitment Letter

Dear Youth Ministry Servant-Leaders:

As a graduate student in the School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Education in Christian Leadership degree. The purpose of my research is to discover the teaching methods that are being used by youth ministry leaders, teachers, and assistants within the Christian churches in Central Texas, and I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.
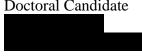
Participants must be 20 years of age or older, their church of membership must be of the Christian faith, their church of membership must have an identifiable and separate ministry for middle school, junior high school, or high school aged students, and they must be currently serving middle school, junior high school, or high school aged students as a leader, teacher, or assistant within the youth ministry of their church of membership.

Participants, if willing, will be asked to complete a short online survey that should take approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Participation will be completely anonymous, and no personal, identifying information will be collected.

To participate, please click here *[***link***]* to access the online survey

A consent document is provided as the first page of the survey and contains additional information about my research. After you have read the consent form, please click the button to proceed to the survey. Doing so will indicate that you have read the consent information and would like to take part in the survey.

In Christ,
Shawna Dixon
Doctoral Candidate

APPENDIX H: Survey Participant Reminder Notification

Date

Leader Name
Church Name
Mailing Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear Pastor,

Grace be unto you, and peace from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

As a graduate student in the School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Education in Christian Leadership.

Two weeks ago, an email was sent to you inviting you to participate in a research study. This follow-up email is being sent to remind you to complete the survey if you would like to participate and have not already done so. The deadline for participation is April 20, 2022.

If you choose to participate, you can access the short online survey via this hyperlink *[*** link***]* that should take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Your participation will be completely anonymous, and no personal, identifying information will be collected.

A consent document is provided as the first page of the survey and contains additional information about my research. After reading the consent form, please click the button to proceed to the survey. Doing so will indicate that you have read the consent information and would like to take part in the survey.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration; your participation in this study is greatly appreciated.

In Christ,
Shawna Dixon
Doctoral Candidate
Liberty University

APPENDIX I: Prescreening Questions

The purpose of this survey is to discover the teaching methods that are being used by youth ministries within the Christian churches in Central Texas.

1. Are you 20 years of age or older? (yes/no)
    ☐ Yes
    ☐ No

Using skip logic, only those who select Yes will be allowed to progress to the next prescreening question; those who select No will be taken to the end of the survey.

2. Is your church of membership of the Christian faith? (yes/no)
    ☐ Yes
    ☐ No

Using skip logic, only those who select Yes will be allowed to progress to the next prescreening question; those who select No will be taken to the end of the survey.

3. Does your church of membership have an identifiable and separate ministry for middle school, junior high school, or high school aged students? (yes/no)
    ☐ Yes
    ☐ No

Using skip logic, only those who select Yes will be allowed to progress to the next prescreening question; those who select No will be taken to the end of the survey.

4. Are you currently serving middle school, junior high school, or high school aged students as a leader, teacher, or assistant within the youth ministry of your church of membership? (yes/no)
    ☐ Yes
    ☐ No

Using skip logic, only those who select Yes will be allowed to progress to the next page of the survey; those who select No will be taken to the end of the survey.

[Survey Exit Message] - Thank you for your time and I appreciate your consideration to be part of this study. May the Lord's peace and blessings be unto you in abundance.

APPENDIX J: Youth Ministry Teaching Methods (YMTM) Survey

Part I: Participant Demographic Questions

Part I of the survey contains five questions that focus on collecting general demographic and leadership information about you as the respondent to this questionnaire. Please mark the response that best applies to you.

1. What is your gender? (multiple choice)
   - ☐ Male
   - ☐ Female

2. What is your age group? (dropdown menu)
   - ☐ 20-29 years
   - ☐ 30-39 years
   - ☐ 40-49 years
   - ☐ 50-59 years
   - ☐ 60-69 years
   - ☐ 70-79 years
   - ☐ 80 years and above

3. How many years have you been serving in the current church youth ministry program? (open response; number format)

4. How many years total have you served in a church youth ministry program? (open response; number format)

5. Which of the following best describes the position you are currently serving in the church youth ministry program? (dropdown menu)
   - ☐ Youth Pastor
   - ☐ Youth Minister (other than Youth Pastor)
   - ☐ Youth Ministry Leader
   - ☐ Youth Ministry Teacher
   - ☐ Youth Ministry Assistant
   - ☐ Youth Ministry Worker/Volunteer

Part II: Church Demographic Questions

Part II of the survey contains four questions that focus on collecting general demographic information on the church for which you serve in the position you identified in Question 5. Please mark the response that best applies to your church.

6. Which church denomination or religious affiliation does the church identify with? (dropdown menu)

- ☐ Adventist
- ☐ Apostolic
- ☐ Assembly of God
- ☐ Baptist
- ☐ American Baptist
- ☐ Fundamental Independent Baptist
- ☐ Independent Baptist
- ☐ Missionary Baptist
- ☐ Southern Baptist
- ☐ Bible Church
- ☐ Catholic
- ☐ Christian Church (Disciple of Christ)
- ☐ Christian Fellowship
- ☐ Church of Christ
- ☐ United Church of Christ
- ☐ Church of God
- ☐ Church of God in Christ
- ☐ Cowboy
- ☐ Episcopalian
- ☐ Full Gospel
- ☐ Holiness
- ☐ Independent
- ☐ Inter-Denominational
- ☐ Jehovah's Witness
- ☐ Latter-Day Saints
- ☐ Lutheran
- ☐ Evangelical Lutheran
- ☐ Methodist
- ☐ African Methodist Episcopal
- ☐ United Methodist
- ☐ Nazarene
- ☐ New Testament Christian
- ☐ Non-Denominational
- ☐ Pentecostal
- ☐ United Pentecostal
- ☐ Presbyterian
- ☐ Reformed
- ☐ Trans Denominational
- ☐ Unitarian (Universalist)
- ☐ Other (*please specify below*)

7. If you did not find the church denomination or religious affiliation of your church in the list above, please specify the church denomination or religious affiliation in the text box below. (open response; text format)

8. Congregation size is defined to be the average attendance to the church's weekend services. Please select the category that best represents the church congregation size. (dropdown menu)
   - ☐ Emerging Small Church (50 or fewer attendees)
   - ☐ Small Church (between 51-249 attendees)
   - ☐ Medium Church (between 250-499 attendees)
   - ☐ Large Church (between 500-999 attendees)
   - ☐ Emerging Megachurch (between 1,000-1,999 attendees)
   - ☐ Megachurch (between 2,000-9,999 attendees)
   - ☐ Gigachurch (10,000 or more attendees)

9. What is the approximate total number of middle school, junior high school, or high school aged students attending the church? (dropdown menu)
   - ☐ 1-10 youth congregants
   - ☐ 11-24 youth congregants
   - ☐ 25-49 youth congregants
   - ☐ 50-100 youth congregants
   - ☐ 100 or more youth congregants

Part III: Youth Group Demographics Questions

Part III of the survey contains three questions that focus on collecting general demographic information about the youth group that you work with. Please mark the response that best applies to the youth group you lead, teach, or assist with in your church.

10. According to the classification of students by your local school district, what age group do you regularly lead, teach, or assist with in your church? (multiple choice; select all that apply)
    - ☐ Middle School (grades 6-8)
    - ☐ Junior High School (grades 6-8)
    - ☐ High School (grades 9-12)

11. What is the approximate number of youth in the class/youth group you regularly lead, teach, or assist with in your church? (dropdown menu)
    - ☐ 1-10 youth
    - ☐ 11-20 youth
    - ☐ 21-30 youth
    - ☐ 31-40 youth
    - ☐ 41-50 youth
    - ☐ 51-99 youth
    - ☐ 100 or more youth

12. How often do you meet with the class/youth group you regularly lead, teach, or assist with in your church? (dropdown menu)
    - ☐ Every week on day of corporate worship service
    - ☐ Every week for youth ministry session
    - ☐ Twice every week (day of corporate worship service and ministry session)
    - ☐ Three weeks during the month on day of corporate worship service
    - ☐ Three weeks during the month for youth ministry session
    - ☐ Three weeks during the month, twice every week
    - ☐ Two weeks during the month on day of corporate worship service
    - ☐ Two weeks during the month for youth ministry session
    - ☐ Two weeks during the month, twice every week (day of corporate worship service and a mid-week session)
    - ☐ One week during the month on day of corporate worship service
    - ☐ One week during the month for youth ministry session
    - ☐ One week during the month, twice that week (day of corporate worship service and a mid-week session)
    - ☐ At least once every two months
    - ☐ At least once a quarter
    - ☐ Twice a year or less
    - ☐ Substitute or volunteer when needed only
    - ☐ Volunteer with special events only

Part IV: Frequency of Teaching Methods Use Questions

Part IV of the survey contains five questions that focus on collecting data about the types of teaching methods being used. Please mark the response that best describes the frequency of the teaching methods you are using with the youth group that you regularly lead, teach, or assist with.

13. For the youth group you regularly lead, teach, or assist with, please read the list of possible CLASSROOM SETTINGS below and use the scale provided to describe your frequency of use (i.e., Never, Weekly, Every Two Weeks, Monthly, Quarterly, or Yearly). (matrix table; view description by hoovering over the term)

	Never	Weekly	Every Two Weeks	Monthly	Quarterly	Yearly
Formal Style						
Auditorium/Theatre Style						
Chevron Style						
Classroom Style						
Pairs						
Round-Table						
Circle						
Conference Room Style						
Flexible Seating						
Virtual						

14. For the youth group you regularly lead, teach, or assist with, please read the list of possible ACTIVITIES below and use the scale provided to describe your frequency of use (i.e., Never, Weekly, Every Two Weeks, Monthly, Quarterly, or Yearly). (matrix table; view description by hoovering over the term)

	Never	Weekly	Every Two Weeks	Monthly	Quarterly	Yearly
Lecture						
Interactive Lecture						
Interactive Lesson/ Hands On						
Question & Answer						
Student Peer Teaching						
Student Presentations						
Think/Pair/Share						
Small Group Discussions						
Whole Group Discussion						
Brainstorming/Reflection						
Modeling/Demonstrations						
Role Play/Dramatization						

	Never	Weekly	Every Two Weeks	Monthly	Quarterly	Yearly
Experiential Learning						
Service Learning						
Music						
Technology						
Visual						
Visual Video Content						
Collaborative/Team-based Learning						
Games/Simulations						

15. For the youth group you regularly lead, teach, or assist with, please read the list of possible ONLINE ACTIVITIES below and use the scale provided to describe your frequency of use (i.e., Never, Weekly, Every Two Weeks, Monthly, Quarterly, or Yearly). (matrix table; view description by hoovering over the term)

	Never	Weekly	Every Two Weeks	Monthly	Quarterly	Yearly
Online Lecture						
Online Learning Modules/Self-Directed Learning						
Background Knowledge Probe						
Online Discussions						
Reflective Blogs						
Participation in Social Networking						
Online/E-Portfolio						
Computer-Based Learning Exercises/Games/Simulations						

16. For the youth group you regularly lead, teach, or assist with, what are the three (3) teaching methods you use most frequently? (multiple choice, select three; view description by hoovering over the term)

- ☐ Lecture
- ☐ Interactive Lecture
- ☐ Interactive Lesson/ Hands On
- ☐ Question & Answer
- ☐ Student Peer Teaching
- ☐ Student Presentations
- ☐ Think/Pair/Share
- ☐ Small Group Discussions
- ☐ Whole Group Discussion
- ☐ Brainstorming/Reflection
- ☐ Modeling/Demonstrations
- ☐ Role Play/Dramatization
- ☐ Experiential Learning
- ☐ Service Learning
- ☐ Music
- ☐ Technology
- ☐ Visual
- ☐ Visual Video Content
- ☐ Collaborative/Team-based Learning
- ☐ Games/Simulations
- ☐ Online Lecture
- ☐ Online Learning Modules/Self-Directed Learning
- ☐ Background Knowledge Probe
- ☐ Online Discussions
- ☐ Reflective Blogs
- ☐ Participation in Social Networking
- ☐ Online/E-Portfolio
- ☐ Computer-Based Learning Exercises/Games/Simulations

17. If the teaching methods you use most frequently are not listed, please specify the teaching method in the text boxes below (open response; text format)
    - ☐ Text 1
    - ☐ Text 2
    - ☐ Text 3

Part V: Closing

Thank you very much for your participation in this survey! Your time is greatly appreciated, and your responses are a valuable contribution to this study. May the Lord's peace and blessings be unto you in abundance.

APPENDIX K: Link Between Research Questions and YMTM Questions

RQ1	YMTM14	YMTM15	YMTM16
What are the most common teaching methodologies being utilized in the educational programming for youth ministries by youth leaders and teachers in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas?	For the youth group you regularly lead, teach, or assist with, please read the list of possible activities below and use the scale provided to describe your frequency of use.	For the youth group you regularly lead, teach, or assist with, please read the list of possible online activities below and use the scale provided to describe your frequency of use.	For the youth group you regularly lead, teach, or assist with, what are the three (3) teaching methods you use most frequently?
RQ1 What are the most common teaching methodologies being utilized in the educational programming for youth ministries by youth leaders and teachers in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas?	**YMTM17** If the teaching methods you use most frequently is not listed, please specify the teaching method in the text boxes below.		
RQ2 To what degree, if any, are the most common teaching methodologies being utilized by youth leaders and teachers in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas linked to Generation Alpha learning styles?	**YMTM13** For the youth group you regularly lead, teach, or assist with, please read the list of possible classroom settings below and use the scale provided to describe your frequency of use.	**YMTM14** For the youth group you regularly lead, teach, or assist with, please read the list of possible activities below and use the scale provided to describe your frequency of use.	**YMTM15** For the youth group you regularly lead, teach, or assist with, please read the list of possible online activities below and use the scale provided to describe your frequency of use.

RQ3	YMTM6	YMTM7	YMTM8
What, if any, is the significance of church demographic variables of religious affiliation, congregation size, and the number of youth congregants to the most common teaching methodologies being utilized by the youth leaders and teachers of the churches in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas?	Which church denomination or religious affiliation does the church identify with?	If you did not find the church denomination or religious affiliation of your church in the list above, please specify the church denomination or religious affiliation in the text box below.	Congregation size is defined to be the average attendance to the church's weekend services. Please select the category that best represents the church congregation size.
RQ3 What, if any, is the significance of church demographic variables of religious affiliation, congregation size, and the number of youth congregants to the most common teaching methodologies being utilized by the youth leaders and teachers of the churches in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas?	**YMTM9** What is the approximate total number of middle school, junior high school, or high school aged students attending the church?		

RQ4	YMTM1	YMTM2	YMTM3
What, if any, is the significance of participant demographic variables of gender, age, position serving in, and years serving in youth ministry to the most common teaching methodologies being utilized by youth leaders and teachers of the churches in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas?	What is your gender?	What is your age group?	How many years have you been serving in the current church youth ministry program?
RQ4	YMTM4	YMTM5	
What, if any, is the significance of participant demographic variables of gender, age, position serving in, and years serving in youth ministry to the most common teaching methodologies being utilized by youth leaders and teachers of the churches in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas?	How many years total have you served in a church youth ministry program?	Which of the following best describes the position you are currently serving in the church youth ministry program?	

RQ5	YMTM10	YMTM11	YMTM12
What, if any, is the significance of youth group demographic variables of grade level, class size, and how often the youth leaders and teachers meet with the youth group to the most common teaching methodologies being utilized by youth leaders and teachers of the churches in the vicinity of the three metropolitan areas of Central Texas?	According to the classification of students by your local school district, what age group do you regularly lead, teach, or assist with in your church?	What is the approximate number of youth in the class/youth group you regularly lead, teach, or assist with in your church?	How often do you meet with the class/youth group you regularly lead, teach, or assist with in your church?

APPENDIX L: Expert Panelist

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Cross Country, Track, and Soccer
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