

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

The United Methodist Church (hereafter referred to as UMC) teaches that at their baptism the child is initiated into the new covenant in Jesus Christ and membership in the Church, Christ's body in the world. For many, this happens when they are very young. The church recognizes that while children are members of their human families, no one expects them to be responsible for their share of the chores in the family until much later. In the same way, "baptized infants are members of the Church—the family of faith—but are not yet capable of sharing everything involved in membership."¹ Joe Iovino, a writer who works at United Methodist Communication states, "What God offers us must be accepted in repentance and faith."² Furthermore, *This Is Your Baptismal Liturgy* states, "Confirmation and reaffirmation are our responses of commitment, profession of faith,

¹ Joe Iovino, "Beyond Baptism: What Confirmation Means to the United Methodist," October 23, 2015, n.p.; UMC.Org at United Methodist Communications, accessed August 1, 2018, <http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/beyond-baptism-what-confirmation-means-to-united-methodists>.

² Joe Iovino, "Beyond Baptism: What Confirmation Means to the United Methodist

and rededication.”³ Because confirmation is so closely linked to baptism, the order for the service is contained within *Baptismal Covenant I* in the front of *The United Methodist Hymnal*. Both Confirmation and baptism are important aspects of the Christian journey of UMC children and youth. In the background of this study, the researcher will use the first person “I,” as she shares her own learning experiences in Confirmation classes as the basis of the study.

One of the significant discipleship programs of UMC’s Christian Education is the Confirmation classes. The Confirmation classes are the United Methodist youth’s first step in the journey of deeper understanding of their Christian faith as they themselves declare their intention and commitment to live as a “faithful disciple of Jesus Christ.”⁴ The *Book of Discipline of the UMC* records, “Confirmation is both a human act of commitment and the gracious action of the Holy Spirit strengthening and empowering discipleship.”⁵

District Superintendent (D. S.) Leyda Yambot of the Rizal Philippines Annual Conference East expresses, “Confirmation classes are being required to all the United Methodist baptized members or from other Trinitarian churches who are desiring to be a

³ Gayle Carlton Felton, *By Water and the Spirit: Making Connections for Identity and Ministry* (Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 1998), 1. This is the study edition of the church’s official interpretive document on baptism adopted by the 1996 General Conference. This source is cited in *This is Your Baptismal Liturgy: A Resource for Understanding The United Methodist Ritual of Holy Baptism* (N.p: The General Board of Discipleship, The United Methodist Church, 2013), 1, accessed August 1, 2018, https://gbod-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/legacy/kintera-files/worship-sacraments-baptism/baptismal_liturgy2013.pdf.

⁴ Iovino, “Beyond Baptism: What Confirmation Means to the United Methodist,” n.p.

⁵ *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church* (Nashville, TN: The United Methodist Publishing House, 2004), ¶ 216.1a, 135-136.

United Methodist member.”⁶ Currently, children who are between 12 and 17 are going through Confirmation classes in their respective local churches. The delivery system usually varies from one congregation to another. Upon completion, the participant will be accepted as a professing member of the UMC. *The Book of Discipline of the UMC* says:

It shall be the duty of the pastor, parents, guardians, and all members of the congregation to provide training for the children of the church throughout their childhood that will lead to a personal commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and to an understanding of the Christian faith and the meaning of baptism. Building on the preparation that youth have received throughout their childhood, the pastor shall, at least, annually, organize them into classes to the end that they may profess their faith and be confirmed. This instruction shall be based on materials produced by the UMC or on other resources that present the mission, history, doctrine, and beliefs of the UMC for this purpose.⁷

There are two kinds of membership in the UMC: one is being baptized and the other one is professing.⁸ As a prior condition, the person would attend Confirmation classes in their respective local congregations before becoming a “professing” member. The professing member of a local UMC “profess their faith in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; in Jesus Christ his only Son, and in the Holy Spirit.”⁹ Furthermore, the confirmands, together with the members of a local church, will profess their desire to faithfully live their lives as Jesus Christ’s disciples. The following are the vows which are a part of the order of confirmation and reception into the church. These vows are the basis for the sub-problems that the researcher will ask from the selected respondents of the current study.

⁶ Researcher’s interview with D. S. Leyda Yambot, August 29, 2018.

⁷ *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, ¶ 216.4, 141.

⁸ *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*. ¶ 215, 135.

⁹ *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, ¶ 217, 136.

1. To renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of the world, and repent their sins;
2. To accept the freedom and power that God gives them to resist evil, injustice and oppression;
3. To confess Jesus Christ as Savior, put their whole trust in his grace, and promise to serve him as their Lord;
4. To remain faithful members of Christ's holy church and serve as Christ's representatives in the world;
5. To be loyal to the United Methodist Church and do all in their power to strengthen its ministries.
6. To faithfully participate in its ministries by their prayers, their presence, their gifts, and their service;
7. To receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.¹⁰

Confirmation classes are the avenues where the local church nurtures the faith of the children. However, there are some problems in the churches that the researcher had been observing. First, although there are UMC that are conducting Confirmation classes, some churches are not.¹¹ Second, there are various types of curriculum or materials for Confirmation classes that are being used. Some come from the district and others are being created by the pastors or the assigned teachers of the Confirmation classes. This means that there is no standard manual that is being prescribed for use by all the churches.

I, the researcher, grew up as a United Methodist. As a young Christian (young as eight years old), I remember that I keep on accepting Christ as my Lord and Savior each

¹⁰ *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, ¶ 217, 136.

¹¹ The United Methodist Church in the Philippines has three areas namely: (1) Baguio Episcopal Area, (2) Davao Episcopal Area, and (3) Manila Episcopal Area (MEA). In this study, the participants will be from the MEA. There are 12 Annual Conferences in MEA namely: Bulacan Philippines Annual Conference, Middle Philippines Annual Conference, Palawan Philippines Annual Conference, Pampango Annual Conference, Philippines Annual Conference, Philippines Annual Conference Cavite, Quezon City Philippines Annual Conference-East, Rizal Philippines Philippines Annual Conference-East, South Nueva Ecija Philippines Annual Conference, Southern Tagalog Philippines Annual Conference, Southwest Philippines Annual Conference, West Middle Philippines Annual Conference. And each of these Conferences composed of one or two more districts. From this Area I will choose six respondents.

time the pastor conducted an altar call and promised to serve Him in the UMC even though I was too young. However, during those years, I did not really enjoy being a United Methodist because of its way of worship, which I found boring. I did not use to go to Children's Sunday school so I stayed with my mother in service. I also did not understand why we need to do sacraments such as baptism and Holy Communion. So, when I reached my sixth grade, I went with my older sisters who were attending a megachurch which I enjoyed for two years.

One Sunday together with my mother I went again to UMC. I was 14 years old at that time, and one of the youth leaders invited me to join in the summer youth camp, which I agreed to attend. After attending that camp, I found new friends which I enjoyed being with so I attended again in the UMC, and started to be involved in children's ministries. However, during that time, there were still Sundays that I was attending the megachurch I had previously attended. Practically, I had two churches which, as a youth, I thought was acceptable. After a year, Pastor Ador Crisostomo, who was the local pastor at that time, told me that I am mandated to attend Confirmation classes. As a 15-year-old, the idea of attending classes had never been a good idea. As a teen, I had no full grasp of understanding the importance of the class in my faith journey. However, I still attended for two reasons: (1) my youth friends were my classmates whom I enjoyed being with each time, and (2) I was obedient to my pastor. The classes lasted for six weeks. They were held every Saturday at 9 am, and ended up during lunchtime. Free food was also being served.

The lessons we had concerned United Methodist history and its structures, and lessons about John Wesley and his theology of God's grace. We also talked about the

Holy Trinity, salvation, and about the United Methodist principles, especially about Social Holiness. During our graduation day, pastor Ador led us to recite the UMC vows, which we committed to keep and do as a professing member of the church. What I enjoyed the most was Pastor Ador's way of teaching—as if he was just telling a story. I can recall most of the lessons in the classes because of his way of teaching. We also had games and quizzes to test how much we learned.

In terms of my relationship with God, Confirmation classes did not technically lead me to accept God as my Lord and Savior, but they helped me understand what it means to commit and surrender my life to God. The class also led me to build a strong relationship with my fellow youth as we enjoyed the class while acquiring learnings. My understanding of the church sacraments and all the other rituals we do in the church help me appreciate the time I am spending in the church. After Confirmation classes, the church gave me avenues for new ministries where I can exercise the means of grace.

I can say that Confirmation classes gave me a strong foundation in the journey of my faith. One of the reasons why I committed to be a deaconess was because I came to understand the Wesleyan faith and my identity as a United Methodist. I wanted to share that faith and identity with everyone, which is one of the main reasons I wanted to conduct research on confirmation. In this study, the perceived impact of selected United Methodist members in their learning experiences in Confirmation classes will be explored. The study will offer recommendations to the UMC on aspects of curriculum and instruction regarding Confirmation classes.

Theoretical Framework

This research adapts as its theoretical framework from Robert R. Pazmiño's "Integration of Developmental Concepts with Biblical Anthropology." The key components in Pazmiño's framework that this study will focus upon "Learning." This study will look into the perceived impact of the Confirmation classes upon the (1) Affective, (2) Behavioral, and (3) Cognitive experiences of the selected UMC members. David R. Krathwohl, Benjamin S. Bloom, and Bertram B. Masia in their book, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives* note that the feelings (affective), actions (psychomotor), and thoughts (cognitive) "are expected to develop as a result of the instructional process."¹² In curriculum and instruction, all three domains should be integrated. The result of the teaching-learning enterprise should reflect the outcomes of these three domains. Pazmiño's framework will also give light into the specific variables in the study. Figure 1 below shows that God's sovereignty and grace is both the umbrella and the foundation of holistic human development.

¹² David R. Krathwohl, Benjamin S. Bloom, and Bertram B. Masia, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals, Handbook II: Affective Domain* (New York: David McKay Company, 1964), 4.

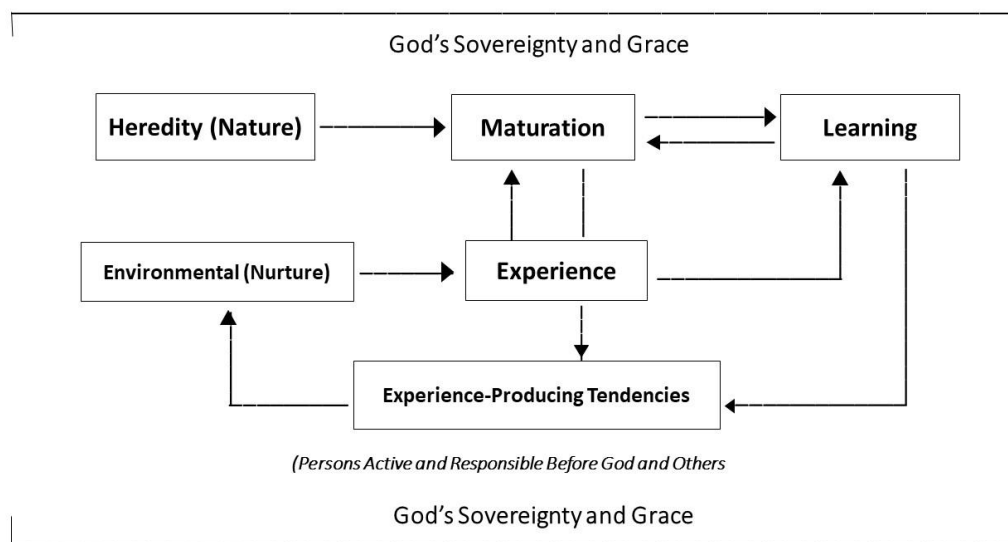


Figure 1: Integration of Developmental Concepts with Biblical Anthropology¹³

The first component of Pazmiño's framework is heredity or nature. This is a genetic and structural makeup of a person in three aspects: biological, cognitive, and emotional that is being passed by the parents or ancestors.

The second component in the framework is maturation. This is defined as different from learning. Maturation is being addressed as the natural process of growth or change of a person biologically without interventions from the outside stimuli or practice. However, Pazmiño argues that a person can also mature mentally and spiritually through learning. In this study, the respondents will be asked if the Confirmation classes had helped or failed to help them in their spiritual life.

¹³ Robert W. Pazmino, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education: An Introduction in Evangelical Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1988), 218.

Pazmiño believes that learning is a process of transformation of a person's understanding, beliefs, values, attitudes, feelings, skills, or behaviors due to one's experience with the natural or supernatural environment. Pazmiño goes to explain that when it comes to their created nature, human beings are called to learn to love. And with God's grace, humans can learn things according to their God-given abilities and capabilities, and do what is expected from them, that is, to live in obedience with God.

The study explores the perceived impact of the selected United Methodist members regarding their Confirmation classes' learning experiences in light of the three learning domains. The first domain is the Affective. According to Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masia, it emphasizes the feelings or the emotions of a person. Within the affective are the interests, attitudes, appreciations, values, and emotional sets or biases of a person.¹⁴ This study will look at how the respondents perceived the impact of their learning experiences in the Confirmation classes in their personal relationship with God.¹⁵ The second domain is Behavioral. Perry Shaw in his book *Transforming Theological Education* notes that "behavioral learning" shapes the person's actions and experiences.¹⁶ This study will look at how the respondents perceived the impact of their learning experiences in the Confirmation classes in their behavioral changes which reflect the UMC vows stated above.¹⁷ The third domain is Cognitive. According to Krathwohl, Bloom, Masia, it is the ability to remember what a person already knows. They also note that cognitive shapes

¹⁴ Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masia, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*, 7.

¹⁵ *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, ¶ 216.4, 141.

¹⁶ Perry Shaw, *Transforming Theological Education* (Cumbria, UK: Langham Global Library, 2004), 67.

¹⁷ *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, ¶ 217, 136.

the person's ability to solve problems by synthesizing and analyzing them.¹⁸ This study will look at how the respondents perceived the impact of their learning experiences in the Confirmation classes in their understanding of the mission and ministries that reflect in the UMC vows.¹⁹

The fourth component in the framework is experience-producing tendencies. This would refer to all the influences that lead a person to have a certain experience. Pazmiño notes that experience-producing tendencies can be from parental influence, a pastor's influence, a teacher's influence, expectations from a certain denomination, a person's accomplishments which have influenced their past learning and maturation, and the impact of their nature and their environment.²⁰ In this study, experience-producing tendencies are all the elements that influenced the selected United Methodist members in relation to the Confirmation classes they have taken.

The fifth component of Pazmiño's framework is environmental or nurture which influences the growth of a person in its total context—physical, psychological, familial, communal, economic, political, social, cultural, educational, aesthetic, and religious dimensions. Environment is also influenced by the person's experience-producing tendencies. Factors that are part of the environment would include the teacher, the class duration, and the curriculum and materials being used in the class among others.

Finally, experience is the sixth component that is included in Pazmiño's framework. Pazmiño affirms that the person's experiences lead him or her to learnings

¹⁸ Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masia, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*, 6.

¹⁹ *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, ¶ 216.4, 141.

²⁰ Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 221.

that eventually mature a person. In this study, the researcher looked into the perceived impact of the selected United Methodist participants regarding their Confirmation classes' learning experiences that they had ten or more years ago. Perry Shaw writes that "the real learning is not what is remembered at the end of a course, but what is remembered five or ten years after taking the course, and even more what shapes in the long term the character and actions of the learner."²¹

Conceptual Framework

This study flowchart vis-à-vis Pazmiño's "Integration of Developmental Concepts with Biblical Anthropology" shows how the Confirmation Classes as an experience may lead the United Methodist member to a holistic learning. In this study, the researcher explored the perceived impact of the six selected United Methodist members regarding their experiences in the Confirmation classes. This study particularly focused on one of the six components of Pazmiño's framework, the "Learning." This is to see how the UMC selected members perceive the impacts of their experiences in Confirmation classes in the light of the three learning domains: the Affective (heart), Behavioral (hand), and Cognitive (head) domains. Upon discovering the answers to the research questions, the study referred to the Christian Education of the United Methodist church for Confirmation classes' curriculum and instruction.

²¹ Shaw, *Transforming Theological Education*, 129.

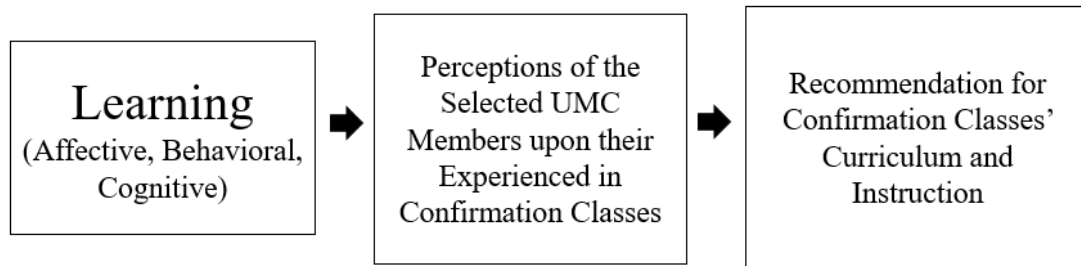


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

Statement of the Problem

This study seeks to answer the main question: what is the perceived impact of the Confirmation classes on the selected United Methodist Church members? The following are the sub-problems of the study:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of the selected UMC members in terms of the following:
 - a. Age?
 - b. Sex?
 - c. How long they have been a member of UMC?
 - d. Current ministry?
2. What are the perceptions of the selected UMC members on their affective experiences with the Confirmation classes in terms of the following:
 - a. In what ways do Confirmation classes help or not help them to experience Christ more?
 - b. In what ways do the Confirmation classes lead or not lead them to a personal commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?

- c. In what ways do the Confirmation classes lead or not lead them to accept the freedom and power that God gives them to resist evil, injustice and oppression?
3. What are the perceptions of the selected UMC members on their behavioral experiences with the Confirmation classes in terms of the following:
 - a. In what ways do Confirmation classes help or not help them to renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of the world, and repent their sins?
 - b. In what ways do Confirmation classes help or not help them to remain faithful members of Christ's holy church and serve as Christ's representatives in the world?
 - c. In what ways do Confirmation classes help or not help them to be a loyal member of the UMC, and do all in their power to strengthen its ministries?
 - d. In what ways do Confirmation classes help or not help them faithfully participate in its ministries by their prayers, their presence, their gifts, and their service?
4. What are the perceptions of the selected UMC members on their cognitive understanding on the following items:
 - a. In what ways do Confirmation classes lead or not lead them to an understanding of the Christian faith?
 - b. In what ways do Confirmation classes lead or not lead them to an understanding of the meaning of baptism?

- c. In what ways do Confirmation classes help or not help them to receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures?
- d. In what ways do Confirmation classes lead or not lead them to an understanding of the following items?
 - i. United Methodist mission?
 - ii. United Methodist history?
 - iii. United Methodist doctrine?
 - iv. United Methodist beliefs?
 - v. United Methodist vows?

Significance of the Study

This study will be significant to the following: first, the study will be helpful to the pastors, deaconesses and Christian educators of the UMC local congregations as they nurture the students in their churches through the Confirmation classes. The study will be able to identify best practices in conducting Confirmation classes in the local churches. This may also be significant to other Protestant denominations who are conducting Confirmation or Membership Classes to prepare children and youth to become professing members of their churches.

Second, this study will be significant to the curriculum writers who are creating materials as they consider important factors such as the age, content of the materials, duration of the class, qualities of teachers, and other factors related to curriculum and instruction.

Finally, this study will be significant to the teachers to come up with teaching strategies that will help them be relevant to student needs and preferences. The narratives

in the case study will help teachers explore what are meaningful experiences for students as they engage in lesson material as well as other factors in the teaching-learning process.

Assumptions

This research is based on the following assumptions: (1) the Confirmation classes are done by the UMC congregations to disciple students so they grow in their relationship with Christ; and (2) the perceptions of the selected UMC members who are the respondents of the study can be identified through their feedback on the experiences they have with the Confirmation classes.

Scope and Delimitations of the Study

This study has the following limitations. First, this study only focuses on the perceived impact of the selected UMC members who took the Confirmation classes ten or more years ago.²² The rationale for this is based on Shaw's statement that "the real learning is not what is remembered at the end of a course, but what is remembered five or ten years after taking the course."²³ The researcher challenged the selected respondents to look back on their previous experiences on how the Confirmation classes impacted their development.

The second limitation of the study revolves around the variables relating only to the learning experiences of the respondents in terms of the three learning domains: the Affective, Behavioral, and Cognitive learning' experiences of the respondents while they were undergoing the Confirmation classes. This study explored how the learning

²² The criteria for the selection of the respondents are identified in Chapter III.

²³ Shaw, *Transforming Theological Education*, 129.

experiences of the confirmation impact their lives in the light of how they perceive its impact.

The third limitation deals with the research locale. The respondents of the study will only come from the churches in the Manila Episcopal Area. This area is the location where the researcher have served as a Christian educator (deaconess) of the UMC. This research wants to contribute to the enhancement of the curriculum and instruction of the Confirmation classes in this area.

The final limitation of the study is on the methodology. It will be limited only to semi-structured interviews that the researcher conducted with six selected respondents (See Appendix A for Interview Protocol and Guide Questions).

The scope of the study is only on the Confirmation classes, and not on Catechism, or on the Membership classes.

In the theoretical framework of the study, the researcher focuses particularly in the “Learning” component of the six components. Under the learning are the three educational domains: Affective, Behavioral, Cognitive.

Definitions of Terms

Affective deals with a person’s values, attitudes, and feelings. In this study, the spiritual development is recognized as a significant facet of the affective domain. The whole paper largely uses the spiritual aspect of development to refer to the affective domain of the experiences of the selected respondents.

Cognitive refers to a person’s ability to acquire knowledge and ability to remember and apply what they learned. In this study, cognitive includes the respondents’

knowledge about being a professing member of the UMC as well as knowledge on the doctrines and history of the UMC.

Confirmation Classes are the lessons conducted by teachers or pastors in the local churches of the United Methodist Church that cover history, beliefs, principles, and what it means to be a United Methodist member. The classes also prepare the youth ages 12 to 17 to be a professing member of the UMC.

Curriculum refers to everything that happens in the teaching-learning process, including the written material that consists of selected experiences that are organized to achieve the Christian educational aims, the learner, the environment, and evaluation among others.²⁴ This is also the definition this study refers to especially in relation to the Confirmation classes.

Manila Episcopal Area refers to one of the areas in United Methodist Church in the Philippines. The area is composed of six Conferences.

Perception refers to the way someone thinks or feels about something. It indicates how a person values something.²⁵ In this study, this would pertain to how the United Methodist selected participants sense the impact of Confirmation classes in terms of their affective (spiritual), behavior, and cognitive aspects of growth.

²⁴ D. Campbell Wyckoff, *The Task of Christian Education* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1955), 127; Scottie May, Catherine Stonehouse, Beth Posterski, and Linda Cannell, *Children Matter: Celebrating Their Place in the Church, Family, and Community* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2005), 196- 197.

²⁵ Gerald R. Girad. *Writing and Assessing Attitudinal Objectives* (Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill Publishing), 1973, 2.

Professing members refer to all baptized people of a local United Methodist Church who have come into membership by profession of faith through appropriate services of the baptismal covenant in the ritual or by transfer from other churches.²⁶

Psychomotor refers to a person's actions and behavior. In this study, I will explore the perceptions of the selected UMC members related to their behavior in the light of the vows that they recite on the Graduation Day of the Confirmation class.

This chapter sets the background of the study which includes the context of the UMC in relation to the Confirmation classes, the frameworks with which this study is anchored on, the research questions and the definition of terms among others. The next chapter will discuss the related literature and studies of the current study.

²⁶ *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church* ¶ 216, 135.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

This chapter reviewed related literature and studies from books, theses, and dissertation, as well as different articles that will support this study. This chapter is divided into three categories: (1) The History and Practice of Confirmation classes in the United Methodist Church; (2) Pazmiño's Theoretical Concepts in Relation to the Developmental Theories; and (3) Factors that Impact the Experiences of the Learners.

The History and Practice of Confirmation classes in the United Methodist Church

This section discuss the brief history and practice of Confirmation classes particularly in the United Methodist Church in the Philippines.

The confirmation in the UMC usually covers the instruction that shall be based on “materials produced by the UMC or on other resources that present the mission, history, doctrine, and beliefs of the UMC.”²⁷ The members of the church who are baptized infants and children are being instructed and being nurtured in the meaning of their faith, their rights and responsibilities of their baptism, and spiritual and moral formation. This is the role of Confirmation classes.²⁸ When a child reaches the age of 12, he or she is being

²⁷ *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, ¶ 216.4, 141.

²⁸ *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, ¶ 216, 135.

encouraged to attend the class. “Using the Baptismal Covenant, youth will profess their faith, commit themselves to a life of discipleship, and be confirmed.”²⁹ Another class that is being held in the UMC annually is called Membership Classes. Confirmation and Membership Classes cover the same material. According to Rev. Jonathan Loscos, Membership Classes are for people who are desiring to be a UMC member even though they were not being baptized in the UMC. Membership Classes are for people ages 18 and up.³⁰

By way of a brief summary of the milieu in which John Wesley headed Methodism, a beginning idea of Confirmation classes started with a small instructional course by Martin Luther after the Protestant Reformation in 1528. Wesley never technically left the Anglican Church even after the Methodist Church was founded. So, the earliest adaptation of Methodist Confirmation classes was recorded in England and America in the early the middle 1800s.³¹ The age of the students in Confirmation referred to the story of Jesus in the temple in Luke 2:41-52. The selection of the age of the participants has foundations that go all the way back to the Jewish custom of Bar Mitzvah (for boys becoming “Sons of the Law”) and later, Bat Mitzvah (for girls - “Daughters of the Law”).³²

²⁹ *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, ¶ 216, 135-136.

³⁰ Personal Interview with Rev. Jonathan Loscos, a UMC pastor in RPACE, December 12, 2018.

³¹ David Lowes Watson, *The Early Methodist Class Meeting* (Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 1987), 145-152.

³² *Encyclopedia of Jewish and Israeli History, Politics and Culture, with Biographies, Statistics, Articles and Documents on Topics from Anti-Semitism to Zionism*, “Bar/Bat Mitzvah - Jewish Virtual Library,” <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/bar-bat-mitzvah> (accessed November 26, 2018).

The widespread use of curriculum for churches to use with Confirmation classes globally did not become an expectation until after World War II. The time when classes became popular in the Philippines was during the 1980s. In the researcher's personal interviews with the two District Superintendents of Rizal Philippines Annual Conference-East, Rev. Leyda Yambot and Rev. Fernando Jose, one of the official curriculum materials that is being used for the conducting of Confirmation classes by most churches in the Philippines up until the present time is the curriculum made by Rev. Jose Padang, a UMC pastor, published in 1985.³³ DS. Yambot said it was the same curriculum they used when she took Confirmation classes. DS. Jose affirmed that the curriculum created by Rev. Padang was the curriculum he used to teach the class. The topics included in the 1985 curriculum are: John Wesley, The 25 Articles of Faith, God's Grace, The Structure of the UMC, The Principles and Beliefs of the UMC, some important notes in the *Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church* about membership and the membership vows of the UMC.³⁴

According to DS. Yambot, there was no known evidence at the exact date of the establishment of the UMC Confirmation classes in the Philippines. In the researcher's personal interview with Prof. Elery Ortiz, the UMC historian in the Philippines, he also states that he did not find the exact dates when the Confirmation classes in the Philippines began. He says that the early American missionaries in the Philippines did not

³³ Personal interview with the two Rizal Philippines Annual Conference-East (RPACE) District Superintendents of the United Methodist Church, October 25, 2018.

³⁴ The contents mentioned above are included in *Pag-unawa sa Nagkakaisang Iglesia Metodista (Understanding the Methodist Faith)*, a 1985 curriculum written by a UMC pastor in the Philippines, Rev. Jose Padang. These are also included in the latest written curriculum, *Hakbang sa Paglago: Saligan ng Pananampalatayang Metodista (Onward to Growth: The Foundation of the United Methodist Faith)*, a 2018 curriculum written by Rev. Noel P. Adriano.

speak about “confirmation” for church membership.³⁵ The vows that are being used in the UMC as new members profess their faith in front of the congregation was adapted from *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church* during the 2008 General Conference. DS. Yambot says that during her time, only four components the UMC vows were focused upon: Prayer, Presence, Service, and Gifts. Early 2009, Witnessing was added.³⁶

There was a set of discipleship materials that was used and made available in 1984, along with *My Membership Vows* by Edsel A. Ammons. The following materials were being given to the UMC members who graduated in Confirmation classes: *The United Methodist Member’s Handbook*, (order no. DR2919), *Living Our Beliefs* (order no. DR169), *The United Methodist Primer* (order no. DR024), *Evangelism and Theology in Wesleyan Spirit* (order no. DR215), *United Methodist Way—Set of 10* (DR215), *Affirmation of the United Methodist Church* (order no. DR255), *A Brief History of the United Methodist Church* (order no. DR256), *A Brief Introduction to the Book of Discipline—Set of 10* (order no. DR243). All these were published through Discipleship Resources, P.O. Box 840, Nashville, Tennessee. The publishing of the above materials was done in 1984 and was reprinted in the Philippines in Ermita, Manila in 1999. A website from 1999 is www.discipleshipresources.org.

John Wesley, together with his brother Charles, highly valued discipleship. They had a commitment to seriously continue walking with God as a disciple, and to help one

³⁵ Personal interview with Prof. Elery Ortiz, historian of the United Methodist Church in the Philippines, December 20, 2018.

³⁶ Discipleship Ministries of the United Methodist Church, “New Membership Vows and Ritual (Revised and Corrected),” <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/new-membership-vows-and-ritual-revised-and-corrected>.

another to grow in faith as well. To do this, they decided to have weekly class meetings which were grounded with a specific format, and with solid theological principles. These theological principles were easily understood by the ordinary people to make sure that everyone could apply what they had learned and disciple others too.³⁷

Though Wesley never offered Confirmation classes, he did encourage Methodists to undertake Catechism. Giving an example of catechesis during the 19th century as a part of the post-John Wesley time, Watson says the group of twelve members would start with singing and praying. After that, the catechism was taught through a conversation between the leader of the group and the members. The leader will ask a certain series of personal questions such as about thanksgiving and confessions of sins, and each of the members in the class will answer. Thus, the leader of the group take hold the accountability in addressing the needs of each member by giving them advice. The method used during that time emphasized discipleship and accountability. Both leaders and the members should be accountable to each other, especially in terms of praying with each other.³⁸ The booklet *My Membership Vows*, written by Edsel A. Ammons, is given to a UMC member who has graduated from Confirmation classes and notes that a UMC member commits to uphold the church with prayer. Ammons states, “Prayer is the desire of the faithful for a closer walk with God, for communication with the Holy Spirit for openness of mind and heart to the Source of life and health and peace.”³⁹ The commitment to intercessory prayer is on the behalf of others. Ammons continues to say, “It is a common practice, but

³⁷ Watson, *The Early Methodist Class Meeting*, 2.

³⁸ Watson, *The Early Methodist Class Meeting*, 111-115.

³⁹ Edsel A. Ammons, *My Membership Vows* (Ermita, Manila: Disciple Sources, 1999), 3.

many who do it are not convinced of its effectiveness. Much of Christian faith centers here, and Christian living, in general, would suffer if prayers for others were omitted.”⁴⁰ John Wesley’s way of encouraging people to be an accountable disciple is being practiced in Confirmation classes as part of the UMC vows.⁴¹

Rather than Confirmation classes, Wesley required Methodists to join class meetings. Watson says that the class meeting during John Wesley’s time was “pragmatic and more task-oriented.” From the idea of Kurt Lewin, Watson describes the process of behavioral changes through class meeting in three stages: the “unfreezing,” “changing,” and “refreezing.” Though the class probably had all three of these stages, he says that “refreezing,” which means “the integration of a new way of life following the change brought about by the commitment of the members to an accountable discipleship,” is the one that primarily took place.⁴² Lewin also elucidates:

Time and again early the Methodist biography reveals that the fellowship of the class meeting was a major influence in bringing people to the point of Christian commitment as well as confirming them in it afterwards. Conversions were usually a climactic point in a process of gradual awakening to the truth of the gospel, in which attendance at class meetings played a vital role.⁴³

⁴⁰ Ammons, *My Membership Vows*, 3.

⁴¹ John Wesley writes about accountability this way: “He that thus loved God could not but love his brother also; and “not in word only, but in deed and in truth.” “If God,” said he, “so loved us, we ought also to love one another” (1 John 4:11); yea, every soul of man, as “the mercy of God is over all his works” (Ps. 145:9). Agreeably hereto, the affection of this lover of God embraced all mankind for his sake; not excepting those whom he had never seen in the flesh, or those of whom he knew nothing more than that they were “the offspring of God,” for whose souls his Son had died; not excepting the “evil” and “unthankful,” and least of all his enemies, those who hated, or persecuted, or despitefully used him for his Master’s sake.” (Sermon 4 (text of the 1872 edition, preached at St. Mary’s Oxford, before the University, August 24, 1744

⁴² Watson, *The Early Methodist Class Meeting*, 132.

⁴³ Watson, *The Early Methodist Class Meeting*, 132.

As Christians commit themselves to Christ as a disciple, taking accountability with their fellow Christians was expected from them. As one of the means of grace, being accountable would help them grow more in their Christian faith. The book, *Foundations for Teaching and Learning* discusses about the United Methodist pathways in faith journeys. The following is a discussion on these faith journeys:

One of the four journeys have to do with the Confirmation classes which is the first stage. This stage is called the “Assenting to statements of belief,” on which children are intimately involved in the faith of their family, especially their parents and grandparents and other people that are important to them. Family discussion, worship during Sundays and church schools are places where children learn the beliefs and creeds. When a child reaches the age of “formal instruction,” then they will be guided to go to “Confirmation Class, an intense, year-long program taught by the pastor.” Memorization and repetition of the important beliefs and practices are part of this training. This is usually done as a year-long program taught by the pastor. The classes include instruction in doctrine, practice of prayer, and “use of the congregation’s book of worship.” Hence, obedience on the church teachings provided the framework of the life of those who took the class.⁴⁴

Pazmiño’s Theoretical Concepts in Relation to the Developmental Theories

This section cites Pazmiño’s Interactive Christian Model as it relates to some developmental theories that explain the growth of learners. Pazmiño’s model gives a

⁴⁴ *Foundations for Teaching and Learning*, 12.

holistic Christian worldview on how human beings develop. According to the model, there are six elements through which humans can fully develop: Heredity, Maturation, Learning, Experience-Producing Tendencies, Environment, and Experience. The umbrella and the foundation of these elements is God's Sovereignty and Grace. These six elements have been noted in Chapter I. In this section, the three learning domains will also be discussed.

Human beings are created in the image of God. By their God-given nature, they have dignity and are entitled to be loved and respected. However, when sin entered the world, human beings became fallen in sin, and need to be transformed by Jesus Christ.⁴⁵ God's sovereignty and grace is always reaching out to people despite their fallen nature.

Sin makes it hard for human beings to grow in Christ. Even John Wesley in his book, *A Plain Account on Christian Perfection* acknowledges this. Wesley acknowledges that Christian perfection does not mean living without sinning.⁴⁶ Klaus Issler and Robert Habermas claim that it is a misconception to assume that when people learn they will automatically change their behavior. Issler and Habermas said that there are "inner factors" that should not be neglected. These are similar to what LeBar notes as: "sin tendencies, motivation, response to the Holy Spirit, and the complexities of making and persevering in choices."⁴⁷ Sin is operative even to those who already profess their faith in God. However, Wesley also says that God's grace is sufficient in overcoming sins and temptations. For Wesley, the definition of sin is a "willful action" of human beings. He

⁴⁵ Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 218.

⁴⁶ John Wesley, *A Plain Account on Christian Perfection* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1966), 24.

⁴⁷ Issler and Habermas, *How We Learn*, 22.

explains that the will of human being can be aligned to God's will through the work of the Holy Spirit. For where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.⁴⁸ Thus Christians, even those who first profess their faith, need to learn to continue to walk with God. This indicates that Christian educators should not stop nurturing these people. They should provide programs and activities wherein the professing members can be involved in exercising what they already know.

In the process of growing spiritually, one should overcome the inertia that prevents them from becoming mature.⁴⁹ Thus, human beings are "in need of instruction, correction, and discipline which recognizes the operation of God's grace at every point of [their] inadequacy."⁵⁰ Through God's grace, He provides not just redemption with His' creation, but also effecting this redemption in the lives of men and women.⁵¹ The researcher notes from this that humans also have the responsibility to exercise their faith in God, and continue to walk in His grace. God's providence of grace leads people to a transformed life.⁵² His grace enables and strengthens human beings to continue living a life in accordance to His will. God's prevenient grace guides people to encounter and experience the gospel before they receive and accept Jesus.⁵³ Through the work of the

⁴⁸ Wesley, *A Plain Account on Christian* 24-28.

⁴⁹ Dirks, "Foundations of Human Development," 75.

⁵⁰ Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 218.

⁵¹ Paul Helm, *Contours of Christian Theology: The Providence of God* (New York: Inter-Varsity Press), 119.

⁵² Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 208.

⁵³ Myung Suk Kwak, "A Case Study of Mothers who Participate in Saturday Open School with their Children: An Evaluation in Light of Pazminiño's Interactive Christian Model" (Master's Thesis, Asia Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, 2017), 53.

Holy Spirit, people encounter the environment on which they'll hear the gospel.⁵⁴ The Holy Spirit guides the people on the path they should walk, and meet people who will influence them to grow in grace and in faith with God. The continued work of the Holy Spirit helps people to see their sins, confess and repent, and experience a transformation in their lives.⁵⁵ Pazmiño expounds, "Persons can be activated by the Holy Spirit who is present in human life to realize this potential of transformation in Christ personally and corporately. The Holy Spirit encounters the human spirit and makes transformation possible across the life span."⁵⁶

Without the work of the Holy Spirit, transformation is impossible for human beings. Westerhoff, III notes, "We are to be a people who know that we cannot manage history or nature, our political, social, and economic systems, or our own lives, and who live dependent upon God, trusting in God's grace and love."⁵⁷ It is only through God's grace that people are becoming aware of their sins, and their need to be transformed in Christ. Thus, "under God's sovereignty and grace, human beings undergo various dimensions to be mature holistically in their entire lives."⁵⁸ Talking about the experience-producing tendency of a person, Pazmiño elucidates:

Although people are influenced by their inborn nature and the nurture they receive, they are active as well as receptive. In Isaiah 29:22-23, children's very presence is said to be a reminder of God's faithfulness. Scripture affirms the place of children in ministering to God and others (1 Samuel 1-

⁵⁴ Kwak, "A Case Study of Mothers," 53.

⁵⁵ Robert W. Pazminiño, *God our Teacher: Theological Basics in Christian Education* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 48, 171.

⁵⁶ Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 192.

⁵⁷ Westerhoff III, *Will our Children Have Faith?*, 48.

⁵⁸ Kwak, "A Case Study of Mothers." 53.

3) The psalmist declares that from the lips of children and infants God has ordained praise (Ps. 8:2). From the very beginnings of life, persons are viewed as active and responsible before God at the level of their understanding and competence. They have experience-producing tendencies.⁵⁹

Through God's grace, people, even young children, are capable to learn and serve God under God's given capacities. They are active and, though their environment and the people surrounding them can influence their learnings, they themselves have their own way to explore and learn. Pazmiño continues on to state:

God created persons with minds and wills and a disposition to gain competence and abilities in a vast variety of endeavors. Often, despite limitations, people express their curiosity, creativity, and uniqueness. . . . As indicated in the model, one person's experience producing tendencies are influenced by previous learning and maturation, and the impact of nature and nurture in each person's case cannot be precisely given the reality of a person's own active engagement with such influence. Therefore, no guarantees of what outcomes will occur can be assured in any educational setting.⁶⁰

A person's experience-producing tendencies, as being guided by the Holy Spirit under God's sovereignty and grace, can lead them to learning that will mature them holistically.

To give more view about Pazmiño's Interactive Christian Model, human development will also be discussed. These theorists and their theories are: Jean Piaget's cognitive development theory, Erik Erikson's psychosocial development, Lawrence Kohlberg's moral development, and James Fowler's faith development.

Jean Piaget described his theory about human cognitive developmental in four stages from baby up until a person reaches youth. The first stage is called the

⁵⁹ Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 221-222.

⁶⁰ Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 221-222.

Sensorimotor (from birth to two years) stage, on which the reality of a child is limited through his or her senses. The second stage is called the *Preoperational* stage that describes two sub-stages: (1) “Preconceptual” (2-4 years) in which the child doesn’t have the ability to identify the differences of the items from the same class; and (2) “Intuitive” (4-7 years) in which the child’s thinking is more logical, however, still more governed by perception than logic. The third stage is called *Concrete Operations* (7-11 years). Piaget and Inhelder elucidate that children are able to draw inferences from observations in order to make a generalization. This means that children can now think logically and can apply his or her thinking to concrete situations. Children are less egocentric than earlier and able to understand other points of view in their communication. At the age of twelve, they think in abstract and more logical terms. Their ability of thinking is more systematic, developing hypothesis about why something is happening that way.⁶¹ The last stage is the *Formal Operations* (12-15 years) in which a child’s logical thinking can now be applied by using abstract concepts with symbols even without real objects.⁶² The researcher notes here that to move from *Concrete* to *Formal Operations* is dynamic and fluid. It cannot be pinned exactly to 12 years old. Lev Vygotsky elucidated a person’s “Zone Proximal Development” (ZPD), in which he explains that people learn best according to their level of readiness.⁶³ This does not mean that if a person turns 12, he can be totally moved to the last stage of Piaget’s theory. These stages suggest that those who are working with

⁶¹ Jean Piaget and Bärbel Inhelder, *The Psychology of the Child* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1969), 96-99.

⁶² Dirks, “Foundations of Human Development,” 77.

⁶³ This discussion relates to the dynamic or the fluid nature of the move from concrete to formal Operations.

children should meet their needs according to their age context. Piaget's study also supports placing the Confirmation classes at an age of 12 or above where the child has reached Formal Operations and can handle the abstract thinking.

Piaget discovered that the human mind has the capacity and the drive to make sense of his or her experiences, thoughts, and feelings.⁶⁴ And under God's Sovereignty and Grace which is at work in the life of the people, humans can organize and assimilate the knowledge and experiences he/she takes and experience as he/she develops. "God's plan for growth to maturity has been imprinted to all."⁶⁵ Leaning towards reasoning, Piaget's goal is to advance the child to a more mature stage. Thus, the educator's primary concern is to help the child on *how* he/she reasons, and not on *what* he/she will reason.⁶⁶ Piaget assumes that growth, development, and maturation will occur only when human reasoning is improved to the next level. He also assumes human beings as autonomous persons or possesses freedom as he argued that every child has the right to the kind of education that aims at the full development of the human personality.⁶⁷ In Christian perspectives, human fallenness can affect human reasoning and all the human other aspects in human life. And in a Christian worldview, the fullness of growth has something to do with God's intervention in the life of humans through the work of the Holy Spirit.⁶⁸ God also expects humans to be good stewards of themselves as they are

⁶⁴ Dirks, "Foundations of Human Development," 74.

⁶⁵ Dirks, "Foundations of Human Development," 72.

⁶⁶ Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 198.

⁶⁷ Jean Piaget, *To Understand is to Invent* (New York: Viking, 1973), 41.

⁶⁸ Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 199.

being strengthened by the Holy Spirit. Jean Piaget's theory gave a framework that educators can consider in designing curriculum, and also the approaches, goals, and tools that will be using in the teaching-learning process. In this study, Piaget's work shows that the best age for the church to consider providing classes such as confirmation is during the last stage or the Formal-Operational stage. This is because children have now the capacity to think abstractly and can understand symbols.

Erik Erikson developed a theory about psychosocial development. The theory focuses on the emotions and their influence as a human matures. Erikson's eight stages of psychosocial development talk about the issues humans are facing that need to be addressed and fulfilled depending on which stage they are in. The stages are: (1) Trust vs. Basic Mistrust (infancy), (2) Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt (Early Childhood), (3) Initiative vs. Guilt (Play Age), (4) Industry vs. Inferiority (School Age), (5) Identity vs. Role Diffusion (Adolescence), (6) Intimacy vs. Isolation (Young Adulthood), (7) Generativity vs. Self-absorption (Adulthood), (8) Integrity vs. Despair, Disgust (Old Age).⁶⁹ Erikson's theory adapted insights from biology, ego psychology, and anthropology to analyze how a person perceived his or her self, body, and the role in society in different stages of his or her life.⁷⁰ Table 1 shows the summary of Erikson's theory:

⁶⁹ Erik H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society*, 2nd ed. (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1963), 247-269.

⁷⁰ Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 200.

Table 1: Erik Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development⁷¹

Psychosocial Crises	Radius of Significant Relations	Related Elements of Social Order	Psychosocial Modalities	Psychosexual Stages
Trust vs. Mistrust	Maternal Person	Cosmic Order	To get, To give in return	Oral-Respiratory, Sensory-Kinesthetic (Incorporative Modes)
Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt	Parental Persons	"Law and Order"	To hold (on) To let (go)	Anal-Urethral, Muscular (Retentive-Eliminative)
Initiative vs. Guilt	Basic Family	Ideal Prototypes	To make (=going after) To "make like" (=playing)	Infantile-Genital Locomotor (Intrusive, Inclusive)
Industry vs. Inferiority	"Neighborhood" School	Technological Elements	To make things (=completing) To make things together	"Latency"
Identity and Reputation vs. Identity Diffusion	Peer Groups and Outgroups, Models of Leadership	Ideological Perspectives	To be oneself (or not to be) To share being oneself	Puberty
Intimacy and Solidarity vs. Isolation	Partners in friendship, sex, competition, cooperation	Patterns of Cooperation and Competition	To lose and find oneself in another	Genitality
Generativity vs. Self-Absorption	Divided labor and shared household	Currents of Education and Tradition	To make be To take care of	
Integrity vs. Despair	"Mankind" "my Kind"	Wisdom	To be, Through having been To face not being	

Erikson's theory provides a framework on how educators can provide for the specific needs of a person according to their age. In the context of an adolescent who is experiencing the Identity vs. Role Diffusion, Christian educators have to lead the learners

⁷¹ Erik Erikson, *Identity and The Life Cycle: Selected Papers* (New York: International University Press, Inc., 1959), 166.

to understand that true identity can only be found in Jesus Christ. It is a good age for the youth to decide for reaffirmation or confirmation.

Lawrence Kohlberg developed the theory about moral development of a person. He classifies three levels of development that are divided in six stages. The first level is the Pre-Conventional (4-10 years), on which children perceive what is morally bad based on the consequences of action. The stages have to do with obedience and punishment and are concerned with satisfying the needs. The second level is Conventional (10-13 years) in which a child has the desire to gain approval from others. The stages on this level have to do with the person's desire to have a "good" boy/girl image and a concern for law and order, doing and showing respect. The last level is the Post-Conventional (13-adult years) in which a person is basing his or her decision with regards to the standards agreed upon by society. The stages of this level are concerned with the legitimate rights of the individual and concern for ethical principles.⁷² In a Christian worldview, morality also involves a *theonomy* which means that persons are dependent on God, and at the same time are part of the fellowship in Christian community, on which he/she depends his or her moral values.⁷³ Christians believe that it is only by God's grace that people are able to do good things and make good decisions. The Confirmation classes' participants in consideration to Kohlberg's theory are typically in the latter stages of his moral development. Pastors and Christian educators have to consider ensuring the commitments of youth in this stage. Youth must profess their faith based on their desire to continue to

⁷² Lawrence Kohlberg, "Stages of Moral Development as a Basis for Moral Education," in *Moral Development Moral Education and Kohlberg: Basic Issues in Philosophy, Psychology, Religion, and Education*, edited by Brenda Munsey (Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1980), 91-94.

⁷³ Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 204.

live their lives under God's sovereignty and grace, and not because it is the decision being made by the society for him/her.

James Fowler introduced his theory of six stages of faith development, deriving from Piaget, Erikson, and Kohlberg's theories. The first stage is the *Intuitive-Projective Faith*, in which a child up to age of seven imitates the faith of their parents. The *Mythic-Literal Faith* is that a childhood in later age accounts his belief both to his parents and to other people. The *Synthetic-Conventional Faith* is that teens lean more to their peers, expectations of their family, and other groups of which he or she belongs. Thus, in this stage, the support of groups to the individual may help in developing the person's faith, as in this stage, increasing.⁷⁴ The *Individual-Reflective Faith* is that late teens and early adulthood develop their personal values and beliefs. "In the face of a liturgical ritual or religious symbol, the Individual-Reflective person asks, 'But what does it mean?' If the symbol or symbolic act is truly meaningful, stage 4 presumes, its meanings can be translated into propositions, definitions and/or conceptual foundations."⁷⁵ In this sense, at this stage, people start walking in and owning their faith. The *Conjunctive Faith* is that an adult has a more mature faith on which they can "integrate traditional positions, their own doubts, and the views of others into a meaningful whole." The last stage is *Universalizing Faith* in which individuals can now identify "beyond self with God as a felt reality."⁷⁶ In the context of this study, the students at this age are in between the *Synthetic-Conventional Faith*, and *Individual-Reflective faith*. students at this stage can

⁷⁴ James W. Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest of for Meaning* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1981), 78.

⁷⁵ Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 180.

⁷⁶ Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 208-209.

enjoy being in classes with peers their age, and their faith is increasing more as well. In the stage four which is the *Individual-Reflective faith*, students starts to develop their personal values and beliefs. Thus, Confirmation classes in this stage may help them in developing their personal values and beliefs.

In the stage of adolescence, James E. Loder says that they are more capable to commit faithfully in self-sacrifice in accordance to the calling of the Spirit because of their “deep ideological hunger, their heightened awareness of their potential nonbeing, and their sense of urgency about the meaning of life.”⁷⁷ Thus, one of the important tasks of nurturing their spiritual growth is to lead them to think through the applications of their issues and situations with biblical truths. Developing the faith of adolescence requires a safe environment wherein they can feel safe to express their pains, and their frustrations. Fellowship with a Christian nurturing community is essential in the growth of their faith; and being surrounded with godly mature people or older Christians can make them desire wisdom, and also for a mature faith.⁷⁸ This emphasizes the importance of the church partnering with the home at this age to advance spiritual growth and development.

Holistic human transformation happens only through God’s Sovereignty and Grace that is the umbrella and the foundation of human development, says Loder, and he expounds:

... the supreme transformation, which includes but transforms all these transformations of creation and the human spirit, is the transforming power of the Creator Spirit who is at work to transform and redeem all of

⁷⁷ James E. Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit: Human Development in Theological Perspective* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1998), 248.

⁷⁸ Dirks, “Moral and Faith Development in Christian Education,” 122.

God's creation. This is the grand, irreversible theological figure-ground shift in which our entire developing life, the whole of the life span, the totality of one's own existence, moves into the background, and the Creator Spirit becomes the central figure, the definitive reality. The human spirit in all its proximate transformations is now ultimately grounded as spirit in God's Spirit. This is the glorious liberty of the children of God.⁷⁹

These materials indicate that Christian educators have to meet the needs of individuals according to their stages of development, or at least consider their stages of development in designing a material which will help the members to grow maturely in their faith. Randall Furushima suggests three things to be considered by church leaders, particularly Christian educators: (1) intentionally, the programs given in the church have to be developed and maintained; (2) the curriculum and teaching resources have to be critiqued in terms of dominant characteristics of people's stages of development; and (3) Christian educators must be trained about the knowledge and expectation of multiple dimensions of life through which the faith of the person can be expressed.⁸⁰ The insights of the theorists can provide descriptions for gaining understanding about humans and how they develop. However, it is important to note that the Holy Spirit, who is at work in the lives of the people, cannot be bound by these developmental theories, although they are of value to consider in designing programs and curriculum as aforementioned. The United Methodist members experience developments in their lives—physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, and psychosocial. Without the grace that is always at work in the life of human beings, transformation may not be possible.

⁷⁹ Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit*, 228.

⁸⁰ Randall Y. Furushima, "The Developmental Faith of Youth," *New Conversations* 5 (Winter 1980-81): 41-42.

The Three Domains of Learning Experiences

Perry Shaw's *Transforming Theological Education* notes that the "effective learning requires interconnection between the cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions."⁸¹ In this section, I will discuss the Confirmation classes in the light of the three domains of learning experiences: (1) Affective and spiritual, (2) Behavioral, and (3) Cognitive.

The Affective Domain of Learning Experiences

Perry Shaw says, "Strong emotional experiences also have a high likelihood of being permanently stored. We tend to remember best and (even more) the worst things that have happened to us. If a teacher can elicit strong emotions in learners, those learners are certainly more likely to remember."⁸² Since the affective (heart) lies the values, emotions, attitudes, and motivations of the person, it is important for the teacher to note and understand the emotional state of his or her students. This study wants to discover how the respondents value Confirmation classes in terms of their spiritual experiences which have direct relation to the affect aspect of the experiences of the learners.

Tom Bisset, in his book, *Why Christian Kids Leave the Faith* discusses issues why people leave the faith. One of the reasons he gave why people leave the faith is because people have troubling unanswered questions about their faith. Bisset claims that wrestling with questions and doubts can make Christians healthier and make their faith stronger. Not dealing with this can result in the opposite. People that surround those who

⁸¹ Shaw, *Transforming Theological Education*, 94.

⁸² Shaw, *Transforming Theological Education*, 135.

have questions and doubts with their faith such as pastors, teachers, parents, and church leaders, can help them. However, when the parents, pastors, teachers and Christian leaders do not understand and do not deal with doubts and questions of those who need help and assistance, it can contribute to the problems.⁸³ Dealing with this, Bisset notes the importance of the role of parents in answering their children's questions about faith. He also suggests that parents should ask their pastors for help, or send their children to seminars and lectures.⁸⁴

John H. Westerhoff III in his book, *Will Our Children Have Faith?* notes that "searching faith," has three characteristics, and one of the three is the action of "doubt and or critical judgement." This means that in order to fully own the faith, people need to doubt and question the faith. "At this point the 'religion of the heard' becomes equally important with the 'religion of the heart.'"⁸⁵ Westerhoff notes that, church should be a community that helps one another in strengthening each other's faith. The church mission is to be "a community where Christian faith is proclaimed, experienced, understood, lived, and acted upon in history."⁸⁶ However some churches do not focus on strengthening the faith. Westerhoff says:

For example, Confirmation classes . . . the ritual itself had two sorts of questions. The first dealt with question concerning faith and the second with institutional commitment. In every case we discovered that the leader of the ritual behaved in preferential ways toward the latter. One set of field notes after another disclosed that faith questions were asked quickly, and

⁸³ Tom Bisset, *Why Christian Kids Leave the Faith* (New York: Discovery House Publishers, 1992), 27-40.

⁸⁴ Bisset, *Why Christian Kids Leave the Faith*, 48-49.

⁸⁵ John H. Westerhoff III, *Will Our Children Have Faith?*, revised ed. (New York: Morehouse Publishing, 2000), 94.

⁸⁶ Westerhoff, *Will Our Children Have Faith?*, 38.

answered in a similar manner. The minister then paused, looked the candidates in the eyes, spoke very slowly and listened very carefully for their reply to the questions on institutional loyalty. Is there any doubt which questions were considered more important? Also, when adults and parents were asked if they would be upset if their children decided not to be confirmed or baptized typically said yes. But when asked why, they all replied that they would be lost as church members. No one expressed concern for their children's souls or faith.⁸⁷

Under the affective and spiritual, this study seeks to discover whether the Confirmation classes do or do not help the United Methodist members value their faith more deeply as a United Methodist, and lead them to know Christ more.

Another reason Bisset gave why people leave the faith is because “they never personally own their faith.”⁸⁸ In his interview with David Allen, a Christian psychiatrist about this concern, Allen said that having the sense of identity and individuality is important “to have a truly meaningful relationship with God.”⁸⁹ Thus, those who own their faith are coming more deeply in relationship with God. *The United Methodist Book of Discipline* states that a faithful membership in the local church is important to personally grow and to deepen the commitment of a person in the “will and grace of God.”⁹⁰ Christian education programs like Confirmation classes provide an avenue wherein the United Methodist members are first taught what it means to be a United Methodist. The classes help the members find a “sense of identity” as they grow in their

⁸⁷ Westerhoff notes that his group of students engaged in the research project rites of initiation in Protestant religious communities and were able to create typology for rites of initiation: (1) rites of institutional incorporation, and (2) rites of faith commitment. In their discovery, most mainline Protestant churches were more concerned with institutional incorporation and survival, 39.

⁸⁸ Bisset, *Why Christian Kids Leave the Faith*, 93.

⁸⁹ Bisset, *Why Christian Kids Leave the Faith*, 106.

⁹⁰ *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, ¶ 218, 137.

Christian faith as a United Methodist. At the end of the classes, they are allowed to decide whether or not they will continue to be a professing member of the United Methodist Church.

The document entitled, *A Study of Youth Confirmation and First Communion in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod*, notes that some attitudes toward attending confirmation can cause problems that can affect the experiences and learnings of the attendees. It notes that while some parents see the importance for their children to attend in class like confirmation to grow their children's faith, "some youth resent being forced by their parents to attend the instruction classes."⁹¹ Another problem is that some parents do not see that they have responsibility in being partnered with the pastor. As being perceived by the teacher, the attitude of the parents reflect with the attitude of the children towards the class.⁹² The study of the Lutheran church about confirmation affirms the need of the parental involvement for the success of the confirmation. In the confirmation of the UMC, parents are not usually being involved in the classes. However, Lutheran church study notes that the emphasis of confirmation is relationship—relationship to the confirmands with his or her fellow, with his or her pastor or teacher, with his or her parents or guardians, and above all, with God.⁹³ The involvement of the parents, grandparents, and other people who model to youth the Christian faith, can help the youth to understand and give more importance to his or her faith; and the importance of his or her involvements in Christian congregation, worship and study, and witness and

⁹¹ *A Study of Youth Confirmation and First Communion in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod* (St. Louis, MO: Department of Youth Ministry Board for Congregational Services, n.d.), 4.

⁹² *A Study of Youth Confirmation and First Communion in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod*, 4.

⁹³ *A Study of Youth Confirmation*, 5.

service.⁹⁴ Thus, the relationship between the youth with his or her parents, and the parents with the pastor or the teacher of the church, can help the participants of the confirmation to have positive attitudes toward the class which may have a positive impact.

The Behavioral Domain of Learning Experiences

According to Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masia, the behavior of the person lies both in the influence of cognitive (head) and affective (heart).⁹⁵ This means that the behavior of the person has to do with how the person perceives things either cognitively and/or affectively. Perry Shaw, talking about behavioral says that people can be agents of transformation if they are prepared to relate theory to practice. He claims that it is not enough to just let the students keep on reflecting what they learned although it is important, but to also put their learnings into practice. And in order to do that, it will be necessary to “give more time to discussion of key themes that are of significance to contemporary daily life.”⁹⁶ The UMC vows reflects the behavioral domain of this study.

They are as follows:

1. To renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of the world, and repent their sins;
2. To accept the freedom and power that God gives them to resist evil, injustice and oppression;
3. To confess Jesus Christ as Savior, put their whole trust in his grace, and promise to serve him as their Lord;
4. To remain faithful members of Christ’s holy church and serve as Christ’s representatives in the world;
5. To be loyal to the United Methodist Church and do all in their power to strengthen its ministries.

⁹⁴ *Foundations for Teaching and Learning*, 11.

⁹⁵ Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masia, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*, 45.

⁹⁶ Shaw, *Transforming Theological Education*, 96.

6. To faithfully participate in its ministries by their prayers, their presence, their gifts, and their service;
7. To receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.⁹⁷

Talking about owning faith, it is important to note that the students have understood and valued what the Christian educators or church leaders are teaching them about their faith. In the context of this study, D. S. Yambot says that the teachers have to emphasize the vows, letting the members fully grasp what it means in their lives.⁹⁸ By understanding and valuing the teachings about faith being taught, Westerhoff says that owning faith also involves “conversion experiences” that always involve a major change in a person’s thinking, feeling, and willing—meaning, a change in their total behavior. In this case, people now want to put their faith into personal and social action, and willing to witness for Jesus.⁹⁹ As the members of the UMC who graduated in the Confirmation classes, this study aims to discover whether they perceive that confirmation helps them to the UMC vows.

Both Herman C. Gregorio and Perry Shaw saw the importance of putting the theory (Gregorio notes that theory means teaching that produces effective learning) into practice. However, Gregorio leans more in practicing the theory learned using textbooks and instructional materials, while Shaw suggests an outside activities. Gregorio notes that in the Philippines, people are behind in practicing what they learned. Two of the reasons Gregorio gave are: lack of textbooks and instructional equipment, and lack of

⁹⁷ *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, ¶ 217, 136.

⁹⁸ Personal interview with D. S. Yambot, October 10, 2018.

⁹⁹ Westerhoff III, *Will Our Children Have Faith?*, 95.

professionally trained teachers.¹⁰⁰ The teacher, or the untrained teacher may have a hard time in instructing their students without textbooks or instructional materials (the importance of the instructional materials and the knowledge of the teacher will be more discussed in the last section of the Chapter II). In the context of this study, the lack of instructional materials (or the uniformed curriculum) and the untrained teachers might hinder in meeting the desired outcome of the experiences of Confirmation classes. Perry Shaw says that one of the best ways in helping students to put their learning to practice is to take them out for field education and let them reflect on how they can use the theory learned.¹⁰¹

The Cognitive Domain of Learning Experiences

The cognitive (head) Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masia note that cognitive emphasizes remembering or “producing something which has presumably been learned” and or understanding things that may give the ability to organize and solve an essential problem using their previous learnings.¹⁰² As said by Perry Shaw, real learning is remembered five or ten years or even more after taking the course. This kind of learning is what shapes the character and actions of the learner.¹⁰³ This study seeks to discover if or if not the Confirmation classes help the United Methodist member to fully understand the mission, history, doctrine, beliefs, and vows, as being perceived by the respondents.

¹⁰⁰ Westerhoff III, *Will Our Children Have Faith?*, 18.

¹⁰¹ Shaw, *Transforming Theological Education*, 110.

¹⁰² Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masia, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*, 6.

¹⁰³ Shaw, *Transforming Theological Education*, 129.

Klaus Issler and Robert Habermas, in their book, *How We Learn* says that in the educational setting, forgetting is a real problem. Issler and Habermas gave two reasons why people forget what they learned: (1) inactivity or the “What you don’t use, you lose,” and (2) inference, or the old learning is being blocked out with the new learning.¹⁰⁴ In the context of this study, the participants might forget to tell the exact things they learned ten years or so from confirmation. However, they may recall things that they actively practice as a UMC member.

Klaus Issler proposed church practices and ceremonies that can holistically nurture the faith of the children.¹⁰⁵ Issler addresses the children’s needs according to their age level, from birth up to 18.

Table 2: Nurturing Children’s Faith Through Corporate Family Classes and Ceremonies¹⁰⁶

A. Rites of passage for child/Teen	B. Public Ceremony: Progressively Welcoming Child into God’s Household of Faith	C. Individual readiness and Suggested Age Ranges	D. Educational Preparation <i>Prior</i> to Public Ceremony
1. Church Family Reception	*[1] Infant Baptism or [2,3] Parent-Child Dedication (as child grows, participates in main worship meeting as appropriate)	Part 1: Following birth, during child’s first year	Orientation class for parents, grandparent, sponsors, godparents
	[1,2,3] White carnation placed at front of auditorium, symbolizing	Part 2: <u>Ages 5-12 years:</u> as acquiring moral accountability: making a	Pastoral interview with child and parent(s) to assess

¹⁰⁴ Klaus Issler and Ronald Habermas, *How We Learn: A Christian Teacher's Guide to Educational Psychology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1994), 34-35.

¹⁰⁵ Klaus Issler, “Biblical Perspectives on Developmental Grace,” in *Children's Spirituality: Christian Perspectives, Research and Applications*, ed. Donald Ratcliff (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Pub, 2004). 65.

¹⁰⁶ Issler, “Biblical Perspectives on Developmental Grace,” 66.

	growing sense of new birth (children's sermons in main worship as one way to welcome children)	personal profession of faith; determined on an individual basis	personal commitment to Jesus Christ
2. Church Family Presentation	[1,2] First Communion of [3] Child Baptism and Communion (now eligible to use gifts to serve)	<u>Ages 5-13 years</u> : as acquiring moral accountability; during elementary school period; determined on an individual basis	Orientation class for child and parent(s) (4-8 session; weekend retreat)
3. Church Family Re-Affirmation	[1-3] Public affirmation of faith or [2] Adult Baptism (increasing use of gifts to serve)	<u>Ages 13-18 years</u> with full onset of moral accountability; determined on an individual basis	Mentoring and doctrine catechism classes for teen (1-2 years prior to ceremony)
4. Church Family Vocational Commissioning	[1,2,3] Vocational Commissioning with laying on of hands (now eligible to serve in a church leadership capacity)	<u>Age 18 years</u> with full-time employment, at start of career; determined on an individual basis (perhaps another at age 30 years)	Orientation class on vocation.

The table shows that doctrinal classes like catechism and confirmation are one of the practices and ceremonies that help the children to grow in their faith and nurture them spiritually. The table also indicates that churches have to be more intentional in nurturing the children, not just focusing on one age level, but on each of the stages of the life of the children. Confirmation according to Richard Osmer, a Presbyterian minister, plays a vital role in the life of a teen who now has the capacity to reason, understand, and affirm his or her faith.¹⁰⁷ This is especially true as it acknowledges and emphasizes the developmental readiness of a teen to proclaim his or her faith, and his or her desire to live out this faith

¹⁰⁷ Osmer, 1996; cited in Ratcliff, ed., *Children's Spirituality*, 67.

publicly, or to the congregation.¹⁰⁸ Osmer proposes some important matters about confirmation that should be considered by the church:

If the church is to grant a more important place to personal appropriation of faith for theological reasons, then it must be willing to allow the element of personal choice to be real. . .the church cannot claim to support a genuinely free and personal profession of faith as long as it continues a programmatic approach to confirmation in which young people automatically enter this program when they reach a certain age . . . the church would do well to become clear about its theological commitments and then shape its practice accordingly.¹⁰⁹

The church has to analyze the programs of the Confirmation classes and see if the classes fit to the needs and readiness of the youth. Lev Vygotsky's "Zone Proximal Development," *Thought and Language* discusses about providing children the learning depending on their readiness. This means that teachers have to provide task not higher to the capability of the children because it might only frustrate the student; and or not a task that children already done before or it will be boring. Either way, it doesn't promote learning. The ZPD for Vygotsky promotes task within the knowledge of the students, but will still need the help of others to accomplish.¹¹⁰ The youth's capacity to understand and affirm his or her faith should not be taken as a sign of readiness by the church leaders, as to immediately ask them to make a decision to be the members of the church. This mean that the church has to secure the youth's understanding about the decision he or she will be taking.

¹⁰⁸ Osmer, 1996; cited in Ratcliff, ed., *Children's Spirituality*, 67.

¹⁰⁹ Ratcliff, ed., *Children's Spirituality*, 67.

¹¹⁰ Lev Vygotsky, *Thought and Language* (London: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1986), 187-189.

Factors that Impact the Experiences of the Learners

This section discusses factors that impact the experiences of people in learning that probably leads to maturation. These factors will particularly focus on the influence of the teacher, parents, church leaders, the curriculum, the duration of the class, and the environment including the people that surrounds the learners.

How people learn is very important to know especially by the Christian educators. This is to help them in providing the needs of their students and in adjusting the lessons and the instructional materials they are using as it is needed. Authors like Stonehouse, Dirks, Orso, and Isler take note of the importance of this matter. Catherine Stonehouse, in *Joining Children on the Spiritual Journey*, says that those adults who “care about children need to understand the inner workings of the developing child.”¹¹¹ Otherwise, those who fail to understand the developmental processes of the children will also fail in using the right methods that will contribute to their spiritual growth.¹¹² Donald M. Joy, in *A Reader in Christian Education* said that if [leaders in the church], particularly Christian educators desire to serve the people well, he or she have to find ways to know them better.¹¹³ By this, he or she can help the person to “grasp the vision of themselves and their world which is the distinctive property of the Christian faith.”¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ Catherine Stonehouse, *Joining Children on the Spiritual Journey: Nurturing a Life of Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1998), 12.

¹¹² Stonehouse, *Joining Children on the Spiritual Journey*, 12.

¹¹³ Eugene S. Gibbs, *A Reader in Christian Education: Foundations and Basic Perspectives* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1992), 349.

¹¹⁴ Gibbs, *A Reader in Christian Education* 349.

Dennis H. Dirks in *Foundations of Ministry*, edited by Michael J. Anthony says that the effective teacher is the one who understands the nature of the learners. He says that those who are knowledgeable with the developmental issues of his or her students adjusts the content and the teaching methods he or she will use. This will probably make them relevant to the learners that may be more likely to lead to a "life-changing" experience. Referring to Colossians 1:28, he notes that in order to understand and address the needs of a person, [educators] should look into the theological concept of "the nature of persons." The goal is to lead people to be "complete in Christ," leading them to grow spiritually, whole and mature.¹¹⁵ Kathryn Wockney Orso in her dissertation "A Study of the Perception of Superior Achievement in Lutheran Confirmation classes" notes that the attitude of the students toward the class improves when the teacher has greater knowledge about his or her students. She discovered in her study that the perception of the teacher will affect the total Confirmation Class experience of the students.¹¹⁶ I note here that in the light of this material, Christian educators have to acknowledge how God created all the learners—that they are created in His image, and are unique in their own special God-given way; he or she have to acknowledge that even though learners are created in God's image, they are also sinful in nature, therefore they are have a need to be corrected and to be guided. Confirmation classes become an exceptionally significant way that come alongside the young person to assist them in their holistic development, especially spiritually.

¹¹⁵ Dirks, "Foundations of Human Development," 70.

¹¹⁶ Kathryn Wickey Orso, "A Study of the Perception of Superior Achievement in Lutheran Confirmation Classes" (PhD., The American University, 1971), 15, 77.

In *Children's Spirituality*, Klauss Issler says that the church that caters to the needs of the children through welcoming them like Jesus did, helps them develop their “commitment-making *before* and *after*” they reach the age when they can decide whether or not they will affirm their faith.¹¹⁷ Tom Bisset says that both the church and the parents of the children can greatly contribute to the Christian faith and growth of a person. However in the end, the person should be the one who will decide to whether or not to stay in their faith.¹¹⁸ Quoting James Rest, Dirks says that the ability of human beings to interpret situations for them to make good decisions has something to do with the age.¹¹⁹ Parents, on the other hand, particularly the mothers, must train their children in the way they should go, before the child reach the age of 12.¹²⁰ And the church in this sense, should welcome children as “members of the Kingdom of God and nurturing their faith in God as much as possible.”¹²¹ Thus, this study affirms that the adults that surround youth play a vital role in their faith and values. Parents and church leaders can influence the youth's faith. Thus, they are set as a model in Christian faith before the youth and should be diligent also with their intentional instruction during these years.

A teacher can create a great impact on how the students learn and develop. Whatever teachers do—his or her gestures, the way he or she speaks, even the tone of his or her voice, and how he or she relates to his or her students can catch the attention and

¹¹⁷ Ratcliff, ed., *Children's Spirituality*, 65.

¹¹⁸ Bisset, *Why Christian Kids Leave the Faith*, 107.

¹¹⁹ Dirks, “Moral and Faith Development in Christian Education,” 116.

¹²⁰ Alfred North Whitehead, *The Aims of Education and Other Essays*, reissue ed. (New York: Free Press, 1967), 1.

¹²¹ Ratcliff, ed., *Children's Spirituality*, 65.

interests of the students.¹²² According to John Milton Gregory in his book, *The Seven Laws of Teaching*, attention and interest is the key to learn. Without it, students cannot learn.¹²³ Lois E. LeBar, in her book, *Education that is Christian Education* also talks about the importance of the teacher in teaching-learning process, and the importance of his or her strategy in getting the attention of the students. Leaning towards the story of the woman at the well, she sets Jesus as an example of a good teacher who used a good method in catching the attention and interest of his learner. She says, [Jesus] aroused curiosity and questions. He aroused interest in Himself as a Person. He put Himself under obligation to His pupil. He gave her opportunity to respond actively.¹²⁴

LeBar notes, “A good teacher, just like Jesus, should see the felt need of the learners, and attend to it. Jesus’ methods led the Samaritan woman to an immediate action, that is, share the gospel to others. Jesus’ teachings led her not to keep what she learned for herself alone, but she was able to transcend that to others, and witness to others for Jesus.”¹²⁵ As the Holy Spirit works in the lives of a confirmation teacher, he or she too can touch the lives of the learners just like Jesus. Through God’s sovereignty and grace, the learners who are influenced by the teacher will probably transfer his or her learning to others.

According to the research of Kemal Oguz Er, “A Study of Epistemological Beliefs of Teacher Candidates in Terms of Various Variables,” the teacher’s

¹²² John Milton Gregory, *Seven Laws of Teaching*, Revised ed. (Nashville, TN: Baker Pub. Group, 1978), 46.

¹²³ Gregory, *Seven Laws of Teaching*, 44.

¹²⁴ Lois E. LeBar, *Education That is Christian* (Wheaton IL: Victor Books, 1989), 67.

¹²⁵ LeBar, *Education That is Christian*, 70.

epistemological beliefs have an impact in the way he/she teach that can also affect the learnings of his or her learners.¹²⁶ The teacher's attitudes and beliefs also have an impact with how he/she relates to his or her students.¹²⁷ Thus, the teacher has to be careful on how he or she relates to his or her students, with a mindful awareness on her words and actions.

When it comes to the class duration, there is an assumption that the longer the time students spend in the classroom, the more the students improve its achievements—or the more students learn.¹²⁸ However, according to the study made by Andres Sandoval-Hernandez, with others, “Does Increasing Hours of Schooling Lead to Improvements in Student Learning? Policy Brief No 1,” the time is not always positively the reason why students achieve more, or gain more knowledge, but the effectivity of the teaching. Their study suggests that instead of increasing the hours of the students spend in the classroom, schools should manage the time by giving teachers more time for instructional activities. Another thing is that the school should increase the effectivity of teachers by giving opportunities to learn more, and should decrease their work load in school so that they can be more effective in doing their given task.¹²⁹ These studies

¹²⁶ Kemal Oguz Er “A Study of the Epistemological Beliefs of Teacher Candidates in Terms of Various Variables,” *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, no. 50. January 1, 2013, <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ1059930&site=ehost-live>.

¹²⁷ Er, “A Study of the Epistemological Beliefs of Teacher Candidates in Terms of Various Variables,” n.p.

¹²⁸ Andres Sandoval-Hernandez, et. al, International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, and Bloomington, School of Education. Indiana University. “Does Increasing Hours of Schooling Lead to Improvements in Student Learning? Policy Brief No 1” *International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement*, International Association for Educational Achievement, September 1, 2013. <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN-ED561884=site=ehost-live>.

¹²⁹ Hernandez, et. al., “Does Increasing Hours of Schooling Lead to Improvements in Student Learning?,” n.p.

suggest that instead of the school working on giving children the quantity of time in staying in school, even more importantly, they should provide children the quality of time.

On the other hand, another research report about the time in the classroom, “Time for a Change: The Promise of Extended-Time Schools for Promoting Student Achievement, Research Report” by Farbman and others, claimed that spending longer periods of time in school can help boost children to achieve more.¹³⁰ Their report stated the benefits of longer duration such as: (1) children were given more time to do their task; (2) teachers can go more deeply on the subject matter they are teaching; (3) school’s staff, teachers, and administrations have more time to sit and plan to achieve positive developments, which can improve teacher’s competence, which in turn, can help with student’s proficiency; (4) there are more opportunities for enrichment and experiential learning; and (5) there is more time to strengthen the adult-child relationship.¹³¹ This study gave positive impacts about providing learners an ample amount of time to stay in the classroom. They said that it is not just giving the learners the time to work more on the subject given, but it can also build good relationships between the learners to their co-learners, and to their teachers.

¹³⁰ David Farbman, Clair Kaplan, and Massachusetts 2020. “Time for a Change: The Promise of Extended-Time Schools for Promoting Student Achievement. Research Report.” *Massachusetts 2020*. Massachusetts 2020, January 1, 2005.
<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=ED5354912&site=ehost-live>.

¹³¹ David Farbman, Clair Kaplan, and Massachusetts 2020. “Time for a Change: The Promise of Extended-Time Schools for Promoting Student Achievement. Research Report,” 6.

The six significant components of curriculum introduced by Harold Burgess (the aim, content, learner, environment, teacher/shepherd, and evaluation),¹³² has been discussed in the book, *Children Matter*. Scottie May, Beth Posterski, Catherine Stonehouse, and Linda Cannell discussed each component and its importance to the learners.¹³³ According to these authors, above all of these components, the major reason why a curriculum is effective is because of the work of the Holy Spirit. Unless God is at work in the curriculum, it can never offer life-changing experience.¹³⁴

The following materials written by May and others, Antone, and Richards, support the importance of the six components of curriculum introduced by Burgess. Scottie May and others., note that the aim sets direction to the teacher and to the church on where they would want the learners to go. It also sets the standard of what resources or materials they will use for teaching and learning, and a guide for planning and evaluating. Without a clear aim, it brings negative effect.¹³⁵ Lawrence O. Richards states, “Behind every good curriculum is a clear understanding of the teaching goals for the span of adolescence.” And these goals assimilate basic theology in the light of the characteristics of adolescence.¹³⁶ Thus the church has to be careful in deciding which aim they think God wants the people move toward. Teachers of the Confirmation classes have to have

¹³² Scottie May et al., *Children Matter: Celebrating Their Place in the Church, Family, and Community* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2005), 195. They provide a Theoretical Framework-type Diagram on page 197.

¹³³ Marlyn Macayan, “An Evaluation of the Accelerated Christian Education Curriculum Upon the Children’s Spiritual Formation in Three Selected Elementary Christian Schools in the Philippines” (Master’s Thesis, Asia Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, 2017), 6.

¹³⁴ May et al., *Children Matter*, 197.

¹³⁵ May et al., *Children Matter*, 196.

¹³⁶ Lawrence O. Richards, *Teaching Youth: A Sunday School Teacher’s Guide to Discovery Learning* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1982), 113.

clear aim and goals when it comes, especially in the curriculum that he or she will use in teaching. This aim will give him or her a clear direction on where he or she is expecting the learners to be. The aim will also help him or her to evaluate the teaching-learning process.

The next component is the learner. “Effective curriculum takes into account [who] the learners [are].” It pursues making each content relevant to the lives of the learners. Learners are part of the curriculum and their personal experiences which they tend to bring to church affects how they comprehend the lessons. How they relate themselves with their fellow learners is also part of the curriculum.¹³⁷ In the curriculum making, the needs of the learners are the first one to be considered.

In her book, *Religious Education in Context*, Hope S. Antone suggests three common religious typologies of people as being human responses to the issue of religious differences. The first typology is the “One against all” which is equivalent to Religious Arrogance. This response suggests that “one particular tradition alone teaches the truth and constitutes the way to salvation or liberation.”¹³⁸ The second typology is the “One Above All” which is equivalent to “Religious Imperialism.” This approach “makes room for others and otherness while trying simultaneously to retain the preeminence of one’s faith.” However, this response believes that there is only one tradition that is presenting the final truth, and other traditions just reflect some aspects of that final truth.¹³⁹ The third typology is the “One with among All” which is equivalent to “Religious Openness.” This

¹³⁷ May et al., *Children Matter*, 196.

¹³⁸ Hope S. Antone, *Religious Education in Context: Of Plurality and Pluralism* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 2003), 32.

¹³⁹ Antone, *Religious Education in Context*, 32.

approach believes that people have different perceptions and conceptions, which correspond to the needs of their faith as an individual. Thus, diversity of each beliefs should be respected by others.¹⁴⁰ Depending on the people's context, these religious responses and approaches should be considered by church leaders to have better understanding of the attitudes of people, especially with Asian Christians, which is Antone's context.

Content sets the vital role in nurturing the learners as it leads them to hear God's word and reflect upon it. Thus, the curriculum should be "rich in experiences and interactions with others" that will encourage the learners to raise their questions and share their insights.¹⁴¹ If the curriculum is effective, it will improve the "educational quality of both the teacher and the learner."¹⁴² In fact, May and others, explain, "Children as well as adults are nurtured through a curriculum that gives them opportunities to experience the faith community and communion, worship and prayer, to hear the word of God and live out that word. They are formed as they engage in service to others and through teaching and learning. These are essential elements in a faith-nurturing curriculum."¹⁴³

The contents of the curriculum which reflect the aim and goal of the curriculum that is set by church leaders can make an impact to the lives of the learners. Thus, the written curriculum should have sets of experiences that nurture the faith of the learners. An

¹⁴⁰ Antone, *Religious Education in Context*, 32-33.

¹⁴¹ May et al., *Children Matter*, 196.

¹⁴² Won Shin Ae, "An Evaluation of the Sunday School Teacher's Training Curriculum Guide in the Korea Evangelical Holiness Church" (Master's Thesis, Asia Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, 1993), 2.

¹⁴³ May et al., *Children Matter*, 195.

effective curriculum content will lead the learners to grow spiritually. This is an important component to pay attention to when conducting teachers interviews in this study.

That introduces another important component in the curriculum which are the teachers, shepherds, or mentors because they establish all the things that are needed in the teaching and learning processes. They are the ones who choose the learning experience and direct the learners on what they should learn.¹⁴⁴ Teachers who have an intimate relationship with Jesus manifest that in how he/she relates himself/herself to the learners. Through them, learners can have the sense of the presence of God. Thus, the teacher plays a vital role in the process of the spiritual growth of the learners.

Both the physical environment and the relational environment contribute to or detract from learning and nurture. The environment—whether physical or relational in all its context can either improve or weaken the learner’s experiences. Thus, having “strong, accepting, supportive relationships” are important to enhance, especially in the learning environment. The environment is not just a place wherein learners stay but also has something to do with their relationship to the people that surround them. An environment can either give a positive or negative impression to the learners about the lesson’s teachers are imparting. Thus, the literature shows it impacts the spiritual growth of the learners.¹⁴⁵

The final important component of curriculum is evaluation. Scottie May and others, claims that even though this component is important, most churches neglect to

¹⁴⁴ May et al., *Children Matter*, 196.

¹⁴⁵ May et al., *Children Matter*, 197.

evaluate. However, evaluation is important because it determines whether or not the learner meets the aim of the curriculum. It also informs revisions or improvements that can be made for later implications. Evaluation can help the church leaders see which one is important and should be considered in the teaching and learning process. Thus, evaluating a curriculum can probably lead the learners to receive the best learning they can get that can nurture their faith. In this study, the researcher challenged the selected respondents to look back on their previous experiences on how the Confirmation classes impacted their development ten years or so. The rationale for this is based on Shaw's statement that "the real learning is not what is remembered at the end of a course, but what is remembered five or ten years after taking the course."¹⁴⁶

In this chapter, through several literature and studies, the different aspects that affect the learning and maturation of human beings were conveyed. Pazmiño's Interactive Christian Model and other human development theories gave better understanding to the life of the individuals. And above and under it all is God's sovereignty and grace. In the next chapter, I will discuss the methodology that will be used in this study.

¹⁴⁶ Shaw, *Transforming Theological Education*, 129.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

This study explored the perceptions of the selected United Methodist members upon their experiences in the Confirmation classes. This chapter discusses the method of this study, the source of research data, the research-gathering procedures, the instruments that will be used in data gathering, and the treatment of the data.

Method of the Study

This study is qualitative research employing a multiple case study approach. Qualitative research is an attempt to understand the “meaning people have constructed, that is, how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world.”¹⁴⁷ Robert Yin in *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* writes that a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.¹⁴⁸ For Yin, multiple case studies entail different cases to be used to address the research questions.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷ Sharan B. Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass A Wiley Imprint, 2009), 13.

¹⁴⁸ Robert Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2003), 13.

¹⁴⁹ Yin, *Case Study Research*, 38.

In this research, the selected respondents had their own interpretations of the experiences they have had in the Confirmation classes ten or so years ago. The data that were gathered from the perceptions of the participants were analyzed using the multiple case study approach (See Appendix A for the Interview Protocol and Guide Questions). Merriam notes that this approach involves “collecting and analyzing data from several cases and it can be distinguished from the single case study that may have subunits or subcases imbedded within.”¹⁵⁰ Multiple case studies deal with studying individuals or subjects and using comparison to analyze the data.¹⁵¹ This is the procedure that was used in presenting, analyzing, and interpreting the data.

In doing the six case studies, this study followed the technique done by Riphath Rodrigues in her thesis entitled, “Illiteracy and the Selected Migrant Girls in Socorro, Porvorim, Goa, India: Implications for Holistic Ministry in the Church.”¹⁵² First, Rodrigues wrote the individual case studies. Then, she did an analysis by comparing and contrasting each case, and look for common and/or different themes to describe the result of her study. In this research, after writing the individual case studies, an analysis by comparing and contrasting each case was done. Common and/or different themes has been looked at from the six case studies to describe the impact that Confirmation classes have had on the affective, behavioral, and cognitive learning’ experiences of the selected respondents. The gathering of the data also observed the caution of Marshall and

¹⁵⁰ Merriam, *Qualitative Research*, 229.

¹⁵¹ Yin, *Case Study Research*, 45.

¹⁵² Riphath Rodrigues, “Illiteracy and the Selected Migrant Girls in Socorro, Porvorim, Goa, India: Implications for Holistic Ministry in the Church” (Master’s thesis, Asia Pacific Theological Seminary, 2016), 60-61.

Rossmann: “The researcher explores a few general topics to help uncover the participant's views but otherwise respects how the participant frames and structures responses.”¹⁵³

Each case study followed the succeeding bounded system: (a) regarding time, the six selected participants should have been actively attending the United Methodist Church for ten or more years; (b) regarding place, this study has been conducted only in the Manila Episcopal area; (c) regarding the age, the selected participants were at least 22 years old. This is the age where the respondents experienced Confirmation classes ten years ago.

For the validity and reliability, this study employed the following strategies: (1) member checks, (2) peer review/examination, and (3) rich, thick descriptions.¹⁵⁴ Figure 3 illustrates how this study will attempt to promote validity and reliability of the data that will be gathering.

¹⁵³ Catherine Marshall and Gretchen Rossmann, *Designing Qualitative Research* (London: SAGE Publications, 2006), 22.

¹⁵⁴ Merriam, *Qualitative Research*, 229.

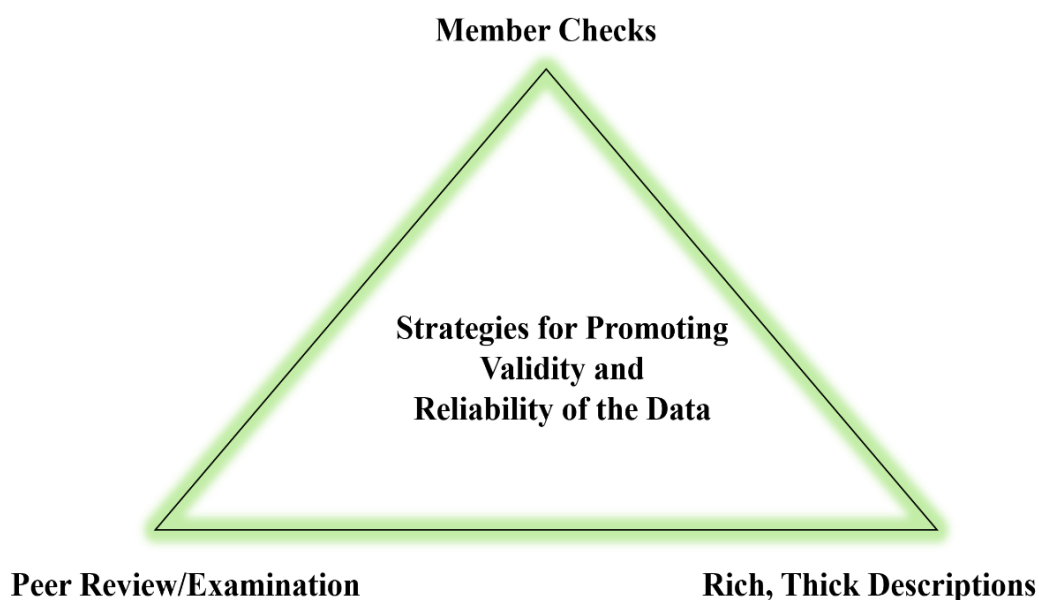


Figure 3: Strategies for Promoting Validity and Reliability¹⁵⁵

The first strategy that employed in the study was engaging in member checks. This was done by “taking data and interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and asking if they are plausible.”¹⁵⁶ After writing the analysis of the responses, the data was sent back to the selected respondents to see the accuracy of the interpretations. The researcher did follow-up interviews with the respondents for proper cross checking. Second, this study engaged in peer review/ examinations. This means, the adviser was consulted as well as the thesis defense panel for the verification of the coherence of the data findings in light of the objectives of the study. Finally, rich, thick descriptions on the perceptions of the respondents were written. This was done in order to provide well-detailed descriptions of the feedback from the respondents. This helped to

¹⁵⁵ Merriam, *Qualitative Research*, 229.

¹⁵⁶ Merriam, *Qualitative Research*, 229.

make clear the analysis as the researcher draw conclusions and recommendations for this study.

Sources of Data

The sampling technique for this study is purposive. According to Merriam, purposive sampling is “based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned.”¹⁵⁷ The respondents in this study came from the churches in Manila Episcopal Area. This area is the location that the researcher have served as a deaconess of the UMC and the researcher want to explore how she can help in the area of curriculum and instruction for the Confirmation classes. In particular, the criterion-based selection used for the participants selected to be in this study. Each respondent met the following criteria: (1) they reside within the Manila Episcopal Area of the United Methodist Church; (2) they have been active members of the UMC in their local churches for at least ten years at the time of the interviews; (3) they have taken the Confirmation classes in their local churches within the period of 2008 to 2010; and (4) they had to be willing to share their experiences and be willing to participate in the one-on-one interviews. To be able to gather at least six respondents, the researcher identified at least 20 names who qualify to the aforementioned criteria, sent a letter to them and from the 20, six were selected who were most available in the given time for the thesis schedule.

Data gathered through semi-structured interviews. Since some respondents were from far places in the MEA like Bulacan and Nueva Ecija, the researcher contacted these

¹⁵⁷ Merriam, *Qualitative Research*, 229.

people through Skype, email, and phone calls, or on whatever means possible to elicit their response. Riphath Rodrigues and Resally Dialing were able to gather their data through online interviews and both were able to gather sufficient data for their studies despite physical distance.¹⁵⁸

Research-Gathering Procedures

The researcher observed the following procedures as she conducted this study. The procedures started with writing letters to the Bishop, pastors, and the respondents, conducting the actual one-on-one interviews, writing the interview transcripts, and finally, analyzing and interpreting the data using the multiple case study approach. Figure 4 explains the step-by-step process on how the researcher conducted this current study.

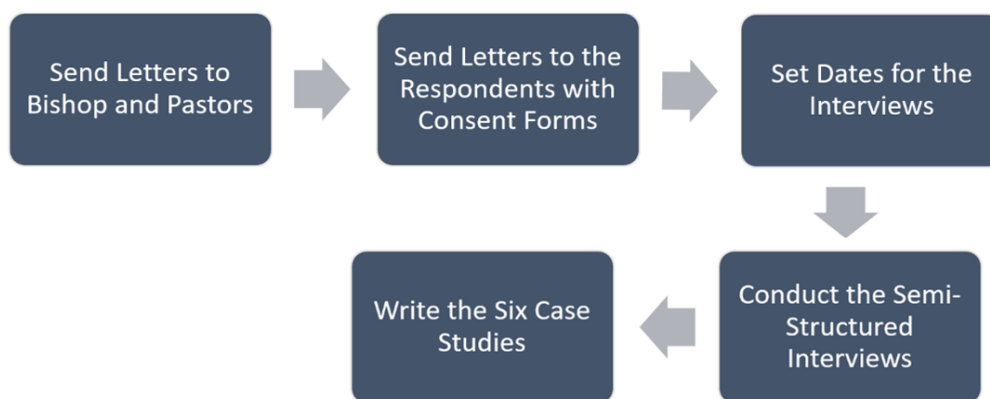


Figure 4: Data-Gathering Procedures

First, the researcher wrote a letter to the Bishop of the UMC to let him know the study on the Confirmation classes of the UMC is being conducted in Manila Episcopal Area, and the overall purpose of the research (See Appendix B for the Letter to the

¹⁵⁸ Rodrigues, "Illiteracy and the Selected Migrant Girls in Socorro," 62; and also Resally Onofre Dialing, "Perceived Ways in which the Multicultural and Multilingual Backgrounds of Visayan Nazarene Bible College (VNBC) Graduates Impact their Ability to Minister Cross Culturally" (Master's thesis, Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, 2011), 58.

Bishop). The researcher also wrote a letter to the pastors of the selected respondents for ethical purposes to gain their permission that the researcher was selecting one of their members to be a participant of the study. Second, after getting permission from the Bishop and the local church pastors (Appendix C), the researcher sent a letter to the selected respondents to be part of this study through email, Facebook messenger, and Skype (See Appendix D for the Letter to Respondents and Appendix E for the Informed Consent Statement for Participants). The letters included the title of the research, the purpose of the study, the researcher's desire to include them to be part of the study, the procedures of the interviews, and the member-checking to verify the interpretations of the study.

Third, after receiving the positive response of my email to the respondents, the researcher asked them for a convenient date for them to conduct the interviews. The researcher asked them to be available for three one-hour-long interview sessions.

Fourth, as soon as the date was secured, the interviews were conducted. The researcher secured the respondent's permission as to whether the interviews could be recorded.

Finally, after all the interviews, the researcher studied and analyzed the interview transcriptions and recordings using the multiple case study approach. The information as Merriam suggested was edited, redundancies were sorted out, parts were fitted together, and the case recorded was organized for ready access.¹⁵⁹ Each case study was analyzed first as a single case study using the research questions as the guide, and then the researcher employed coding to assign a summative attribute data from the interview

¹⁵⁹ Merriam, *Qualitative Research*, 77.

transcripts. The researcher observed repetitive patterns to guide her data analysis and interpretations.¹⁶⁰ Rodrigues, in her thesis observed the following as cited by Strauss in doing coding: similarity, difference, frequency, sequence and consequence.¹⁶¹ These were also to be observed in this study as the researcher organized data gathered so that the study can bring in a deeper understanding of the perceptions of the selected United Methodist members upon their experiences in Confirmation classes.

Data-Gathering Instrument

The researcher employed semi-structured interviews for this study (See Appendix A for the Interview Protocol and Guide Questions). For semi-structured interviews, Merriam identifies the following elements: (1) Interview guide includes a mix of more and less structured interview questions; (2) Questions are used flexibly; (3) Usually specific data are required from all respondents; (4) The largest part of interview is guided by a list of questions or issues to be explored; and (5) There is no predetermined wording or order.¹⁶² The researcher followed these elements in conducting the one-on-one interviews. Furthermore, interviews attempt to understand the world of the subjects' point of view, to unfold the meaning of their experiences, and to uncover their lived world."¹⁶³

¹⁶⁰ Rodrigues, "Illiteracy and the Selected Migrant Girls in Socorro," 65.

¹⁶¹ Anselm L. Strauss, *Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 155.

¹⁶² Merriam, *Qualitative Research*, 89.

¹⁶³ Steinar Kvale and Svend Brinkmann, *Interviews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Interviewing*, 2nd ed. (Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications, 2008), 1.

The interview guide is divided in three sections: the first section was about perceived impact of the selected United Methodist members on the Confirmation classes' experiences on their affective domain; the second was about their behavioral domain, and the third section was about their cognitive domain.

Treatment of Data

All the narratives gathered from the semi-structured interviews and/or conversations were transcribed. Then the researcher wrote the six individual case studies. After finishing the interview transcripts, the researcher wrote rich, thick descriptions that reflected the perceptions of the respondents. After writing the six case studies, the researcher created a table that summarizes all the responses of the research participants and then interpreted them.

This chapter discusses in detail the method of this study, the sources of data, the research-gathering procedures, the data-gathering instruments, and the treatment of data. The next chapter discusses the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of data.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The intention of this study was to explore the perceived impact of the Confirmation classes on the selected United Methodist Church members. This chapter contains the six case studies with data gathered through interviews. The structure of each case study follows the sequence of the sub-problems. The researcher used pseudonyms in order to maintain the privacy of the respondents. Respondent One was given the name Andres, Respondent Two was Anne, Respondent Three was Rose, Respondent Four was Peace, Respondent Five was Jana, and Respondent Six was Cecille. The final section of this chapter presents the integration of all the responses of the selected respondents in terms of the three domains of learning, the affective, behavioral, and cognitive.

Case Study One: Andres

Andres grew up in a Christian family. He said that all of the members of his family were baptized in the UMC. His mother is a deaconess and his father is an active member in the UMC. He said that as he grew up in the church, he was always involved in its activities. His father remains active in the church ministries, especially in choir, assisting the pastor during visitation, and attending Bible studies. In the UMC, a deaconess is appointed and transferred from one church after the other. However, in the case of Andres' mother, she was appointed only once and decided to teach at one of the

UMC schools that trains deaconesses. Hence, his family was able to stay and serve at a UMC congregation in the Metro Manila area.

Andres is 36 years old now. Counting from the year he graduated from his Confirmation classes, Andres has been an active professing member in a local UMC for 24 years. Currently, he is active in the United Methodist Young Adult (UMYAF), one of the lay organizations in the UMC for young adults aged 24 to 40. He is part of the praise and worship team as a guitarist, he is a Care Group leader, the leader of the witnessing committee head, and one of the council leaders in his local church. He is also part of a non-profit organization that sponsors church workers' studies. In other words, Andres is actively engaged in the ministries of the UMC.

The following narrative describes how the Confirmation classes impacted the life of Andres specifically on the cognitive aspect of his development.

Experiencing Christ More and the Experiences in the Confirmation Classes

Andres said that since his parents were active in the church. He, together with his two other siblings were expected to live a Christ-like life just like their parents. He explained that his parents' faith and Christian living became the standard and model that led him to be a Christian. His mother was stricter in disciplining them than his father. He stated that he knew about what was morally good and bad through the guidance and discipline of his parents, especially his mother. He explained that his parents would see to it that he, together with his two siblings, would be punished if they did something wrong. However, they understood that the discipline they received was out of love. Lawrence Kohlberg's first level, the *Pre-Conventional* in his moral theory reflects Andres' situation

when he was at this age. On this level, children perceive what is morally bad based on the consequences of the action. This stage has to do with obedience and punishment and are concerned with satisfying the needs.¹⁶⁴ Andres said that he and his siblings grew up disciplined because of their parents. His childhood experiences also reflected the claims of James Fowler about the first and second stages of faith; the *Intuitive-Projective Faith*, in which a child up to age of seven imitates the faith of his or her parents, and the *Mythic-Literal Faith* on which a child in later age accounts his belief to his or her parents.¹⁶⁵

Going back to his teenage years, Andres elucidated that things in him started to change not just physically, but also did his view about his Christian faith. That is, when he was a child, things seem to be just going well when it came to his faith. For him, being a “Christian” and doing Christian things were easy. This was influenced by his thought that a Christian was someone who simply attends Sunday School, who involves himself or herself in the ministry of the church, and someone who regularly attends Christian camps. He started to realize that he was not a Christian the way he thought he was when he became a teenager and explored doing activities Christians should not do. Those were the days when he started to reflect about what it means to be a real Christian, not just by name, but by way of living. In the case of Andres, though he was influenced by the learnings he had from his parents, from the church which helped him make good decisions, his active participation with his own life, and his own decisions did not always guarantee a desired outcome.

¹⁶⁴ Kohlberg, “Stages of Moral Development as a Basis for Moral Education,” 91-94.

¹⁶⁵ Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 78.

Andres said that he was “convinced” that he knew Jesus, but he was not yet “converted.” He based his thoughts on the bad decisions he took in his youth, especially during his college years. Although he was actively involved in the church as a local youth officer and then as a district officer, he said that his life outside the church did not reflect his relationship with God. Outside the church, he joined with his friends doing “unchristian” things. Despite his involvements in the church he was still asking, “Why am I doing these things? What are these for?” and tried to search the purpose of what he was doing. This agrees with what Tom Bisset says about the time when people will have trouble asking questions about their faith. Bisset writes that the role of the parents and church leaders are important in this stage of the life of a person.¹⁶⁶ The experience of Andres can also be connected to Fowler’s theory about the *Individual-Reflective Faith*. In this stage, a person develops his or her personal values and beliefs. “In the face of a liturgical ritual or religious symbol, the Individual-Reflective person asks, ‘But what does it mean?’ If the symbol or symbolic act is truly meaningful, this stage presumes its meanings can be translated into propositions, definitions and/or conceptual foundations.”¹⁶⁷ In this sense at this stage, people start walking in and owning their faith. During Andres’ college years, he claimed to be the “black sheep,” for he chose to experience doing things Christians should not do. He did not elaborate the things he did during those years, but he stated that it pained him that he committed them despite professing to be a Christian. Klaus Issler and Robert Habermas note that sin still operates even in the person who has accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior.¹⁶⁸ Sin affects the

¹⁶⁶ Bisset, *Why Christian Kids Leave the Faith*, 27-40.

¹⁶⁷ Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 180.

¹⁶⁸ Issler and Habermas, *How We Learn* 22.

behavior, the motivation, and the responses of a person towards the call of the Holy Spirit.¹⁶⁹ However, Paul Helm also notes that God's grace impacts the lives of the person, enabling them to live a life in accordance to His will.¹⁷⁰ Wesley also notes that the will of human beings can be aligned to God's will through the grace of God.¹⁷¹ Andres, even though he had committed himself to Christ, still experienced struggle in the flesh that led him to sin.

Confirmation classes, as stated by Andres, led him to experience Christ in a unique way. For instance, he heard about the story of John Wesley and how the father of Methodism experienced Christ. He cited the story of Wesley when Wesley questioned his own faith and actions towards God while observing the group of Moravians. The researcher was impressed that Andres could cite this particular time in John Wesley's life. Recalling his teenage years and college days, the bad decisions and the consequences of his actions made him question his faith and actions toward God. He said that his story somehow resonated with the story of Wesley. He just thanked God that despite his sinful actions, he can still experience the grace of God. Andres said that God's grace that Wesley experienced was the same grace he experienced, and this grace led him to experience Christ more. He said, "If it's not through His grace, I don't think I can be able to change from being stubborn to fully mature in Christ." Andres' statement about God's grace reflects with Pazmiño's claim that God's providence of grace leads people to a

¹⁶⁹ Issler and Habermas, *How We Learn* 22.

¹⁷⁰ Helm, *Contours of Christian Theology*, 119.

¹⁷¹ Wesley, *A Plain Account on Christian* 24-28.

transformed life.¹⁷² His grace enables and strengthens human beings to continue living a life in accordance to His will. This also reflects with what Loder says that people can only experience holistic transformation through the Grace of God, with the work of the Holy Spirit.¹⁷³

Andres elucidated that practically, Confirmation classes did not lead him to experience Christ “more.” This was because he felt that the class was just a “one-time big-time” event, which means that after he graduated there were no follow-up classes regarding Confirmation. This gave him an impression that the class was only intended for membership purposes only, and not for holistically nurturing the person’s faith. He described it as, “*Parang hangin, dumaan lang, tapos, tapos na!*” (“It was just like a wind just passed by then suddenly it’s gone!”). What he said reflects with the study conducted by Westerhoff and his colleagues. Their study found that some churches that are conducting activities like Confirmation classes do not focus on strengthening the faith of the people, but lean more towards to membership.¹⁷⁴ Andres said that when he was 12, Confirmation sounded important and was urgently needed, especially when his father urged him to attend. However, when he compared his experience with youth camps to the Confirmation classes, he felt that the class did not lead him to experience Christ more. There were no in-depth reflections upon the life of Wesley in Confirmation classes, but just merely classes specifically for membership.

¹⁷² Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 208.

¹⁷³ Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit*, 228.

¹⁷⁴ Westerhoff III notes that his group of students engaged in the research project rites of initiation in Protestant religious communities and were able to create typology for rites of initiation: (1) rites of institutional incorporation, and (2) rites of faith commitment. In their discovery, most mainline Protestant churches were more concerned with institutional incorporation and survival, 39.

Personal Commitment to Jesus Christ and the Experiences
in the Confirmation Classes

Andres was 12 years old when he took Confirmation classes, and he was 13 years old when he accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior. When he was asked about how the Confirmation classes led him to have a personal relationship with God, he recalls:

UMC is so structural that when I became a member in the local church through my parents, I had an opportunity to join in different ministries. I enjoyed all the ministries that I was in and never thought I was not yet counted as a ‘professing’ member of the church. Even though I do not know what it means to be a ‘professing’ member, I was sad when I heard that I was not. I thought it meant that UMC was not yet counting me as part of their family. One day, my father told me that I was mandated to attend the class to be a professing member of the church. I was 12, and all I wanted to do was just to enjoy, and play together with my fellows. Attending the class was no fun to me.¹⁷⁵

He described that he was disappointed during that time because he felt that it was not his personal decision, but just a requirement. Then after finishing the class, he just knew that he became a part of the “confirmed professing” member without the in-depth understanding of what it means. Richard Osmer, a Presbyterian minister notes that it is important for the church to ensure the personal decision of the youth in the matter of Confirmation. Osmer says, “If the church is to grant a more important place to personal appropriation of faith for theological reasons, then it must be willing to allow the element of personal choice to be real.”¹⁷⁶ This means that the youth should have the full grasp of understanding about what they are going to profess. Issler supports Osmer’s claim. Issler says that it is important that youth fully understand the significance of the classes in his or her life, and not just a matter of entering Confirmation because the youth is at the stage

¹⁷⁵ Interview with Respondent One, Andres, January 22, 2019.

¹⁷⁶ Osmer, cited by Issler, *Children's Spirituality*, 67.

of confirming his or her faith.¹⁷⁷ This gave Andres an impression that Confirmation was for membership's sake, and not for nurturing faith. Andres stated, "Practically, the class did not lead me to accept Jesus as my Lord and Savior because it provided no experience as such. However, it makes sense that I am now part of a church family." He explained that the class did not provide an experience that led him to accept Jesus as his Lord and Savior. Andres accepted and confessed Jesus as his personal Lord and Savior in a Christmas Institute. Christmas Institute is an annual activity of the United Methodist Youth Fellowship (UMYF) in district conferences. It is being held for four to five days, for youth ages 12 to 23. During the last night of the camp, he willingly responded to an altar call of the pastor. He noted that the message he heard before the altar call was so convicting, and it led him to surrender his life to God.

Accepting Freedom and Power and the Experiences in the Confirmation Classes

Andres stated that he experienced accepting the freedom and the power God gives to resist evil, injustice, and oppression when he accepted Christ to be his Lord and Savior when he was 13 years old. During the four-day youth camp of the United Methodist Youth Fellowship in their conference, he said that the topics he heard led him to understand what it means to be free from the power of evil over his life. He also had a better understanding about God's grace and love that forgave sins which strengthened him to feel fully free from being bound because of sin. After the altar call made by the pastor, Andres started to acknowledge the sovereignty and grace of God over his life. Although there were challenges in his Christian life, he continued to walk with God.

¹⁷⁷ Issler, in *Children's Spirituality*, 67.

Pazmiño notes that the fullness of human growth has to do with God's intervention in the life of humans through the work of the Holy Spirit.¹⁷⁸ Andres stated that Confirmation classes practically did not lead him to accept the freedom and power God gives to resist evil, injustice, and oppression. Although it was recited during their graduation day, he explained that Confirmation did not give him an experience like what he experienced in the camp. Hence, the vow did not lead him to really accept the freedom of God. The only experience he had in the classes aside from discussions, was that the pastor who taught them also gave an exam to measure their knowledge after every session. He cannot claim that although he passed the exams, his knowledge led him to have in-depth reflections that helped him accept the freedom and the power Christ gives.

The following narrative describes how the Confirmation classes impacted the life of Andres specifically on the behavioral aspect of his development.

Renouncing and Rejecting the Evil Powers; Repenting Sins, and the Experiences of Confirmation Classes

Since Andres was a child, he was an active member of UMC and involved himself in different ministries until he became a youth leader in both local and district levels. However, he has a claim that despite his church involvement, he still had a hard time “renouncing forces of wickedness,” and “rejecting the evil powers of the world” in the presence of temptation. Even after he accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior, he had difficulty repenting of his sins and totally surrendering these things to God, especially during his college years. Pazmiño notes that human beings are “in need of instruction, correction, and discipline which recognizes the operation of God's grace at every point of

¹⁷⁸ Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 199.

[their] inadequacy.”¹⁷⁹ Through God’s grace, He provides not just redemption with His creation, but also effecting this redemption in the lives of men and women.¹⁸⁰ Andres mentioned that he might have been worse if it had not been through the people God sent to help him get over temptations. The teachings he received from his parents, and the teachings provided by the church led him to keep on walking with God despite the challenges he was facing. Mostly he was moved to repent during Christian camps. He explained that the topics he heard annually in the camp convicted him of the sins he was committing. Regarding the Confirmation classes, he indicated they did not have lessons about “rejecting and renouncing evil,” or had any time to reflect about it. He claimed that since he was only 12, he probably could not understand what it meant to “renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of the world, and repent [of your] sins.” He explained that as far as he can remember he just said “yes” to all of the seven vows, even without fully grasping what they mean, for he felt that it was the answer expected by the pastor. The second level of Kohlberg’s theory reflects Andres’ response in the vows during the Confirmation graduation as the *Conventional* level in which a child has the desire to gain approval from others. Andres desired to have a “good” boy image and a concern for law and order, having and showing respect. His response also reflected Fowler’s theory third stage of faith. The *Synthetic-Conventional Faith* is that teens lean more from their peers, expectations of their family, and other groups of which he or she belongs.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁹ Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 218.

¹⁸⁰ Helm, *Contours of Christian Theology*, 119.

¹⁸¹ Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 78.

Remaining Faithful Members of Christ's Holy Church and the Experiences of Confirmation Classes

Andres said that learning experiences with Confirmation classes did not help him to “remain a faithful [member] of Christ’s holy church and serve as Christ’s representatives in the world.” He claimed that there are other factors that led him to remain faithful. He mentioned that he was first influenced by his family. Later, his involvement in the church led him to enjoy and grow in his ministries and spirituality. Andres said that one of the programs in the church that led him to remain a faithful member of Christ’s holy church was the UMC-Disciples of Christ (a Christian education course of classes program). He explained that there was a particular activity in the UMC-Disciples of Christ that moved him to commit to remain faithful in Christ’s holy church. That was when each of them was given a nail and the facilitator asked them to pin the nail on their left palm using their right hand to have a glimpse of Christ’s experience on the cross. While the solemn music was playing, and every one of them was quiet, he was able to reflect thoroughly through that simple activity. He explains:

My experience of Confirmation was like the experiences I had in school. I wanted to move, I wanted to explore, I wanted to experience new things while acquiring learning but I could not. The classes did not even give me and my classmates any moments to reflect or to share our thoughts about what we were hearing. We were just there. Sitting. Listening.¹⁸²

Erik Erikson notes the power of human emotions in the life of a person which impact the decisions and motivations of a person toward his or her experiences.¹⁸³

Andres’ experiences with the UMC-Disciples of Christ led him to make life-time decisions to remain faithful, unlike what he experienced with his Confirmation.

¹⁸² Interview with Respondent One, Andres, January 22, 2019.

¹⁸³ Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 200.

Becoming A Loyal Member of the UMC and the Experiences of Confirmation classes

In terms of being loyal to the UMC, Andres claimed that Confirmation classes helped him to be more so. He elucidated that after studying things about the UMC, as a 12-year-old boy these lessons gave him an impression that UMC teachings were biblical, and under the power of the Holy Spirit. The lessons that gave him this impression were: the story about the founder of UMC, John Wesley, the Four Pillars of Faith, and the Holy Trinity. He also mentioned that the stories about John Wesley led him to find his “identity” in the UMC. When he heard John Wesley’s quotation, “The world is my parish,” his impression was, “UMC is not just bound in the four corners of the church, but has its mission that concerns the whole world.” That mission was also his desire to do or at least share something about God to his friends and classmates his age. Erikson notes here that the adolescent stage is experiencing “Identity vs. Role Diffusion.” In the case of Andres, Confirmation classes helped him find his identity as a Christian in a particular denomination. This also reflects what James Loder says about adolescence. That is, they are more capable to commit faithfully in self-sacrifice in accordance to the calling of the Spirit because of their “deep ideological hunger, their heightened awareness of their potential nonbeing, and their sense of urgency about the meaning of life.”¹⁸⁴ After Confirmation graduation, Andres became more active in the UMC and the church’s ministries.

Faithfully Participating in the Ministries and the Experiences of Confirmation Classes

¹⁸⁴ Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit*, 248.

Andres said that his active involvements in the UMC through faithfully participating in ministries by prayers, presence, gifts, and service has nothing to do with Confirmation classes. Prior to Confirmation, he already learned these things through his parents and Sunday School teachers. His peers in church also inspired him to be an active member in the church and, together they grew as they prayed, as they attended church services and fellowships, and as they did their ministries. He said that his friends in church made his ministries more enjoyable. This reflects what Lode's theory. Loder notes that fellowship with a Christian nurturing community is essential in the growth of their faith; and being surrounded with godly mature people or older Christians can make them desire wisdom, and also for a mature faith.¹⁸⁵ Andres' personal journey with God from being a child until he became a young person also led him to be faithful in participating in the church ministries. Andres' experiences prior to Confirmation classes led him to experiences that helped him produce his own tendencies to serve God in all the ways he could. Andres recalls that church participation was not emphasized in the Confirmation classes. Thus, he claimed that Confirmation did not really affect him in this aspect.

The following narrative describes how the Confirmation classes impacted the cognitive aspect of his development.

Understanding of the Christian Faith and Experiences of Confirmation Classes

Andres claimed that when he was younger, through the modeling of faith by his parents and through the teachings he had in church, he understood what his faith was.

¹⁸⁵ Dirks, "Moral and Faith Development in Christian Education," 122.

When he was a child, he had an idea about what was morally “good” and “evil,” and what will make God happy or sad through the teachings and discipline coming from his parents. Andres discussed that he remembered that they talked about the Four Pillars of Faith which are Scripture, Tradition, Reason, and Experience in Confirmation. These four helped him to have the “knowledge” about the Christian faith. However, during that time he could not claim that this knowledge led him to have a better understanding of the Christian faith, what this meant, or how he could use it in his Christian growth. He explained that his age probably hindered him in having a better understanding about the particular lesson. Since he was only 12, he thought he could not fully grasp what these truths meant with regards to his Christian faith. Andres’ claim is not matching with Jean Piaget’s claim about the age of 12-year-olds. Piaget notes that youth this age can think in abstract and more logical terms. Their logical thinking can now be applied by using abstract concepts with symbols even without real objects.¹⁸⁶ The Four Pillars of Faith that Andres first heard in Confirmation remained just “head knowledge” until he realized what this meant in his Christian life. Andres described that as he grew more through attending church fellowships, camps, and other church activities, he better understood what the Four Pillars meant in his faith, and was able to apply them in his walk with God.

Understanding of the Meaning of Baptism and Confirmation Classes’ Experiences

The UMC teaches the importance of baptism to the UMC members. The Church teaches that a baptized child is initiated into the new covenant in Jesus Christ and membership in the Church, and Christ’s body in the world. It means that baptized infants

¹⁸⁶ Dirks, “Foundations of Human Development,” 77.

are members of the Church, and the family of faith.¹⁸⁷ Andres was baptized in the UMC when he was still an infant. As he grew older and observed other infants in the church that were being baptized, he wondered what it meant and why it was needed. Andres elucidated that one of the things they discussed in the Confirmation classes was baptism. However, the lesson about it was not elaborated upon. He remembered an experience when he, together with his fellow classmates in the Confirmation, were testing each other's knowledge about how many sacraments the UMC has as compared to the Roman Catholic sacraments. They discussed it after Confirmation graduation just for fun. Confirmation made him remember that UMC has two sacraments: The Holy Communion and Baptism. However, since it was not explained what these two meant or their importance, the sacraments did not make an impact in his life. He elucidated that there was no clear explanation why these sacraments were being conducted during worship. The Confirmation classes also did not have any "re-affirmation of baptism" activity, so he never experienced re-affirming his baptism. Hence, he said that the classes did not lead him to have better understanding about baptism, or its importance in the life of a Christian.

Receiving and Professing the Christian Faith and Experiences in Confirmation Classes

In terms of receiving and professing the Christian faith as contained in the Scripture, Andres said that in his heart, he received and professed his Christian faith as contained in the Scripture, not during the time of Confirmation nor the time when he recited the vows. It was when he was 13 years old during youth camp when he accepted

¹⁸⁷ Iovino, "Beyond Baptism: What Confirmation Means to the United Methodist," n.p.

Christ as his Lord and Savior. He explained that what made him decide to truly receive and profess the Christian faith was when the preacher of the camp touched the core of his emotions, as if the pastor knew everything about him and what he needed to hear. During the altar call, he voluntarily went. Perry Shaw notes the importance of looking into the emotional state of the students. This will help the teacher to provoke learnings that can mold the personality of the students. Shaw says that students can easily remember the things that happened to them if the teacher elicits strong emotions.¹⁸⁸ The authors like Stonehouse, Joy, Dirks, Orso, and Issler also take note of the importance of knowing the students well. Stonehouse says that those adults who “care about children need to understand the inner workings of the developing child.”¹⁸⁹ Otherwise, those who fail to understand the developmental processes of the children will also fail in using the right methods that will contribute to their spiritual growth.¹⁹⁰ Joy says that if leaders in the church, particularly Christian educators, desire to serve the people well, they need to find ways to know them better. By this, they can help the person to “grasp the vision of themselves and their world which is the distinctive property of the Christian faith.”¹⁹¹ Dirks notes that the effective teacher is the one who understands the nature of the learners. Those who are knowledgeable with the developmental issues of their students adjust the content and the teaching methods they will use. This will make them relevant to the learners so that the students may be more likely to possess a “life-changing”

¹⁸⁸ Shaw, *Transforming Theological Education*, 135.

¹⁸⁹ Stonehouse, *Joining Children on the Spiritual Journey*, 12.

¹⁹⁰ Stonehouse, *Joining Children on the Spiritual Journey*, 12.

¹⁹¹ Gibbs, *A Reader in Christian Education* 349.

experience. Orso notes that the attitude of the students toward the class improves when teachers have greater knowledge of their students.¹⁹² Since the preacher of the camp was able to connect with Andres and relate the word of God to him, Andres voluntarily moved his feet towards the altar and committed his life to Christ. His experienced can also be related to Vygotsky's ZPD. Andres, in this stage are more capable to understand the lessons he had from the camp because of his "readiness" to learn.¹⁹³ Andres explained that during Confirmation, he said "yes" to receive and profess Christian faith because that was the expected answer from him. He also said that this matter of conversion was not even communicated to them by the pastor who taught them in the class.

Understanding of the UMC Mission, History, Doctrine, and Vows and Experiences in Confirmation Classes

Andres said that John Wesley's "The world is my parish" quote was his favorite and each time he thinks about the mission of the church, he remembers this. Confirmation led him to have better understanding of the mission of the UMC through this quotation of Wesley. He explained that for a 12-year-old boy, it impressed to him that one of the missions of the church is to disciple others for Christ, and do evangelism. John Wesley's boldness to share the gospel of Christ inspired him to do the same. He also mentioned that since only Confirmation classes have a direct lesson about the mission, structures, beliefs, history, and doctrines of UMC, the classes led him to have knowledge about these. However, he better understood, especially the mission of the church by experience. He involved himself in the ministries of the church, especially in the mission extensions

¹⁹² Orso, "A Study of the Perception of Superior Achievement in Lutheran Confirmation Classes," 15, 77.

¹⁹³ Vygotsky, *Thought and Language* 187-189.

of the local church. He shared that what impacted him the most among all the lessons through the years was the story of John Wesley and his experience of the journey aboard to America, and in observing the group of Moravians; and his “heart-warming experience” at Aldersgate. He didn’t just remember them, but he also shared the stories with others.

Andres said that Confirmation did not lead him to have a better understanding of the UMC vows. He said that it was not even tackled in the classes and that he just heard the vows during their graduation day. He said, “Probably it would be better if a 12-year-old like me memorized the vows.” He also said that it would have at least helped him to remember what he promised to God after taking Confirmation classes. District Superintendent Yambot says that the teachers have to emphasize the vows, letting the members fully grasp what it means in their lives.¹⁹⁴

Summary of Andres’ Profile

Table 3 depicts a brief summary of the affective, behavioral and cognitive experiences of Andres with Confirmation classes. The statements here were taken from the case study that the researcher wrote on Andres.

¹⁹⁴ Personal interview with D. S. Yambot, October 10, 2018.

Table 3: Summary of the Affective, Behavioral, and Cognitive Experiences of Andres on Confirmation Classes

AFFECTIVE DOMAIN			
Experiences Christ More	Personal Commitment	Accepts Freedom and Power	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - His parents were his models in Christian living. - He experienced identity confusion - He was 12, Confirmation led him to experience Christ in “some sense.” - Wesley’s experience of faith led him to experience Christ - Confirmation was a “one-time-big-time” and there was no follow-up activities or classes - Christian camps led him to experience Christ more. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Committed life God when he was 13 in Christmas Institute. - Confirmation disappointed him because was mandated, and not a personal decision. - The only purpose of confirmation is for membership’ sake, and not for nurturing his faith. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Topics and the experiences in the camp were clear and led him to deal with the power of evil over his life. - He recited the vow about “accepting freedom. . .” during graduation but did not feel that it led him to accept it fully. - Aside from the lectures in classes, they had quizzes to measure if they learned or remember classes’ lessons. 	
BEHAVIORAL DOMAIN			
Renounce and Reject Evil	Remain Faithful Member	Loyal Member	Faithful Participation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - His family and church leaders helped him continue walking with God - Confirmation does not have a lesson about “renouncing and rejecting evil powers” - He said “yes” to all the vows without fully understanding, only because it was expected from him. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Family influenced his faith and involvements in UMC - Confirmation did not lead him to remain faithful because it does not provide that experience - As a 12 year old, he wished he had more physical or reflective activities in Confirmation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirmation helped him realize that UMC is sound in doctrine - The story about Wesley led him to find his “identity.” - Became more active in the ministries through Confirmation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prayer, presence, service, and witness, were not discussed in classes; Learned these from his parents and teachers. - Peers in the church led him to enjoy more his ministries - Confirmation has nothing to do with his faithful participation in the church.
COGNITIVE DOMAIN			
Understanding of Christian Faith	Understanding of Baptism	Professing Christian Faith	Understanding UMC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knew about faith through parents and leaders in the church. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The class discussed about the two sacraments of UMC but 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Did not profess his Christian faith 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - John Wesley’s “The world is my Parish,”

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learned Four Pillars of Faith in Confirmation, but these did not lead him to an understanding of faith. - Assumed that his age hindered him to better understand the lessons. - Through his continue walk with God by attending church activities and camps, he had better understanding of what this particular lesson meant in his Christian faith. 	<p>were not elaborated what it meant in his life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - After confirmation graduation, he, together with his fellow friends used to recite the sacraments for fun - There was no activity in confirmation about “re-affirmation” of baptism. Thus he claimed that the classes did not led him to an understanding of baptism. 	<p>during Confirmation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preacher of the camp touched the “core of his emotions,” and the message he heard led him to say “yes” to God. - In Confirmation, he said “yes” to the vows and professed his faith because it was what was expected from him. 	<p>impressed him that that was the mission of the UMC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirmation has clear lessons about the mission, history, structure, beliefs, and doctrines of UMC - Understood what these meant through his personal experience
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One can observe that Andres did not have a high positive feedback when it comes to his experiences in Confirmation classes. There were elements in Confirmation that affected him but other activities in the home and the church impacted his life more.

Case Study Two: Anne

This section presents the story of Anne. The case includes her demographic background and her perceptions about her affective, behavioral, and cognitive experiences with the Confirmation classes.

Anne grew up as a Roman Catholic. However, since her father was attending the Iglesia Evangelica Metodista en las Islas Filipinas (IEMELIF). Occasionally she would attend the church too. Practically, her family had two churches. However, she was more oriented in the Roman Catholic way since her faith was more influenced by her mother, who was a Roman Catholic. She used to kneel and pray in front of the images, acknowledged the power of the holy water, and practiced the signing of the cross. She also learned about the Rosary when she was in third grade as she was required to attend

Catechism in her school as part of the school's curriculum. When she was around seven years old, her mother was invited by a UMC pastor to attend Bible study. Her mother agreed to attend in the regular activity of the local UMC since it was near their house. Anne advised that she would go wherever her mother went when she was a child. Hence, when her mother attended a Bible study, Anne also attended although she was the youngest in the group. She said their nearby neighbors were also attending with them.

Anne is now 31 years old. Counting from 2003 after Anne's Confirmation graduation, she has been a professing member of the church for 16 years. Currently, Anne is a Christian education deaconess in a local UMC. In the UMC, there are two kinds of deaconess: one is a Kindergarten education deaconess who focuses on the ministries of the established school of a local UMC, and the other is involved in the Christian education programs of the church. The Christian education deaconess focuses on all the church ministries, nurturing the faith of the people. A deaconess is someone who is commissioned by the Bishop after attending a certain number of years in a school which trains women to be church workers of UMC. Anne's work is to teach Christian education in all age levels, from children up to the eldest member of the church, and she also conducts the choir. In addition, she trains and equips people to minister to others. Anne is also writing the UMC's Board of Christian Education and Discipleship (BCED) Vacation Church School curriculum materials, and is the head secretariat in one of the Annual Conferences in the Manila Episcopal Area. In one particular UMC school, she was trained to teach, to preach, and to play the piano.

The following narrative describes how the Confirmation classes impacted the life of Anne specifically as to the affective aspect of her development.

Experiencing Christ More and the Experiences in the Confirmation Classes

Anne stated that after she and her mother attended the UMC Bible study for one year, her mother was invited to the UMC Sunday worship. When her mother became a regular church attendee that was also the start of their active participation in the local church services. Her father was an Overseas Filipino Worker at the time. That was why her mother had the freedom to attend and stay on in the church she wanted to. Anne stated that compared to her experience of attending the Roman Catholic Church, attending UMC was different and full of fun. She started to appreciate the church especially when she found friends, and felt that she learned a lot about God, and started to love God more through the UMC. This is reflected on Myung Suk Kwak's statement that, through the work of the Holy Spirit, people can encounter the environment in which they will hear the gospel.¹⁹⁵ Anne recounted that she became a Christian through the help and guidance of her mother, who was her model. This reflects the claim of Fowler that children tend to imitate the faith of their parents¹⁹⁶ Anne went wherever her mother went, and her mother's faith became her faith.

Anne enjoyed attending the kid's Sunday School since she found friends to be with, and she became involved in church ministries. When she was a child she was a part of a children's choir. Anne became more active when she became a youth. She started to be involved in more ministries such as being a tambourine dancer, a Praise and Worship leader, and occasionally a leader in youth devotions. She became more active in the

¹⁹⁵ Kwak, "A Case Study of Mothers," 53.

¹⁹⁶ Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 78.

church when she became a Praise and Worship leader, and started to consciously check her life's testimony. Those were also the days when she knew that God was calling her to full-time church ministry as a deaconess. At the peak of her being active in the church, especially when she was in her third and fourth years of high school, she experienced preaching in their congregation several times. During that time, she explained that she could not say "no" to her pastor when she was invited to speak, even though she did not know how to preach. It was because she felt like she was saying "no" to God, and not really to the pastor. Anne's situation when she was 13 years old reflected Lawrence Kohlberg's *Conventional Stage* in which youth at this age desire to create an image of a "good-boy/girl" to get an approval.¹⁹⁷ She desired not just her pastor's approval, but also God's approval. The challenge she had from the task given by her pastor became her training ground and gave her confidence in speaking in front of people.

Before entering one of UMC's educational institutions to be trained as a deaconess, one of the requirements was to undertake Confirmation classes in the local church. Anne stated that she wasn't aware there was an activity called "Confirmation classes." She did not know what its purpose was. But because she wanted to be a deaconess, she entered into the classes. She took the classes when she was 16 years old. Anne said, "All the activities I was involved in with the church led me to experience Christ more. Since Confirmation classes are part of the activities in the church, I can say that it led me to experience Him more." Anne shared that the topic in the Confirmation classes that impacted her in experiencing Christ most was the lesson about God's grace. She explains:

¹⁹⁷ Kohlberg, "Stages of Moral Development as a Basis for Moral Education," 91-94.

Confirmation made me understand more that God loves me so much and was willing to sacrifice His life for me through His grace. Although in Sunday school we often talk about God's love, in Confirmation the pastor elaborated on the significance of God's grace in Confirmation. I learned about Prevenient grace, the Justifying grace, and the Sanctifying grace. The lessons impressed to me that apart from His grace, I am nothing. I need God and His grace every day!¹⁹⁸

Anne stated that although she learned to walk with God by first observing her mother and then by being active in the church and involving herself in the ministry, the particular topic led her to not just experience God's grace, but to continue her walk in His grace. Anne's experience reflects what Dirks says about the grace of God. Dirks elucidates that through God's grace, God provides not just redemption with His creation, but also effects this redemption in the lives of men and women.¹⁹⁹ Anne, after experiencing the grace of God, became more responsible in exercising her faith in God, and continued walking in God's grace. She also said that she became more aware to see and appreciate God's grace in her life in whatever circumstances she was in.

Personal Commitment to Jesus Christ and the Experiences in the Confirmation Classes

Anne stated that she was in her first year of high school when she accepted Jesus as her Lord and Savior, three years prior to her attendance in Confirmation classes. It was December 28, 2000, during the Christmas Institute. In the UMC, the United Methodist Youth Fellowship conducts a four to five-day youth camp during summer (usually in April or in May) and during December after the Christmas celebration. These annual camps cater to all United Methodist youth ages 12 to 23. During the last night of the

¹⁹⁸ Interview with Respondent Two: Anne, January 26, 2019

¹⁹⁹ Helm, *Contours of Christian Theology: The Providence of God* 119.

camp after the preaching of the pastor, the pastor conducted an altar call for those youth who desired to accept Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior. At that time, almost everyone in the group was crying while praying and repenting of their sins. She was one of those who was crying while remembering and reflecting on her committed sins. When the pastor invited them to go in front to the altar and surrender their lives to God, she “boldly responded and surrendered” her life to Jesus. She said the solemnity of the place, the soft music that was being played by the worship team, and the sermon she heard led her to reflect deeply. James Loder says that adolescents are more capable of committing faithfully in self-sacrifice in accordance to the calling of the Spirit because of their “deep ideological hunger, their heightened awareness of their potential non-being, and their sense of urgency about the meaning of life.”²⁰⁰ Anne’s experiences reaffirm what Loder wrote in *The Logic of the Spirit*. During this period of Anne’s life, she said that she felt being ready to fully surrender her life to God, and serve Him no matter what.

Basically, Anne said that it was not Confirmation classes per se that led her to accept Jesus as her Lord and Savior. She explained, “Although Confirmation did not lead me to my personal commitment to Jesus, since I did that prior to attending Confirmation classes, I can perceive that it helped me see the bigger picture of my commitment to Jesus.” There were many things that happened between those years after she accepted Jesus. She explained that as a High School student, she still committed bad things even though she was already a Christian. In particular, she did things like cutting classes and going with her classmates who were not Christians. She also experienced drinking alcohol with them, although at many times she was able to resist. Issler and Habermas

²⁰⁰ Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit*, 248.

notes about the “inner tendencies” of human beings to sin.²⁰¹ However, Wesley notes that through God’s grace, human sin can be victoriously overcome.²⁰² Anne said that through the topics they had in Confirmation classes, she was reminded about her “committed life to Jesus” which helped her to abide in Christ.

Accepting Freedom and Power and the Experiences in the Confirmation Classes

Anne mentioned that one of the topics that made an impact on her life was the story of John Wesley. The particular story she remembered was when the pastor said Wesley was being tempted when he was with Sophia, the love of his life. Anne described that while the pastor was telling that story, she and her classmates in Confirmation were focused as if they were watching a romantic movie, imagining the scenario. As a 16 year old who experienced admiring someone and dreaming to have a “prince charming,” the story itself caught her attention. That’s why she can still remember the story up until today. This experience resonates with what John Milton Gregory says. Gregory states, “Attention and interest is the key to learn. Without it, students cannot learn.”²⁰³ Anne was being captured by the story that aroused her interests and made her learn from it. Anne elucidated that she was surprised that Wesley was able to flee from being tempted with physical attraction to Sophia. She described, “The words we used to say, ‘*Palay na ang lumalapit sa manok*’ (it is the grain who voluntarily comes to the rooster) fit what Wesley

²⁰¹ Issler and Habermas, *How We Learn* 22.

²⁰² Wesley, *A Plain Account on Christian* 24-28.

²⁰³ Gregory, *Seven Laws of Teaching*, 44.

experienced, and that was what we thought and laughed about in the class.”²⁰⁴ That story gave her an impression that John Wesley, the father of Methodism was so pious, and so spiritual. Wesley’s dedication to God gave him the courage to flee from temptations. She also mentioned that in facing some tempting situation she remembered that if a pious person like Wesley was able to conquer temptation, thus, she can also. Linking the story of John Wesley in the story of Jesus’ temptation in the Bible, Anne said, “The work of the Holy Spirit to those who trust and love God, makes it possible for me to conquer temptations that are coming.” The particular story she learned from Confirmation classes helped her to accept the freedom and power God gives to resist evil, injustice, and oppression. Although she also perceived that she was able to accept this freedom when she fully accepted Christ as her Lord and Savior, Confirmation classes made her aware of this matter. Piaget notes reflects Anne’s understanding about the Confirmation lessons.²⁰⁵ Although Anne was still experiencing temptations, there were moments when she was able to conquer them through the grace of God, and by acknowledging the Holy Spirit that was at work in her life.

The following narrative describes how the Confirmation classes impacted the life of Anne specifically on the behavioral aspect of her development.

²⁰⁴ The famous Filipino idiomatic expression means that the woman voluntarily draws herself near to the man; the man should not give any chance to miss her.

²⁰⁵ Dirks, “Foundations of Human Development,” 77.

Renouncing and Rejecting the Evil Powers; Repenting Sins, and the Experiences of Confirmation Classes

Anne elucidated that when it comes to renouncing the spiritual forces of wickedness, rejecting the evil powers of the world, and repenting her sins to God, she perceived that it was not just Confirmation classes that led her to this. She said that she learned earlier about this through Bible studies, youth camps, personal devotions, involvement with church ministries, and youth fellowships. She mostly experienced the state of repenting her sins especially during youth camps. She explained that what she learned from Confirmation classes was basic. The topic focused on the history of the UMC, God's grace, the story of John Wesley, Sacraments, Pillars of Faith, the 25 Articles of faith, and the structure of the UMC. Aside from the lessons about God's grace and the particular story of Wesley mentioned above, she said that Confirmation offered no experience like what she had at the youth camps. She also stated that since Confirmation happened only once for a period of time, she cannot claim that Confirmation led her to renounce and reject the evil powers of the world, and repent her sins to God. She remembered that this is one of the vows she recited during her graduation day of Confirmation classes. When she said "yes" to this vow, it was because she perceived that she was already making this vow through God's help and grace, especially "repenting" of her sins to God.

Aside from youth camps that led her to repent to God, one of the things that led her to renounce and reject the evil powers of the world was her ministry as Praise and Worship leader. She said that she intentionally checked if her life was congruent to what she would be saying whenever she led the people. She learned to acknowledge her weaknesses before God, and how much she needed the Holy Spirit so that she may be

able to lead the people to worship God. Pazmiño notes that the continued work of the Holy Spirit helps people to see their sins, confess and repent, and experience a transformation in their lives.²⁰⁶ Pazmiño expounds, “Persons can be activated by the Holy Spirit who is present in human life to realize this potential of transformation in Christ personally and corporately. The Holy Spirit encounters the human spirit and makes transformation possible across the life span.”²⁰⁷ Anne’s submission to the Holy Spirit led her to a repenting heart and helped her to continue walking with God.

Remaining Faithful Members of Christ’s Holy Church and the Experiences of Confirmation Classes

Anne explained that in her heart, she became a faithful member of Christ’s holy church when she started to be part of the UMC family, and involved herself in the ministries of the church. She said that at UMC, she found another home, especially when she was not doing well at her own home. She explained that when she was young, her mother loved to give her commandments regarding house chores, which she hated. When her two older siblings had a competition in school which often happened, she was left alone to do the house chores. When she did not obey, she would receive punishments. Because of this, she would rather obey than be punished. Anne’s experience reflected with Kohlberg’s first level in his moral theory. This level is the *Pre-Conventional* in which children perceive what is morally bad based on the consequences of action. This stage has to do with obedience and punishment and are concerned with satisfying the

²⁰⁶ Pazminiño, *God our Teacher*, 48, 171.

²⁰⁷ Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 192.

needs. Anne stated that there came a time when she felt having grudges with her family. However, whenever she went to church, her thoughts and feelings toward her situation at home were being corrected. She said that in the church, she learned to be forgiving and loving. In Bible studies and Sunday School, she kept on learning about loving God and loving neighbors, and respecting and loving her parents. She explained that she found another home that she could call a family. Her life and the relationship she had in her local church was her motivation to remain faithful in Christ's Holy church. She said that even before she took Confirmation classes, she had already committed herself to remain faithful because of the warm experiences she had in her local church.

Becoming A Loyal Member of the UMC and the Experiences of Confirmation classes

Anne claimed that her loyalty to UMC was affirmed because of Confirmation classes. When she said "yes" to the vow, she knew that she wanted to serve in a church with a sound doctrine. She said that when she was still in the Roman Catholic Church, she did not really understand why they had to pray in front of images made by humans. She also had several questions about her faith, especially when she was growing up. When she was in Grade Three, she kept asking her mother about the Roman Catholic practices especially when she went to Catechism classes as required by the school. One day when she was in Grade Three, she asked her mother if she could join with the Roman Catholic Confirmation event in their school. Her mother told her that she was not required to do so because she was now a member of the UMC. Her questions about her faith were answered through attending the Confirmation. Bisset expounds the importance

of the people that surrounds the person who have questions about his or her faith.²⁰⁸

Anne's mother and the teacher of the Confirmation classes helped her with this. Anne said that the topic about the polity and the history of UMC impressed to her that UMC was an established denomination with Christ as the head.

Faithfully Participating in the Ministries and the Experiences of Confirmation Classes

Anne said that when her mother became an active member in the UMC, she became an active member of the UMC too. Her faithful participation in the ministries was learned especially in children and youth's Sunday school, Adult worship, and in Bible studies. Some other things that learned before entering Confirmation was being prayerful, the importance of attending church services, giving tithes and offering, and other services and ministries she was involved with. She mentioned that Confirmation emphasized these values, especially when they talked about John Wesley and his accountability to people through praying and preaching the gospel. Even though she could not perceive that she was learning about being faithful while participating in the ministries of the church in Confirmation, the classes led her to see the bigger picture of the services she was doing for God in the church.

The following narrative describes how the Confirmation classes impacted the life of Anne specifically on the cognitive aspect of her development.

²⁰⁸ Bisset, *Why Christian Kids Leave the Faith*, 48-49.

Understanding of the Christian Faith and Experiences of Confirmation Classes

Anne stated that Confirmation classes helped her to have better understanding of the Christian faith, particularly the faith of the UMC. As aforementioned, Anne had questions about the Roman Catholic faith and its difference from UMC's faith. She now had a full grasp of why UMC does not have images, and why the cross is empty. She can remember that the reason why UMC has an empty cross was the emphasis was on the resurrection of Christ and of Christ's victory over death. She also had a better understanding about how to pray, to whom to pray, what to pray, about the Holy Trinity, and God's grace. She adds:

One of the things that happened after Confirmation was it gave me the clear direction in my Christian faith. It also gave me confidence to know my stand as a UMC member. I remember when I entered this particular UMC school and learned that some of the students did not attend Confirmation, there was a feeling that I had an edge among my classmates. I don't feel it was pride, but more like confidence, that when someone will ask me about the UMC faith, I can answer!²⁰⁹

Anne mentioned about learning the Four Pillars of Faith which she first heard in Confirmation. She stated that the Pillars of Faith gave her a sense of direction about her stand as a Christian. She learned to reads her Bible with more understanding because it is the first foundation of the faith. The other three pillars, namely, Tradition, Reason, and Experiences were secondary.

²⁰⁹ Interview with Respondent Two: Anne, January 28, 2019

Understanding of the Meaning of Baptism and Confirmation Classes' Experiences

Anne was baptized in the Roman Catholic Church when she was four years old. She was converted as a UMC member when she was eight years old, when she started to be an active member in the UMC. She said that there came a time when she became a young person that she told her mother she wanted to be baptized in the UMC instead. She explained that because she understood that baptism means being a full member in the church as in the family of Christ, she wanted to be a full member in the UMC. Before she took Confirmation classes, she joined one of the activities of the church which is the re-affirmation of baptism. Since the UMC acknowledges the baptism of a person from other denominations, the UMC is not do re-baptizing. Anne was happy when she had the chance to experience re-affirming her baptism in the UMC. Anne stated that prior to Confirmation classes, she had a full grasp of what it means to be baptized, and how important it was in her life. In Confirmation, although they talked about the two sacraments of the UMC, it was not elaborated on in the class. She said that the pastor just gave the two sacraments of UMC and compared them with the seven sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church. They also tackled why UMC conducts only two sacraments, and that was because these were the two sacraments Jesus conducted and experienced in the Bible.

Receiving and Professing the Christian Faith and Experiences in Confirmation Classes

Anne shared that she started to receive and profess the Christian faith when she was younger and became an active member in the church and its ministries. Her desire to

profess the Christian faith became stronger when she was 13, after confessing Jesus as her Lord and Savior. She was willing to serve God and do everything for Him after that special moment of her life. She stated that youth activities in her local church helped her achieve her desires. Youth activities such as jogging fellowship, devotions every Saturday, youth Sunday school, and monthly youth fellowships strengthened her relationship with her fellow youth. The ministries in the local church such as Praise and Worship, tambourine dance, and Bible study kept her on track concerning her personal devotion with God. Anne's local church mission trip to Talim Island gave her an opportunity to minister to other people. When she became a youth leader, she said that the big factor that helped her to accomplish her responsibilities was her older "ate" and "kuya" (big sister and brother) who guided and mentored her in her faith journey. She shared that the people around her in the church inspired her to continue her walk in the Christian faith.

Anne stated that she thought that receiving and professing her faith was just that. To her surprise, there was an activity in the church that would formally affirm her desire to receive and profess the Christian faith, and that was in Confirmation classes. Confirmation classes' graduation day was significant to her as she recited the vows of the UMC while being in front of the congregation and God, at the altar. She explained that because she was 16, she thought she could grasp the moment and the feeling of being part of the church, especially as a professing member. Even in the classes, she affirmed that she had a better understanding of what the lessons meant, compared to when she was younger. Anne's age supports Jean Piaget's study in placing the Confirmation classes at an age of formal operations on which youth this age can handle abstract thinking.

Understanding of the UMC Mission, History, Doctrine, and Vows and Experiences in Confirmation Classes

Anne claimed that her Confirmation classes' experiences led her to have a better understanding of the mission, history, doctrine and vows of UMC. She explained that she had a better understanding about the UMC doctrine of salvation when they talked about God's grace. She said, "Since I grew up with an orientation of the Roman Catholic Church, during my youth days I worked so hard to gain my salvation." She shared that there came a time in her Christian life when she thought that she had to serve God and work for Him as if paying Him for the salvation and grace God gave to her. She elucidated, "Confirmation classes helped me understand that I am not saved because of my own work, but because of God's work; that I do not need to merit grace, but it was freely given to me by God." Anne's understanding of salvation and grace through the Confirmation lessons also led her to have a better understanding of missions. She explained, "After we talked about that topic, I understood that my works were the fruit of God's grace." Confirmation classes led her to understand why she was doing missions. However, she also mentioned that she had a better understanding of the mission of the church because of her own experiences in the church. This is in line with what Piaget notes that the human mind has the capacity and the drive to make sense of experiences, thoughts, and feelings.²¹⁰ And under God's sovereignty and grace which is at work in the life of the people, humans can organize and assimilate the knowledge and experiences

²¹⁰ Dirks, "Foundations of Human Development," 74.

they take and experience as they develop. “God’s plan for growth to maturity has been imprinted to all.”²¹¹

Summary of Anne’s Profile

Table 4 depicts a brief summary of the affective, behavioral and cognitive experiences of Anne with Confirmation classes. The statements here were taken from the interviews with Anne.

Table 4: Summary of the Affective, Behavioral, and Cognitive Experiences of Anne on the Confirmation Classes

AFFECTIVE DOMAIN			
Experiences Christ More	Personal Commitment	Accepts Freedom and Power	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oriented in a Roman Catholic way and attended two churches. Yet she found that UMC nurtures her faith. - She was 16 when she attended Confirmation and claimed that all the activities led her to know Christ more - The lessons led her to not just experience Christ, but to continue to walk on God’s grace. - The lessons led her to become more aware to see and appreciate God’s grace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Had a personal commitment to Jesus in a Christmas Institute, three years prior confirmation. - Although confirmation did not lead her to a personal commitment to Jesus it led her to see the bigger picture of her commitment. - The topics they had in confirmation, set as reminders about her commitment to God. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - John Wesley and Sophia’s story was one of the stories that made an impact in dealing with temptations. - She described that the story was told as if they were watching a romantic movie. - Confirmation led her more to continue to ask for God’s presence in her life for her to be able to conquer temptations that was coming. 	
BEHAVIORAL DOMAIN			
Renounce and Reject Evil	Remain Faithful Member	Loyal Member	Faithful Participation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Other ministries led her to renounce and reject evil powers. - Youth camps led her to repent. - Confirmation did not provide the same experience n camps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - She started remaining faithful when she became active in the UMC, because she found her second home. - Regular programs like Sunday school and Bible studies led her to know and love God more. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desire to be loyal to UMC was affirmed through Confirmation - Had questions about her faith which were answered in Confirmation. - Lessons on UMC polity and history 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Her faithful participation in the church started when her mother became an active member in UMC.

²¹¹ Dirks, “Foundations of Human Development,” 72.

- Cannot claim that it led her to renounce and reject evil powers.	- Thus, confirmation has nothing to do with her being a faithful member.	made an impression that UMC was an established denomination.	- Confirmation led her to see the bigger pictures of the services she was doing in the church.
COGNITIVE DOMAIN			
Understanding of Christian Faith	Understanding of Baptism	Professing Christian Faith	Understanding UMC
- Confirmation led her to have better understanding of her Christian faith. Confirmation also gave her confidence in her faith as UMC. - Pillars of Faith led her to appreciate more reading the Bible	- Attended the re-affirmation of baptism that was conducted in her local church prior confirmation. - Knew the meaning of baptism even before attending confirmation. - The two sacraments were not elaborated in Confirmation.	- Professed her faith when she was younger - Youth fellowships and the people around her helped her to walk her faith. - Confirmation' graduation was significant to her. She formally professed her faith with that event. - Age helped to have better understanding of the lesson	- Appreciated the doctrine of salvation and grace. - Confirmation led her to understand mission, but her personal experiences in mission led her to have better understanding of it.

Case Study Three: Rose

This section presents the story of Rose. The case includes her demographic background and her perceptions about her affective, behavioral, and cognitive experiences with the Confirmation classes.

Rose was raised by her grandparents and parents in a local UMC congregation. When she came to an age in which she was aware of what was happening in her world, going to church was a weekly routine. Every Sunday, she, along with her three other siblings, had to wake early to prepare their best dress for Sunday. All of the members in

the family were baptized as infants in the UMC. Her mother was active in church activities, especially in the United Methodist Women Society of Christian Services (UMWSCS), a women's lay organization. Usually the members are mothers. Rose used to attend Bible studies with her mother and other activities, even though she was the only child in the group. At home, her grandparents taught her to pray before eating meals. She described that her grandparents used to sing their prayers of gratitude and that was how she first learned how to pray by singing. She claimed that she became a serious person even though she was still a young girl because she was often with her elder people in home. Fowler notes that children imitates their parents.²¹²

Rose is 28 years old now. Counting after her Confirmation graduation, she has been a professing member of UMC for 14 years. Currently, she is an active Christian education deaconess in a local church, assigned by the bishop. Her works are teaching UMC members of all ages from the youngest to eldest, conducting the choir, and preaching occasionally. She also trains and equips people to lead and minister to others, handles care groups, and writes Vacation Church School materials in Ecumenical Ministry. She is also an Outreach chairperson on her District.

The following narrative describes how the Confirmation classes impacted the life of Rose specifically regarding the affective aspect of her development.

Experiencing Christ More and the Experiences in the Confirmation Classes

Rose admitted that even though she was active in the church with all of its ministries and activities, church became a routine for her. The biggest part of her being

²¹² Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 78.

active in the church was not practically her own decision, but the decision of her parent and grandparents. She was trained strictly especially by her grandparents who lived with them in their house. She just knew that church should be part of her life and it was morally good to obey elders. Rose's situation reflects Kohlberg's about basing her actions on the consequences this action might receive; and her desire to gain approval to the people around her.²¹³ Rose knew in her heart that she loved God. However, she also stated that she did not have a deep personal relationship with God. Rose started to fully walk with God and had the "deeper hunger for God's love and mercy" when her father died when she was only 12 years old. She explained that her future dreams were suddenly shattered and she did not know how to start with her life again. In her most painful situation was where she personally found God, and felt His presence in her life. She became more active in the church as a volunteer teacher in their mission area, and a youth leader as well.

Rose was 14 years old when she attended Confirmation classes. Even though she had been active in the church since she was younger, she admitted that she did not know anything about what it meant to be a Methodist. Attending the classes led her to experience Christ more. She recounts:

In Confirmation, I learned a lot not just about my faith as a UMC member but also about the love of God for me. Aside from the topic about Jesus, His life, death, resurrection, and grace which touched the deepest hunger of my heart and soul, my teacher, who was my administrative pastor, impacted my faith a lot.²¹⁴

²¹³ Kohlberg, "Stages of Moral Development as a Basis for Moral Education," 91-94.

²¹⁴ Interview with Respondent Three: Rose, January 21, 2019

Rose added that the lectures given by her teacher were easily understood because of the strategies and approaches he used. LeBar notes, “A good teacher, just like Jesus, should see the felt need of the learners, and attend to it.”²¹⁵ Rose also described that her teacher walked his talk. The teacher’s presence and support filled her felt need as an active youth. He was loving and gentle to them, and modeled the life of a good Christian.

Personal Commitment to Jesus Christ and the Experiences in the Confirmation Classes

Rose elucidated that at the peak of her desire to know God more and experience His presence, Confirmation classes impacted her walk and personal relationship with Him. Rose explained that Confirmation classes led her to see the beauty and richness of her faith as a UMC member. She learned more about God and His grace, as it was the bigger part of the emphasis in the lessons. Confirmation made her realize more of her need to have a personal and intimate relationship with God. She remembers:

There was a culminating activity in Confirmation that led me and my friends who were with me to accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior and commit our lives to Him. We did the activity during the night, as our teacher conducted a love feast. After his message and personal testimony about his personal walk with God, he asked us to find a partner and pray for each other. There was solemn music and few lights were on. I think the ambiance helped us to reflect deeply. We prayed for each other and cried together. The pastor then asked all those who wanted to surrender their lives to Jesus. I went and I surrendered my life to Him right there and then.²¹⁶

²¹⁵ LeBar, *Education that is Christian*, 70.

²¹⁶ Interview with Respondent Three: Rose, January 21, 2019

In the love feast, the pastor conducted the Holy Communion. Both the big bread and a bowl of juice were on the table. The participants looked for a partner and gave each other the bread and then prayed together. Rose mentioned that she fully surrendered her life to Jesus because of that event. She does not really remember the message of the pastor during the love feast, but she was moved to repentance. Her desire to grow more with Jesus happened after Confirmation classes.

Accepting Freedom and Power and the Experiences in the Confirmation Classes

Rose claimed that Confirmation classes led her to appreciate more the discipline she received from her parents and grandparents. Before personally confirming and owning her faith, she learned about God and the importance of praying and reading the Bible through the guidance and teachings of her family. The involvement of parents, grandparents, and other people who model the Christian faith to youth, can also help the youth to understand and give more importance to his or her faith, along with the importance of his or her involvements in Christian congregation, worship and study, and witness and service.²¹⁷ The church also played a vital role in her life as she continued growing in faith and in love with God, until she finally embraced and understood things she was doing in church. She learned to not just imitate her parents and grandparents. The church offered programs that catered to members from infancy to old age. Confirmation classes were part of the programs the church offered for youth, ages 12 up to 17. Rose stated that Confirmation helped her see the bigger picture of her faith, ministries, and

²¹⁷ *Foundations for Teaching and Learning*, 11.

God's grace. Rose's statement reinforce the claim of Issler that doctrinal classes lead youth in growing and nurturing in their faith.²¹⁸ One of the particular lessons that Rose cited from Confirmation that led her to accept a freedom and power that God gave to her as a Christian, was the Four Pillars of Faith. These are the Scripture, Tradition, Reason, and Experience. She states:

I learned more that God's word should be above my tradition, my personal reasoning and experiences in life, and in whatever circumstances that I am in. Truth will only be found in the Bible first. There were times in my puberty period that I was experiencing things that really confused me, especially with my identity. But the Scripture kept on reminding me about who I am as a child of God.²¹⁹

Each time Rose felt down, confused, discouraged, or disheartened, she kept on appreciating the truth that comes from the Bible, and from the goodness and grace she experienced from God.

The following narrative describes how the Confirmation classes impacted the life of Rose specifically on the behavioral aspect of her development.

Renouncing and Rejecting the Evil Powers; Repenting Sins, and the Experiences of Confirmation Classes

Even before attending Confirmation classes, Rose was obedient to her parents and grandparents. Observing their Christian life, she stated that she knew what was moral and what was not. Saying "no" to her other friends who were asking her out to do something Christians should not be doing, was part of the discipline she learned. She described, "When I was young, I called it my conscience. In Sunday School, I used to learn that it

²¹⁸ Issler, "Biblical Perspectives on Developmental Grace," 66.

²¹⁹ Interview with Respondent Three: Rose, January 21, 2019

was my guardian angel who kept me from doing wrong.” She also loved God and her family and did not want to do anything that would hurt them. Through the people around her, when she committed sin, she was being rebuked by them. However, her Confirmation class learning experiences led her to realize that she was trying to do the good and moral things by using her own strength, and not totally depending on the grace that comes from God. Rose reminisces:

I thought I was already doing well in my Christian life. After all, I was never a bad person. But the lesson about God’s grace was clear. Our teacher clearly explained the lessons about Preventive, Justifying, and Sanctifying grace. For me, the lessons were too reflective. My teacher did not just explain their meanings, but also related them in our everyday Christian life. Right there and then, I realized I am prideful, and I needed more of God’s grace.²²⁰

Westerhoff notes, “We are to be a people who know that we cannot manage history or nature, our political, social, and economic systems, or our own lives, and who live dependent upon God, trusting in God’s grace and love.”²²¹ In light of Rose’s experiences, the researcher believes that it is only through God’s grace that people are becoming aware of their sins, and their need to be transformed in Christ. Aside from Rose’s childhood experiences in her family and in the church, she became more aware and acknowledged her need for God’s grace in order for her to renounce and reject evil powers over her life, after attending Confirmation classes.

²²⁰ Interview with Respondent Three: Rose, January 21, 2019

²²¹ Westerhoff III, *Will Our Children Have Faith*, 48.

Remaining Faithful Members of Christ's Holy Church and the Experiences of Confirmation Classes

Even before attending Confirmation, Rose stated that she had the feeling that God was calling her to remain a faithful member of Christ's holy church and be His representative in the world. When she was younger, her models of being faithful in Christ were her parents and grandparents. When she became a youth her desire to be God's representative in the world was confirmed when she started to be involved in her local church's community mission in a depressed area. When she saw the need of the people, her heart longed to serve God by serving them even though she was only around 12. Loder says that adolescents are more capable to commit faithfully in self-sacrifice in accordance to the calling of the Spirit because of their "deep ideological hunger, their heightened awareness of their potential nonbeing, and their sense of urgency about the meaning of life."²²² Loder's statement has a direct relationship with what Rose experienced. Rose first volunteered as the teacher of the children in the mission area. She explained that her learning experiences in Confirmation led her to see the bigger picture of her ministries to people, which led her to be more faithful in Christ. Rose cited the lesson about John Wesley and his ministry. She quoted Wesley's "The world is my parish." Wesley's quotation gave her an impression that she too, "can represent God to the world." She said that Wesley's story inspired her to do more.

Rose also shared her experience about God's grace through a deaconess who led her to better understand John Wesley's quotation. It was when her sponsor in Harris Memorial College who was a deaconess had cancer. Rose affirms:

I thought I cannot continue with my studies because my sponsor needed the money more than I do. In my surprise, she told me that no matter

²²² Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit*, 248.

what, she will continue supporting me until I graduate. Her words reminded me of Wesley's words. Despite her disease, she was willing to extend God's blessing to me. Like Wesley, despite the great challenges he faced that time, he was able to continue and made the world his parish.²²³

Rose felt that God gave her the confirmation that if she remained faithful, she would not be abandoned by God. Rose explained that she was inspired by the life of other people and the particular story of Wesley that led her to become faithful in Christ's holy church. Her personal experiences with the people God used to bless her, led her to want to do the same thing to others.

Becoming A Loyal Member of the UMC and the Experiences of Confirmation Classes

Rose claimed that there are other factors that led her to become loyal member of the UMC. The number one factor was her family who were loyal members in the UMC. Since Rose's grandparents and parents were her models in the Christian faith, their faith became her faith until she owned it personally. Another factor she gave was her UMC family; her local church who nurtured her spiritual growth from being a child until the time when she decided to enter a UMC school for deaconesses. Her local church also supported her and her family to cope with the pains they had during the time of mourning. Her involvements in the church as a youth leader and a volunteer in their community mission area also led her to become loyal to UMC. Finally, she shared that her learning experiences in Confirmation classes led her to affirm her loyalty to UMC. Rose admitted that even though she was an active member in her local church and her

²²³ Interview with Respondent Three: Rose, January 22, 2019

heart was loyal to serve God in the UMC, she did not know what it meant to be a Methodist and its difference from other denominations. When she clearly learned the lessons about the Four Pillars of Faith, about the story of Wesley, about the beliefs, faith, and principles, and the structure of UMC, Rose claimed that she felt proud to be a member of the UMC.

Faithfully Participating in the Ministries and the Experiences of Confirmation Classes

Rose was being trained by her parents and grandparents to pray diligently to God since she was a child. Although there were moments when she wondered if God was really listening to her prayers because she could not see God physically, she learned to believe that her prayers were answered. When she grew up, Rose learned to pray not just for herself but also for others. Rose was also trained to tithe in the Sunday school junior worship. She shared that her mother would give her money and put it in her right and left hands. Her mother would then remind her to give to Jesus the money that was in her right hand as an offering that money was bigger than the money she should take. She was trained to be faithful in giving her tithe before becoming a young person, and this became her lifestyle. Whitehead notes that mothers should have trained their children before they reach the age of 12. Those years can give good foundations.²²⁴ Because of the training Rose received, she became faithful in participating in the ministries of the church.

In Confirmation classes, Rose stated that she was led to appreciate the ministries that she was already practicing. Before entering Confirmation, she did not know why she had to give her life to Jesus. After Confirmation, she came to realize that it was part of

²²⁴ Whitehead, *The Aims of Education and Other Essays*, 1.

her obedience, honor, love, and trust to God. In Confirmation, she shared that they talked about the importance of the ministries they were practicing in the church. Their teacher also gave his personal testimony about God's goodness in his life. These stories inspired her. After Confirmation, Rose said that she became more faithful because she understood things she was doing.

The following narrative describes how the Confirmation classes impacted the life of Rose specifically upon the cognitive aspect of her development.

Understanding of the Christian Faith and Experiences of Confirmation Classes

Rose affirmed, "Confirmation classes became an introductory part of the succeeding classes I attended." She shared that her pastor seemed to know well the needs of his members and planned follow-up programs that would help to nurture their Christian faith. She declares:

I had a great experience in Confirmation classes because of our teacher. He used strategies that fit our age and communicated to us the UMC history, beliefs, Pillars of Faith, and principles in our level of understanding. It happened 14 years ago, but I can still remember them and was able to use them as my stepping stones when I entered this UMC school. After Confirmation graduation, my pastor encouraged me to attend a week of follow-up classes. I became interested in attending the classes because I enjoyed Confirmation.²²⁵

Reflecting on this, the researcher is reminded that one of the key components Harold Burgess introduced that makes an impact in curriculum and instruction is the teacher/shepherd. Burgess says that teachers establish all the things that are needed in the teaching and learning processes. They are the ones who choose the learning experience

²²⁵ Interview with Respondent Three: Rose, January 22, 2019

and direct the learners on what they should learn.²²⁶ The researcher notes here that teachers who have an intimate relationship with Jesus manifest that in they relate themselves to the learners. Through them, learners can have the sense of the presence of God. Thus, the teacher plays a vital role in the process of the spiritual growth of the learners. Rose claimed that she had a better understanding about her Christian faith because there was a follow-up class after Confirmation. She avows, “Confirmation was like a bridge from simple learnings to complex. It led me to want to hear more about God and about my faith.” Her one week stay in the follow-up classes taught her about the importance of personal devotions and they talked about more things about the UMC faith. She also had more information and understanding about the Christian faith after attending a Heart-Warming Experience (one of the Christian education programs of UMC).

Understanding of the Meaning of Baptism and Confirmation Classes’ Experiences

Rose stated that one of the activities they had in Confirmation was the re-affirmation of baptism. Prior to the last activity, the pastor clearly taught the class about the two sacraments of UMC, and gave their meaning and significance in Christian life. What Rose understood in the class according to the explanation of her teacher about baptism is that it had to do with cleansing of sin and that she was now part of God’s family. The pastor used the story of Jesus’ baptism, and set it as an example. Rose explained, “Through the ritual of baptism, it is as if God is announcing that I am His own dear child, just like Jesus.” Aside from that, she also understood that remembering her baptism reminded her that she has to live a life according to God’s own will. That was

²²⁶ May et al., *Children Matter*, 196.

why during the re-affirmation, she treasured the experience she had, and felt that she had received new strength and power that comes from God. Even today, each time she sees a child being baptized, she keeps remembering and appreciating hers. This experience can be reflected in what Shaw says. He states, “Strong emotional experiences also have a high likelihood of being permanently stored. We tend to remember best and (even more) the worst things that have happened to us. If a teacher can elicit strong emotions in learners, those learners are certainly more likely to remember.”²²⁷ Rose was able to keep remembering her baptism and appreciate its importance because her experience touched her emotions.

Receiving and Professing the Christian Faith and Experiences in Confirmation Classes

Aside from the re-affirmation of baptism activity and the lessons about baptism, Rose remembered that her Confirmation graduation was also significant to her. That was where she professed her Christian faith and desire to be Christ’s disciple. It was more memorable since the whole congregation made her feel that they were celebrating with graduates and would support them in their endeavors. She also took seriously the vows she heard and recited. Her desire to serve God as His disciple grew deeper. She also understood that after she professed her faith to God and her promises to serve Him, her life should be reflective of His. Rose made it clear that she still committed sins many times, and was still committing sins even after professing her faith. She admitted that there were moments when she found herself wanting to beat herself up. But the Holy Spirit always led her to repent, and to just continue to walk in His grace. Sin makes it

²²⁷ Shaw, *Transforming Theological Education*, 135.

hard for human beings to grow in Christ.²²⁸ Sin is operative even among those who already profess their faith in God. However, God's grace is more than enough to overcome sin.²²⁹ Thus, Christians, even those who first profess their faith, need to learn to continue to walk with God. Rose acknowledged that she is weak and she needs to continue walking with God. That was why she did not stop learning about her faith after Confirmation and attended other classes and Christian education programs offered by her local church.

Understanding of the UMC Mission, History, Doctrine, and Vows and Experiences in Confirmation Classes

“Social Holiness” was what Rose most understood to be the mission of UMC. She shared that she saw that her local church was observing both “Personal Holiness” and “Social Holiness.” She was able to practice both with the training and discipline that were first given by her parents and grandparents. The local church then became her avenue to continue nurturing her faith. Even before Confirmation, Rose was already practicing the mission of the church. However, she stated that she had a better understanding of what this meant in the classes. The phrase, “Personal and Social Holiness” was first heard in Confirmation. Through the teachings given by her Confirmation teacher, she understood that to be a disciple of Christ is to do the mission of the church, that is, to be intimate with God, and to act in society. In the classes, she also realized that the church should not be content with “feeding programs,” but provide programs that will nurture people holistically, especially people who are outside the church. Rose mentioned that during her

²²⁸ Dirks, “Foundations of Human Development,” 75.

²²⁹ Helm, *Contours of Christian Theology*, 119.

training at one of the UMC School for deaconesses, aside from the Bible courses she also enjoyed practicum. She did not have a hard time living for two weeks or a month with people who were in depressed areas. She also enjoyed teaching them. The training she received from her local church in their community ministries, her understanding about the mission of UMC through Confirmation classes, and her practicum at one of the UMC School led her to have a better understanding of what the mission were of the UMC. Since the classes which had the clearest teachings about the history, doctrine, structure, and principles of UMC was Confirmation classes, Rose claimed that Confirmation led her to have a better understanding about them. She was also able to use this knowledge in some classes in this UMC School, especially in her Methodism subject. It was like a refreshment course for her which was why she did not have a difficult time in the class. Rose mentioned that they did not particularly talk about the UMC vows in Confirmation classes, or memorize them. She first heard and recited the vows during graduation day. While the pastor was leading the class in reciting the vows, she understood these vows because of the prior knowledge she had in Confirmation. She said “yes” to all these vows with all her heart, and was able to profess her faith in her own decision. She also claimed that she owned her faith because of her experiences and learning at the Confirmation classes.

Summary of Rose’ Profile

Table 5 depicts a brief summary of the affective, behavioral and cognitive experiences of Rose with Confirmation classes. The statements here were taken from the case study that the researcher wrote on Rose.

Table 5: Summary of the Affective, Behavioral, and Cognitive Experiences of Rose on the Confirmation Classes

AFFECTIVE DOMAIN			
Experiences Christ More	Personal Commitment	Accepts Freedom and Power	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raised as UMC, but admitted that church was a routine for her. - Was 14 when she attended Confirmation, and the classes led her to experience Christ more. Appreciated the teacher who used strategies and methods that caught her attention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirmation led her to have a personal relationship with God. - “Love feast” in Confirmation led her to repent her sins to God, and surrendered her life to Him. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirmation led her to appreciate the teachings and discipline she received from her parents and grandparents. - Four Pillars of led her to appreciate reading the Bible more, and see herself as God sees her. 	
BEHAVIORAL DOMAIN			
Renounce and Reject Evil	Remain Faithful Member	Loyal Member	Faithful Participation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knew what was morally good through parents and grandparents. - People around her rebuked her each time she committed a sin. - Confirmation led her to realize that she was prideful and do things according to her own strength. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Faithful in Christ’s holy church even before attending confirmation. - Confirmation led her to see the bigger picture of her ministries. - Some people inspired her to continue being faithful. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Family, and her ministries in the church helped - Lessons on Four Pillars of Faith, Wesley, about the beliefs, faith, and principles, and the structure of UMC, she expressed that she felt being proud to be UMC. Thus confirmation led her to be more loyal in UMC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents and grandparents helped her be faithful - Confirmation led her to appreciate the service she was doing in the church - Her teacher also shared personal testimonies in the class which she appreciated too.
COGNITIVE DOMAIN			
Understanding of Christian Faith	Understanding of Baptism	Professing Christian Faith	Understanding UMC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirmation led her to an understanding of her Christian faith. - Confirmation - Was inspired by her teacher because he communicated the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Part of the activities in their Confirmation was re-affirmation of baptism. - Each time she saw an infant being baptized, she remember her baptism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirmation graduation was significant to her. - She did not stop learning after Confirmation, but attended to the follow-up classes and activities the church provided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Personal and Social Holiness” were significant. - Confirmation led her to have better understanding about the history, beliefs of UMC - Although the vows were not

lessons well to them. - Attending Heart-Warming Experience retreat helped her.	- Baptism reminded her to live a life that is holy, since she is part of God's family.		discussed, she understood them since she understood the lessons given.
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Rose has good feedback on Confirmation classes by mentioning that the classes and other activities helped her grow in her Christina life. Rose also acknowledged the contribution of follow-up classes and other church activities that molded her to become a servant of Christ

Case Study Four: Peace

This section presents the story of Peace. The case includes her demographic background and her perceptions about her affective, behavioral, and cognitive experiences with the Confirmation classes.

Peace grew up in a United Methodist family. She said that she, her mother, and her six siblings were baptized in the UMC. They were influenced by her grandmother who was an active member of UMC. Peace's father died due to a disease when she was eight years old. She said that during the time of mourning, her local UMC consoled, loved, and supported them. Hence, the church made their situation easier for them. Even though Peace was very young, she was dynamic in the activities of the church. She described that her life rotated between school, home, and church. There was no week when she missed attending Sunday school and other church activities. When she was younger, her mother set her and her siblings' minds on Saturday that they will attend church. Every Saturday night before going to bed, she used to prepare her dress for tomorrow's worship. She was raised by her mother and grandmother with a positive attitude towards church. She felt excited and always looked forward to Sunday. She also

grew up learning about the church workers. There were pastors and also deaconesses who regularly went to their house to visit, to conduct Bible studies, to pray for them, and to bond with them. Observing the church workers in their local church gave her an impression that a church worker was just like Jesus, because they kept on reaching out to people. There came a time when she said to herself, “I want to be like them too!”

Peace is now 30 years old. Currently, she is an active Kindergarten education deaconess in the UMC. She was appointed by the Bishop to serve in the local UMC with an extension mission of an established school. She also teaches older members in the church in Bible study and occasionally conducts in choir during worship. At the UMC school which trains teachers, particularly women workers in the church, she was trained to teach, preach, play piano, and do school administration. Counting after her Confirmation classes' graduation, Peace has been a professing member in the UMC for 17 years.

The following narrative describes how the Confirmation classes impacted the life of Peace, specifically the affective aspect of her development.

Experiencing Christ More and the Experiences in the Confirmation Classes

Peace at a very young age was involved in the church. Growing up, she said she became interested in the ministries of the church such as tambourine dancing and choir. The church helped to develop her talent in singing and in dancing. Her ability to lead people, talk with people, and share the gospel with others were also developed through her church involvements. When she was asked what her life was like before meeting Jesus, she describes:

I cannot remember a time that I did not know or love Jesus. When I was at the age that I am aware of what was happening in my world, I already loved Jesus. Of course, there were times when I still committed sins or did things I thought God did not want me to do. But I loved Him, and always had the desire to serve Him.²³⁰

Peace stated that she felt she was so in love with God even though she was young. She loved to go to church to learn more about Him. There was a time when her mother had to pick her up at the church because she was staying late at night assisting volunteer teachers in preparing the lessons and visual aids for Sunday school. She described her feeling as “a child thirsts for water.” Peace have experience-producing tendencies, in which Pazmiño elucidates that children are active as well as receptive, and that the Scripture affirms children in ministering to God and others.²³¹ The researcher notes here that through God’s grace, people, even young children, are capable to learn and serve God under God’s given capacities. They are active and, though their environment and the people surrounding them can influence their learnings, they themselves have their own way to explore and learn.

Peace was 12 years old when she took Confirmation classes. She stated that when she heard that it would be a Confirmation camp, she felt very excited. Before taking Confirmation, she understood well what it was for. Her local pastor oriented students about the classes, and who they would be with. She was happy that she would finally be not just a baptized member of the church, but also a professing member of UMC. Peace revealed that she expected a lot from Confirmation, especially that it would be conducted in a camp. However, when she was there she expresses:

²³⁰ Interview with Respondent Four: Peace, January 29, 2019

²³¹ Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 221-222.

It was never like an approach in Sunday School. I was surprised that it was a serious class with an icebreaker in between each session. I can't believe that our teachers were expecting us to absorb what they were saying. As far as I can remember, each time we have sessions, I was like, "I hope time will pass by as fast as time can!" The class was different compared with my Sunday School experiences which I enjoyed and understood each lesson. I could have enjoyed the sessions if the teachers spoke to us on our level, and not as if we were 30 years old. It gave me and my classmates no chance to "experience Christ more" because it was not an experience, but more on cognitive, too intellectual. I was 12 years old at that time, and it was boring. It was far from my expectations.²³²

Peace enjoyed some of the activities in the camp, especially the swimming time, and culminating activities. However, when it came to experiencing Christ more, Peace elucidated that Confirmation classes did not lead her in this matter. She said the sessions they had were too intellectual and the approach did not fit her age. Giving the benefit that she was at the peak of her excitement and longing to hear and learn things about God and her denomination, Peace claimed that her experiences with Confirmation classes did not reach her expectations. She had a better understanding about the importance of knowing the needs of the students according to their age level when she became a professional teacher. How people learn is very important to know, especially for Christian educators. This is to help them in providing the needs of their students and in adjusting the lessons and the instructional materials they are using as it is needed. Otherwise, those who fail to understand the developmental processes of the children will also fail in using the right methods that will contribute to their spiritual growth.²³³ Although Peace can still remember the lessons, she said they did not touch her heart enough to allow her to experience Christ more.

²³² Interview with Respondent Four: Peace, January 29, 2019

²³³ Stonehouse, *Joining Children on the Spiritual Journey*, 12.

Personal Commitment to Jesus Christ and the Experiences
in the Confirmation Classes

A few months after Confirmation classes, Peace accepted Jesus as her Lord and Savior during Christmas Institute. Peace explained that in her first Christmas Institute, she did not have any idea about what it was, and what would happen there, compared with her knowledge about Confirmation classes. She described that even today, as she recalls her first Christmas Institute experience, she can still have the same feeling she had 17 years ago. Perry Shaw notes, “Strong emotional experiences also have a high likelihood of being permanently stored. We tend to remember best and (even more) the worst things that have happened to us. If a teacher can elicit strong emotions in learners, those learners are certainly more likely to remember.”²³⁴

Peace still appreciates and treasures her first Christmas Institute experience because it touched her deep emotional and spiritual need. She experienced a deeper longing for God during the last night of the camp. She said that the topics she heard were about the struggles that youth were facing, about all kinds of relationships with family, friends, with the opposite sex, about discipleship, and about faith. She said that she was able to cope with all the sessions with the help of the invited speakers who caught her attention and interests. The researcher notes here that a teacher can create a great impact upon how the students learn and develop. According to Gregory whatever teachers do—their gestures, the way he or she speaks, even the tone of their voice, and how they relate to his or her students can catch the attention and interests of the students. Milton adds that the attention and interest of the students are the keys to learning. Without it, students

²³⁴ Shaw, *Transforming Theological Education*, 135.

cannot learn.²³⁵ LeBar also talks about the importance of the teacher in the teaching-learning process, and the importance of their strategy in getting the attention of the students. Peace said that the speakers, preachers, and group facilitators in the camp caught her interests and made her listen. It was as if she would miss a lot of things if she did not listen to them even in for a split second. She explains:

I was too open and excited with everything about me, and I was always ready to accept whatever ministries the church will give me. My first experience of Christmas Institute affirmed my calling to be a deaconess. I accepted Christ as my Lord and Savior on the last night of the camp. Yes, I was too emotional, but I know in my heart that I was so in love with Him more through what I experienced. That day also, I said “yes” to God who was calling me in a full-time ministry.²³⁶

Peace fully surrendered to God’s lordship eight months after experiencing Confirmation classes. She explained that the leaders who facilitated the Christmas Institute and the topics they discussed were relevant to her age. She made a comparison between the approach of the teachers of the Confirmation, and the approaches and strategies she experienced during Christmas Institute.

Accepting Freedom and Power and the Experiences in the Confirmation Classes

After Peace’ Confirmation classes experiences, she happily accepted the certificate of being a professing member of the UMC. In her 12-year-old thinking, accepting the Confirmation certificate was the most important part of the activity. She was looking forward to accepting it during the Confirmation graduation day because she

²³⁵ Gregory, *Seven Laws of Teaching*, 44.

²³⁶ Interview with Respondent Four: Peace, January 29, 2019

felt that her identity as a UMC member would be affirmed. She said she does not know why she had a strong desire to be “affirmed,” “approved,” and “accepted” when she was 12, compared to when she became 30. She just knew that it was so important to her. Erikson’s psychosocial theory says that adolescents is experience “Identity and Role diffusion.” Peace’s desires to achieve her longings gave her a sense of “identity.” Peace added that she recited vows and made promises as a professing member in front of the congregation. However, while saying “yes” to each of these vows, she did not feel moved by them. She did not absorb what these vows meant in her life. These vows were recited as part of the program, and saying “yes” to each was expected from graduates. The only vow she can recall and still walk with was about “praying, tithing, and being present in the church.” Peace perceived that she fully accepted the freedom and the power God gives when she accepted Christ as Lord and Savior. Her first Christmas Institute provided her an experience that made her feel strengthened and made her more aware of the power God gives to those who call Him for help.

The following narrative describes how the Confirmation classes impacted the life of Peace specifically on the behavioral aspect of her development.

Renouncing and Rejecting the Evil Powers; Repenting Sins, and the Experiences of Confirmation Classes

Peace cited some stories she remembered in Confirmation classes. These were the stories about John Wesley, and how through the power of the Holy Spirit and through God’s grace, he was able to resist temptations. The story was about Wesley and Sophia Hopkey. Wesley was able to resist temptation and was able to focus his attention upon God and remain holy. It was impressed to her that the power of the Holy Spirit helps

people to reject evil powers. She explained that this story gave her information about the UMC founder, and set Wesley as an example in renouncing temptation. However, she claimed that her Christmas Institute experiences led her more to renounce and reject evil powers. She explains

Confirmation happened only once in my whole entire youth experience. After that, there was no follow-up activities or lessons to remind me about its significance. After graduation, that was it! I got my certificate of membership, and I continued working with my usual activities in the church. Compared with Christmas Institute experiences which happen annually, I kept on being reminded about what a Christian youth should and should not do.²³⁷

Peace claimed that the Christmas Institute topics reminded her about resisting temptations and rejecting the evil powers over her life. Also, she still remembers one of her favorite lessons in Sunday school. It was about Romans 12:21 and overcoming evil with good. She remembered that the verse was sung by her Sunday School teacher. It was easily memorized and during a time of experiencing oppression, she remembered the verse.

Remaining Faithful Members of Christ's Holy Church and the Experiences of Confirmation Classes

Peace' personal journey with God since she was a child led her to remain a faithful member of Christ's holy church. She said that she has had a deep hunger to serve God in the church since she was very young. The Sunday school lessons helped her to know more about God, and her ministries led her to stay and enjoy the church. Peace claimed that her desire to remain a faithful member has nothing to do with Confirmation classes. She had this desire and continued being faithful, even before she attended

²³⁷ Interview with Respondent Four: Peace, January 29, 2019

Confirmation classes. Aside from her involvement in the local church, there was one person she can never forget. It was a church leader who mentored her in tambourine dancing, and who guided her in her walk with God. Peace described her as a person who is filled with the Holy Spirit. She met her when she was around nine years old and worked with her until she became more active in ministries as a youth. Peace said that each time her mentor would say something, she could reflect well about her Christian life. Her mentor's advice, presence, and support helped her to remain faithful. Her mentor was her model in faith and in Christian living. Her desire to serve God and be more faithful to Him grew more when she became a youth leader. She was also assigned to be a council member as the Christian education chair. She was 17 years old when she was assigned as the Christian education head of the church. She elucidated that her church positions led her to strengthen her faith in God. Though she was young compared to the other members of the council, she saw to it that she would be a good example to people.

Becoming A Loyal Member of the UMC and the Experiences of Confirmation Classes

When Peace was in her elementary grades, her classmate asked her what a Methodist was. She explained that during that time, she did not know anything about what it meant to be a UMC member. She just enjoyed serving God in the church. Her classmates also knew that she was a Christian since it showed in her living. However, when a curious friend asked her about her denomination, she admitted that she could not explain it well. She just answered that it was very different from *Iglesia ni Kristo* (Church of Christ), and it was almost the same as "Born Again." After conversing with her friend, she was ashamed that she could not answer her. That was why, when her local pastor

advised them about Confirmation classes and the things she can learn from the class, she got very excited. After the graduation day, Peace claims:

I think Confirmation led me to be more loyal in the UMC. The sessions we had may be too intellectual for a 12-year-old like me, but I had a better understanding of what it means to be a Methodist. Aside from my church involvements and ministries, Confirmation classes gave me a clear meaning of why I am doing what I am doing as a member of the church.²³⁸

When Peace learned that UMC was beyond what she was already doing in the church, she became confident enough with how she would answer her friends who asked her about UMC. She also learned that UMC focused on its mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ as written in the Scripture.

Faithfully Participating in the Ministries and the Experiences of Confirmation Classes

In a local UMC, Peace' spiritual life has been nurtured from being a child up to the time she went to the UMC School to be trained. Peace explained that she already learned to faithfully participate in all activities and ministries in the church even before attending Confirmation. She shared her personal story about her first teaching experience in Vacation Church School as part of an outreach ministry in her local church. She was 11 years old when she was trained as an assistant teacher in Sunday school. Since her local church was small in size, she became involved in all the ministries of the church, particularly in teaching. When she turned 12, she started to teach in the Vacation Church School, a ten-day activity of the church during vacation time in reaching and teaching children outside the church. When VCS ended, she was crying because she missed her

²³⁸ Interview with Respondent Four: Peace, January 30, 2019

students so much. Her desire to minister to children started with the ministry of teaching in the church.

Confirmation classes, Peace claimed, helped her in giving her a clear meaning of the ministries she was doing. After Confirmation graduation, she remembered that a church worker told them that the classes did not just finish with being a member of the church and then doing nothing. The classes should be a reminder of the importance of the ministries she was involved with. Peace already had learned about and did the ministries of the church such as praying, tithing, giving, and teaching. However, she stated that these were also part of the UMC vows. Praying, tithing, and her regular presence in the church were part of her promises to God, as part of the disciplines of a UMC member. That was why, after she graduated Confirmation, she became more active in giving and in praying for others.

The following narrative describes how the Confirmation classes impacted the life of Peace specifically in the cognitive aspect of her development.

Understanding of the Christian Faith and Experiences of Confirmation Classes

Peace stated that her experiences in Confirmation classes were boring compared with her first Christmas Institute. She thought that it was because of the teaching strategies of the lecturers. She illustrated that she thinks she was too young to receive that kind of approach from her teachers. However, she also claimed that Confirmation lessons were detailed especially about John Wesley, the structure of UMC, the Four Pillars of Faith, and the principles and beliefs of UMC. She also elucidated that after her encounter with her elementary classmate, she used to ask questions about her denomination and her

faith. Although she was active in church, however, she was sad that she did not know the distinction of UMC from other religious sects. Peace said that when they talked about the Four Pillars of Faith in the class, she learned that the UMC way of thinking was: before making decisions consider first what the Scripture was saying. She did not learn these specific things in Sunday school or in Christmas Institute. She just knew that she has to read the Bible and pray every day. At that time, she cannot fully grasp what these Four Pillars mean and how she will use them in her ministry. As she continued growing in faith with God and faced some challenges especially as a young leader, she was able to connect the “Scripture, Tradition, Reason, and Experience” in her life and decisions. Confirmation gave her a sense of direction about her ministry, her faith, and even in her decision making. She kept remembering the Pillars of Faith especially in making decisions. She explained that her Sunday school and her Confirmation classes led her to be more of a Bible reader too. Her ability to memorize and recite Bible verses was developed through Sunday school. Her ability to use verses came after Confirmation classes.

Understanding of the Meaning of Baptism and Confirmation Classes’ Experiences

Peace stated that the last part of their activities in Confirmation was baptism. She felt excited when she heard not about the “experiencing of baptism” as re-affirmation of her infant baptism, but when she heard that they were allowed to swim after all of them in the class re-affirmed their baptism. She illustrates:

When it was my turn, I remember that I was too worried about how will I look. My crush was also there. Many handsome youth joined in Confirmation who came from other churches and I felt like everyone was looking at me. I did not know how to look “cute” in front of them. That

was my only concern at that time. That was the only thing I had in mind when we did that activity.²³⁹

Peace explained that she did not really know the meaning of her baptism in Confirmation classes. Although it was part of the lessons, what she remembers was that there were two sacraments of UMC: The Holy Communion and Baptism. She did not even learn why Methodists had only two sacraments as compared with her Roman Catholic classmates who had seven sacraments. She only learned the significance of her baptism and its relevance to her life when she became a deaconess and started to teach the same class in youth. She said that when she learned about the essence and meaning of baptism in her life, she thought that it must not be “just an activity or part of a lecture,” especially in Confirmation, but an “experience full of reflections.”

Receiving and Professing the Christian Faith and Experiences in Confirmation Classes

Peace confessed that she totally professed the Christian faith not during Confirmation classes, but during her first Christmas Institute. She remembered that although she professed her faith and desire to serve God in front of the local church congregation during her Confirmation graduation day, she did not feel it in her heart. She felt that she personally and wholeheartedly professed her Christian faith to God and to people when she moved forward to the altar call during her first Christmas Institute. Peace described that she was crying at that time, and she felt that she was even ready to die for God and for His will in her life. She surrendered herself to God and expressed it “with all her heart, soul, mind, and strength.” She said that since Confirmation focused on

²³⁹ Interview with Respondent Four: Peace, January 30, 2019

the cognitive domain of learning according to her own observation, the heart-warming experience was not met. During her Confirmation graduation, Peace tells:

I realized now that professing your faith in front of the congregation must be because you willfully want to do it. Not just because it was mandated by the church. I think during that time, not all of us had the full grasp of those vows. Maybe some of us just said ‘yes’ to all of the vows without thinking that those vows were commitments to abide by and work on for the rest of our lives. Just like with my case, I just said “yes” to most of the vows because that was expected from me. After that, I forgot already what I had said. The vows were not explained in the classes, nor were they memorized.²⁴⁰

DS. Yambot expresses the importance of explaining the vows to Confirmation classes, and to the youth who are attending in order for them to have a better understanding of the vows. Peace’ realization is supported by Osmer’s statement to church leaders about Confirmation. Osmer states that the church has to provide an avenue for youth to express their willingness, allowing them to decide according to their own personal choice in professing their faith. This may only happen if the youth has a better understanding about faith and its theological reasons that shape the youth’s commitment. The church may fail to achieve this if the church will continue the practice of confirming the faith of the youth just because they reach a certain age.²⁴¹

Peace made a comparison between her first experience in Confirmation classes held through a camp, and her first Christmas Institute experience. She noted that she was 12 years old when she experienced both camps. However, when it comes to “experiencing professing faith,” in heart and in mind, the Christmas Institute led her to this experience. Peace claimed that although the camp lasted for five days, it made an

²⁴⁰ Interview with Respondent Four: Peace, January 30, 2019

²⁴¹ Issler, “Biblical Perspectives on Developmental Grace,” in *Children's Spirituality*, 67.

impact upon her spiritual life and maturity. A study conducted by Hernandez and others indicates that the quantity of time children spend in classes does not always matter. It is the quality of the teaching that children learned the most. Their study suggests that teachers give more time for training and for mastering the lessons they are going to teach.²⁴² Peace claimed that her five-day camp led her to an amazing experience with God that she still remembers and treasures even today.

Understanding of the UMC Mission, History, Doctrine, and Vows and Experiences in Confirmation Classes

Peace said that she learned about missions, the history, the structure, and the beliefs of UMC in Confirmation since it was only in Confirmation that these topics were emphasized. She cited John Wesley's quote, "The world is my parish." When she heard the story that pushed Wesley to make the world his parish, it gave her an impression that "to be a Methodist is to go and do a mission, and that is to make people disciples of Jesus Christ." That was why after Confirmation, she began to strive harder through the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit and through God's grace that she disciple others. Her awareness in discipling the people through her words and actions happened after Confirmation. She was astounded that Wesley's circumstances did not hinder him to do the mission God gave him. She became confident that her age would not matter in reaching others. She related Wesley's quotation to Matthew 28 that the Greatest Commission Jesus gave to His disciples was to go and make disciples among all nations. Peace said that she better understood the mission of the UMC local church's activities

²⁴² Hernandez, et. al., "Does Increasing Hours of Schooling Lead to Improvements in Student Learning?," n.p.

and the programs the church provided. Although the lessons about the doctrines and beliefs of UMC such as about the Holy Trinity and about God's grace, were introduced in Confirmation classes, she understood these better by experiencing them in the Christian camps and youth fellowships she attended. She explained that these topics "were not to just be learned in lessons, but better understood through an experience. The experience that can change a life." Peace only remembered the vow that has to do with praying, tithing, and presence. She explained that it was easier for her to remember about this vow, although she cannot say exactly what the vow was, because these three were being practiced by her even before attending the camp. Issler and Habermas note that people tend to forget things they learned that are not being used or practiced.²⁴³ Shaw elucidates the importance of providing an avenue for the students to practice what they learned in the class.²⁴⁴ Since Peace was able to practice her vow particularly those which had something to do with prayer, giving, and her presence in the church, and her local church also provided programs and activities, she was able to remember them and make them part of her life.

Summary of Peace' Profile

Table 6 depicts a brief summary of the affective, behavioral and cognitive experiences of Peace with Confirmation classes. The statements here were taken from the case study that the researcher wrote on Peace.

²⁴³ Issler and Habermas, *How We Learn*, 34-35.

²⁴⁴ Shaw, *Transforming Theological Education*, 96.

Table 6: Summary of the Affective, Behavioral, and Cognitive Experiences of Peace on the Confirmation Classes

AFFECTIVE DOMAIN			
Experiences Christ More	Personal Commitment	Accepts Freedom and Power	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raised by godly mother and grandmother - Confirmation was “too cognitive” in approach; expectations were not met - Enjoyed icebreaker activities in confirmation, but not the lectures - First Christmas Institute experience led her to experience Christ more, and not Confirmation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Committed her life to Christ in Christmas Institute. - Confirmation provided learnings about UMC, but not an “experience” that led to a personal commitment to God. - Christmas Institute touched the core of her emotions - Confirmation strategies were not appropriate to her age. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Was happy when she accepted her professing member certificate. - Said “yes” to the vows without fully grasping the meaning - Accepted the freedom and power God gives when she accepted Christ - Felt that she received the freedom and power God gives in Christmas Institute, and not in Confirmation. 	
BEHAVIORAL DOMAIN			
Renounce and Reject Evil	Remain Faithful Member	Loyal Member	Faithful Participation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Christmas Institute’s lessons led her more to renounce and reject evil - Confirmation did not fully help her. - Story about Wesley’s choice to keep on being holy impressed that through the work of the Holy Spirit she can conquer temptations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desire to remain faithful has nothing to do with Confirmation classes. - Kid’s Sunday school; her involvements and ministries in the church led her enjoyed her walk with God. - Her mentor also helped her to remain faithful. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirmation led her to have knowledge about Methodist faith and beliefs. - When she learned more about her faith, she became more loyal in serving God in the UMC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Faithful participation happened prior to Confirmation. - Confirmation strengthened her church involvement - Remembered the vows: Although she already doing these, she became more faithful since she said ‘yes’ to this vow.
COGNITIVE DOMAIN			
Understanding of Christian Faith	Understanding of Baptism	Professing Christian Faith	Understanding UMC

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher was boring, lessons were well-detailed and gave her knowledge about her faith - The Four Pillars of Faith gave her direction - Not able to use what she learned immediately, but was able to apply this when she continued her walk with God 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Re-affirmation of baptism was more meaningful. - During the activity, she was conscious about how she looks than the meaning of baptism. - She had better understanding about baptism when she started to teach the class to youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cannot claim that Confirmation led her to profess faith - Her first Christmas Institute experience helped her to respond to the altar call of the pastor. - She felt that as she professed God to be her Lord and Savior, she also surrendered her life to Him and was even willing to die for Him. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understood the mission of the church - Confirmation made her aware about the mission of UMC - She remembered and understood the vows that has to do with what she already practiced. .
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Peace, among others, did not have a good experience with her teacher in Confirmation. She thinks that the Christmas Institute had more impact on her compared to Confirmation. Her family and the church community also helped her in addition to the learning she had in Confirmation.

Case Study Five: Jana

This section presents the story of Jana. The case includes her demographic background and her perceptions about her affective, behavioral, and cognitive experiences with the Confirmation classes.

Jana grew up in the UMC family. Her parents have been active in a local UMC as leaders since she was a young girl. Her mother is a finance officer and her father is a lay leader and chairperson in a local UMC. Growing up, Jana described that she was involved in all the church's activities in most of its fellowships, camps, and ministries. When she was a child, she became one of the kid's officers and led children her age. She was part of children's choir and was active in attending children's camp. She said, "I can

100% say that my Christian journey started at home with my parents as discipling me first. Essentially, I grew up in a biblical way of parenting.” She explained that her parents would not let her or her two older brothers miss attending church services and activities. Her parents’ faith became her faith, and she was comfortable with imitating her parent’s faith. She described them as her models and disciples. Fowler notes that children tend to imitate their parents’ faith.²⁴⁵

Jana is now 23 years old. Counting from her Confirmation’ graduation, she has been a professing member of the UMC for 11 years. Currently, she is the president of United Methodist Youth Fellowship in the Philippines (UMYFP) a youth lay organization of UMC in one of the Annual Conferences of UMC in Manila area. She is also active in her local church as youth adviser, Care Group leader, youth Sunday School teacher, choir member, and council secretary.

The following narrative describes how the Confirmation classes impacted the life of Jana specifically in the affective aspect of her development.

Experiencing Christ More and the Experiences in the Confirmation Classes

Jana revealed that even though she was active in the church in all its ministries and activities, her faith was “bland.” When she was younger, she was active in the church not because she was excited about being in the church, but because she was trained to be in the church. She expresses:

As I’ve said, I’m part of a very Christian family so I did not really engage with the wrong peers or start drinking, smoking, etc. The main thing for me probably is that I had the wrong intentions in doing what I did. On the outside I was the basic church girl but I wasn’t doing it for

²⁴⁵ Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 78.

the Lord. I was doing it to please my parents and the people around me since I know that by doing, validation of my identity will come. My worth is based on the praises I got from people. It wasn't sustainable and at a young age, it was a stressful way to live.²⁴⁶

Jana's situation reflects Kohlberg's theory which says that children have the desire to gain approval from others.²⁴⁷ Jana, even though she grew up in a Christian family admitted that she did not have a deep and a personal relationship with God.

Jana was 12 years old when she attended Confirmation classes. In her experience with the classes, she described the lectures to be "too logical" and "too historical." When she was asked in what ways Confirmation lead her to experience Christ more, she confesses:

Honestly, not much. It's essentially going through a history class with no heart to it. It's very logical. The pastor who was assigned in our local church just gave us the schedule. The classes were a set of lectures and we had exam afterwards. It also seemed mandatory and not intentional. It was not something that the members were excited to go through, it was just expected from us.²⁴⁸

Jana shared that she experienced Christ more through her parents who loved her much, through the church leaders, and friends. She added that Confirmation did not provide an avenue to let her experience Christ more. It was just a mere class full of history about John Wesley and about the structures of UMC.

Personal Commitment to Jesus Christ and the Experiences in the Confirmation Classes

When Jana was younger, she committed herself to church and to Jesus through the help and the guidance of her parents who supported her ministries in the church,

²⁴⁶ Interview with Respondent Five: Jana, February 5, 2019

²⁴⁷ Kohlberg, "Stages of Moral Development as a Basis for Moral Education," 91-94.

²⁴⁸ Interview with Respondent Five: Jana, February 5, 2019

especially in financial matters. She learned the word “commitment” from seeing her parents’ works and actions toward God. Whenever she was given a task to do in the church, she gave her very best in finishing the task. Jana thought that her personal relationship with God meant to “commit doing the work in the church,” as well as loving and obeying parents. When she became 12, she assumed that part of the “mandated work” was to attend Confirmation classes. Since she was obedient to her parents, who told her to attend to the classes, she committed to attend.

Jana shared that she did not commit her life to God and let God be her personal Lord and Savior through Confirmation classes. It was because Confirmation did not offer an experience for such. She decided to have a personal relationship with God when she attended summer camp. In every local church of UMC, the United Methodist Youth Fellowship (UMYF) officers spearhead the annual activity camp for youth ages 12 to 23 for four to five days during summer vacation. Jana shared that the topics and activities they had at the camp led her to commit her life to Jesus and personally walk with Him. Pazmiño notes, “Persons can be activated by the Holy Spirit who is present in human life to realize this potential of transformation in Christ personally and corporately. The Holy Spirit encounters the human spirit and makes transformation possible across the life span.”²⁴⁹ When the preacher of the camp made an altar call, she willingly responded and personally committed her life to God. She let Jesus be her Lord and Savior, and started to intentionally grow with God in faith. Jana also shared that even though Confirmation did not lead her to have a personal commitment with God, she admitted that the vows recited

²⁴⁹ Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 192.

from Confirmation during graduation became a significant part to her life as Christian.

She recalls:

During that time, I did not fully grasp what was the meaning of those vows. I practically said “yes” to all of them, declaring to the congregation and to God that I will do them all because it was expected from me. However, as I grew older, it means so much more when the vows I uttered get repeated during the Covenant Service each year. It’s just a great reminder of the things that I have to do as a member of the United Methodist Church especially as a leader of the church.²⁵⁰

Part of Jana’s local church program during New Year’s Day is to conduct a Covenant Service. Part of the service is reciting the vows as one’s covenant to God. Jana appreciated the vows not during Confirmation but during Covenant Services.

Accepting Freedom and Power and the Experiences in the Confirmation Classes

Jana described herself as “*batang Sunday School*” (“Sunday School kid”). She grew up hearing and learning from her parents about God’s sovereignty and grace over sin and evil in the world. She learned more about God and about God’s love through Sunday school and activities in the church. Growing up with her Christian parents and with the church, with which she was always involved, Jana learned to be a “nice” child whether she was in school, in home, in church, and even in the playground with other children. She intentionally avoided hurting others, even those who hurt her. She also learned to pray wholeheartedly and started to believe that prayer works at a very young age because that was what her parents kept on telling her. When she was a child, she simply learned that prayers can “cast out fears.” That was why whenever she feared

²⁵⁰ Interview with Respondent Five: Jana, February 5, 2019

ghosts or had bad dreams about monsters, she would pray and her fears would be gone. When she became a young person, she learned that prayer works even with temptations. Even before attending Confirmation classes, she claimed that she accepted the freedom and power that God gives her to resist evil, injustice and oppression. In her experiences in Confirmation classes, Jana stated, “I don’t even have a recollection that this was discussed during class.” She described that the class did not emphasize any lesson about accepting freedom and power that comes from God. She first heard it in the vows during the Confirmation graduation, but it was not explained.

The following narrative describes how the Confirmation classes impacted the life of Jana, specifically in the behavioral aspect of her development.

Renouncing and Rejecting the Evil Powers; Repenting Sins, and the Experiences of Confirmation Classes

Jana was the youngest and the only girl among three children. Aside from her parents who modeled her faith, she was inspired by her two older brothers who also modeled Christian living. Growing up, seeing her two brothers becoming leaders in the youth and actively participating in church activities, she enjoyed following their steps. She saw how soft-hearted her two brothers were and how they were never ashamed to share God with other people. She was with them in all church activities and in youth camps and saw them crying while repenting their sins to God. Even though her brothers had choices to be tougher and have freedoms to choose peers who were not attending the church, they chose their friends wisely. Being surrounded by godly people, Jana did not have a hard time understanding what it means to renounce and reject evil powers of the world. Though, in the presence of temptation, Jana admitted that she was still struggling,

her personal walk with God and the guidance given by her family and church leaders led her to renounce and reject evil powers. Jana claimed that Confirmation classes did not lead her to this. She expounds:

I don't recall the Confirmation classes being conducted to be a spiritual activity that would lead me to renounce sins, etc. Although I can recall some of the stories about Wesley keeping his holiness over his desire, I cannot connect that with my life. We did not reflect about it too much in the class. It was a mere story, like that! And maybe it's also a factor that I was so young when I attended Confirmation classes. There were lessons that were too odd for me to understand. Or maybe because of the approach or the way our teacher explained the lessons in Confirmation. So, I'm sure it was not how I really started knowing more about Jesus.²⁵¹

Jana's statement about her age and her experience in Confirmation did not complement to the claim of Piaget's last stage of his theory.²⁵² Aside from the people who modeled before Jana, she learned about the power that would strengthen her to renounce and reject evil through youth camps such as Christmas Institute and summer camps. Christmas Institute is held during Christmas break, while summer camp is conducted during vacation break for four to five days. In all the camps she attended, God's sovereignty and grace over the power of evil in the world were part of the topics. She kept on being reminded about resisting temptations and saying "no" to evil through activities like camps.

Remaining Faithful Members of Christ's Holy Church and the Experiences of Confirmation Classes

Jana shared that she does not have any recollections of the topics in the Confirmation classes that would lead her to remain a faithful member of Christ's holy church. She clarifies:

²⁵¹ Interview with Respondent Five: Jana, February 5, 2019

²⁵² Dirks, "Foundations of Human Development," 77.

My experience in Confirmation classes practically was like I was in our history class. It was too boring! We had to sit there for an hour or two, listening without doing any other physical activities. I remember being thankful each time the classes ended. We did not even talk about God, or about His grace. It was more of the United Methodist traditions and John Wesley's life as a whole. Sadly, I cannot make connections with most of the lessons in my life and ministries as UMC.²⁵³

Jana said that her desire to remain faithful to Christ's holy church started when she was a child through her family, which was faithful to God and the church. The church also provided complete Christian education programs that catered to all ages from children to adults. She experienced spiritual nurturing through Sunday Schools, church activities, fellowships, and camps. Her desire in remaining faithful to Christ's holy church grew more after she accepted Christ as Lord and Savior, and became the youth leader. In 2016, during a Christmas Institute, she felt that God was calling her to be the youth's district president and she accepted it. She saw the need of ministering to youth even more, and knew that God was calling her to take another step of faith in leading more youth. Currently, she is serving God faithfully not just in her local church but as an Annual Conference' youth president. She became more faithful to Christ's holy church and committed to remain faithful because of God's calling and grace.

Becoming A Loyal Member of the UMC and the Experiences of Confirmation Classes

When Jana was younger, she became loyal to UMC because of her parents, who often visited other churches. Her idea of loyalty in serving God in the UMC came from them. And because she was holistically nurtured in UMC, she did not feel like going to

²⁵³ Interview with Respondent Five: Jana, February 5, 2019

other denominations. She shared that one of the reasons why she remained loyal to the UMC was because of Confirmation classes. She explained that she thinks that Confirmation classes helped her in this factor since it was clear to her what she was expected to do as a member of the United Methodist church. When she graduated in Confirmation, she stated a vow which served as an oath or promise to the Church. Jana admitted that the vows she recited during Confirmation did not make an immediate impact. However, the vow about being loyal to God through serving Him in UMC was stated to God wholeheartedly. She said that it also helped that the vows were being cited yearly in the Covenant service in the church. UMC was not a perfect denomination, but she kept on claiming that God is sovereign over imperfections, and He is in control over everything. She will keep on being faithful to God and continue serving Him in UMC.

Faithfully Participating in the Ministries and the Experiences of Confirmation Classes

Jana said that Confirmation did not contribute to her faithful participation in the church. Her faithfulness in participating in church's ministries was learned through her parents. She noted, "My parents taught me to pray, to go to church, to share, to give offering, etc." As she grew older, her personal walk with God and her involvements in the church led her to become more faithful in participating in all the church's ministries. When she could decide on her own, she accepted the church's responsibilities and commitments until she finally became the president of youth's Annual Conference with the support from her family and local church. Jana stated that even before attending Confirmation classes, she was already faithfully participating in the church ministries. She adds:

I can say that I am an active member of the church who graces our church with presence, gifts and service. I think Confirmation classes is not the sole contributing factor to that. I learned about these through the guidance and teachings from my parents. My brothers also contributed to who I am as they witnessed being faithful in participating in the church. Youth camps also led me to desire to stand as a witness of Jesus both with words and actions. Again, the vows helped somehow. However, I think it was really more of my relationship with God that led me to faithfully participate in the church, more than the Confirmation classes.²⁵⁴

As her faith and love to Jesus grew, Jana was led to acknowledge that only through God's faithfulness in her life did she became faithful in doing all the tasks that God called her to do. Westerhoff notes, "We are to be a people who know that we cannot manage history or nature, our political, social, and economic systems, or our own lives, and who live dependent upon God, trusting in God's grace and love."²⁵⁵ Jana also acknowledged that only through God's grace was she able to give, to work in ministries, and to lead young people. She was also able to continue walking with God through the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit. She recognized that without the Holy Spirit who was guiding her every step, growing in Christ through her faithful participation is impossible. Helm notes that through God's grace, God provides not just redemption with His creation, but also effecting this redemption in the lives of men and women.²⁵⁶ The researcher notes from this that humans also have the responsibility to exercise their faith in God, and continue to walk in His grace. God's providence of grace leads people to a transformed life.²⁵⁷ His grace enables and strengthens human beings to continue living a

²⁵⁴ Interview with Respondent Five: Jana, February 5, 2019

²⁵⁵ Westerhoff, *Will Our Children Have Faith?*, 48.

²⁵⁶ Helm, *Contours of Christian Theology*, 119.

²⁵⁷ Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 208.

life in accordance with His will. God's prevenient grace guides people to encounter and experience the gospel before they receive and accept Jesus.²⁵⁸

The following narrative describes how the Confirmation classes impacted the life of Jana specifically in the cognitive aspect of her development.

Understanding of the Christian Faith and Experiences of Confirmation Classes

Jana claimed that Confirmation classes did not lead her to have better understanding of her Christian faith. She explained that this was because the lessons focused only on the history of the UMC and the life of John Wesley. Although she remembered the lesson about the turning point of John Wesley's Journey to America with the Moravians, at that time she could not really understand how that related to her Christian life. She claimed that the class was "too logical" and not spiritual or reflective. She also said that she was not interested in attending the classes but had to attend because it was mandated. When she was in the classes, she affirmed that even the lessons and the teacher's strategies in teaching the class did not catch her attention, thus affecting her learning process. Gregory and LeBar talk about the importance of attention and strategy in the teaching and learning process of the learners. According to Gregory, attention and interest is the key to learn. Without it, students cannot learn.²⁵⁹ LeBar notes the importance of the teacher in teaching-learning process, and the importance of his or her strategy in getting the attention of the students.²⁶⁰ Jana shared that in the class, they were

²⁵⁸ Kwak, "A Case Study of Mothers," 53.

²⁵⁹ Gregory, *Seven Laws of Teaching*, 44.

²⁶⁰ LeBar, *Education That is Christian*, 67.

not given a time to reflect on the lessons about Wesley and his story of faith. The classes also did not talk much about God or His will in the life of those who want to follow Him. What she experienced from the classes after the lectures was that they had exams just to measure if she and the others remembered something from the lectures. She claimed that the classes were not about “understanding the Christian faith,” but just about knowing who was the founder of the UMC and his story, and the structure of the church. Jana was led to know about her Christian faith not through Confirmation, but through her family and other activities and ministries in UMC.

Understanding of the Meaning of Baptism and Confirmation Classes’ Experiences

Jana was baptized in the UMC when she was an infant. The sacrament of baptism did not become significant to her because she was not conscious about it when it happened. One of the final activities she had to take during her Confirmation classes was to re-affirm her baptism. She shared that the whole class went to a place where there was pool. It happened before her Confirmation graduation. During that time, she admitted that even when they held the re-affirmation of baptism, it did not make an impact upon her. She claimed that the activity just remained in her mind but not in her heart. She explained that it was because the importance of the sacrament in her life as a Christian was not discussed in the classes. Although they talked about the two sacraments of the UMC which are the Holy Communion and Baptism, it was not explained in the classes why the church had these two sacraments, or their importance in Christian life.

Receiving and Professing the Christian Faith and Experiences in Confirmation Classes

Jana admitted that Confirmation classes as a whole did not make an impact in her Christian life. She compared her experience to other activities in the church that nurtured her holistically. She asserts:

I don't think Confirmation classes helped me receive and profess my Christian faith. As I have said, I felt like it was a set of lessons with no heart in it. It was too logical and historical. We had been talking about the faith of our ancestors and the UMC founder, but since the classes focused on simply "knowing it all," I did not feel empowered. There was no assurance of salvation or anointing of the Spirit so, sadly, it made no impact. Christmas Institute, Care group and summer camp helped, but Confirmation classes are not on par with these.²⁶¹

Jana added that when she was 12 years old she did not feel that the classes were "intentional." The teacher should have been better in communicating to them about the faith of the UMC. She stated that the classes just ended without her fully understanding her faith as a UMC member. The classes did not also empower her in her Christian living. LeBar notes, "A good teacher, just like Jesus, should see the felt need of the learners, and attend to it. Jesus' methods led the Samaritan woman to an immediate action, that is, share the gospel to others. Jesus' teachings led the Samaritan not to keep what she learned for herself alone, but she was able to transcend that to others, and witness to others for Jesus."²⁶² The researcher notes here that as the Holy Spirit works in the lives of a Confirmation teacher, he or she too can touch the lives of the learners just like Jesus. Through God's sovereignty and grace, the learners who are influenced by the teacher will probably transfer his or her learning to others. However, in the case of Jana, she claimed

²⁶¹ Interview with Respondent Five: Jana, February 7, 2019

²⁶² LeBar, *Education That is Christian*, 70.

that one of the reasons that the classes made no impact upon her Christian life was because of the teacher, who was not able to connect the lessons well to her level of understanding. Dirks advises that the effective teacher is the one who understands the nature of the learners. He says that those who are knowledgeable with the developmental issues of his or her students adjusts the content and the teaching methods he or she will use. This will probably make them relevant to the learners that may be more likely to lead to a "life-changing" experience. Jana also shared that the teaching strategies that the teacher used did not fit her age.

Understanding of the UMC Mission, History, Doctrine, and Vows and Experiences in Confirmation Classes

Jana claimed that she did not have a better understanding about the mission, the history, and the doctrine of the UMC through Confirmation. She explains why:

Part of the lecture was the UMC mission. But I will admit that it did not stick in my memory. Probably because it was too wordy and not easy to remember. The UMC history was also part of the lecture. But it was taught like Jose Rizal's story except that it's John Wesley's and we get to know his life by integrating him during classes. The doctrine was more of a "yea" or "nay" list. What we do and what we don't do but nothing much on why, it's just that, that's how it is and we need to follow them. Sort of like that which makes it quite shallow.²⁶³

Jana came to understand the mission of the UMC through her own experiences and walk with God. She also learned more about the beliefs and doctrines of the UMC through other seminars she attended as a youth leader. When it comes to the UMC vows, although Jana claimed that she did not fully grasp what the vows meant when she was 12, it became significant to her as Christian. She stated that Covenant services help her a lot especially since she when was around 12 years old and took Confirmation classes, it did

²⁶³ Interview with Respondent Five: Jana, February 7, 2019

not really mean anything to her, but now that she has grown older, she understands its importance. She stated, “I do the vows as a commitment to the Lord and not just to the church.”

Summary of Jana’s Profile

Table 7 depicts a brief summary of the affective, behavioral and cognitive experiences of Jana with Confirmation classes. The statements here were taken from the case study that the researcher wrote on Jana.

Table 7: Summary of the Affective, Behavioral, and Cognitive Experiences of Jana on the Confirmation Classes

AFFECTIVE DOMAIN			
Experiences Christ More	Personal Commitment	Accepts Freedom and Power	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raised in a UMC family. - Her faith was “bland.” - Classes were “too logical” and “too historical” - The class was “mandatory and not intentional.” - She experienced Christ more through examples given by her family. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Committed her life to God in summer camp - Confirmation was part of the “mandated task” she should finish. - No experiences in Confirmation concerning personal commitment to God - UMC vows set as reminders about her commitment to Jesus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Acknowledged God’s sovereignty and grace in her life through the teachings given by her parents, and Sunday School. - Does not have any recollections that there was a lesson that led her to accept freedom and power from God in confirmation. 	
BEHAVIORAL DOMAIN			
Renounce and Reject Evil	Remain Faithful Member	Loyal Member	Faithful Participation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Family members and youth camps led her to renounce and reject evil powers. - Confirmation did not led her to renounce sins because the class did not provide such experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirmation was like history class. - Not much about God - Classes did not lead her to remain faithful member. - Her family and all church activities including youth camps led her to remain faithful member. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Her family and her local church led her to become loyal to UMC. - Her learnings from Confirmation also led her to become loyal to UMC. - The vows she recited were significant to her. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirmation did not contribute to her faithful participation in the church. - God’s grace and the work of the Holy Spirit enabled her to faithfully

			participate in the UMC.
COGNITIVE DOMAIN			
Understanding of Christian Faith	Understanding of Baptism	Professing Christian Faith	Understanding UMC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirmation did not lead her to an understanding of her faith because it was “too logical” and “too historical.” - The lessons and the teaching strategies of her teacher did not catch her attention. - There was no time for them in the class for reflections or lesson processing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Re-affirmation of baptism but made no impact because she did not understand its significance. - The two sacraments were discussed but not well-explained in the class. - Thus it did not lead her to an understanding of her baptism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirmation did not empower to profess her Christian faith. - The main factor was her teacher who did not connect the lessons well to her age level. - Church activities and ministries led her to profess her faith. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirmation did not lead her to understand more about UMC because: (1) the lecture was too wordy to remember, (2) the classes were boring, (3) lessons lean more on dos and don'ts and not on whys

Jana identified significant things for improvement concerning Confirmation. For her, the teacher and the people around her are significant towards her learning compared to the classes that were given in Confirmation.

Case Study Six: Cecille

This final section presents the story of Cecille. The case includes her demographic background and her perceptions about her affective, behavioral, and cognitive experiences with the Confirmation classes.

Cecille was raised in a Roman Catholic Church. Even though her family was Roman Catholic, she stated that they were not regularly attending church. In her childhood days, she remembers that she used to attend other denominations activities and outreach ministries when she was invited. During summer vacation, there was a ten-day

regular outreach activity that was conducted for children her age by a local UMC near them. It used to be called Vacation Bible School but now it is called Vacation Church School. She learned more about God because of that. She was in her sixth grade when a UMC pastor invited her mother to attend Bible study. Her mother was encouraged to attend the Bible study because her mother's best friend was a regular attendee. Cecille began consistently going with her mother. Because she was the youngest in the group, she was given the task to be the Bible reader. The Bible study was being held in a small church near their house. One day, her mother decided to regularly attend the church services at the UMC. That was also the time when she and her older brother became active in the UMC.

Cecille is 40 years old now, married, and has two children. Counting from her Confirmation graduation, she has been a professing member for 24 years. Currently, Cecille works in the UMC as Christian education deaconess. She is teaching members of all ages from the youngest to the eldest. She is also a Care group leader and Bible study leader. She occasionally preaches. She trains and equips people to minister to others, and she is one of the members of Commission on Deaconess Service (the group that leads, guides, and secures deaconesses in their church appointments).

The following narrative describes how the Confirmation classes impacted the life of Cecille specifically in the affective aspect of her development.

Experiencing Christ More and the Experiences in the Confirmation Classes

Cecille stated that she did not see her parents consistently attending church or involved in any church activities. She just knew that they were Roman Catholic

since she and her mother occasionally attended the church. She also practiced some Roman Catholic ways like signing of the cross and praying to Mary. They had images of the saints in their house. When she was around nine years old, she attended Catechism. She technically did not learn to pray because she was taught by her mother or father. She learned how to pray through observing her mother and other Christian friends. She also learned to communicate with God through the learning she had from Vacation Church School. She shared that even though her parents were not churchgoers because they were busy working to make a living, they taught their children good moral values. Her parents also did not hinder them from joining and attending other denominations activities such as VCS. Cecille shared that she enjoyed her childhood days walking with God. She learned more about God and would seek Him through her own effort by attending other church invitations. Together with her childhood friends who had the same situation as hers, they walked with God. Jana have experience-producing tendencies that Pazmiño notes. Cecille was active and responsible before God even at her tender age.²⁶⁴ When Cecille was around 12, her mother became active in attending a Bible study that eventually led them to be active in the UMC and be converted. Cecille shared that during that time, she and her older brother started to be active in youth activities and ministries. Things changed from then. They removed all the images of saints from their house.

When Cecille was 12, she became more active in the UMC as a young person. She committed herself to God in all the ministries she could attend in the

²⁶⁴ Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 221-222.

church. Since the church was near their house, she and her other youth friends in their neighborhood spent almost all their time staying in the church after school and doing household chores. She became hungry to hear the Word of God and was excited to learn more about Him. She said that part of the Christian education programs in the church that helped her in her walk with God was Confirmation classes. Although she did not know the purpose of the classes, she attended because it was mandated by her pastor. Cecille was 16 years old when she attended Confirmation classes. She confessed that Confirmation led her to experience Christ more since she learned about her faith as UMC. She first heard about the founder of Methodism, John Wesley, about the Holy Trinity, about the 25 Articles of faith, God's grace, the history of UMC, and the Four Pillars of Faith. Although the classes happened 24 years ago, she claimed that the classes became significant to who she is now as a UMC deaconess.

Personal Commitment to Jesus Christ and the Experiences in the Confirmation Classes

Cecille had a personal commitment to Jesus four years prior to Confirmation classes, in summer camp. Summer camp is the United Methodist Youth Fellowship's regular program during summer vacation. Cecille shared that it was her first camp, and she learned to be more intentional in walking with God because of it. It was during their "Quiet Time" activity when she felt that God was calling her to repent. She no longer remembers what Bible text she was reading at that time, but she described that her heart felt warm and she cried to God for repentance. During the last night of the camp when the pastor made an altar call, Cecille recalled that she was crying and was emotional as she

moved forward and surrendered her life to Christ. She confessed Jesus to be her Lord and Savior. When the pastor asked about those who wanted to be a pastor or a deaconess, even without the knowledge about what a deaconess was, she went and committed herself. She described that she did not care about what other youth were thinking or what she looked like. She was just crying and praising God. She stated that she remembered feeling okay even if she looked like crazy in front of the other youth. In the stage of adolescence, Loder elucidated that they are more capable to commit faithfully in self-sacrifice in accordance to the calling of the Spirit because of their “deep ideological hunger, their heightened awareness of their potential nonbeing, and their sense of urgency about the meaning of life.”²⁶⁵ The researcher notes here that developing the faith of adolescence requires a safe environment wherein they can feel safe to express themselves. After that experience, Cecille stated that she felt being willing to die for Jesus. In Confirmation, Cecille stated that even though she learned about God and about her faith, it did not lead her to have a personal commitment to Jesus, like with what she experienced from her first camp experienced when she was 12. She maintains:

Confirmation led me to be knowledgeable about my UMC faith. In fact, it helped me when I went to this UMC school which trains women to become deaconesses. It made me confident about my calling as a deaconess. It also helped me when I myself am teaching the classes. But my first summer camp experience led me to commit myself to Christ, not Confirmation.²⁶⁶

Confirmation, as she described, was more cognitive than affective. She gave the lesson about the 25 Articles of Faith as an example. She illustrates:

²⁶⁵ Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit*, 248.

²⁶⁶ Interview with Respondent Six: Cecille, February 13, 2019

We needed to memorize the 25 Articles of Faith. It was too long, and sadly the meaning of each article was not elaborated in the class. I remember when my classmates in Confirmation and I were trying to memorize the 25 articles together, we complained, “Why are these important? Why do we have to memorize these?” I don’t think I was able to understand it that time. Unless I read the 25 Articles of Faith now, I do not remember them today.²⁶⁷

Except for her re-affirmation of baptism in Confirmation, which she counted as spiritual, Confirmation in her observation leaned more to give knowledge about the UMC per se.

Accepting Freedom and Power and the Experiences in the Confirmation Classes

Even though Confirmation classes leaned more toward the cognitive, Cecille stated that she perceived that some of the lessons in the classes led her to accept the freedom and power that comes from God because she was able to connect herself to the story she heard. According to Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masia, the behavior of the person lies both in the influence of cognitive (head) and affective (heart).²⁶⁸ This means that the behavior of the person has to do with how the person perceives things either cognitively and/or affectively. Cecille was able to accept the freedom and power of God because she was able to relate herself to the story she heard from the classes. Cecille shared the story about Wesley’s heart-warming experience at Aldersgate. She testifies:

As far as I can remember, after I heard about that story, I remembered my experience in my first summer camp. It was a heart-warming experience like with John Wesley. I honestly do not remember if we talked about a particular lesson about “accepting freedom and power comes from God.” However, I knew that the particular story led me to remember that after

²⁶⁷ Interview with Respondent Six: Cecille, February 13, 2019.

²⁶⁸ Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masia, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*, 45.

receiving Christ, I also received the power and freedom God gives me to resist evil, injustice, and oppression.²⁶⁹

The age of Cecille reflected Piaget's last stage of his theory.²⁷⁰ Cecille was able to apply things she learned from Confirmation.²⁷¹ Cecille also shared that as she grew up physically and spiritually, there were other factors that led her to accept freedom and power that comes from God. These were youth Sunday school, Bible studies, and youth camps. Since Confirmation happened only once, her continuing walk with God led her to keep on being reminded about God's sovereignty in her life. The following are under the behavioral domain of Cecille's Confirmation classes' perceived impact.

Renouncing and Rejecting the Evil Powers; Repenting Sins, and the Experiences of Confirmation Classes

Cecille shared that she was repentant at her first summer camp experience. She stated that she was convicted by what she heard from the message before the altar call. She even promised God to change. She said that she was convinced that she was transformed through the Holy Spirit after she committed herself to Christ. There were bad attitudes and habits that were taken away, and she acknowledged that this was through the work of the Holy Spirit. Westerhoff says that owning faith also involves "conversion experiences" that always involve a major change in a person's thinking, feeling, and willing—meaning, a change in their total behavior. In this case, people now want to put their faith into personal and social action, and are willing to witness for Jesus.²⁷²

²⁶⁹ Interview with Respondent Six: Cecille, February 13, 2019.

²⁷⁰ Dirks, "Foundations of Human Development," 77.

²⁷¹ Piaget and Inhelder, *The Psychology of the Child*, 96-99.

²⁷² Westerhoff, *Will Our Children Have Faith?*, 95.

However, Cecille confessed that even though she fully surrendered herself to Christ, she was still capable of sinning. She explained that some things in her life changed, but some were in the process of pruning. Cecille acknowledged that apart from God's grace, she cannot fully change. That was why she continued her walk with God.²⁷³ Through God's grace, He provides not just redemption with His' creation, but also effecting this redemption in the lives of men and women.²⁷⁴ The researcher notes from this that humans also have the responsibility to exercise their faith in God, and continue to walk in His grace. God's providence of grace leads people to a transformed life.²⁷⁵

Cecille elucidated that Confirmation was one of her stepping stones in renouncing spiritual forces and wickedness and rejecting evil powers of the world. The stories of Wesley's conversion, faith, and beliefs, the lesson about God's grace, and the principles of UMC led her in this matter. Other factors that led her to embrace God's sovereignty in her life are her ministries and church activities. When she was a youth, summer camps and Christmas Institutes led her to be repentant to God.

Remaining Faithful Members of Christ's Holy Church and the Experiences of Confirmation Classes

When Cecille was a child, she had the desire to be faithful to God. And even though her family were not church goers before, she came to know Christ more by attending other church activities. Cecille shared that when she was around nine years old,

²⁷³ Dirks, "Foundations of Human Development," 75.

²⁷⁴ Helm, *Contours of Christian Theology*, 119.

²⁷⁵ Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 208.

she attended Roman Catholic Catechism classes that was conducted near their house. She described that during that time she learned almost the same beliefs she heard in Confirmation, such as about the Holy Trinity, except that in catechism she learned about the saints and other prayers that had to memorize. At that time in summer, Catechism was conducted in the morning. In the afternoons, she attended VCS. For a nine-year-old child like her, she stated that there was no problem with her about her beliefs. What was important to her was learning more about God. But when she, together with her mother, started to attend the UMC, she started to ask about her faith and beliefs, especially about honoring the saints and praying to Mary. Bisset discusses issues why people leave the faith. One of the reasons he gave as to why people leave the faith is because people have troubling, unanswered questions about their faith. Bisset claims that wrestling with questions and doubts can make Christians healthier and make their faith stronger. Not dealing with this can result in the opposite. Pastors, teachers, parents, and church leaders who surround those who have questions and doubts with their faith can help them. Westerhoff notes that “searching faith,” has three characteristics, and one of the three is the action of “doubt and or critical judgement.” This means that in order to fully own the faith, people need to doubt and question the faith. “At this point the ‘religion of the heard’ becomes equally important with the ‘religion of the heart.’”²⁷⁶ Westerhoff notes that, church should be a community that helps one another in strengthening each other’s faith. The church’s mission is to be “a community where Christian faith is proclaimed, experienced, understood, lived, and acted upon in history.”²⁷⁷ Cecille’s regular attending

²⁷⁶ Westerhoff, *Will Our Children Have Faith?*, 94.

²⁷⁷ Westerhoff, *Will Our Children Have Faith?*, 38.

UMC especially when she became a young person corrected some of her beliefs. She clarified that she did not mean that UMC is holier than the Roman Catholic Church. However, she found that some of what she believed before being converted was “shallow.” In the UMC, she found her faith and desired to remain faithful. Cecille expounds:

Bible studies, youth camps, and my other involvements to church led me to desire to remain faithful in Christ’s holy church. Confirmation on the other hand, led me to more understanding of my faith and beliefs. The classes entailed lessons that were only heard in Confirmation like the Pillars of Faith or the 25 Articles of Faith, or the stories of John Wesley, and the history and structure of UMC. When I learned about of these, I understood my faith. And thus, led me more to remain faithful in Christ’s holy church.²⁷⁸

Cecille added that the particular lesson about the Holy Trinity answered her question about why she should only pray to God and not to the saints or Mary. She no longer remembers who her teacher was, but she said that when she asked about it, her teacher explained it clearly. As she understood her faith and owned it, she desired more to remain faithful in Christ’s holy church and represent it to the world as well.

Becoming A Loyal Member of the UMC and the Experiences of Confirmation Classes

Even prior to Confirmation, Cecille stated that when she became active in UMC, she became loyal to it. She came to realize that Vacation Church School, which she enjoyed attending during summer, and which nurtured her faith when she was a child, was part of the UMC’s outreach program. Cecille confessed that at that time, she did not understand why she had to go through classes like Confirmation. After all, she had already been active in the church for four years. The objectives of the classes were not

²⁷⁸ Interview with Respondent Six: Cecille, February 13, 2019

explained well. She was not willing to attend at first. But since it was mandated, she attended. Cecille claimed that even though she did not initially understand the importance of the classes, she came to know her identity as a UMC member. She stated that learning more about her faith led her to be a more loyal member of the UMC. The lesson about the Four Pillars of Faith led her to an understanding that a UMC member listens to what the Bible is saying before anything else. That was also where her faith rooted. Her questions about her faith were also answered through Confirmation. She was also astounded with the story of John Wesley's faith and mission.

Faithfully Participating in the Ministries and the Experiences of Confirmation Classes

Cecille explained that she perceives that Confirmation had nothing to do with her faithful participation in the ministries of UMC. She was willing and already practicing her ministries and participating in her local UMC even before attending Confirmation. She stated that she no longer remembers if they had a particular lesson about the involvement of a UMC member in the ministries of a local church. She just recalled that she mostly learned about the importance of praying and reading the Bible through Vacation Church School, Bible studies, and youth Sunday School. She also shared that when she became an active youth member in the church, she was mentored by a deaconess who inspired her the most in her faith. Another reason why she became more active and faithful in participating in the church was her first summer camp experience, and the succeeding camps attended. She became active in giving her tithes, and she also learned to pray for others and be an accountable disciple to them. She expresses:

I think since Confirmation happened only once and it focused more about the history, about Wesley, about the Articles of Faith, etc. it

did not give an emphasis about the importance of “my” participation in the church. I also cannot remember that the lessons were connected in the ministries that I had in the church. Mostly, I learned these things by experiences in the church and other church’s programs and ministries, and not by Confirmation.

Also, the importance of my faithful participation was explicit to learn in Bible studies, Sunday Schools, and even in youth camps I attended. Lastly, as I matured spiritually, I noticed that my faithful participation in the church became a lifestyle, and my way of giving thanks to God.²⁷⁹

Cecille also acknowledged that her faithful participation in God was the fruit of God’s faithfulness and grace in her life. The reason why she faithfully participate in the church was because of the grace she received from God.

The following narrative describes how the Confirmation classes impacted the life of Cecille specifically in the cognitive aspect of her development.

Understanding of the Christian Faith and Experiences of Confirmation Classes

Cecille mentioned that Vacation Church School became an avenue for her to hear about Jesus Christ. Remembering her childhood memories about walking with God, she said that it pleased her so much when she heard stories in the Bible. When she became the Bible reader in the Bible study together with her mother, she came to know more about Jesus and other stories in the Bible. She understood most of the lessons in the Bible stories through the teachings of the pastor who was leading them in the study. When she became a young person, she felt being so in love with God through the camps, ministries, and activities the church provided. Confirmation classes led her to have a better understanding of her Christian faith. Cecille stated that the lesson about the Four Pillars of Faith which are the Scripture, Tradition, Reason, and Experience led her to appreciate

²⁷⁹ Interview with Respondent Six: Cecille, February 13, 2019

more reading the Bible and somehow gave her direction as to how she should weigh things. She learned that those four were the root of her Christian faith. Cecille explored that after Confirmation, she admitted that she did not know how to practice the particular lesson in her life at first. However, as the years went by and she had to make some decisions, she did not just pray but also thought through the Pillars of Faith. The major decision in which she applied these lessons came when she felt like giving up in her first year of appointment as a deaconess in a local church. Cecille shares:

I was about to give up that time when I was being oppressed by my co-workers in the church. I felt that no one believed that I can lead the church because I was not that smart or talented like the others. I was still young and I felt lost. Thank God He sent some people who encouraged me to keep going. One night in my quiet time, I came back thinking about the root of my faith, and the reason of why I am working in the church. It strengthened me.²⁸⁰

She stated that that night she recalled her experience of God's goodness, grace and sovereignty in her life. That strengthened her. She read God's Word and sought the counsel of godly people. She said that she made the right decision to stay being faithful to the One who called her in the ministry.

Understanding of the Meaning of Baptism and Confirmation Classes' Experiences

Even though Cecille was not baptized in the UMC, she stated that she had a great experience in the re-affirmation of baptism in Confirmation. She explained that part of their last activity before graduation was a re-affirmation of baptism. They went to a private place with a pool. What she appreciated the most was the lesson about the sacraments of UMC which she understood well. She said that she had been oriented to

²⁸⁰ Interview with Respondent Five: Jana, February 7, 2019

regards seven sacraments. But she understood in the classes the reason why UMC were conducting two sacraments only. It was elaborated in the class, and she shared that her knowledge about the sacraments came because of Confirmation, and now she teaches youth about sacraments. Issler and Habermas note that in the educational setting, forgetting is a real problem. Issler and Habermas gave two reasons why people forget what they learned: (1) inactivity or the “What you don’t use, you lose,” and (2) inference, or the old learning is being blocked out with the new learning.²⁸¹ Cecille was able to remember what she learned about sacraments in Confirmation because she kept on sharing those with her students in Confirmation and even with her other friends. Cecille elucidates:

When it was my turn I felt excited. I can describe that I felt a warm, feeling that the Holy Spirit was in our midst. Prior to that event, the pastor kept on reminding us about taking the activity seriously, for we were not doing it for fun. He also oriented us to pray for each other as especially to the person re-affirming the faith. I cannot recall anymore the message that was preached before we did the activity. I just knew I felt overwhelmed. I also took seriously the lesson I heard in the class about baptism. During that time, I remember that I was reminding myself that I will be adopted in the family of God, thus will carry His name. I felt being renewed after the pastor lifted me up. For me, it was an amazing experience!²⁸²

Cecille states that she learned more about God’s grace in the lesson about the two sacraments. She learned that Holy Communion is a reminder of God’s love and faithfulness in her life. It reminded her about the sacrifices of Jesus on the cross and His suffering that brought life to everyone. In the sacrament of baptism, it was like a renewal of her relationship with God. The lesson about baptism reminded her that she should live a holy life pleasing to God for she is carrying His name.

²⁸¹ Issler and Habermas, *How We Learn*, 34-35.

²⁸² Interview with Respondent Six: Cecille, February 13, 2019

Receiving and Professing the Christian Faith and Experiences in Confirmation Classes

Cecille felt that she first professed her faith to God during her first summer camp experience. At that time, she declared that she was willing to follow Jesus and be His disciple. She also felt empowered to witness about Jesus to others. That was why she became more active in her local church. Her Confirmation classes' learning experience affirmed more of her desire to receive and profess her Christian faith. She shared that after learning about her faith and her denomination, she knew in her heart that she wanted to serve God in the UMC. Confirmation graduation became significant to her because that was where she really professed her desire to be a disciple of Jesus and serve God in the UMC. She said, "Although the UMC welcomed me before, professing my faith in front of the congregation in our church still gave a sense of belonging. I belonged to the family of God. I belonged to the UMC family, and I was happy about it." She admitted that she did not really understand much about the vows recited at graduation day because it was not discussed in the class. But what was important at her that time was that she declared that she was a professing member.

Understanding of the UMC Mission, History, Doctrine, and Vows and Experiences in Confirmation Classes

Cecille shared John Wesley's quotation, "The world is my parish." Wesley's quotation impressed her that UMC is doing the mission of making people Christ's disciples. In the classes, she remembered that they talked about the great commission of Jesus with His disciples. She said that in Confirmation, she learned that UMC

emphasized discipleship. But more than discipling other people, the most important is to be loyal to Jesus and to be intimate with Him. Cecille states:

Confirmation became my stepping stone in my faith journey. In Confirmation, I learned things that I did not learn in Sunday school or Bible studies. These are the history of UMC, the Articles of Faith, the Pillars of Faith, the structure of the church, the beliefs, and principles of UMC. When it comes to the mission of the church, I learned them better by practicing them. John Wesley's quotation became an introduction of my better understanding of the Great Commission Jesus has for me. All in all, as in my understanding to the lessons I heard in Confirmation, I think being loyal and staying focused on Jesus will keep me going.²⁸³

Cecille added that her Confirmation experience did not materialize immediately. She just noticed that her learning from the classes helped in her ministries in the church, especially when she went to be trained at the UMC school for deaconesses. She admitted that she did not much appreciate the vows she recited during her Confirmation graduation because she did not really understand what they meant. She said that the vows were not discussed in the classes. However, she shared that as she matured in faith year after year, whenever she hears the vows being recited by other youth in the church who are graduating in Confirmation, she is being reminded of the vows she committed to God.

Summary of Cecille's Profile

Table 8 depicts a brief summary of the affective, behavioral and cognitive experiences of Cecille with Confirmation classes. The statements here were taken from the case study that the researcher wrote on Cecille.

²⁸³ Interview with Respondent Five: Jana, February 9, 2019

Table 8: Summary of the Affective, Behavioral, and Cognitive Experiences of Cecille on the Confirmation Classes

AFFECTIVE DOMAIN			
Experiences Christ More	Personal Commitment	Accepts Freedom and Power	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raised in a Roman Catholic way - Learned about God through attending VCS - Classes led her to experience Christ more through learning the UMC faith. She was 16 (thinks that her age affected her understanding) - Classes became significant to her ministries as a deaconess. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Committed life to God in summer camp - Although the classes led her to an understanding of her faith, she did not personally commit to God in Confirmation because the classes did not offer for such experiences - Confirmation was “too cognitive, and not affective.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - John Wesley’s conversion was significant. - Classes led her to accept the freedom and power from God. - Since confirmation happened only once, other factors such as Bible studies, Sunday schools, youth camps, and her personal journey with God led her to accept freedom and power from God. 	
BEHAVIORAL DOMAIN			
Renounce and Reject Evil	Remain Faithful Member	Loyal Member	Faithful Participation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Even after committing her life to Jesus, she also still struggling with sin. - Confirmation became her stepping stone in renouncing and rejecting evil. - Confirmation reminded her to abide by the teachings of Wesley, principles of UMC, and God’s grace. - Youth camps and other church activities led her to be repentant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Had questions about her faith before being converted. - Her involvements in her local UMC led her to be faithful. - Attending Confirmation and understanding her faith through the classes led her to desire more to remain faithful member of Christ’s holy church. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Though she did not understand at first why she had to attend confirmation, she claimed that the class led her to become loyal to UMC as member. - She found her identity in UMC. - Lessons about the Four Pillars of Faith led her to an understanding of the root of her faith and gave an impression that UMC faith is based on the Bible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perceived that Confirmation has nothing to do with her faithful participation in the church. - She learned this through other church’ ministries, programs, and activities. - Her faithful participation was the “fruit” of God’s grace to her life.

COGNITIVE DOMAIN			
Understanding of Christian Faith	Understanding of Baptism	Professing Christian Faith	Understanding UMC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Claimed that Confirmation led her to have better understanding of her faith. - The lesson about Pillars of Faith led her to appreciate reading her Bible and understanding about life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Re-affirmation of Faith was a great experience. - Lesson about sacraments were discussed in the classes, hence, she understood what these meant. - Took seriously the experience and felt renewed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Summer camp facilitated faith. - Confirmation experiences affirmed her desire. - Confirmation graduation was significant to her because that is where she professed her faith in God and in congregation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirmation led her to an understanding of her faith as UMC. Wesley's quote gave an impression that UMC value discipleship and intimacy with Jesus. - She understood other things better through her experiences.

Cecille had significant experiences in Confirmation as well as activities in addition to it. She also gave credit to her own experiences when it comes to her development. The lessons she had in Confirmation had made lasting impact for her.

Integrated Summary on the Perceived Impact of Confirmation Classes on the Selected UMC members

This study explored the perceived impact of the Confirmation classes on the experiences of selected UMC members in Manila Episcopal Area (MEA). This section contains the integrated summary of all the respondents' perceptions as to the problems posed in this research.

Demographic Characteristics of the Six Selected UMC Members

Andres, Rose, Peace, and Jana grew up in the UMC family, and their parents were active in the church. All the members of their families were baptized in the UMC. Anne and Cecille were raised in a Roman Catholic Church and were converted to the UMC when they were both 12 years old. Their current age range is between 23 to 40. Since their Confirmation classes graduation, all of the respondents have been members of the UMC. All the respondents are active in the UMC as leaders and disciplers of people for Jesus. Andres is active in the Young Adult organization while Jana is active in the Youth organization. The two also have positions in the church and in their respective Districts and Annual Conferences. Anne, Rose, Peace, and Cecille are active in the ministries of the church as deaconesses. They are teaching members in the church in all age levels from the youngest to eldest. They are occasionally preaching in the church. They are equipping people to be disciples of Jesus.

The Perceptions of the Selected UMC Members on their Affective Experiences with the Confirmation Classes

Table 9 below shows the perceived impact of Confirmation on their affective experiences. The check (✓) tells that the respondents perceived that their Confirmation classes' learning experiences impacted them on the sections given under Affective domain. The ex (X) tells the opposite. The affective experiences were divided into three sections. The first column has to do with experiencing Christ more through the learning experiences they had from the classes. The second column indicates whether their learning experiences in Confirmation led them to a personal commitment to Jesus, confessing Him to be their Lord and Savior. The third column tells if their learning

experiences in Confirmation led them to “Accept the freedom and power God gives them to resist evil, injustice, and oppression.”

Table 9: Summary of the Affective Experiences of the Respondents on the Confirmation Classes

AFFECTIVE DOMAIN			
RESPONDENTS	Experience Christ More	Personal Commitment	Accepting Freedom and Power
Andres	✓	X	X
Anne	✓	✓	✓
Rose	✓	✓	✓
Peace	X	X	X
Jana	X	X	X
Cecille	✓	X	✓

Except for Cecille who personally walked with God when she was a child, the other five respondents were influenced by their parents in their faith. They said that their parents were their model and first disciples. Rose and Peace also shared that their grandparents influenced their faith too. All respondents became more active in their local churches when they were youth. All of them became leaders in their church as a youth officer, and were involved in all the activities and ministries provided by their local churches. Andres, Rose, and Jana were active in the church when they were children, but the three claimed to have no personal relationship with God, and just imitated their parents' faith; while Anne, Peace, and Cecille intentionally walked with God. Anne and Cecille went with their mothers to Bible studies, and Peace joined in all the activities in the church with or without her mother. When it comes to the purpose of Confirmation classes, Andres, Anne, Jana, and Cecille elucidated that there was no clear explanation as to what a Confirmation classes was for. Peace and Rose stated that they knew the purpose

of the classes before attending Confirmation because it was well-explained by their pastor.

When it comes to the perceived impact of the classes in terms of “experiencing Christ more,” Anne, Rose, and Cecille claimed that Confirmation became their stepping stone in their faith journey and walk with God. The particular lesson about God’s grace led the three of them to experience Christ “more.” Anne became more aware and appreciative of the grace of God she is experiencing every day. Rose appreciated the teachings and the disciplines she received from her parents and grandparents. Cecille appreciated her Christian faith as she learned it more through Confirmation. Andres described Confirmation as a “one-time, big-time” event which means that there was no follow-up activity for him to “experience Christ more.” It led him to experience Christ through the story of Wesley and God’s grace. Jana described the classes to be “mandated and not intentional; a class with no heart in it.” Hence it did not lead her to experience Christ more. Peace also claimed that Confirmation did not lead her to experience Christ more because the classes were “too intellectual” and did not provide an opportunity for such.

In terms of leading the respondents to have a personal relationship with God, all of them except Rose claimed that they experienced it through Christian camps and not in Confirmation. Rose explained that Confirmation led her to commit herself to Jesus because of the “Love Feast” activity she experienced in the classes as part of the culminating activities. All the respondents described that the factors that led them to have a personal relationship with God and confess Jesus to be their Lord and Savior were: (1) being convicted by the pastor’s message; (2) the ambiance and the mood set in the place.

They described that the night was quiet with the soft worship music being played; and (3) through an altar call. Anne explained that even though she did not commit herself to Jesus in a Confirmation, the classes led her to see the bigger picture of her commitment. Jana explained that she did not appreciate the vows recited during Confirmation graduation. The vows only became significant to her when she grew older and were repeatedly confessed them during the annually Covenant service in her local church. Andres, Peace, and Cecille stated that Confirmation did not provide an experience for such like what they experienced in the youth camps.

In terms of accepting the freedom and power God gives them to resist evil, injustice, and oppression, Andres, Jana, and Peace stated that youth camp, and not Confirmation led them to this experience. They expressed that when they accepted Jesus through camps, they felt that they received and accepted the freedom and power that comes from God to resist the evil power over their lives. Andres added that even though he recited the vows in Confirmation, it made no impact. Peace described that what she excitedly accepted in Confirmation was her Membership Certificate and not the freedom and power God gives. Jana shared that the lesson about it was not mentioned or reflected in the classes. Anne also explained that she fully accepted the freedom and power God gives through youth camp but claimed that the story of John Wesley's overcoming temptation had an impact upon her life in that aspect. Rose claimed that Confirmation led her to this through the lesson about the Pillars of Faith. Cecille also claimed that even though youth camp led her to accept the freedom and power God gives, the stories about John Wesley's conversion, faith, and beliefs became her "stepping stone" in her faith journey.

The Perceptions of the Selected UMC Members on their Behavioral
Experiences with the Confirmation Classes

Table 10 below shows the perceived impact of Confirmation classes upon the respondents' behavior. The behavioral experiences was divided into four sections which are part of the seven vows professed during Confirmation graduation. The first column indicates whether the Confirmation learning experiences led the respondents to "renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of the world and repent of their sin." The second column indicates whether the Confirmation learning experiences led the respondents to "remain faithful members of Christ's holy church and serve as Christ's representatives in the world." The third column indicates whether the Confirmation learning experiences led the respondents to "be loyal to Christ through the UMC and do all in their power to strengthen its ministries." The fourth column indicates whether the Confirmation learning experiences led the respondents to "faithfully participate in its ministries by their prayers, their presence, their gifts, their service, and their witness."

Table 10: Summary of the Behavioral Experiences of the Respondents on the Confirmation Classes

BEHAVIORAL DOMAIN				
RESPONDENTS	Renounce and Reject Evil	Remain Faithful Member	Loyal Member	Faithful Participation
Andres	X	X	✓	X
Anne	X	X	✓	✓
Rose	✓	✓	✓	✓
Peace	✓	X	✓	✓
Jana	X	X	✓	X
Cecille	✓	✓	✓	X

All the respondents claimed that there are other factors that taught them to renounce and reject the evil powers, and repent their sins. The factors they mentioned are the teachings they received from their parents and grandparents, their learnings from Bible studies, their personal walk with God, the ministries they were involved with, and youth camps. According to Andres, Anne, and Jana, Confirmation did not influence them in this aspect because it provided no experience for such. Jana and Andres claimed that their age probably affected their understanding of the lessons. Anne explained that even though she remembered the lessons she had in the classes, she cannot connect them in this aspect. Peace, Rose and Cecille claimed that Confirmation helped them in renouncing evil and in repenting their sins to God. The lessons about grace according to Rose were reflective, and the teacher related the lesson to their daily living. The lessons about Wesley's conversion, and the lesson about grace helped Cecille to count Confirmation as her stepping stone in renouncing and rejecting evil, and to repent to Jesus. Peace claimed that the story about Wesley's overcoming temptation set as an example to renounce the temptation she was facing.

All the respondents mentioned that they were already faithful in Christ's holy church even before attending Confirmation. The main factor that led them to remain faithful was their church involvement. For Andres, Anne, Peace, and Jana Confirmation has nothing to do with their faithfulness. Both Andres and Jana stated that their Confirmation experience was like they were in academic school. It was boring and not reflective. Another factor that the two respondents said was their age factor. They elucidated that their age probably affect their understanding of the lessons. Jana added that they did not even talk about God, but focused only on Wesley and the UMC as a

whole. Rose and Cecille agreed that Confirmation led them to see the bigger picture of their commitments and ministries. Rose added that the lesson about Wesley's quotation, "The world is my parish" impressed to her that she too, can represent Christ to the world. Cecille explained that as a Roman Catholic, her questions about praying to Mary and to the Saints were answered in the classes when they talked about the Holy Trinity.

All respondents agreed that Confirmation led them to be loyal to the UMC. They mentioned that the lessons in Confirmation impressed upon them that the UMC's faith is a sound doctrine. Anne and Rose said that Confirmation affirmed their desire to be loyal to UMC. Andres and Cecille stated that Confirmation helped them to find their identity as a United Methodist members. Jana said that the UMC vows gave her clear expectations as a UMC member. Anne, Peace and Cecille expressed that their questions about faith and beliefs were answered through Confirmation. Rose and Cecille affirmed that the lesson about the Four Pillars of Faith led them to understand the root of the faith of the UMC.

All respondents mentioned that they had learned to faithfully participate in all the ministries of their local churches before Confirmation. They had learned them through their parents, and in their personal walk with God. Andres added that his peers made him enjoy all the ministries he was involved with. Andres, Jana, and Cecille agreed that Confirmation had nothing to do with their faithful participation in the church. Jana and Cecille stated that their faithful participation was the fruit of God's faithfulness in their lives, and their love to God as well. Cecille and Andres both said that the ministries were not emphasized in the classes. For Anne, Rose, and Peace, even though their participation in the church was learned before Confirmation, the classes still contributed to this aspect.

The three respondents explained that they had a better understanding of their participation in the church. Anne said that she appreciated more her participation in the church; Rose added that they talked about the importance of their participation in the church in Confirmation classes; and Peace stated that she remembered the vow she recited about her faithful participation in the church and walked faithfully according to it.

The Perceptions of the Selected UMC Members on their Cognitive Experiences with the Confirmation Classes

Table 11 below shows the perceived impact of Confirmation on the respondents' cognitive experiences. The Cognitive domain was divided into four sections. The first column indicates whether the Confirmation learning experiences led the respondents to have better understanding of their Christian faith. The second column indicates whether the Confirmation learning experiences led the respondents to an understanding of their baptism. The third column indicates whether the Confirmation learning experiences led the respondents to "Receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments." The fourth column indicates whether the Confirmation learning experiences led the respondents to have better understanding of the UMC mission, history, doctrine, beliefs and vows.

Table 11: Summary of the Cognitive Experiences of the Respondents on the Confirmation Classes

COGNITIVE DOMAIN				
RESPONDENTS	Understanding of Christian Faith	Understanding of Baptism	Profess Christian Faith	Understanding UMC
Andres	✓	X	X	✓
Anne	✓	X	✓	✓
Rose	✓	✓	✓	✓
Peace	✓	X	X	✓
Jana	X	X	X	X
Cecille	✓	✓	✓	✓

The five respondents stated that Confirmation led them to an understanding of Christian faith. The Four Pillars of Faith were mentioned by the four respondents, Andres, Anne, Jana, and Cecille. That led them to an understanding of the root of the UMC faith and at the same time helped them in their decision making. Although at first, they had a hard time understanding the connection of the lesson to their lives, as they continued maturing in faith with Jesus, the lessons helped them in their decision making. Rose stated that Confirmation became an introductory class for follow-up classes. She shared that she attended the follow-up classes offered in her church because she enjoyed her Confirmation experience. Jana explained that Confirmation did not lead her to have better understanding of her faith because she did not see the relevance of the lessons in her life. Although for Peace, Confirmation led her to understand her faith, both her and Jana mentioned that the strategies of their Confirmation teacher were not effective and boring.

Both Rose and Cecille shared that Confirmation led them not just to understand their baptism through the lessons, but also through experience. They said that the lesson about baptism was elaborated in the classes. Part of the Confirmation activities

was re-affirmation of baptism. Since they understood its meaning and its relevance in their Christian life, the activity made an impact upon their lives. Andres, Anne, Peace, and Jana stated that the lesson about baptism was not elaborated upon in the class. And although Peace and Jana experienced the re-affirmation of their baptism, they claimed that it did not lead them to an understanding of their baptism. Andres and Anne said that there was no activity to re-affirm their baptism in Confirmation.

All five respondents mentioned that their youth camp experiences led them to profess their Christian faith. For Andres, Peace and Jana, Confirmation did not lead them to this because the classes did not provide an experience for such. Both Peace and Jana agreed that Confirmation was “too cognitive.” For Anne, Rose, and Cecille, Confirmation graduation became significant to them. They shared that they formally professed their desire to become Jesus’ disciple in that event.

In terms of understanding the UMC mission, all six respondents agreed that they better understood this through personal experience. Five respondents claimed that Confirmation led them to understand the UMC’s mission. John Wesley’s words, “The world is my Parish” made an impression on Andres, Peace, and Cecille, UMC member is accomplishing Jesus’ mission to make disciples of all nations. Anne elucidated that after she learned about the doctrine of salvation in Confirmation, the lesson led her to the message of salvation with others. Rose added that she learned that Social Holiness as part of the mission of a UMC member. The understanding of UMC doctrine, history, and beliefs were understood in the classes according to three respondents (Andres, Peace, and Cecille) because they only heard these lessons in Confirmation. For Jana, Confirmation did not lead her have better understanding of the UMC mission, doctrine, history, and

beliefs, because the lessons were too “wordy” to remember or understand. The vows became significant to Jana only through the annual Covenant Services. Andres stated that the vows were not discussed in the class, and he did not understand the vows at all; Rose said that even though the vows were not discussed in the class, since she understood the lessons, she also understood what the vows meant; Peace remembered one vow that had to do with her participation in the church; and Cecille shared that the vows became more significant to her as she listened to other youth who are reciting the vows during Confirmation graduations.

In summary, the interviews with the six respondents yielded that the Confirmation classes did help them in some areas of their development. There were particular aspects of their faith, however, other activities of the church and the influence of the home did more. The respondents also indicated some negative feedback on the Confirmation classes. Some of them mentioned that the curriculum of Confirmation was too rigid, too cognitive, and the way the teachers and pastors taught them did not match their developmental characteristics at the time.

The perceptions of the respondents also indicated that family, peers, teachers, pastors, deaconesses, counselors, and other workers both inside and outside the church facilitated the holistic growth of the respondents in addition to the Confirmation classes that the respondents all participated in. All respondents in this case study indicated that they had become successful persons and active leaders of the UMC and their community because of the rich environment they had experienced both in their own homes and in the churches that nurtured them.

This chapter presented, analyzed, and interpreted the six case studies of the selected UMC members as to the impact of Confirmation upon their affective, behavioral, and cognitive experiences. The next chapter presents the summary, findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary, findings, conclusions, and the recommendations the researcher derived from the data gathered. The summary begins with the identification of the demographic characteristics of the respondents and then goes on to include the major aspects of the literature review that influenced this study. It is followed by a presentation of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

Summary

This study sought to answer the main question: What is the perceived impact of the Confirmation classes on the selected United Methodist Church members? This study looked into the perceived impact of the Confirmation classes on the affective, behavioral, and cognitive experiences of the selected respondents. First, to investigate how the UMC selected members perceived the impact of Confirmation on their affective experiences, they were asked in what ways Confirmation helped or did not help them to experience Christ, to have a personal commitment to Jesus, and how the classes led them to accept the freedom and the power God gives to them to resist evil, injustice, and oppression. Second, to investigate how the UMC selected members perceived the impact of Confirmation on their behavioral experiences, they were asked in what ways Confirmation led or did not lead them to renounce spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of the world, and repent their sins, how the classes help or did not help

them to remain faithful members of Christ's holy church and serve as Christ's representatives in the world, to be a loyal member of the UMC, and do all in their power to strengthen its ministries; and help or not help them to faithfully participate in its ministries by their prayers, their presence, their gifts, and their service. Finally, to investigate how the UMC selected members perceived the impact of Confirmation on their cognitive experiences, they were asked in what ways Confirmation led or did not lead them to an understanding of the Christian faith, understanding of the meaning of baptism receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures; and an understanding of the mission, history, doctrine, and beliefs of UMC.

The theoretical framework used in this study is Pazmiño's "Integration of Developmental Concepts with Biblical Anthropology." The framework shows that God's sovereignty and grace are both the umbrella and the foundation of holistic human development. There are six elements the framework shows: Heredity or Nature, Maturation, Learning, Experience-Producing Tendencies, Environmental or Nurture, and Experience. This study focused on one element in the framework which is the Learning, in relationship to the experience of Confirmation. Under the Learning are the three learning domains: affective, behavioral, and cognitive.

The respondents of this study were six United Methodist members, namely Andres, Anne, Rose, Peace, Jana, and Cecille (not their real names) who are actively attending and ministering in UMC for more than 10 years. Their willingness to give anecdotes regarding their learning experiences in Confirmation yielded fresh insights and inspirations in offering recommendations for the curriculum and instruction enhancement for Confirmation classes in local congregation in the UMC.

The data were gathered through semi-structured interviews. The guide questions reflected the research questions. The semi-structured interviews were conducted according to the convenience of the respondents. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed. The data gathered from the perceptions of the participants were analyzed using the multiple case study approach. First, the researcher wrote an individual case study. Then she analyzed each case by comparing and contrasting each case looking for emerging themes, similarities and differences. Common and/or different themes have been looked at from the six case studies to describe the impact that Confirmation classes have on the affective, behavioral, and cognitive learning experiences of the selected respondents. For the validity and reliability, this study employed the following strategies: (1) member checks. After writing each case, the researcher sent back the analysis to the respondents to ensure the plausibility of the interpretation; (2) peer review/examination. The adviser was consulted for the verification of the coherence of the data findings in light of the objectives of the study; and (3) rich, thick description on the perceptions of the respondents were written to describe the experiences of the respondents.

All the respondents expressed that they came from a Christian family. Two of them were from the Roman Catholic Church and were converted to the UMC. The four others were born into UMC families. All have experience-producing tendencies about which Pazmiño notes, “Although people are influenced by their inborn nature and the nurture they receive, they are active as well as receptive.”²⁸⁴ The six respondents experienced walking in the Lord with the ability and understanding given by God from a

²⁸⁴ Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 221-222.

tender age. When they reached the age of 12, they became more active in the church and committed themselves in church activities and ministries. In all, five respondents committed their lives to Jesus when they were 12 or 13 during youth camps; only one respondent said that she committed her life to Jesus during Confirmation. All respondents noted that aside from Confirmation, there are other factors that influenced them to holistically learn and grow in their Christian faith. These factors are: family religious background and guidance and discipline received from parents and grandparents; their personal walk with Jesus; nurturing of the church especially through Bible studies, Sunday schools and youth Christian camps; and the ministries they are involved with. The following are the findings from the data gathered in this study.

Findings of the Study

The study explored the perceived impact of the Confirmation classes on the selected United Methodist Church members. The following is a summary of the findings from the data gathered through the semi-structured interviews.

On the affective domain, there were three questions that were posed: (a) In what ways do Confirmation classes help or not help them to experience Christ more?; (b) In what ways do the Confirmation classes lead or not lead them to a personal commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?; and (c) In what ways do the Confirmation classes lead or not lead them to accept the freedom and power that God gives them to resist evil, injustice and oppression. The study yielded the following results. First, for the question on the ways that Confirmation classes help or to not help them to experience Christ more, among the six respondents, four respondents perceived that Confirmation *led* them to

experience Christ. The particular lesson about God's grace and the story of God's grace in the life of John Wesley led them to this experience. The lesson left an imprint on the participants to be more appreciative in the grace, discipline, and guidance received from God and their parents as well as become appreciative of the faith they have in Christ. The two respondents who were 12 years old when they took the classes stated that Confirmation *did not* lead them to this experience because the classes were "too intellectual" and "too rigid" for their age. Second, in terms of leading or not leading them to have personal relationship with God, five of the six respondents perceived that Confirmation *did not* lead them to this experience. They elucidated that they committed to have a personal relationship with Jesus through a Christian camp not at Confirmation. Only one respondent claimed that Confirmation *did lead* her to commit her life to Jesus through one of the culminating activities in Confirmation which is the "Love Feast." One respondent recalled that even though she did not commit her life to Jesus in Confirmation, the classes *led* her to understand the meaning of this commitment. Finally, on the question regarding leading or not leading the respondents to accept the freedom and power God gives them to resist evil, injustice, and oppression, three out of six respondents (these were 12 years old when they took the classes) stated that Confirmation *did not* lead them to this, because Confirmation *did not* provide the avenue to acquire this experience. However, they stated that the youth camps gave them this opportunity. The other three respondents who were 14 to 16 years old when they took the classes claimed that Confirmation *led* them to this experience. It happened when they understood the lessons about the Four Pillars of Faith, the story of John Wesley's conversion, and Wesley's experience of overcoming his temptation.

On the behavioral domain, there were four questions that were posed: (a) in what ways do Confirmation classes help or not help them to renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of the world, and repent their sins; (b) in what ways do Confirmation classes help or not help them to remain faithful members of Christ's holy church and serve as Christ's representatives in the world; (3) in what ways do Confirmation classes help or not help them to be a loyal member of the UMC, and do all in their power to strengthen its ministries?; and (d) in what ways do Confirmation classes help or not help them faithfully participate in its ministries by their prayers, their presence, their gifts, and their service. First, for the question on whether or not Confirmation led them to renounce and reject evil powers in the world and repent their sins, three of six respondents claimed that Confirmation *did not* lead them to experience this because the classes *did not* provide avenues of learning such experiences. The rest of the respondents, however, shared that the classes *led* them to this aspect. They explained that the lessons about grace and the story of Wesley's overcoming temptation led them to repentance and reject evil powers. One respondent added that the teacher of the Confirmation explained all the lessons well and was able to connect these lessons in their Christian living. Second, in terms of helping or not helping the respondents to remain faithful to Christ's holy church, four out of six respondents stated that Confirmation *did not* facilitate this learning. Two of these four respondents explained that the lessons they had were boring and felt that they were in a formal and "academic" class. The other two respondents claimed that Confirmation *led* them to see the bigger picture of their commitments and ministries in the church, hence, the classes *did help* them to remain faithful to Christ's holy church. Third, in terms of being loyal to serving God in UMC, all

respondents said that Confirmation *led* them to this. All six respondents elucidated that Confirmation impressed on them that UMC's faith is Bible based and under the power and sovereignty of the Holy Spirit. Hence, they all want to serve in the church that is sound in doctrine. Finally, on the question whether or not Confirmation help them to faithfully participate in the ministries, three of six respondents stated that the classes *did not* help them in this area. The rationale was that they already learned to faithfully participate to all church ministries beforehand, and it was not even discussed in the classes. The two respondents agreed that the fruit of God's love and grace to them is their faithful participation. While the three respondents claimed that Confirmation *contributed* to their faithfulness in participation to church and its ministries. They stated that the classes *led* them to better an understanding of the importance of their participation in the church as they discussed them. Hence it also *led* them to appreciate what they were already doing in the church.

On the cognitive domain, there were four questions that were posed: (a) in what ways do Confirmation classes lead or not lead them to an understanding of the Christian faith?; (b) in what ways do Confirmation classes lead or not lead them to an understanding of the meaning of baptism? (c) in what ways do Confirmation classes help or not help them to receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures?; and (d) in what ways do Confirmation classes lead or not lead them to an understanding of the UM mission, history, doctrine, beliefs, and vows. For the first question, five of six respondents claimed that Confirmation *led* them to an understanding of Christian faith through the lesson about the Four Pillars of Faith. The lesson led them to have better understanding of the root of the UMC faith. One respondent remarked that Confirmation

became an introductory part to the follow-up lessons of Confirmation she attended.

Second, in terms of understanding their baptism, only two of six respondents claimed that Confirmation *led* them to this. Both shared that the lesson about baptism was discussed clearly in the classes and the re-affirmation of baptism was part of the culminating activities in the classes. The four respondents remarked that the classes *did not* lead them to this because the relevance of baptism in the classes was not discussed in Confirmation.

Third, in terms of receiving and professing the Christian faith as contained in the Scripture, the three respondents mentioned that Confirmation *did not* lead them to this. They stated that they fully received and professed their Christian faith during youth camp and not in Confirmation. The other three respondents claimed that Confirmation *led* them to this experience by giving them an avenue to formally profess their desire to be Christ's disciples. Confirmation's graduation became significant to them because they formally professed their Christian faith through it. Finally, regarding understanding the mission, history, doctrine, beliefs, and vows of UMC, five of six respondents stated that Confirmation *led* them to an understanding of the mission of UMC. The lesson about what Wesley said "The world is my parish" gave them an impression that the mission of UMC is to make people disciples of Christ. Since they only heard the lessons about the history, doctrine and beliefs in Confirmation, they also said that the classes *led* them to have better understanding about these lessons. Only one respondent said that the classes *did not* lead her to this because it was "too wordy" to understand or remember.

To sum it all up, the selected respondents were able to recall and cite stories about how the Confirmation classes impacted their lives in one way or the other.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the research conducted, Confirmation classes can provide opportunities for holistic growth among the participants if delivered in ways that cater to the needs of the students. The following are some of the conclusions that this study yielded:

Based on the findings of the study, in terms of the affective aspect, the Confirmation classes that the respondents had were too doctrinal and too academic for 12 year-old learners. According to the respondents who took classes when they were 12 years of age, the classes did not provide much experiences that gave them opportunities to think about their spiritual or emotional needs. Some respondents described the classes as “boring” and did not catch their attention. However, there were also elements in Confirmation like the culminating activity, the re-affirmation of faith, and the Love Feast that were identified by the respondents as memorable instances that helped them think about their commitment to Christ.

In terms of the behavioral aspect, the lessons about God’s grace, John Wesley’s conversion, and overcoming temptations helped the respondents to renounce and reject evil powers and repent of their sins. The respondents also acknowledged other factors that led them to be transformed. These are summer camps, Christmas Institute, mission trips, and other ministry involvements in the local church. These activities provide the alternative activities that Confirmation lacked. These activities led the learners to see the bigger picture of their commitment to Jesus and how to be loyal members of the UMC. The findings of the study yielded that in some particular way, the classes help the

members find a “sense of identity” as they grow in their Christian faith as a United Methodist.

In terms of the cognitive domain, Confirmation led the learners to an understanding of their Christian faith through learning and reflecting the Four Pillars of Faith and its relevance to their lives. Confirmation also allowed them to re-affirm their faith and prepared them to become professing members of the UMC. The lessons on the Doctrine of Salvation, Social Holiness, history, doctrines, and beliefs of UMC are particularly being discussed in Confirmation. These proved to be successful in leading the learners to have a better understanding of the UMC distinctive. However, these lessons have to be presented in an “age appropriate” way since the respondents stated that these lessons would have the tendency to be “too wordy” and hard to remember.

Other conclusions that the researcher gathered from the study are the following. First, the family is a significant part in the nurture of children. Most of the respondents acknowledged that both their parents and grandparents were helpful in the forming of their values and faith in Jesus Christ. Second, the people surrounding the lives of the students are important. There were respondents in the study who stated that the pastors, counselors, their friends, their neighbors, camp speakers, the other teachers and adults in the local church were instrumental in the forming of their faith in Jesus Christ. Third, based on the findings of the study, the following are some of the best practices that may be conducted to have a transformational Confirmation curriculum: (a) the lessons on Confirmation could be supplemented with the other activities in the local church like summer camps, Christmas Institute, mission trips, VCS, and other ministries. The lessons become more alive when reinforced with other activities that the students can engage in.

Student participation is crucial in the formation of faith and commitment; (b) Confirmation can be enhanced by having follow-up classes. Only one respondent noted that she had a follow-up classes and claimed that she became a better Christian because of that, and her faith were being well-nurtured by the church; (c) The teacher is the key so that students will learn more and have the interest in the lessons. Their strategies in catching the attention of the learners are significant. It is also important to note that teachers need to have the expertise in the age levels they are teaching. As some respondents noted, their Confirmation experiences made an impact to them up until today because the teacher were able to communicate well to them the lessons. And for the other participants, the learning experiences they had in Confirmation made no impact because the teacher was not able to communicate the lessons to them according to their age level; (d) building relationships among the students and the family is also key to having a successful Confirmation classes. Thus, students should have good relationships with the teacher, with their family, the faith community. Whatever lessons they have in Confirmation can be supplemented with positive atmosphere; and finally, (e) identifying needs and meeting them. Some respondents of the study shared that the lessons in Confirmation did not have an impact on them because the “too rigid and too academic” lectures did not meet their needs, either spiritual or emotional. Teachers would do well if they know the needs of the students and relate the lessons on Confirmation to their felt needs.

Finally, according to the findings of the study the following lessons had made a big impact on the lives of the respondents: personal holiness, doctrine of salvation, the Four Pillars of Faith, the stories about John Wesley, and God’s prevenient grace.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are identified for the church and for further studies.

Recommendations to the Church

The following are some recommendations to the church that the researcher has identified based on the findings of the study:

For the affective domain, based on the findings of the study, the following are the recommendations for the church:

1. Incorporate other activities that would complement the lessons in Confirmation classes. Four respondents perceived that Confirmation *led* them to experience Christ and that the particular lesson about God's grace and the story of God's grace in the life of John Wesley led them to this experience. These lessons if done through lecture only could be boring so the church would do well if Confirmation will be conducted in such a way that is interactive by using audio-visual presentations since the story of Wesley, for example, happened centuries ago. These lessons were enhanced by the culminating activity about Holy Communion which is the "Love Feast," and make an altar call after the activity.
2. The respondents also noted that Confirmation did not provide opportunities for them to understand "to accept the freedom and power God gives them to resist evil, injustice, and oppression." This is particularly from the *Book of Discipline* and part of the vows that confirmands would agree to. The church would do well by conducting, for instance, a parallel activity that supports this particular lesson.

3. In Chapter I of this study, it was noted that Confirmation classes are the avenues where the local church nurtures the faith of the children. However, in the real context of most UMC congregations, not all churches were conducting the classes. Thus, the researcher strongly recommends that the churches will do well if they would implement Confirmation classes as part of the Christian education programs. As it is written in the *Book of Discipline of UMC*, it is the pastor's duty to implement this as part of his or her administration. Pastors, Christian educators, and deaconesses could also take note that Confirmation is done not just for the sake of adding professing members in the church, but for faith nurturing. For the behavioral domain, the following are some recommendations to the church:

1. Include the UMC vows in the lessons and not just ask the students to recite them during graduation day. Teachers could discuss each vow and emphasize the importance of observing and abiding them vis-a-vis their Christian life as professing member of the church. One respondent indicated that it was good if the vows were memorized. However, in addition to memorizing the vows, proper explanation of each vow could prove to be more useful as students process their faith.
2. The lessons on the behavioral part like "renouncing the spiritual forces of wickedness," need to be relevant in the lives of the learners as Christians. This means that the teacher of the classes should be able to communicate the lessons to them, at the same time giving the learners an avenue in practicing what they have heard.

3. Continue teaching the UMC distinctive in Confirmation classes because based on the perceptions of all six respondents, these lessons have encouraged them to faithfully participate in the ministries of the local churches they are in.

For the cognitive domain, the following are some recommendations for the church:

1. Emphasize the lesson about the Four Pillars of Faith and its relevance in their Christian faith, and how they can use it in their life, especially in making decisions. The lesson about baptism and the re-affirmation of baptism have to be considered in discussions, and be part of the culminating experience of the participants. Other topics such as following made an impact upon the respondents so these lessons should be strengthened: personal holiness, doctrine of salvation, the stories about John Wesley, and God's prevenient grace.
2. The story about Wesley's "The world is my parish" is also a help in discussing the mission of the church. Instead of giving the participants exams, the church could provide an avenue where they can exercise what they understood in the lessons. Confirmation teacher could coordinate with the Outreach ministry committee on how the lessons could be applied in their actual lives.
3. Continue to organize summer camps, Christmas Institute, VCS, Bible studies with the participation of the confirmands to strengthen the lessons in Confirmation.

Based on the other findings of the study, the researcher offers the following recommendations:

1. The United Methodist Church with the leadership of the Bishop could commission curriculum writers that will create instructional materials for Confirmation that are needs-based and relevant on the lives of today's students. These curriculum writers need to consider the needs of the learners per age level, which means that the curriculum and instructions be written separately for each level with the idea of producing a "spiral curriculum." This is to cater to the specific needs of the learners per age level, and at the same time have follow-up classes every year. This would also consider writing the specific objectives of each lessons and the teacher's expectations for each class session.
2. The duration of the Confirmation classes could be stretched throughout the whole year with other supplemental activities in between. The respondents of the study have indicated that other activities like camps, VCS, Bible studies have helped them understand the lessons they had in Confirmation.
3. The local churches could consider conducting teachers' trainings. It is significant for the pastors, Christian educators, and deaconesses to learn how to communicate to the learners according to their age-level needs.
4. Separation of the classes for younger teens and older teens would provide a more needs-based approach to learning.
5. All participants who did not grow up in the UMC should attend Confirmation classes. The data of the research showed that the two

respondents who did not grow up in UMC have highly appreciated Confirmation classes.

6. The following best practices could enhance the delivery of Confirmation classes:
 - a. The Confirmation curriculum could include additional interactive activities to the lessons to meet the affective, behavioral, and cognitive needs of the students
 - b. The teacher will do well to build relationships with the students and their families by doing visitation, follow-up classes as needs arise, and by being involved in the lives of the students
 - c. Identifying the needs of the students and their families and meeting them by engaging in creative ways in presenting the lessons in Confirmation classes.
 - d. Rallying the cooperation of all the people in the church to support the children who are in Confirmation classes. In the study, supplemental relationships proved to be a strong element in the growth of the students.

Recommendations for Further Studies

After conducting this research, the researcher realized that further studies on the following areas need to be considered.

- (a) A comparative study between the UMC's approach of conducting Confirmation and another denomination that is also from the Wesleyan conviction;

- (b) A survey on what activities in the youth camp can provide most impact on the youth's learning experiences especially if the Confirmation will be conducted in a camp.
- (c) A qualitative study on the impact of Confirmation vis-à-vis spiritual nurturing of the youth.
- (d) A qualitative and quantitative study about the Christian education programs that most help the youth in nurturing their Christian faith.
- (e) A project thesis on creating an interactive curriculum on the lessons of Confirmation
- (f) A case study on best practices on how to teach Confirmation lessons to children 12 years old.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL AND GUIDE QUESTIONS

Friendly Greeting!

- I will begin talking to my respondent with some friendly conversation to make him/her feel comfortable. Then I will assure him/her that I am not looking for the “right answers.” What I am wanting to know is he/she’s thinking about the questions.
- I will politely ask him/her permission to record our conversations. Then I will ask him/her about the following: Age, how long they have been a member of UMC, and their current ministry.
- Then I will rewind and listen to the recording to be sure the recorder is picking his or her voice clearly.
- I will keep the recorder going to catch all his or her answers (unless he/she draws or writes quietly for several minutes.)
- Then I will begin with my research questions which are indicated in the Appendix of this paper.

Semi-Structured Interview Guide Questions

Questions for Perceptions of the Respondents on the
Affective/Spiritual Domain

- a. Tell me the story of how you became a Christian?
- b. Can you describe to me your life before meeting Jesus?

- c. In what ways do Confirmation classes help you experience Christ more? Please identify these ways. If you have not experienced this, please explain.
- d. In what ways do the Confirmation classes lead you to a personal commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior? Please identify these ways. If you have not experienced this, please explain.
- e. In what ways do the Confirmation classes lead you to accept the freedom and power that God gives them to resist evil, injustice and oppression? Please identify these ways. If you have not experienced this, please explain.

Questions for Perceptions of the Respondents on the
Behavioral Domain

In what ways do the Confirmation classes help you fulfill the following? Please identify these ways. If you have not experienced this, please explain. Please cite some anecdotes or stories that you can recall in relation to each of these aspects.

- a. To renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of the world, and repent their sins;
- b. To be loyal to the United Methodist Church and do all in their power to strengthen its ministries.
- c. To faithfully participate in its ministries by their prayers, their presence, their gifts, and their service;

Questions for Perceptions of the Respondents on the
Cognitive Domain

In what ways do the Confirmation classes help you better understand the following items? If yes, please identify these ways. If no, please explain. Please cite some anecdotes or stories that you can recall in relation to these aspects.

1. In what ways do the Confirmation classes lead you to an understanding of the Christian faith? Please identify these ways. If you have not experienced this, please explain.
2. In what ways do the Confirmation classes lead you to an understanding of the meaning of baptism? If yes, please identify these ways. If you have not experienced this, please explain.
3. In what ways do Confirmation classes help you to receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures? If yes, please identify these ways. If you have not experienced this, please explain.
4. In what ways do Confirmation classes lead you to an understanding of the following items:
 - a. United Methodist mission?
 - b. United Methodist history?
 - c. United Methodist doctrine?
 - d. United Methodist beliefs?
 - e. United Methodist vows?

APPENDIX B
LETTER TO THE BISHOP

January, 2019

To Rev. Ciriaco Q. Francisco
Bishop, Manila Episcopal Area

Dear Bishop,

Christian greetings!

I am currently studying at Asia Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, taking Master of Arts in Religious Education, concentrating in Curriculum and Instruction. This is now my second year and I am preparing to graduate in May of this year. As part of my course of study, I am conducting research on the “Perceived impact of Confirmation classes on Selected United Methodist Members in the Manila Episcopal Area.” The aim of my study is to contribute to the possible improvements of the curriculum and instruction of our Confirmation classes in the Philippine context.

Concerning this, I would like to ask for your permission to please allow me to conduct this study. My six respondents will be selected from the churches in Manila Episcopal Area.

I’m looking forward for your positive response.

Respectfully yours,

Cathy Lee F. Gondra,
Deaconess, Christian Education

APPENDIX C

LETTER TO THE PASTORS

January, 2019

To Rev. _____
Administrative Pastor

Dear Pastor,

Christian greetings!

I am currently studying at Asia Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, taking Master of Arts in Religious Education, concentrating in Curriculum and Instruction. This is now my second year and I am preparing to graduate in May of this year. As part of my course of study, I am conducting research on the “Perceived impact of Confirmation classes on Selected United Methodist Members in the Manila Episcopal Area.” The aim of my study is to contribute to the possible improvements of the curriculum and instruction of our Confirmation classes in Philippine context.

Concerning to this, I would like to inform you that one of the members in your local church is selected to be part of this study. I am hoping that you will allow him/her to be part of this study.

I’m looking forward for your positive response.

Respectfully yours,

Cathy Lee F. Gondra,
Deaconess, Christian Education

APPENDIX D

LETTER TO THE RESPONDENTS

January 2019

Dear _____

I am currently studying at Asia Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, taking Master of Arts in Religious Education, concentrating in Curriculum and Instruction. This is now my second year and I am preparing to graduate in May of this year. As part of my course of my study, I am conducting research on the “Perceived impact of Confirmation classes on Selected United Methodist Members in the Manila Episcopal Area.” The aim of this study is to give contribution to the curriculum and instruction of Manila Episcopal Area regarding Confirmation classes.

Concerning to this study, I would like to invite you to be one of my participants. The interviews will be conducted depending on your convenient schedules. The interviews will also be conducted via Facebook, email, skype, or phone calls if you may. Your participation in this study will be a help as I gather the needed information.

I will also request you to have follow-up interviews, especially since I will do member checking. This means that as I finish writing up the answers you gave to the interviews, I will give back to you the tentative written data for you to read. This is to ensure that the written data are plausible.

I am hoping for your positive response!

In Christ,

Cathy Lee F. Gondra

Deaconess, Christian Education

APPENDIX E

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT FOR PARTICIPANTS

I, Cathy Lee F. Gondra am a MARE student at APNTS. I am conducting a study on the “Perceived impact of Confirmation classes on Selected United Methodist Members in the Manila Episcopal Area.” as part of my course of study. The following information is provided for you to determine whether you are willing to participate in the study. You should be aware that even if you agree to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty. I will be asking you to participate in an interview for at least three sessions, which is estimated to take no more than an hour of your time.

The content of the questions concern your own personal experiences as part of the United Methodist member in Confirmation classes. It is highly unlikely that you will experience any discomfort or harm from participating. If you are asked any question that you do not wish to answer, you are free to exercise that option. Although participation in my study will not directly benefit you, I believe that the information will be useful for the improvement of the curriculum and instruction of Confirmation classes. Your participation is solicited, although strictly voluntary. I assure you that your name will not be associated in any way with the research findings. All participants will be assigned pseudonyms. Only my professor, certain members of my panel and I will have the access to the transcripts.

If you would like additional information concerning this study before or after it is complete, please feel free to contact me by cell phone or email. There is no compensation for your participation, but it is greatly appreciated.

I have read this Consent and Authorization form. I have had the opportunity to ask, and I have received answers to any questions I had regarding the study. I understand that if I have any additional questions about my rights as a research participant, I may call 09269186033, or send an email to cathygondra48@gmail.com. I agree to take part in this study as a research participant. By my signature I affirm that I am at least 20 years old, and that I have received a copy of this Consent and Authorization Form.

Type/Print Participant’s Name

Date

Participant’s Signature

(Adapted from Dr. Clark Armstrong, December, 2014)

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Yambot, Leyda (District Superintendent of Rizal Philippines Annual Conference-East). Interview by Cathy Lee Gondra, Taytay, Rizal, August 10, 2018 and August 29, 2018.

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OTHER INVOLVEMENTS

- Curriculum Writer at Board of Christian Education and Discipleship of the UMC Philippines Central Conference for 3 years.
- Conference secretary member of Rizal Philippines Annual Conference East for 2 years and at present.
- Part-time Christian Education Deaconess at Villa Lolita United Methodist Church