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# Increasing Known Performance Indicators Using Andragogy-Based Models

Jacqueline Conroy  
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# Walden University

College of Management and Technology

This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

Jacqueline Frances Conroy

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,  
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the review committee have been made.

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Walden University

2018

Abstract

Increasing Known Performance Indicators Using Andragogy-Based Models

By

Jacqueline Frances Conroy

MA, American Intercontinental University, 2008

BS, American Intercontinental University, 2007

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Management

Walden University

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## Abstract

Variety of training models are used in large retail organizations in South Carolina. Large retail organizations have leaders educating their employees using multiple methods of training without regard as to how adults learn. Leadership of large retail organizations in South Carolina may be investing in training materials, concepts, and facilitation methods that may not have substantive impact on known performance metrics. Knowles' theory of andragogy has been at the forefront of adult education theory as it has led many researchers to explore new methods for adults to learn effectively. A quasi-experimental study was designed to determine if an andragogy based training models have influenced performance of employees measured by existing performance indicators. The data were collected from a t sample of 715 employees before and after an andragogy style training was administered. The data analysis, using paired t-test, showed significant variance in all three dependent variable metrics. Sales and credit card percent to goal metrics showed negative variance and item locate metric showed a positive variance thus providing quantifiable data from andragogy-style training. This study addressed the gap in the literature regarding the effectiveness of training adults using adult-learner methods and has the potential to contribute to positive social change by affecting the culture of how employers in large retail organizations are training their employees. Management for large retail organizations could find a higher return on investment the training as well as increased morale; while increasing retailer profits and potentially increasing career advancement opportunities and merit increases.

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## Dedication

I dedicate my dissertation to my family; Gregory, Kenneth, and Jacob Warthen. They gave me the drive and support to never give up throughout this journey. In memory of my beloved grandparents, William Francis Conroy II, and Jacqueline Conroy who instilled in me to never stop striving to become better than I was the day before.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Employee training program designs in large retail organizations commonly mirror those used for educating adolescents rather than adults (Golhar & Alex, 2017). Knowles (2012) demonstrated that adults learn more efficiently in adult-oriented learning models, including self-directed learning environments. Instead of traditional teaching practices, the educator facilitates the learning material to the adult learners without regard to their relative level of experience or prior subject-matter knowledge (Knowles, 2012). Applying Knowles' theory of andragogy to develop adult-oriented curricula and leveraging adult-learning models may improve return on investment (ROI) for large retailers.

Organizational leaders invest a significant amount of resources in their employee training programs. In 2013, there was over \$200 billion budgeted for employee training with approximately 46% spent on external organizational trainers/educators (Bresin, 2014; Harward, 2014). The need for the instructor/facilitator to be effective in transferring knowledge to the adult learners is critical. Inefficient training can sub-optimize the overall efforts of the organization that can lead to a reduced level of employee morale (Bresin, 2014). Employees who do not use training on the job can negatively impact the ROI expended to fund those training programs (Baden & Parkes, 2013). Chapter 1 includes the overall framework and background of andragogy as well as review how this study is conducted.

## **Background of the Study**

Through an empirical study, McLean (2006) identified how adults in the workplace learn differently based on their prior world-life experiences and respective cultures. McLean discovered that different worldviews could determine how an employee within a workplace learns and adapts to training. Retail corporations, especially those in the international market, were comprised of employees from different family backgrounds, religions, ethics, gender, and nationalities, creating environments where employees have unique experiences and biases. Therefore, unique training methods tailored to each respective adult population may need to be put into practice to obtain the desired results. Corporate trainers within large corporations seek training methods that can reach most of the learning practices within a diverse employee population. One of the predominant challenges corporate leaders confront with optimizing their respective adult training programs is getting their facilitators to recognize that they must be privy to the various methods that were available to reach their adult learners (McLean, 2006). McLean's research consisted of general analogies associated with personal experience versus information gathered through in-depth research or experiment, this method links directly into themes studied in Knowles (2012) theory of andragogy.

Rachal (2002), a professor of adult education, sought extensive evidence of how andragogy is present in teaching and where the methods were going in the future of adult learning within the classroom and workplace. Rachal's hypothesis was that while many studies and dissertations written on adult education, not many of them were based on clear evidence. Many of the andragogical-related studies conducted were on campuses

that taught to a mixture of both young and older students (Rachal, 2002). This observation started an empirical study that uncovered what Rachal (2002) believed is the seven criteria for true andragogy to take place within teaching. The seven steps include willing participants, adult status, collaboratively determined objectives, performance-based assessment of achievement, measuring satisfaction, suitable adult learning environment, and technical issues. The conclusion from the research was that many young students had little or no actual life experiences to bring to the discussion and the older students were held back by the formal teachings used in pedagogy-style settings (Rachal, 2002). Critical findings in this article were that Rachal (2002), using the experience as an adult educator and the research of a previous theorist, created what may be the beginning of implementing a structure to the application of the theory of andragogy.

The andragogy-style of teaching adults has been around for many years. However, this method was not practiced in most classroom or workplace settings where adults were involved in seeking education (Rachal, 2002). Rachal's research concluded that this could be due to the inability of each party to obtain a clear expectation of the specific measurement guidelines for grading purposes. Rachal (2002) stated that research on andragogy theory gave a clear picture into the need to create more structure and additional research on the benefits and drawbacks of andragogy within an all-adult classroom setting, attended by students who possess different learning styles (Rachal, 2002). The information within the seven criteria was used to establish methods of andragogy within creating workplace educational classes (Rachal, 2002).



Gibson (2011) and Hynes (2005) measured course competencies in organizations that were familiar with tracking known performance indicators and training methods created for adult learners. The purpose of their research was to expand on benefits that were realized with the use of standardized rubrics (Gibson, 2011). The grading rubrics were found to be acceptable by both the instructional specialists who were working under the lead professor and the students who were critiqued (Gibson, 2011; Hynes, 2005). Circumstantial reports from students cited an increased comfort level with being cognizant of the respective assessment guidelines (Gibson, 2011). Prompt feedback was a focal topic and was considered a useful method of training (Gibson, 2011; Hynes, 2005). This article was beneficial for obtaining foundational knowledge of organizational rubrics and the methods currently proven successful in the transfer of information to their employees. Transfer of knowledge and using methods that allow employees to share their understandings and how best to implement the material is parallel with the need to incorporate tenured employees in the transfer of knowledge to newer employees. Andragogy theory relies on participation from the group to help transfer new material in a way where it can be used immediately.

Sandlin, Wright, and Clark (2011) provided information on the differences in the teaching styles of andragogy and pedagogy. These differences gave insight that describes why adults learn differently than youth learners. Adult learners become engulfed in traditional learning styles that had an impact on their respective learning ability (Sandlin et al., 2011). A range of conceptualizations of adult identity, transformation, development, and learning was present in this public pedagogy literature, some of which

reinforced the same modernist notions of adult development that their simultaneous focus on culture dispels (Sandlin et al., 2011). The discussion of how adults learn differently than youth learners increases questions about what the role of adult educators in the development of critical transformational-learning materials is. This acknowledgment has given the increasing recognition of the importance of nonfacilitated learning happening in various locations of public pedagogy as well. The discussion focused on oneself and learned ambiguity, relationality, and not verbalizing the final answer; refusal ended in not being able to provide a definitive answer to this query (Sandlin et al., 2011).

Conklin (2012) focused on the importance of student experience by creating autonomy-supportive classrooms for millennial learners that accommodated the differences in adult learners versus youth learners. The purpose of Conklin's study was to review andragogy as the philosophy resident in the broad arena of experience-based learning. Conklin explained that more students, specifically millennial learners, were thriving in environments that use andragogy. Conklin's study revealed that educators need to reduce the amount of control they have in the classroom. Conklin's research concluded that adults learn more effectively when they were provided with an explanation as to why they need to learn the new material and how it will play a role in their career. Adults need to learn experientially and approach it from a problem-solving perspective. Researchers have stated that adults learn best when the topic is of immediate value (Conklin, 2012). Conklin's perspective gave insight that reduced the gap of unavailable literature on millennial learners in environments that used andragogy versus

other forms of learning and teaching styles affirming that how one is taught can directly relate to if they learn from the material and can implement the new concept.

Cohen and Billsberry (2014) and Kelly (2013) focused on understanding the facilitators' point of view demonstrating different approaches to deconstructing andragogy and putting it into practice. The purpose of their research was to provide insight into the concerns that educators have with implementing andragogy (Cohen & Billsberry, 2014; Kelly, 2013). One of the concerns with this approach to instructional design is that it assumes that the teacher knows best (Kelly, 2013). However, when teaching adults, the students come to the course with a foundation of knowledge that may surpass the teacher, creating a different environment than when teaching younger students (Kelly, 2013).

Cohen and Billsberry discovered that many instructors were hesitant to use rubrics because it simplified, deconstructed, and decontextualized the training material to the degree that was contrary to management's training objectives (Cohen & Billsberry, 2014). The researchers believed that skill-based business disciplines, such as accounting, might lend themselves well to the building-block approach (Cohen & Billsberry, 2014). The research concluded that a better strategy might discard the old notions of teaching management that was based on a deconstructed pedagogic approach and opted for a more holistic and transformational approach, which add benefits to understanding a different approach to deconstructing andragogy (Cohen & Billsberry, 2014). Although some of the ideas and explanations expressed have countering research on the topic, the concepts and observations overall appeared in line with much of the andragogy material researched.

Understanding what training models work best will allow corporations the ability to train employees more efficiently, therefore reducing cost and achieving the desired results.

### **Problem Statement**

Adult employees working in a large retail organization are trained by the blending of different models of curriculum to increase personal key performance indicator (KPI) metrics. A common problem in large retail organizations is poor employee performance in KPIs related to the training they receive (Salas, Tannenbaum, Kraiger, & Smith-Jentsch, 2012). The American Society for Training & Development (ASTD) estimated that U.S. businesses spend approximately \$15 billion per year on sales training (see Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016). The researchers also discovered that many sales employees do not find the training effective (Lassk, Ingram, Kraus, & Di Mascio, 2012). The general problem in major retail organizations is that leaders within their respective agencies educate their employees using multiple methods of training without regard to how adults learn (Arbaugh, Desai, Rau, & Sridhar, 2010).

The specific problem is that large retail organizations in South Carolina may be investing in training materials, concepts, and facilitation methods they do not have any impact on the KPI metrics, due to training practices not being appropriate for how adults learn best. The training methods currently used could be a potential problem for adult retail workers since their performance reviews are based on their success within the KPI metrics being expected to excel at based on the training. Being unsuccessful within the KPI metrics can also reduce morale and reduce the opportunity for advancement (Lassk, et al., 2012).

A failure to identify the specific needs of each learner has led to a lack of ROI and reduced drive within the workplace. Adult learners within retail organizations also were taking more ownership of their education and development needs (Beattie, 2006). Studies have shown that objectives were often set by trainers, rather than the learners leading to reduced acceptance of the material and implementation of that material (Spaulding, 2013; Topno, 2012; Unwin, & Wellington, 2013; Wang, 2010). This increase in adult retail employees wanting to learn has added to the need for retailers to express interest in how adult learn most effectively.

With the increasing need to see quick results, time to prepare for the learning, events were reduced (Topno, 2012). Learning and development teams were not given the ability to follow up and ensure that the transfer of data is present within the daily work activities related to attaining the known performance metrics that were measured (Golhar & Alex, 2017). By not spending the time following up to determine the transfer of data, the execution could be reduced, and implementation of the new material is often set aside, and previous methods continue to be used reducing the ROI and profitability.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this quasi-experimental design using one-group repeated measures and the dependent t test (paired samples) study was to determine variance on key participant performance metrics from androgynous training methods used in large retail organization in South Carolina. The KPI metrics were analyzed from a participant sample of 715 employees as generated from existing reports (secondary data) collected before and after training an andragogy style training was administered. These metrics were used

to determine the productivity of employees, including how the employees were reviewed for pay increases and promoted up within the organization. The dependent variables were sales, item locate and opening credit card applications. The independent variable is andragogy style training used to increase the dependent variables.

### **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

The related hypotheses and matching research questions were as follows:

RQ1: What changes in participant pre/post KPI sales metric occur when an andragogy training model within a large retail organization located in South Carolina is facilitated?

H<sub>0</sub>1: There is no significant difference in the participant pre/post KPI sales metric when an andragogy training model is facilitated within a large retail organization in South Carolina.

H<sub>a</sub>1: There is a significant difference in the participant pre/post KPI sales metric when an andragogy training model is facilitated within the large retail organization in South Carolina.

RQ2: What changes in participant KPI locate metric pre/post occur when an andragogy training model within a large retail organization located in South Carolina is facilitated?

H<sub>0</sub>2: There is no significant difference in the participant pre/post KPI locate metric when an andragogy training model is facilitated within the large retail organization in South Carolina.

H<sub>a2</sub>: There is a significant increase in the participant pre/post KPI locate metric when an andragogy training model is facilitated within the large retail organization in South Carolina.

RQ3: What changes in participant pre/post KPI opening credit application metric occurs when an andragogy training model within a large retail organization located in South Carolina is facilitated?

H<sub>03</sub>: There is no significant difference in the participant pre/post KPI opening credit application when an andragogy training model is facilitated within the large retail organization in South Carolina.

H<sub>a3</sub>: There is a significant difference in the participant pre/post KPI opening credit application when an andragogy training model is facilitated within the large retail organization in South Carolina.

### **Theoretical Foundation**

Knowles' (1984) theory of andragogy, Gardner's (1991) multiple intelligences, and Kolb's (1984) experiential learning comprise the theoretical framework of this study. Research by Knowles, Kolb, and Gardner (2006) provided diverse, but parallel understandings concerning the adult learning process how different settings were used and models supporting the theory that individuals learn differently, with a focus on how adult learn differently than child learners. Knowles' (2012) theory of andragogy was a common theme among the research regarding adult education. Knowles (2014) is one of the protuberant theorists in the adult learning field. Researching the concept that adults have different motivations to learn and methods that were more conducive for adult

learners to use the knowledge that they were learning through experience (Knowles, 2012). Knowles (1975) contended that educating adults requires different principles and techniques than those of children. Adults bring specific needs to organized learning for many reasons. According to Knowles et al. (2005), learning is a lifelong process, whereby experiences shape one's education.

Gardner's (2011) theory of multiple intelligences supplemented supporting evidence that individuals learn differently. Gardner (1991) developed the theory of multiple intelligences in 1983. Multiple intelligences theory brings productivity and flexibility to teaching and learning creating an environment for the learners to be more successful (McFarlane, 2011). In Gardner's theory of multiple intelligence, each person has intellect specific to different traits. Neuroscience researchers have provided increasing scientific support to Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences (McFarlane, 2011). Supporting adults learn differently and using training models created by how they learn best would be beneficial.

Kolb's (1984) intensive framework provided an experience-based model of learning that identified four recurrent stages: experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and doing. Kolb's theory showed relationships between learning styles and how adults learn and the benefits of educating using models and techniques that would cater to the learners. Kolb's approach to understanding learning has parallel topics, and examples were supporting that knowing how an individual learns could increase the ability to implement what is learned, supporting that adults learn differently than child learners.



The works of Knowles (1984), Gardner (1991) and Kolb (1984) was the inspiration to research further on how adults in large retail organizations were being trained; the models used and the return on interest based on the known performance indicators. As I researched current literature in training adults in large retail organizations, the gap discovered was in the analysis of the effectiveness of training material in retail, as it relates to models created based on how adults learn (see Cohen & Billsberry, 2014; Knowles, 2014).

### **Nature of the Study**

This study had a quantitative methodology with a quasi-experimental design using one-group repeated measures and the dependent t test (paired samples) to determine variance on key participant performance metrics from androgynous training methods. This process is found to be one of the most popular research methods; other options included closed-ended questionnaires, experiments, correlation, and regression-analysis designs (Collis & Hussey, 2009). The quantitative study coincides with numbers that signify an emphasis to quantification in data collection and analysis and, as such, is appropriate for the data needed to produce information needed as reflected in the gap of the literature (Collis & Hussey, 2009). A quantitative method allows the researcher to collect a significant amount of data and analyze a vast number of people or sources (Merriam, 2009). This study included an analysis of pre- and post populated metrics from 715 employees fitting the criteria for this methodology. Quantitative research was used to study trends in large groups in a precise way (Collis & Hussey, 2009). Therefore, the

measures were standardized according to Collis and Hussey (2009) and able to be recreated by other researchers seeking to expand on the topic.

A qualitative method is used to conduct in-depth interviews to analyze responses to open-ended questions. Conducting a qualitative approach would not be as effective as using the statistical data that is being generated by currently collected KPIs to support the hypothesis. According to Maxwell (1996), qualitative research focuses on individual experiences of an occurrence to clarify how one has been affected by that phenomenon. Within my study, there was a comparison of the three KPIs, the andragogy style training facilitated, and the results based on metric performance, to determine if there is a variance to the ROI based on when the employees were trained using andragogy-type training models.

A quasi-experimental design using one-group repeated measures and the dependent t test (paired samples) study was used to determine variance on key participant performance metrics from androgynous training methods. The use of a dependent t test was appropriate for this study to establish if there is a definite relationship between the type of training received and the metrics related to job performance. According to Jaffee, Strait, and Odgers, (2012) quasi-experimental methods that cover the creation of a comparison group were most often used when it is not possible to randomize individuals or groups to treatment and control groups.

### **Definitions**

The following definitions promote a shared understanding of some terms used throughout this study:

*Adult Learner:* Chronologically, adult learners were sectioned into three groups, seniors (65 and older), working-age adults (25-64 years old), and young adults (18-24 years old). Participants in this study were working-age adults, ages 18-65 (Wlodkowski, 2008).

*Andragogy:* The theory of adult learning that is anchored in the characteristics of adult learners; beginning with concepts researched by Cross, (1981).

*Pedagogy:* The term that identifies the techniques of teaching child learners. Teachers used models that were subject centered, teacher-oriented, building a foundation of knowledge (Forrest & Peterson, 2006; Knowles, 1980; Lee, 1998; Merriam, 2002; Ozuah, 2005).

*ROI-Return on Investment:* A performance measure used to evaluate the efficiency of an investment or to compare the effectiveness of some different investments (Phillips & Phillips, 2016).

### **Assumptions**

Assumptions in a study were variables that were somewhat out of the researcher's control; scope, however, if they were not present the study would be irrelevant (Student, 2016). As a quantitative research study, some assumptions were related to a statistical study. The research has data that can be analyzed, which means that there must be a large sample size to determine if the information is accurate. The employees identified for the study were chosen randomly based on which training courses they have attended or taken via computer-based training or conference call and their metrics before and after the training to determine if there is an increased or decreased. The possibility of bias toward

the metrics and training used to train the employees, the study or the content of the discussion(s) existed, creating the potential for influencing the data results. Andragogical assumptions include the six essential characteristics of the adult learners taking part in the training. The adult learners must assume responsibility for their learning decisions and be self-directing (Knowles, 2012). The adult learners need to be motivated to learn and possess the desire to learn (Knowles, 1975). The adult learners should be able to bring life experience to the classroom, possesses a readiness to learn, and show an orientation to learning (Knowles, 1975; Knowles et al., 2005).

### **Scope and Delimitations**

The scope of this study included an analysis of employees that have training that was created based on how adults learn and those who do not. The metrics of 715 large retail employees in South Carolina was analyzed to determine if an andragogy method of training had a significant ROI. This focus was chosen to determine if training employees of large retailers learn more effectively when taught using andragogy methods. Although research on training adults is plentiful, there were gaps in the research of retail metrics and adult training methods. Employee metrics were used to determine annual pay increases and job performance. Training does not always dictate if employee metrics will increase since increases can occur without training. Metrics can also decrease after training depending on the execution of the training as well as the employees' ability to perform the task corresponding to the task.

Delimitations were characteristics of the study that limits the scope and describes the limitations of the study (Student, 2016). The delimitations were within the control of

the researcher (Student, 2016). In this study, archival data was used for the analysis. My use of archival data ensured that there were enough data points to decide if using an andragogy training model increased the utilization and execution of the material resulting in improved metrics increasing the ROI for the large retail organization. The data sets were also generated without personal identifiers to protect the employees from being identified.

### **Limitations**

Limitations were possible weaknesses within the study; often these shortcomings were not under the control of the researcher (Student, 2016). The limitations of a study could impact the outcome. The boundaries of the study were obvious reasons for the reduced metrics, the cost of the training models outweigh the ROI, and metrics being influenced by other employees. There were also employees who were experienced and typically excel in the tracked metrics, without the need to have the training to be successful. External reasons that could impact the study outcome is natural disasters that could affect the metrics of the employees' due to loss of sales or clients that they would typically to serve.

### **Significance of the Study**

Employees with retail experience use training to build on their current knowledge. Inexperienced employees rely primarily on the training attained from their workplace, through onboarding, training materials and working aside from experienced colleagues. The median age of retail department store workers in the United States in 2013 was 36 years old ("United States Department of Labor," 2013). Knowles (2014) theory of

andragogy revealed that adults learn differently than youth learners. Using training methods based on Knowles philosophy could impact KPI metrics, have a more significant ROI and be profitable for retailers seeking to educate their employees and increase their ROI over the long-term (Knowles, 2014). The data may produce findings for leaders choosing training models within the retail industry to have more information on the importance of models geared to how adults learn, potentially increasing their ROI and avoiding the wasted expense of the ineffective training models that they currently use. Corporations using noneffective training models result in lower morale due to truncated employee buy-in to the program or training (Conklin, 2012).

Information gained from the outcome of this study has the potential to increase morale with employees who were appropriately trained within large retailers. Retail learning and development (L&D) leaders could select to use models created for adults, which could also reduce the number of training programs that were proven not as effective. Retailers using the best-suited training models could also impact social change by educating their employees in the KPIs needed to advance their career. Trained employees could apply for internal advancement and have the skills needed to earn more income and rise within and outside of their current organization.

### **Significance to Theory**

The researched material has been documented on the benefits of workplace training (Dean, 2014; Fornaciari & Lund; Gibson, 2011; Karim, Huda, & Khan, 2012). In the current literature, there is a notable gap in understanding the cost and effectiveness of training using methods geared to how adults learn more effectively (Cohen & Billsberry,

2014; Knowles, 2014). Being cognizant of the best training models that were available for large retailers within South Carolina could help management improve the quality and effectiveness of adult workplace training within their respective organizations. Training models tailored toward how adults learn could be one of the most efficient ways to train adults in a large corporation, creating an environment that is profitable as a result of improved employee performance (Knowles, 2014).

### **Significance to Practice**

L&D leaders were responsible for allocating funds to training models that were effective based on the KPI's focused on improving overall employee morale, retention, and performance. When training implementation occurs, but employee performance does not improve, the cause is often due to the training models that was used to deliver the training (Conklin, 2012). This situation not only results in a loss of corporate funds but also contributes to reduced morale within the company's environment (Conklin, 2012). The information derived from the data collected in this study may be significant in providing information on the training model currently used. This study specifically focused on a training model that was geared toward how adults learn most efficiently and the respective ROI of the selected training model. The information obtained could be useful in L&D departments within large retail organizations that make decisions regarding which training model will most likely yield the most significant ROI by improving employee performance.

### **Significance to Social Change**

Corporations using noneffective training models create lower morale due to truncated employee buy-in to the program or training (Conklin, 2012). Information gained from the outcome of this study has the potential to increase morale from employees who were adequately trained within large retailers. L&D leaders could select to use models created for adults, which could also reduce the number of training programs that were proven not as effective. Retailers using the best-suited training model could also impact social change by educating their employees in the KPI's needed to advance their careers. As indicated previously, trained employees could increase their opportunities for advancement within their respective organizations because of acquiring the requisite skills.

### **Summary and Transition**

The quantitative dependent t test study explores training materials, concepts, and the method of delivery of training adult employees within a large retail organization. Training used but not geared toward models is not increasing the KPI metrics of the retail employees affecting employee performance. Chapter 1 is the introduction to the study and includes the background of the study, helping to clarify the reason for conducting the study and the problem explored during the research study. Chapter 1 includes the framework that supports and gives clarity to the research and describes the significance of the study. Along with the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations related to this research study, a thorough review of the literature on Knowles theory of andragogy and



social impact of adult education in the workplace is analyzed in Chapter 2 along with the gap in the literature in training theories used for adult retail employees.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

The theory of andragogy and adult education in the workplace is a growing trend among large retail organizations (Cron, Marshall, Singh, Spiro, & Sujan, 2005). Chapter 2 will give evidence to the theory of how adults learn and the possible ramifications that could occur when adults were taught using pedagogy models. I developed a literature review by conducting an extensive search strategy using peer-reviewed journal articles and books from trustworthy sources. The topics reviewed include adult learning theories, education in the workplace, the ROI from training adults in the workplace, and social impacts that affect employees by reduced morale and loss advancement opportunities when education was given is not geared to how adults learn effectively.

The general problem in major retail organizations is that leaders within their respective agencies educate their employees using multiple methods of training without regard to how adults learn (Arbaugh et al., 2010). Adult employees working in a large retail organization were trained using a blend of different models of curriculum to increase personal KPIs (Lassk et al., 2012). U.S. businesses spend in upwards of \$15 billion per year on sales training according to the ASTD (see Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016). Their research has also proven that many sales employees do not find the training effective (Lassk et al., 2012).

The specific problem is that large retail organizations in South Carolina may be investing in training materials, concepts, and facilitation methods that may not impact the KPI metrics due to training practices not being appropriate for how adults learn best. The training methods currently used could be a potential problem for adult retail workers

since their performance reviews were based on their success within the KPI metrics and were expected to excel based on the training. Being unsuccessful within the KPI metrics can also reduce morale and reduce the opportunity for advancement.

The purpose of this quasi-experimental design using one-group repeated measures and the dependent t test (paired samples) study was to determine variance on key participant performance metrics from androgynous training methods used in large retail organization in South Carolina. The KPI metrics were analyzed from a participant sample of 715 employees as generated from existing reports (secondary data) collected before and after training an andragogy style training was administered. These metrics were used to determine the productivity of employees, including how the employees were considered for pay increases and promoted up within the organization. The dependent variables were sales, item locate and opening credit card applications. The independent variable is the andragogy training model.

### **Literature Search Strategy**

The search strategies used throughout the search process included keyword searches changed based on adult education practices, learning in the workplace, and the reason why education to employees is critical to the growth and morale of the workplace. The search strategy used included selecting appropriate databases and sources, using keyword searches, studying the reference list of sources to find relevant sources, and selecting, assessing, and summarizing the source. The literature search included dissertations, journals, and the Walden University Library to examine dissertations, full-text, and peer-reviewed articles. Keyword searches were created in Google Scholar to

receive emails and alerts on newly published articles. The focus, in the last 5 years of literature in scholarly and electronic databases, were reviewed for historical and contemporary peer-reviewed sources. These databases included Academic Search Premier, Business Source Complete, Google Scholar, ProQuest Central, PsycARTICLES, PsycINFO, SAGE Premier, and SAGE Research Methods Online.

A historical framework regarding relevant literature on how adults learn most effectively provided research on ROI. The search strategy includes historical and current searches of terms on topics such as *achievement, achievement goals, adult education, adult learning, adult learners, assessment, andragogy methodology, adult learners preference, andragogy principles, and andragogy classroom practice, corporate trainers collaborative learning, dependent t test, educational measurements, educational psychology, educational research, educational theories, facilitating adult learning, higher education, KPIs, learning development, learners competence, learners feedback, learners perception learning styles, lifelong learners, lifelong learning Malcolm Knowles, mentor, mentoring, metrics, motivation, motivational theories, nontraditional students, pedagogy, pedagogical practice, professional development, retail training, self-concept, self-determination, self-determination theory, self-directed learning, self-direction, self-esteem, self-regulation, social change, student satisfaction, teacher perceptions, teaching strategies, teaching styles, training types, and workplace education.*

### **Theoretical Foundation**

Knowles' (1984) theory of andragogy, Gardner's (1991) theory of multiple intelligences, and Kolb's (1984) theory of experiential learning comprise the theoretical

framework of this study. There is a significant amount of tested information on education theory, pedagogy (how children learn) versus andragogy (how adults learn), training in the workplace, and a variety of training models. Knowles' theory of andragogy was a common theme among the articles on adult education. As I researched current literature in training in the major retail organizations, the gap discovered was in the analysis of the effectiveness of training material within the retail industry as it relates to models created based on andragogy (Cohen & Billsberry, 2014; Knowles, 2014). The research verified that there were limited empirical instruments existing to measure andragogical theories. Knowles's (1970) personal HRD inventory, Suanmali's (1981) andragogy in practice questionnaire, Christian's (1982) 75 student orientation questionnaire, Conti's (1978) principles of adult learning scales, and Hadley's (1975) educational orientation questionnaire were instruments that specialize in andragogical paradigms, however these focused on the viewpoint of the educator rather than the adult learners.

Knowles (2014) theory of andragogy demonstrated that adult learners use their previous foundation of knowledge to relate to the material that is taught. Adult learners were responsible for their decisions and had self-concept (Knowles, 2014). Adults come into the educational activity with a better understanding of the topics and a different quality of experience than their youth's counterparts (Knowles, 2012). Adults were equipped to learn the material needed to then subsequently apply it accordingly as a coping mechanism with their real-life situations (Knowles 2014). In contrast to children's and youths' subject-centered orientation to learning primarily in organizing schools, adults were life-centered, task- or problem-centered in their orientation to learning

(Knowles, 2014). While adults were responsive to external motivators in their life such as career advancement, career change, increased salaries, the most compelling was internal motivators including the yearning for improved job satisfaction, building self-confidence, and quality of life (Knowles 1990, p. 57-63). As large retailers were selecting the training materials and platforms for education the employees, understanding how adults learn and creating programs to train using those methods were likely to receive a greater return on interest and the employees more apt to use the training received.

## **Literature Review**

### **Adult Learning Theories**

There is not one single theory of learning that can be applied to all adults. As trainers within organizations seek methods and models that best fit their audience, the question becomes what method or model will best educate and result in an adequate ROI. My search through decades of research yielded a variety of models, principles, theories, and explanations that were identified with the adult learners. Adult educators that were familiar with this knowledge base were more efficient (Knowles, 2014). This literature review gives detail about three key theories used in training models, Knowles' theory of andragogy, Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, and Kolb's theory of experiential learning and their implications for practice. This review also highlights the responsibility of the adult learners and the adult educator, and lastly, describes how the ROI impacts social change among adult employees within large retail organizations.

**Andragogy.** Andragogy is the theory established by Knowles that consists of helping adults learn more successfully (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005; Paraskevas & Wickens, 2003). Knowles' (2012) concept of andragogy is founded on how adults learn. Knowles' theory of andragogy foundation was created based on two fundamental characteristics. The first is how adults approach learning. Knowles' research proved that adult learners preferred being an active part of the learning process. Establishing that the role of the adult educator needs to be more of an active facilitator leading the adult learners through the contact versus only presenting the material in a written or oral format (Knowles, 2012). Adults learn by using parallels from their foundation of knowledge, built upon previous education and practical experience (Knowles et al., 2005). Understanding the principles of andragogy could play a role in the process of how training models were chosen and how they were implemented into an organization's training practices. Adult learners want to be part of the process of learning and understand how the information will benefit them in real life situations (Knowles et al., 2005; Paraskevas & Wickens, 2003).

Knowles' developed five primary principles of andragogy. The first principle is self-concept (Knowles et al., 2005). As the learners mature their self-concept changes from being a dependent learner to a self-directed learner (Knowles, 2012). Knowles' second principle is an experience; experience occurs as children grow into adults and they have different roles and responsibilities (Knowles et al., 2005). Adult learners have a foundation built on their experience with life situations and interactions. Those life lessons and experiences were used to merge their new and older skills. The skills adults

gain come from careers choices, new roles in a new or existing career, and social situations. Adult learners often were motivated to increase their knowledge on a topic that is important to them from a career or social stance (Knowles, 1984).

Readiness to learn is Knowles (1980) third principle of andragogy. The motivation to learn is internal in most adults, according to Knowles. Adults learners were more willing to seek education as they find that they may be required to know more to fulfill their ever-increasing roles in both the social and career constructs (Knowles, 1975). Researchers have proven that adults exhibit a willingness to acquire information when their knowledge foundation does not sufficiently prepare them for the more complex roles that they were undertaking (Brookfield, 1986; Davenport & Davenport, 1985; Knowles, 1984; Lee, 1998). The literature suggested that other contributors to adult's willingness to learn in a social context include life-cycle events, such as the birth of a child or the death of a family member or a friend (Knowles, 1984). In this edition, adults have been incentivized to learn new skills due to career changes or other significant life events such as a promotion or loss of job, children, marriage, divorce, and evolving tasks that occur during diverse stages of development (Havighurst & Glasser, 1972, as cited in Knowles et al., 1998; Knowles, 1984). Merriam (2002) stated that readiness to be taught occurs at the moment that the learners decide that it is crucial to gain the information that is needed to accomplish their desired goal. Achievement of their respective role leads to contentment and heightened self-effectiveness, whereas disappointment and failure can lead to discontent, social dissatisfaction, and reduced self-effectiveness (Havighurst & Glasser, 1972). Knowles (1984) stated that adults that have a motivation to learn were



more likely to seek out the material they need to be successful in a task. This motivation stems from the desire to improve their current knowledge base to be more equipped to achieve their goals. When adults were not motivated, or the training does not align with how adults learn could result in lower morale and less likelihood of meeting or exceeding the KPI metrics needed to improve their performance.

Knowles' (2012) fourth principle is an orientation to learning. As an adult, the learner needs additional information to function within their respective positions (Knowles, 2014). As a result, they will be inclined to seek out the requisite knowledge or skills needed to fill those roles adequately (Knowles, 2012). As a student matures, their learning alignment changes from subject centered to problem centered (Davenport & Davenport, 1985). This problem centered approach leads the learner to want to know what needs to be learned as well as how the material is given will be used in real time situations. The adult learner is evolved; after years of learning topics and life lessons, the learner is currently seeking how they will solve a problem or need that is now present (Sinnott, 1994). Faced with situations originating from developmental tasks, life events, and lifecycle transitions, adults pursue to learn the ability or material needed for the execution of the task (Sinnott, 1994; Tennant & Pogson, 1995). As the youth matures, their experience leads them to enhance problem-solving abilities suggesting using a problem-oriented curriculum as a replacement for a subject-oriented will lead to higher retention of the material being taught which will lead to a higher execution rate (Tennant & Pogson, 1995). By using training that created for the needs of the adult learner,

organizations could find that their employees can achieve more and have a greater ROI on the training that is facilitated.

The fifth and final principle of andragogy is the motivation to learn (Knowles, 2014). Motivation gives the learners a purpose for learning the material (Knowles, 2014). This motivation could be a driving force for an adult learner in the retail organization to seek the material at a higher level and be more inclined to implement the knowledge that they gained. The ability to use the material and see how it works at the moment is a key part into why adults have the motivation to learn. The motivation for an adult learner includes a request by the organization they were working to get a new position in their current career or one they were seeking to attain (Knowles, 2012). Unlike a young learner, where the material to build on their knowledge foundation is given without them being provided with the supporting rationale as to how it will be used explicitly in their subsequent life experiences. Adults were experiencing living on a different level and seek to obtain the reasons why and how the training will be implemented in their daily routines (Knowles, 1975).

Henschke (2011) created a global research foundation for andragogy. The examination of the literature led to the recurring themes: (a) the evolution of the term andragogy; (b) historical events that shaped the concept; and (c) the comparisons of American and European understanding of how children and adults learn (Henschke, 2011). American concepts have become widespread as the application of andragogy within real-world settings started to emerge in more industries (Henschke, 2011). Since the 1990s, andragogy has had two primary sides: those who have confidence in the

methods and models and were establishing the methods as a scientific discipline, and those who think that andragogy lacks significant aspects of how the learning material is delivered and contemplate if the ROI worth the anxiety experienced while adapting to the change in materials and training environments (Henschke, 2011). This separation in if andragogy styles influence learning is still a topic of discovery, although research has given insight into how adults process information.

Adult employees bring life-long experiences that they can share with their peers to help them integrate the training material as it is discussed (Knowles et al., 2005). This practice also helps to inspire conversation and follow-up questions from the adult learners. Knowles (2014) also determined that adult learners tend to center the material on those problems and develop possible solutions. Retail organizations that have embraced andragogy models have found that this method of learning is preferred, and the employees were eager to learn about topics that will have direct significance to their aspirations such as career and personal goals (Knowles, Holton, III, & Swanson, 2014). When adult learners collaborate, the material learned can be rendered more beneficial versus receiving the info via PowerPoint, or a lecture on the probable situations or new initiatives that they could put into practice (Silén & Uhlin, 2008; Zepke & Leach, 2002). Listening to employees' anecdotes as to how they have previously responded to the various situations can often provide the opportunity to describe how those experiences can be incorporated into the training regimen. Also, an adult learner receives insight into how current practices were being implemented and how the new material will add value.

**Multiple Intelligence.** A different approach to adult education in the workplace includes learning models based on Howard Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligence. Gardner (1991) researched how youth and adult learners learn more effectively when taught to their specific type of intelligence. Gardner suggested that learners fit within one or more of the 9 intelligences and can be more successful if the learner embraces their specific learning styles and chooses careers that were in tune with his or her natural intelligence. The 9 types of intelligence that Gardner theory includes: Existential intelligence, Logical-mathematical intelligence, Spatial intelligence, Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, Linguistic intelligence, Musical intelligence, Interpersonal Intelligence, Naturalistic intelligence, Intrapersonal intelligence (Gardner, 2011).

There have been many theorists with an educational focus that have incorporated Gardner's hypothesis and have had encouraging results from using the separation of intelligence to create models to fit the needs of the learner. The studies have included pre-school, higher vocational, and adult educations. North American educators have incorporated learning models that were structured around Gardner's intelligence concept (Gardner, 1989). To understand the differences between Gardner's multiple intelligence, a brief description of each of the nine intelligence is summarized below.

**Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence.** When a person solves the situation by using their body or parts of their body is suggested to have Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence (Gardner, 2011). This type of learner uses their mental ability to coordinate their physical movements. Characteristics of this kind of a learner include individuals with an abundance of physical energy and were naturally athletic. This type of learner is

appreciative of outdoor environments activities and tends to enjoy keeping their body in motion (Gardner, 1989). Explicitly engaging themselves in exhilarating experiences and sports-related activities or working with their hands. This classification of the learner is coordinated with exceptional motor skills and learns best by “doing” (Gardner, 1999).

Within this classification, the adult learner will get more out of training that includes body movement and consistent interaction. The facilitator using an andragogy model would choose to create sections where the learner can get up and move around while engaged in various activities throughout the session. That style of training will help prolong their overall attention span. This type of adult learner would prosper in role play activities where they can demonstrate their knowledge and work through actual scenarios. In a larger retail environment, there is a significant amount of training that takes place on the sales floor while interacting with their respective clients. By training on the floor and being part of the training will improve the connection between the material and implementing the material within their role (Gardner, 1999).

**Existential Intelligence.** Having the natural ability to solve situations within religion or spiritual references or beliefs is known as having existential intelligence. Gardner (2011) added existential intelligence after researchers within the field inquired about learners that understand topics were related to beliefs and faith. Existential intelligence characteristics include having a high appreciation of reading philosophical writings and preaching the word of biblical scriptures. Existential intelligence learners thrive when they have an opportunity to connect with others that share the same belief systems. They connect well with others and like to share their knowledge with others.

These traits work well when training others and working to help others learn material that can be used in daily routines.

Existential intelligence adult learners align with Knowles (2014) theory of how adults learn most effectively. They were more likely to retain and be part of the session when they can share their knowledge, ideas, and experiences with others. They were eager to learn and can manage and evaluate their learning and performance. There is a downside of training an adult with existential intelligence; they may find it challenging to admit their faults, coaching and giving fast feedback when they were wrong could be stimulating and disturb the training environment. This trait could reduce their ability to be coached and learn from behaviors that were conducive to increasing the various performance metrics within their respective organizations. Overall, this learner will be an active part of the training and could help others learn the reasons why the training is needed and how to incorporate the material into the daily task.

**Interpersonal Intelligence.** Gardner (2011) described interpersonal intelligence as a learner who works naturally with others and prospers in social circumstances. Learners with Interpersonal intelligence have the aptitude to comprehend other's objectives, inspirations, and goals. Interpersonal intelligence traits include being vociferous and appreciate activities that involve having large groups of friends around them, meeting new people, social engagements, teaching, and participating in team sports (Gardner, 1991). Characteristics include the capability to recognize the needs of others. Be accommodating in groups, and empathic to situations around them. Those with

interpersonal intelligence were defined to be avid readers yet learn more efficiently through collaboration and discussion (Gardner, 1993).

A trainer who uses andragogy methods within their style of teaching found that adult learners with interpersonal intelligence would appreciate the group setting that includes interaction with one another. Gardner (1991) stated that adults that have interpersonal intelligence communicate with ease. They flourish in group settings where they can be a part of collaborating and working together with others to achieve a goal.

**Intrapersonal Intelligence.** Howard Gardner's theory of intrapersonal intelligence indicates that learners understand oneself. Intrapersonal intelligence characteristics include being comfortable with who they were and how they interact with others. Although comfortable with themselves and others they were often introverted. This type of learners would prefer independent learning activities. Spending time thinking through situations, reflecting and working alone was why many categorized as intelligence as a perfectionist and being, often philosophical. Gardner (1991) stated they were the most self-aware out of the other eight intelligence types. Intrapersonal intelligence is often independent learners and can find it challenging to work in larger groups; they also prefer independent projects or task (Gardner, 2011). Having a preference for independent tasks could prove to be difficult for the learner to participate in large groups where they need to be the center of attention or work with many learners at once.

Adult learners that were categorized to have intrapersonal intelligence would likely find training in an andragogy setting to be difficult. However, once comfortable,

the learner may see the benefits of learning from others. Participation may take a period for them to adjust, thus reducing their organization's ROI and possibly reduce their ability to meet their respective performance goals.

**Linguistic Intelligence.** Gardner and Hatch (1989) stated that individuals who understand the verbal and written language effortlessly were described as possessing linguistic intelligence. Gardner (2011) stated that language learners have an instinctive ability to explain and teach others. Characteristics of linguistic intelligence include a gratification in activities that use speech and words. They easily connect to material where writing, word games or quotes were used. They have a good memory for the written word and pick up on foreign languages, quotes, and famous sayings easily. In classroom settings, they were the learners that were note taking, reading the material thoroughly and listening to lectures intently. They were known for noticing mistakes in grammar and speaking (Gardner & Hatch, 1989).

Adult learners who have linguistic intelligence tend to learn best by visual learning, and like reading the material, since they also have excellent listening skills, they often will take notes and review the material in written form (Gardner, 2011). These natural abilities allow for that learner to connect with other adult learners efficiently and comprehend dialogue which would be an advantage in the classroom. Within a classroom that is using andragogy, this learner would be able to reflect on their knowledge to articulate what they know and support the material to help the learner see the relevance and need for the changes and how to implement them in their daily activities (Gardner & Hatch, 1989).



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**Logical-mathematical intelligence.** Howard Gardner (2011) stated that learners who possess logical-mathematical intelligence approach each situation by analyzing situations using systematic approaches. Gardner's description of a student with logical-mathematical intelligence includes the ability to problem solves logically, the capacity to carry out operations scientifically while using mathematical methods. Those with logical-mathematical intelligence characteristically were abstract thinkers, seeking for cogent explanations for how things work (Gardner, 1991).

Adult learners that have logical-mathematical intelligence pursue the most rational way to process information. They prefer to seek logical explanations and to think for answers "outside the box" to attain needed information for the situation they were resolving (Gardner, 1991). The logical-mathematical learner prefers to figure out what would be the method, and how it would be best implemented. This trait tends to work well for an andragogy style learning environment. They desire to see the results and will make changes to get the desired outcome. Helping others see their path to the answer

would be systematic and in a chronologic approach to learning and implementing the material.

**Musical intelligence.** Adult learners who have musical intelligence have the natural aptitude to classify and compose music (Gardner, 1999). These learners tend to incorporate music into their daily lives by humming, tapping rhythms and singing. Those with musical intelligence take pleasure in different sounds and were known to have excellent hearing. They naturally hear pitches, and tempos with ease and have the desire and skill to perform and quickly can determine when a note is off-key (Gardner, 1999). They were often outgoing, enjoys group activities and will find ways to bring music into their work.

Musical intelligence and linguistic intelligence were similar in characteristics and often were considered analogous intelligence. The adult learner with musical intelligence share familiar personality traits comparable to the adult learner with linguistic intelligence, and likely would result in similar results in an andragogy setting. Musical intelligence employees communicate and adapt well to most situations (Gardner, 2011).

**Naturalist intelligence.** Gardner (1991) stated that adult learners with naturalist intelligence tend to be more aware of the environment. They were more likely to notice changes in their surroundings due to their highly developed sensory awareness. Adult learners with naturalist intelligence often connect with animals and appreciate collecting items such as rocks, minerals, shrubberies, florets, shells, plumes, and listening to melodies that were related to nature.

An adult learner with naturalist intelligence naturally notice changes in their surroundings. They have highly developed sensory perception make connections with vegetation and animal life. Adult learners with naturalist intelligence often appreciate listening to music that is related to nature, collecting items such as fossils, rocks, minerals, leaves, flowers, shells, and feathers.

**Spatial intelligence.** Adults with Spatial intelligence have the aptitude to remember places and pictures. They can recognize and use the patterns of varied spaces to their advantage. They were artistic and inventive. Learners with spatial intelligence possess advanced skills in understanding directions and maps. They like to draw and learn best when visual aids were a part of the class resources. Adult learners with visual intelligence like to see the material and correlate links to what they know and what they were learning. Naturally, they were aware of their environments and had their ability to memorize their surrounding which helps in recalling information for future use (Gardner, 1999). Having spatial intelligence allows the adult learner to retain and execute training adapted to specific metrics and implement the material to be successful on the sales floor.

**Conclusion.** Gardner's (2006) work on Multiple Intelligence Theory, claims that each person has a unique set of basic intelligence indicated that the nine types of intelligence types irregularly function separately. As the intelligence categories overlap, giving depth to their personality and whom they were naturally suited to become. Adult learners that embrace their natural intelligence can choose methods of learning models to come easily for them and expand their base of knowledge. Being inclined to discover their natural intelligence, may determine what methods of learning work best for them as

well as what careers would be best suited (Gardner, 2006). Adult learners that take the time to classify how they learn best will leverage their natural intelligence to learn more efficiently. In a work environment that uses andragogy methods, there would be benefits to understanding the intelligence of their employees and incorporating methods best suited to them. There were possible disadvantages of using Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligence instead of Knowles theory of andragogy, with each intelligence learning differently it could lead to the L&D department having to create multiple classes to accommodate the diverse learners. Large corporations would need to determine each employees' intelligence type and then incorporate andragogy style classes that were best suited to that intelligence. This method of training could be an expensive and laborious activity depending on corporation size and a number of departments. Although characteristically specific traits were more appropriate for diverse learners, it does not mean that numerous types of learners would not have the ability to succeed in the same occupation. Giving Gardener's multiple intelligence an opportunity to be a worthy guide to training within industries and departments to streamline models within departments or when training is specialized for a group of adult learners.

### **Kolb-Experiential Learning**

Kolb's theory of learning is based on two philosophies that coincide with the student: a four-stage cycle of learning and four distinct styles of learning. Kolb's theory supports Knowles' andragogy learning as a process where knowledge is created through life experiences (Kolb, 1984, p. 41). Kolb's learning styles were segregated based on

what method they decide to use to complete the learning task which often is the learner's preferred way to process and apply the information.

**Experimental Learning.** Alice Y. Kolb and David A. Kolb (2005a) used a quantitative method to support their findings that experiential learning used in higher education can improve the learning of the adult learner. In Kolb and Kolb's article, learning styles and learning spaces: Enhancing experiential learning in higher education, they concluded that students all go through stages of learning:

**Stage I - Concrete Experience – Feeling - (CE).** Kolb (2014) stated that this learner is typically sensitive to the feelings of others and will take a creative approach to solve situations versus a methodical approach. This type of learner uses their foundation of knowledge and their background to take a creative approach to the situation and incorporate new material. In the concrete experience stage the adult learner implements the task then scrutinizes the result of the action used to complete the task (Kolb, 2014).

**Stage II - Reflective Observation – Watching - (RO).** Kolb and Kolb (2005b) stated that reflective observation occurs when the adult learner reflects on the connection and information gained from adding memories while increasing and developing their current skill sets. While in the reflective observation stage, the adult learner comprehends the differences and similarities within the task. This correlation allows the adult learner to relate to the situation, allowing for new processes to be created. The learner in this stage will be fascinated by others by observing and make decisions based on these observations along with the information that was learned from their past experiences (Kolb & Kolb, 2009).

**Stage III - Abstract Conceptualization – Thinking- (AC).** Kolb and Kolb (2009) stated that in the abstract conceptualization stage the learner prefers thinking about plausible resolutions using newly founded ideas and perceptions contrasted with using similar practices to make the decision. Abstract conceptualization occurs when the adult learner uses reflection to identify with events to create a new idea or to modify an existing concept. This process can result in both helpful and antagonistic outcomes. Abstract conceptualize allows for the adult learner to find parallels with what they know and what they were learning, although the thought process to get there well thought out but not following the norms of connecting new material with material that has been learned previously.

**Stage IV - Active Experimentation – Doing - (AE).** Kolb (2014) stated that Active Experimentation occurs when the adult learner demonstrates a process of interpretation to the application of learning. This simplification allows the learner to use their foundation of knowledge and create a better way to incorporate the new material into the task. Adult learners that were within the active experimentation stage were “hands on” and were likely to take more risk in getting the goal attained (Kolb, 1984). There is more confidence that they will succeed with that task of putting theories and concepts into place prior in-depth planning or reflecting. Adult learners within this stage will react first and after determining if there is a more efficient method to achieve the same or better results.

## **Learning Styles**

Kolb (1984) stated that there were cycles of learning that adult learners should incorporate when seeking effective methods of learning. The styles of Kolb's learning theory are Diverging (CE/RO), Assimilating (AC/RO), Converging (AC/AE), and Accommodating (CE/AE). These learning styles were created by combining two learning cycles. Kolb (1984) stated that styles were set up to understand and categorized how learners could learn most successfully and gain knowledge from experience. Below lists the learning style, with a brief explanation of the learning conditions that would best suit that category of learner.

**Diverging (feeling and watching- CE/RO).** Diverging is the first learning style discussed in Kolb's theory. Kolb (2014) stated it is common in the diverging style for the adult learner to prefer to observe others and gather information to use to solve situations. They are more likely to observe and decide what to do first versus doing and changing methods based on the outcome. Adult learners with a diverging learning style learn best in classroom environments that include brainstorming activities or where a think tank is part of the learning environment. They have a natural interest in others and prefer to work with large groups. Those with a diverging learning style tend to be able to listen intently with an open mind and have a desire for fine art and have an expressive personality (Kolb, 2014).

**Assimilating (watching and thinking - AC/RO).** Assimilating is the second of Kolb's learning styles. Assimilators prefer direct explanations; they are observant of philosophies and concepts and prefer direct explanations rather than a judicious

opportunity. Adult learners within the assimilating learning style use logic are more in tuned a plausible proposition rather than tactics that are based on practical value (Kolb, 2012). Learners who are successful in assimilating learning styles favor investigating systematic models, reading, having time to think concepts through thoroughly. They enjoy attending and giving lectures in most learning environments. This learner excels at compiling information taking information from multiple sources and creating one document or learning tool.

**Converging (doing and thinking - AC/AE).** Adult learners with a converging learning style can solve problems and make decisions by searching for solutions to questions and challenges. This classification of the learner is also more drawn to technical tasks and challenges rather than being concerned with relational aspects. They also strive to find practical uses for their concepts and philosophies. Kolb (2014) stated that adult learners with a converging learning style prefer an environment where they can experiment with real-life scenarios. Converging learners like methodological tasks, and gravitate to learners who are also practical problem solvers.

**Accommodating (doing and feeling - CE/AE).** Kolb (2012) stated that the Accommodating learning style is becoming prevalent among learning styles. Accommodating learners that are captivated by new situations and experiences. Learners with accommodating learning style approach situations using their predisposition on the matter, instead of completing a logical analysis. Accommodating learners will also seek out others for information on the topic. They are “hands-on” and are inclined to take a



sensible and practical approach to activities leveraging the investigation of others (Kolb, 2012).

**Conclusion.** Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences and Kolb's theory of experiential learning have variables that could be incorporated into a large organization. The size of the organization and cost to implement multiple training programs could outweigh the benefits of incorporating that theories into the training programs based on the many different types of learners (Kolb, 2012). Adults learn for the desired outcome, and typically prefer to use the material instantly. Trainers within large retail organizations want to educate their employees via a method that will enable them to learn the material and can apply it instantaneously. When creating new training programs, incorporating aspects of Gardner's multiple intelligence or Kolb's learning style could benefit the organization education in the workplace

Fornaciari and Dean (2013) stated that leadership educators have moved from traditional pedagogy models, instructor-centered syllabi for andragogy community-oriented syllabi. Using the syllabus for a boundary-crafting object used by both the instructor and employee to create a path the is sensible (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). An employee must be mature and experienced enough in the process of learning to make the right decisions. Also, not every employee will readily engage in the learning process. The trainer must perform due diligence with researching their intended audience and tailor the learning outcomes accordingly. Trust and mutual respect are critical components of andrological syllabus design. Bishop (2006) and Singham (2005) stated

that although trainers can force employees to do little beyond mere compliance which, they can counter by fostering an environment that is conducive to learning.

Classroom learning is just one of many learning models in existence. Other types of learning Also include e-learning, workplace-based learning, distance education and development initiatives such as mentoring, coaching, buddying shadowing and communities of practice. Also, research has revealed that learning is also process-based, collaborative, facilitated and often problem-oriented. Prescott (2014) researched the use of Facebook and social media type platforms that were used to teach employees within their respective organizations; the research showed that faculty/educators do not typically use Facebook and social media type platforms for teaching purposes. Further research is needed to gain an understanding of how social media could be leveraged as a forum to educate adult learners. Although the concept is still relatively new, in recent years, more organizations have been using Facebook as a teaching and informational platform within their organizations. For instance, Sears uses Pebble, and Belk uses Yammer to create forums where trainers and managers can use to build learning platforms. Social media is also used as a voice for employees that are familiar with this type of communication. The development of an online persona connected with their professional work is viewed as essential for academics (Barbour & Marshall, 2012). Prescott's (2014) study has given substantial research and information to reduce the gap in using social networking sites (SNS) as a learning tool. As more organizations embrace the digital age, more trainers need to encourage and support the use of technology and models that will enhance the learning experience of their adult employees.

## **Responsibility of the Adult Educator**

Knowles theory of andragogy indicates that adults learn differently than child learners. As discussed previously, self-concept, personal experience, the readiness to learn, orientation to learning, and motivation to learn to make up the five primary principles. Knowles (1991) stated that when adults are trained in an environment that uses their knowledge and have them be a part of the training and learning process that the material is accepted and executed more frequently than when training is not disrupted in a method best suited for adults. This means of empowering and layering new behaviors could provide corporate educators with a higher probability that their respective training material is well received.

Knowles' (2012) results indicated that adult learners had less resistance to the open forum type of training methodology. Other benefits include providing the corporate educator the discretion to facilitate versus the traditional lecture format, which could facilitate having a more interactive and receptive group of learners. The concept of creating a learning environment that is open for discussion allows for more pertinent information to become part of the learning; this is beneficial to larger audiences with different levels of experience. Although there have been studies of adult learner resistance with the various styles of training methods, trainers have usually been able to overcome this barrier by introducing their respective training style within smaller groups of adult learners to obtain collaboration from the entire group vice a select few. However, large corporations who are contemplating adopting this method will need to factor in the

additional time that it will take to accommodate all their employees in smaller, more intimate settings.

Those who have embraced the open forum as a method of delivery have had better results measured by a higher level of learner compliance with the material that was presented as compared to the traditional delivery method. Corporations have been training their employees using a vast number of different types of training methods. Many are appropriate to achieve the return that is expected. However, many training models are used or not considered that would be better suited for morale, execution and buy in. Adult learners seek methods that give them the opportunity to be a part of the training environment by discussion and having the links between what they are learning and how it will benefit them at work. The theory of andragogy allows adult learners an opportunity to practice what they know, and support others to grasp the information more efficiently in a real-life setting (Garriott et al., 2013).

Adult educators using the andragogy style have different roles in the classroom than when using pedagogical methods (Knowles, 1975; Knowles et al., 2005). The largest differentiation between the two constructs about andragogy is that the teacher is playing a constructive role in helping guide the learners to where they need to be doing instead of merely giving the adult learner the information from their knowledge or from the standard text for that topic. With the andragogical teaching construct, the educator provides more support in the early stages of the course. The more classes the adult learner attends, the more accustomed they become to communicating with their peers about embellishing on their experience. This collaboration creates an environment where the

adult learner is in a better position to seek out the material needed to expand their current base and become more self-sufficient (Knowles et al., 2005) According to Knowles (1973):

The andragogical teacher (facilitator, consultant, change agent) prepares in advance a set of procedures for involving the learners (and other relevant parties) in a process involving these elements: (a) establishing a climate conducive to learning; (b) creating a mechanism for mutual planning; (c) diagnosing the needs for learning; (d) formulating program objectives (which is content) that will satisfy these needs; (e) designing a pattern of learning experiences; (f) conducting these learning experiences with suitable techniques and materials; and (g) evaluating the learning outcomes and diagnosing learning needs. (p. 102)

Within the context of stakeholder philosophy, there are different approaches toward doing the right thing, (e.g., mapping the responsibility, orientations of leaders, and discussing the concepts of responsible leadership). Pless, Maak, and Waldman (2012) argued that leadership should be a social-relational and ethical phenomenon that occurs within the interactions between leaders and a larger group of followers, both inside and outside the organization.

Knowles stated that in a constructive approach, adult educators are facilitators/trainers and co-learners. Within the classroom, environment trainers have the benefit of learning from their employees. Adult employees have developed specific learning preferences based on their various life experiences. If the corporate trainer can become cognizant of their employees' individual learning preferences, it can be leveraged toward

tailoring the respective training material to achieve a higher level of learning. Although some trainers may still revert to a more traditional pedagogical approach to teaching and learning – they will still need to understand and respect their employee’s learning styles. By gradually introducing the respective teaching concepts in small portions, adult learners will be in a better position to adapt accordingly (Knowles, 2012).

**Responsibility of the adult learner.** As an adult learner, some of their learning criteria differ from child learners. Adult learners are cognizant of the reason that they are attending class and approach the material differently. Adult learners are motivated and either seeking to increase their knowledge base by in a more formal, academic setting by going back to school or are attaining skills from their respective workplace. As a child becomes an adult, the role of the student and the educator changes (Knowles, 2005). Children go to school to learn the foundation of what their knowledge becomes. Adults, on the other hand, build on that foundation to expand their level of comprehension. Adult learners also benefit from the expertise of their peers to expand their knowledge within them in particular areas of interest. (Brockett & Hiemstra, 1991; Canipe, 2001; Guglielmino, 1977; Knowles, 1975; Knowles, 1991; Knowles et al., 2005; Loyens, 2008; Silén & Uhlin, 2008; Wilcox, 1996; Zepke & Leach, 2002).

Knowles (2012) stated adult learners show an interest in learning when they already possess a level of knowledge of the subject or topic. Adults create parallels between the material and their personal and professional experiences. This method of building on their current knowledge helps the adult learner’s level of comprehension and allows them to expand on the subject matter that is being taught. Adults learn more

efficiently when they are part of the learning process. They have a desire to learn and tend to acquire more out of the program when they are involved in the planning and have formed some degree of a rapport with the facilitator and their fellow employees. The principal difference in this setting is that the trainer is guiding the adult employees to discover the problems while gently encouraging the adults to use their experience and resources to come up with an answer (Knowles et al., 2005).

The employee has the responsibility for attaining the knowledge that can be gained by understanding the new concepts or techniques being delivered. There is also a need for the employee to obtain knowledge of how to find the information to continue to learn needed skills to perform the job more efficiently. In the beginning, learning to know enables an employee to develop the skills necessary to understand their work environment and the expectations associated with their respective roles and responsibilities. As employees gain more experience, they desire to know why they are learning the material and how it will help them execute their job. One of the benefits associated with adult employees understanding their roles and acquiring additional knowledge is that they can continue to partner with their peers and collectively contribute to the needs of the global society while helping others gain more skills (Delors, 1996).

Trainers influence employees to apply the knowledge gained in their respective professional careers. This role encourages employees to execute and implement the methods and behaviors that will best produce the desired outcome of attaining the metric goals. As life and work circumstances unfold, employees will have the opportunity to use

their newly acquired knowledge and skills toward solving problems that subsequently arise in the workplace or within a personal context (Delors, 1996).

To maintain their relevance, employees of the major retail organizations of the 21st century, modern-day, multichannel global economies, require learners to strategically apply to learn to meet the evolving needs of their respective businesses to remaining abreast of the ever-changing technological advancements in the production and service sectors. Also, learning to apply better communication, conflict resolution, and interpersonal skills is critical to maintaining their competitive edge in the workplace (Delors, 1996; Ouane, 2009).

**Application of andragogy in training.** Knowles (2014) provided an example of applying andragogical principles to the design of personal computer training. This method is commonplace in the major retail organizations due to the volume of employees that are onboarding during peak shopping times. There is a need to explain the reasons specific things are being taught. Training should consider the broad range of different backgrounds of learners. Also, teaching materials and activities should be developed with the understanding that their adult learners have been exposed to various types of training aids (such as computers). The adults might need brief, refresher training on the respective computer and operating system that they will be using to receive their respective training. Adults are self-directed. Pratt (1988) stated, the type of instruction provided should enable the adult learners to discover ideas and knowledge for themselves without depending on the teacher, who could intervene and will provide guidance only when necessary.



In the discussion of andragogy, Cox (2006) gave the insight to direct comparisons of Knowles' six principles of andragogy to specific training practices. Cox's research led him to eight philosophies of adult learning and how they can be applied to the deliverance of adult training. Cox (2006) stated that the concept reviewed the utilization of andragogy style models. "The influential theory of andragogy popularized by Knowles was taken as a starting point for the elaboration of an adult learning (informed) framework for coaching" (Cox, 2006, p. 214). Cox's research linked each principle of andragogy to practice in training. Cox's research supported that training can influence employees' connection with their emotional and career wants and needs to the goals they are trying to achieve. Cox's research found that adult learners reflect throughout the training of goals being placed on the employee. This research expressed how training provides a collaborative, goal-oriented way of learning to resolve issues in the employees' lives. Cox presented how training can assist the employee to use their knowledge and foundation to move forward in their development. He also proved that training provides an opportunity for employees to recognize ways to meet their pending concerns. Suggesting that training, using andragogy methods can help employees find their purpose and work toward a promotion or career change.

**Return on investment.** ROI is a critical measure for determining if the training model would be profitable and likely to achieve the desired increase in their metrics. By following a few steps, it has been proven to create more favorable results in the employee's metrics (Topno, 2012). Adult learners recognize that it is essential to make the connection, up front and early, as to how they are going to apply their newly acquired

knowledge and skills. Employees taking part in corporate training classes fail to see the application of the knowledge or skills until well into the training, if ever. Studies have shown that to ensure a higher ROI; students should begin each training session by linking the training content to the practical application. Education instills initial motivation in adult learners, which is a key to andragogical success. By building interactive exercises, interactivity is key to ensuring the employee remaining attentive and engaged. According to Topno, (2012), an excellent source of interactivity includes simulations, assessments, and discussions. One of the best strategies to build an in interactivity is to have a teach-back session where employees act as the facilitator for smaller chunks of content. About turning training into problem-solving, e. Employees face problems daily in any industry, regardless of tenure, compensation, or job-level. Many of us are used to “fighting fires” when issues occur with customers, clients, supervisors, or internal staff. Training has turned many of us into capable problem solvers. By rotating the content into a problem and having the employees work towards the solution on how to accomplish the desired result. The knowledge held by the facilitator regardless of experience pales in comparison to the knowledge held by a class full of employees. Facilitators should appreciate the knowledge base of their adult learners and endeavor to impart that knowledge to the other adults participating in the training session. This could help the facilitator evaluate the effectiveness of their respective training model with a corresponding rubric, specifically tailored to measure that specific type of training. It is also essential to be willing to change the content, exercises or delivery style to meet the needs of the students.

In summary, andragogy approaches in corporate training could ensure knowledge retention, application, and motivation of employees. Organizations that consider using this method in their companies better equip their employees to complete the task and attain the metrics being measured. Andragogy models work with the foundation of knowledge that the employee has and builds on what they know which through working together teaches newer employee's best practices.

### **Social impact**

Training in the workplace is an essential part of succession planning and helps employees understand how to prosper in their respective roles within their organizations. Understanding how adults learn and creating tools to give value to the purpose of the training could prove to have better results in tracked metrics. Using employees that have a considerable amount of subject matter knowledge and experience that can reiterate how to incorporate the material into daily activities (Baden & Parkes, 2013)

The method of delivering the training is often just as important, if not more important than the actual material that was facilitated. Using training based on the methods of andragogy will allow for the knowledge of experienced employees to be passed to those who employees with less experience (Allio, 2013). Having the tenured employees help the facilitator merge the new vision of expectation into a real-life situation provides more assurance that the employees will understand how the training will benefit them overall. One consideration that a large retail organization also needs to consider is the roll-out of the training and how it will reach the masses. The one downfall is that many of the models suggest smaller groups where multiple employees have the

opportunity to speak and participate. For large corporations, they may find that placing everyone in an auditorium and giving them, the material is a more efficient process. However, this approach versus a smaller group does not allow for sharing of employees' experiences and potentially miss out on several value-added learning opportunities as it applies to their respective jobs (Avery & Bergsteiner, 2011).

Participation opens the forum for those who do not understand to ask questions and to expand their knowledge by talking to others who have similar skill sets. In a retail sales environment, it is the experience of the tenured employees that help train new hires. Having the ability to start that collaboration within the classroom will also assist the application of on-the-floor training that the employees will be able to apply immediately for the job.

Sandlin, Wright, and Clark (2011) stated the focus on public pedagogy and its association with adult learning and development provided a cultural dimension within the literature. They also posited that a range of conceptualizations of adult individuality, transformation, advancement, and learning are present in this public pedagogy literature, which incongruously supported the same modernist philosophies of adult development that their simultaneous focus on culture dissipated. Sandlin et al. (2011) discussed how contrary to the ideas of traditional adult learning and development theories; individuals have embedded in cultural contexts that shape who they are and how they learn. After describing modernist concepts of adult development and learning, it was explicated how such master narratives of adult identity are depicted, preserved, and resisted through various hegemonic and counter-hegemonic public pedagogies.

Each of the learning styles reviewed could be used in the workplace. Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences and Kolb's theory of experiential learning have many variables that may or may not work in a corporate setting. Knowles theory of andragogy relates to multiple situations as well as understanding how adults learn this theory is much more suited to a company that is looking for new ways of educating their employees. The one downfall is that the most efficient classes have smaller groups where multiple employees could speak and participate in the training. For large corporations, rolling out training needs to be done in a timely fashion and require an additional amount of time to train their employees in smaller groups versus using the traditional auditorium delivery method to accommodate the masses most expeditiously, sacrificing quality of training to save time.

Using the andragogical method of delivery allows for the knowledge to be passed from experienced members to those who do not have as much experience on that topic. The participation from tenured employees allows for many to share practical experiences and give insight on how the new material can be incorporated into what they are currently doing. This method allows those who do not understand to ask a question and those who do, to share their knowledge and collaborate with others who have similar skill sets.

As a child becomes an adult, life events and experiences create who they are and the basis of knowledge they have. As they learn the skills required for their respective job, it helps mold who they are as a person and a contributor to society as a whole. Having an organization that continually educates their employees allows them to grow individually and become more proficient at their respective jobs. Knowles' (2012)

research proved that as adults mature, they become more willing to seek the level of information required for them to meet the requirements of their roles as they evolve.

Adult learners also have the desire to learn. This desire establishes a foundation of knowledge and understanding that they must continue to seek out the tools and knowledge to be successful. The need to understand how they can use the material at the moment is also a key component of why adults seek out information (Knowles, 2012). Learning about what models will best relate to the function that they want to improve is also needed when teaching adults. Knowles (1991) stated that adults frequently seek to learn about a topic when they are working on fulfilling an aspiration, such as advancement or to improve their knowledge in their current role. This motivation gives the learner purpose for learning the material. As an adult learner, their motivation is often based on how the knowledge can be applied in their lives currently, unlike a child learner that learns the material to build a foundation without necessary knowing as to how it will be implemented.

Adults learn for a purpose, and typically they want to use the information immediately. Large retail organizations want to educate their employees in a method that they learn the material and can apply what they are learning instantly. Education in the workplace is essential to continue to improve the level of employee performance as well as to foster their career and personal development. Many of the skills needed require additional information, as more and more corporations are looking for the best methods of andragogy to deliver to their respective employees (Cron, et al., 2005).

## **Gap in Literature**

A thorough review of the literature proved that there is a considerable amount of deficiencies in the research. The gap in literature resides in understanding the effectiveness of training adults using methods more geared to how adults learn more competently. The objective of my research is to close the gap by analyzing secondary data from a large retailer to determine the most functioning ways to train adults in large retail organizations. Primary topics include limited empirical research to support an association between andragogy training model and training theories within large retail organizations that have over 1000 employees. The inadequate material is determining if there is a variance between andragogy and training models used as described or demonstrated by corporate trainers in a major retail environment. Along substantiated best practices of trainers within a large retail organization who use andragogy in their selection of training practices used once the training model has been selected (Cron et al., 2005, Knowles, 2012, Knowles, 2014).

## **Summary and Conclusions**

Many methods and theories contribute to the training materials used in a large retail organization. Though there is not one method of training alone will fit all the needs of the organization and result in an appropriate ROI. It is crucial for educators to understand that various factors motivate adults to learn new concepts and skills. The literature has also indicated that it is essential for educators to use the training material and training methods that are best suited to their respective employees. Knowles theory of andragogy would be beneficial for corporate educators and their adult learners. As

discussed in the literature review, Knowles theory of andragogy is based on five primary principles; self-concept, personal experience, the readiness to learn, orientation to learning and motivation to learn. Knowles (2012) theory suggests that involving the adult learner in the class environment will encourage learning and implementation of the material.

The benefits of using training models based on andragogy models would lead to a more interactive and receptive group. By facilitating the information and an open forum, it also allows for more real-life experiences and relevant situational instances to be shared with others that may not be as experienced. Potential barriers to consider would include possible resistance to the style of deliverance. Knowles (2012) proved that pushback from the adult learners could be overcome by introducing andragogy training model in smaller group settings. Setbacks could include, major retailers finding it difficult to change most of the training material from pedagogy styles to more andragogy styles without having to alter their current delivery methods significantly. Facilitating the training material in small groups, via the open forums in a discussion format could be considered challenging for larger corporations who traditionally delivered the training via PowerPoint in large (auditorium) settings. There would also be an increased investment in time for large entities who adopted and radical approach. Within Chapter 3 the gap in research is analyzed, and additional research was added to the conclusion of this study. By adding new material to existing research, another researcher will also have the ability to continue the path to finding the best methods to teach adults within a large retail organization reducing the gap further.



### Chapter 3: Research Method

Limited research currently exists on the rationale behind how L&D leaders choose which training programs to offer during new hire training and continuing education within their respective organizations (Du, 2011). Therefore, more research is needed to understand which training models will achieve the desired goal of meeting and exceeding employee metrics. The purpose of this quasi-experimental design using one-group repeated measures and the dependent t test (paired samples) study was to determine variance on key participant performance metrics from androgynous training methods used in large retail organization in South Carolina. The KPI metrics were analyzed from a participant sample of 715 employees as generated from existing reports (secondary data) collected before and after training an andragogy style training was administered. The importance was discovering the various training models available that were best suited for large retail organizations and the optimum way to delivering the training that their employees will be able to apply for the job. The benefits of educating employees in a model that is best suited for how an adult learns could increase their moral and allow them to thrive and prosper within their respective organizations.

The justification for the research is explained in detail in the sections of the chapter: the population sample, research instrument, and materials needed and supply information regarding the method and the procedure for data collection and analysis. Additional research addresses the ethics of the study, threats to validity, and is concluded with a summary.

### **Research Design and Rationale**

A quantitative dependent t test was the methodology of this study. A quasi-experimental design using one-group repeated measures and the dependent t test (paired samples) study was used to determine variance on key participant performance metrics from androgynous training methods. Characteristics of this research paper were consistent with a quantitative paradigm, versus mixed methods or qualitative paradigms (Johnson & Christensen 2004, p. 31). The form of data used was number based, using numerical rating scales.

In contrast, the strength of mixed methods or qualitative research resides in data in the method of interviews, field notes, open-ended questions, and participant observations (Johnson & Christensen 2004). The dependent variables were sales, item locates and solicited credit card applications. The dependent variables were determined based on the metrics that employees within large retail organizations were required to perform. The independent variable is the andragogy training model facilitated in August and September of 715 employees. A quantitative method allows the researcher to collect an important amount of data and analyze a vast number of people or sources (Collis & Hussey, 2009). The measures were standardized according to Collis and Hussey (2009) and could be recreated in future studies. This study included an analysis of secondary data of the metrics from 715 employees fitting the criteria for this methodology. Quantitative research was used to study trends in large groups in a precise way (Collis & Hussey, 2009). The design best suited for this dependent t test using paired samples from pre/post assessment of the androgynous training intervention.

## **Methodology**

The purpose of this quasi-experimental design using one-group repeated measures and the dependent t test (paired samples) study was to determine variance on key participant performance metrics from androgynous training methods used in large retail organization in South Carolina. The KPI metrics were analyzed from a participant sample of 715 employees as generated from existing reports (secondary data) collected before and after training an andragogy style training was administered. Although Johnson (2001) stated that correlation design investigates the relationship between two or more variables after receiving the data, it was clear that the use of a correlation research design was not appropriate for this study. After receiving data and analyzing the data set it was determined that a dependent t test would generate the analyzing needed versus the correlation design and regression analysis method. The use of a dependent T test was appropriate for this study since the analysis pre and post the facilitation of the dependent variable is analyzed. Within the dependent t test study, there was the pre and post a comparison of the three dependent variables: sales, credit, and item locate after the dependent variable, the andragogy training model was facilitated to the employees in August/ September 2017. The data comparison is necessary for determining the existence of the level of support for the allocation of funding for training model best suited to how an adult learns more efficiently (Newman & Benz, 1998).

## **Population**

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2016), there were 69,430 retail sales employees in South Carolina as of May 2016. The target population consisted of 659

adult employees ranging from ages 18-65 within large retail organizations in South Carolina. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2016), there were 69,430 retail sales employees in South Carolina as of May 2016. In this study, the minimum sample size needed to reach saturation is 382 retail employees in South Carolina with a 95% confidence level and 659 retail employees in South Carolina with a 99% confidence level. The sample size was calculated by using an internet based sample calculator with a confidence level of 95% and 99% each with a confidence interval of 5 (Creative Research Systems, 2018).

The retail sales employees in this study work in big-box retailers, selling clothing, cosmetics, and home goods. The average population of retail employees were part-time and were required to have little or no sales education to attain the position. Often the training comes directly from the trainers and managers within the organization or through computer-based training and webinar formats.

### **Sampling and Sampling Procedures**

A dependent t test was the chosen method of data analysis. The dependent-samples t test allowed the researcher “to compare the scores of the same group of people on two different occasions” (Pallant, 2007, p. 236), such as comparing scores on the pre-test to the scores on the post test for the same employees within the large retail organization within South Carolina.

When conducting a t test, some assumptions need to be met for the test to be validated. The assumptions that relate to the t test include the scale of measurement, a random sample, data that results in a normal distribution, a reasonable sample size used and

homogeneity of variance. The first assumption made regarding t test s concerns the scale of measurement. Within this study, the t test is a scale of measurement applied to the data collected follows a continuous scale of the difference between pre and posttest values for the dependent variables scale. The second assumption made is that of a simple random sample, the collected data from a representative randomly selected portion of the total population. Stratified random sampling was used on the secondary data points received from the large retail organizations. This method allowed for the sampling of each subpopulation of the initial population separately. In this study, the archival data was separated into groups outliers were removed based on extreme variances both positive or negative. The third assumption is the data, when plotted, results in a normal distribution, bell-shaped distribution curve. This is demonstrated in histogram figures 1-3 in Chapter 4. Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007 stated that variables normality could be evaluated by histograms and statistical tests for normality and skewness. Histograms yielded a bell-shaped curve, the distribution of the dependent variables under study was deemed as normal. If the histograms were skewed, the variables were transformed. The fourth assumption is a reasonably large sample size is used. Larger sample size means the distribution of results should approach a normal bell-shaped curve. This study has 715 employee data points pre and post-training. Which exceeds the minimum number of participates needed to support saturation. The final assumption is the homogeneity of variance. Homogeneous, or equal, variance exists when the standard deviations of samples were approximately equal.

Stratified random sampling was used on the secondary data points received from the large retail organizations. Stratified random sampling is considered a random sampling method (Fowler Jr., 2013). This includes surveying a particular group of subjects from a larger cluster of individuals. Stratified random sampling is working with a sample frame that contains subgroups within the sample (Fowler Jr., 2013). This method allows for the sampling of each subpopulation of the initial population separately. In this study, the archival data was separated into groups outliers were removed based on extreme variances both positive or negative.

This study used archival data collected from large retail organizations to complete my study. As I organized the secondary data collected from 847 employees' metrics, I separated the employees currently ranked within high, mid and low levels of their metric scorecard, as well as by their tenure within the organization. To ensure the accuracy of the data set, I removed any employees that did not have both metric scores from August and November. I also removed any employees with a percentage over 250 percent over goal. Then randomly selected from each subgroup in the sampling frame and use the same method within each subgroup to comprise my 715 subject sample size.

#### **Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection (Primary Data)**

The archival data that I received consisted of the employee's start date, training model used, dates of the training, August month to date (AMTD) and November month to date (NMTD) metric scores giving me the employees scores before and after the training was facilitated. Each employee within the study when through the same training program using the same material. The instructors were different between the locations. I

analyzed the differences versus the increase or decrease of the metrics pre/post training. Employees of the retail organizations were not disclosed nor does the information be directly linked to their specific performance. The data is safeguarded within the password protected document and be used purely for the data and not the means to disclose individual employees' metrics or standings within the organization.

### **Archival Data**

An L&D leader within a large retail organization gave me access to archival employee data on employee metrics. Approved consent documentation is enclosed within the appendix. The raw data was sorted by the tenure of the employee, the current actuals of their metrics in sales, credit, and item locate, pre/post training.

### **Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs**

Extensive research has determined that there be limited empirical instruments exist to measure andragogical theories. Knowles's (1970) personal HRD inventory, Christian's (1982) 75 student orientation questionnaire, Suanmali's (1981) andragogy in practice questionnaire, Conti's (1978) principles of adult learning scales, and Hadley's (1975) educational orientation questionnaire were instruments I found that specialize in andragogical paradigms; however, these tools focused on the viewpoint of the educator rather than the adult learner. Wilson (2005) made the first change to the scarcity of empirical instruments and the lack of student perspective in existing empirical andragogical measurement tools. In 2005, Wilson developed the adult learning principles design process elements questionnaire (ALPDEQ). This experimental tool measured five out of six andragogical constructs. The sixth paradigm, orientation to learning, was added

after the development of the instrument (Wilson, 2005). Wilson created a tool that researched motivation, readiness to learn, experience, the need to know, and self-directedness, from an educator and adult learner perspective. The establishment of content validity is fundamental to the creation of a credible research instrument (Wilson, 2005). In the current study, I confirmed the method of training was an andragogy model then analyzed the increase or decrease of the metrics before and after the training was completed to determine if the training that is used fits the needs of adult learners within a large retail organization

### **Data Analysis Plan**

#### **Statistical Tests**

Essential features of the variables in this study, as they pertain to the sample, is summarized using descriptive statistics. I used the clear command in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 23, to calculate the dependent t test and the mean, median, mode, variance, standard deviation, and kurtosis for the dependent variables in the study. These include sales, item locate, and credit applications. In this study, it was vital to understand the calculated mean of the variables to find common ground for what is the average score of the data points. Finding the median determined what is the middle value, to reconnoiter if the training before and after is above or before the middle value of the data points. Calculating the mode gave insight into what was the average score within the employee's metric values. This determination also uncovered if scores were grouped or scattered. Finding the variance and standard deviation determined if the variables were similar or distributed through highs and lows of metric compliance. Kurtosis was used to



describe the trends in the charts used to demonstrate the findings from the data analysis visually. The raw scores for these scales were converted to *t* scores to standardize the distributions and make them comparable (see Gravetter & Wallnau, 2008). The dependent variable, training model using andragogy theory, was calculated as well and be visually graphed.

The purpose of this quasi-experimental design using one-group repeated measures and the dependent *t* test (paired samples) study was to determine variance on key participant performance metrics from androgynous training methods used in large retail organization in South Carolina. The KPI metrics were analyzed from a participant sample of 715 employees as generated from existing reports (secondary data) collected before and after training an andragogy style training was administered.

The related hypotheses and matching research questions were as following:

RQ1: What changes in participant pre/post KPI sales metric occur when an andragogy training model within a large retail organization located in South Carolina is facilitated?

H<sub>0</sub>1: There is no significant difference in the participant pre/post KPI sales metric when an andragogy training model is facilitated within a large retail organization in South Carolina.

H<sub>a</sub>1: There is a significant difference in the participant pre/post KPI sales metric when an andragogy training model is facilitated within the large retail organization in South Carolina.

RQ2: What changes in participant KPI locate metric pre/post occur when an andragogy training model within a large retail organization located in South Carolina is facilitated?

H<sub>0</sub>2: There is no significant difference in the participant pre/post KPI locate metric when an andragogy training model is facilitated within the large retail organization in South Carolina.

H<sub>a</sub>2: There is a significant increase in the participant pre/post KPI locate metric when an andragogy training model is facilitated within the large retail organization in South Carolina.

RQ3: What changes in participant pre/post KPI opening credit application metric occurs when an andragogy training model within a large retail organization located in South Carolina is facilitated?

H<sub>0</sub>3: There is no significant difference in the participant pre/post KPI opening credit application when an andragogy training model is facilitated within the large retail organization in South Carolina.

H<sub>a</sub>3: There is a significant difference in the participant pre/post KPI opening credit application when an andragogy training model is facilitated within the large retail organization in South Carolina.

### **Threats to Validity**

In research, the researcher needs to be cognitive of both internal and external validity (Onwuegbuzie, 2000). Internal validity can impact the outcome of the study with

concerns that the experiment may be affected by the researcher and have the possibility of skewing the data. External validity can impact the topic of generalization; the concern is derived from knowing the degree that the outcomes of the research study can be replicated in other settings or to a larger population. As a researcher, the goal is to increase internal validity, so that the external validity decreases (Onwuegbuzie, 2000).

### **External Validity**

External validity of the research study was enhanced by ensuring that there is a sufficient population size (Onwuegbuzie, 2000). The sample size should be adequate to provide a high probability of detecting as the significant effect size of a given magnitude if such an effect exists. This number is not random; sample size is commonly determined by using power analysis. The larger the sample size, the more reliable the study results are, and the more likely it is that the results can be generalized to future researchers (Onwuegbuzie, 2000). According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2016), there were 69,430 retail sales employees in South Carolina as of May 2016. In this study, the minimum sample size needed to reach saturation is 382 retail employees in South Carolina with a 95% confidence level and 659 retail employees in South Carolina with a 99% confidence level. The sample size was calculated by using an internet-based sample calculator with a confidence level of 95% and 99% each with a confidence interval of 5 (Creative Research Systems, 2018).

Programs from 2011 through 2016, increased reliability when examined in my research study. This time frame represents five consecutive years of program data for comparison. Also, the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 supports that the variables I

selected were reliable indicators of what they measure and triangulated. All three variables have been shown by the research in Chapter 2 to contribute to employee satisfaction with their program selection.

### **Internal Validity**

Internal validity is the assurance that the researcher can place in the cause and effect association with the study. Internal validity guarantees that the researcher has evidence that the results of the research were caused by what was observed and not due to cause and effect factors (Onwuegbuzie, 2000). This study had limited internal validity threats due to the use of collected data that is being used to conduct the analysis. As the researcher, I will not have access to the employee personal records nor will the study interface with the employees directly. The data collected was used to analyze the employee metrics before and after andragogy models were used to determine if andragogy style models increase, decrease or were inconclusive to the increase/decrease of the metrics analyzed.

### **Construct Validity**

Education within the workplace allows for corporations to teach their employees the expectations of the job as well as help them improve on measured metrics. The training that the employees receive often is in settings that mimic how children learners were taught. The audience of the material being used in the major retail organizations is given to adults with the expectation to execute and improve their performance. Teaching adult learners with methods that were aligned with how adults learn could increase the ability to use the material being taught, increasing employee metrics leading to increased

KPIs (Wang, 2010). This study will analyze KPI scores before and after andragogy training styles were administered to determine if using adult training methods increased the associates KPI metrics. The datasets that were used were pre-existing and will not contain employee personal information.

### **Ethical Procedures**

Secondary data was used in this study; secondary data analysis is the use of existing research data to discover the answer to a question that differs from the original purpose (Tripathy 2013). Secondary data used in this study will have had all identifying information removed by sorting the preexisting data without employee personal information. This precaution is taken to ensure the integrity of the information and avoid possible identification or linking information to the employee. First, there is the issue of confidentiality it is possible that the researcher could know of an individual who participated in the study and could, inadvertently, identify that individual within the dataset. If that was to occur, it is essential that the researcher protect the privacy of that individual. Next, there is the issue of storage. The data obtained as electronic files stored on the researcher's personal laptop computer and is password protected. Only Walden University supervising faculty members would have access to the data. Once analyzed, the data is secured by the researcher for a minimum of 5 years, and then it will be deleted or destroyed via a shredding company.

### **Summary**

Chapter 3 included an overview of the research design and the rationale for completing the study. Topics covered included the methodology which details what

process is used and how the study was conducted, the sample size as well as how the sample size was determined and what possible validity concerns could arise while completing the study. Chapter 3 also includes the outline of the statistical test that was used to analyze the data and what gaps were noted along the way. The benefits of completing the study, and how the study could promote social change within the environment. Giving detail to how the study will use data to determine if an andragogy training facilitated in a large retail organization in South Carolina has a significant increase, decrease or have no change in the metric KPI scores of the adult employee. The discussion includes the social implications of the findings, application of results, and recommendations for future research.

## Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this quasi-experimental design using one-group repeated measures and the dependent t test (paired samples) study was to determine variance on key participant performance metrics from androgynous training methods used in large retail organization in South Carolina. The KPI metrics were analyzed from a participant sample of 715 employees as generated from existing reports (secondary data) collected before and after training an andragogy style training was administered.

In this chapter, the results of the data analysis for this study were presented. An evaluation of the statistical results of the data determined whether statistically significant differences exist between the dependent variables (sales, item locate, and credit percentage to goal) and the independent variable (andragogy training model facilitated within large retail organizations in South Carolina). External validity of the research study was enhanced by ensuring that there is a sufficient population size (Onwuegbuzie, 2000). According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2016), there were 69,430 retail sales employees in South Carolina as of May 2016. In this study, the minimum sample size needed to reach saturation is 382 retail employees in South Carolina with a 95% confidence level and 659 retail employees in South Carolina with a 99% confidence level. The sample size was calculated using an internet based sample calculator with a confidence level of 95% and 99% each with a confidence interval of 5 (Creative Research Systems, 2018).

In this study, KPI metrics were analyzed using 715 employees per metric generated from existing reports collected pre and post training received in August

/September 2017. The dependent variables analyzed were-sales, item locate and opening credit card applications. The independent variable was the training model consistent with andragogy theory facilitated to all employees within this study.

The related hypotheses and matching research questions were as following:

RQ1: What changes in participant pre/post KPI sales metric occur when an andragogy training model within a large retail organization located in South Carolina is facilitated?

H<sub>0</sub>1: There is no significant difference in the participant pre/post KPI sales metric when an andragogy training model is facilitated within a large retail organization in South Carolina.

H<sub>a</sub>1: There is a significant difference in the participant pre/post KPI sales metric when an andragogy training model is facilitated within the large retail organization in South Carolina.

RQ2: What changes in participant KPI locate metric pre/post occur when an andragogy training model within a large retail organization located in South Carolina is facilitated?

H<sub>0</sub>2: There is no significant difference in the participant pre/post KPI locate metric when an andragogy training model is facilitated within the large retail organization in South Carolina.

H<sub>a</sub>2: There is a significant increase in the participant pre/post KPI locate metric when an andragogy training model is facilitated within the large retail organization in South Carolina.



RQ3: What changes in participant pre/post KPI opening credit application metric occurs when an andragogy training model within a large retail organization located in South Carolina is facilitated?

H<sub>0</sub>3: There is no significant difference in the participant pre/post KPI opening credit application when an andragogy training model is facilitated within the large retail organization in South Carolina.

H<sub>a</sub>3: There is a significant difference in the participant pre/post KPI opening credit application when an andragogy training model is facilitated within the large retail organization in South Carolina.

### **Data Collection**

This study includes an analysis of pre- and post populated metrics from 715 employees per metrics fitting the criteria for this methodology. Preapproval for the use of archival data was approved (Appendix A) in April of 2017. After receiving Walden University's Institutional Review Board's (IRB) approval (12-27-17-0135855), I received the requested archival data via email from the human resources department and granted access to the files via the internal database of status checks from period of December 28, 2017, through January 18, 2018 from one of the three large retail sources. As stated in Chapter 3, According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2016), there were 69,430 retail sales employees in South Carolina as of May 2016. In this study, the minimum sample size needed to reach saturation is 382 retail employees in South Carolina with a 95% confidence level and 659 retail employees in South Carolina with a 99% confidence level. The sample size was calculated using an internet based sample calculator with a

confidence level of 95% and 99% each with a confidence interval of 5 (Creative Research Systems, 2018).

The initial data collection plan was to take archived data from three large retailers to create a sample size of a minimum 659 employees who participated in an andragogy style training. After numerous attempts to communicate and reach final approval with the vice president of the human resources department and legal departments of two large of the three large retailers, I was unsuccessful in obtaining the needed consent and data. Additional employee metrics were provided from the approving large retailer to exceed the minimum number needed to have a complete dataset. The collected archival data was created from August 2017 employee status checks when the training was administered compared to collected archival data from November 2017 employee status checks of the same employees to determine if there is a significant increase between the training and the percent to the goal within the metrics analyzed. The archival data received from the large retailer consisted of the employee's start date, the training model used, month to date metric results from August 2017 (AMTD) and month to date metric results from November 2017 (NMTD).

Once archival data were collected and entered into the SPSS Version 23 software, the clear command was used to calculate a dependent t test and the mean, median, mode, variance, standard deviation, and kurtosis for the dependent variables in the study. These included sales, item locate, and credit card penetration. The independent variable is the andragogy style training that was facilitated between August 2017 and early September 2017. The dependent t test was calculated to compare the values of means from two

related dependent variables 'before and after' the andragogy training was facilitated. The mean was calculated to identify the variables to find common ground for what is the average score of the data points. The mean represents a whole data set of scores with one single number, this was calculated by adding all the scores ( $x$ ) and dividing by the total number of scores in the distribution. Mean deviation =  $\Sigma|x - \mu|N$ . The median was calculated to determine what is the middle value, to reconnoiter if the training before and after is above or before the middle value of the data points. The mode or modal value determined the variable that appears most often in the data set. In this analysis is helped determine what was the most common percent to the goal within the data sets.

According to Sprinthall and Fisk (1990), the standard deviation is a measure of how spread out numbers is within the data set. Finding the variance and standard deviation determined if the variables were similar or distributed through highs and lows of metric compliance. The purpose of finding the standard deviation is to determine if the score is grouped or scattered among the percentages of 0-100 percent to goal. Variance is the average of the squared differences from the mean. Kurtosis was used to describe the trends to demonstrate the findings from the data analysis visually, tables and charts.

When conducting a t test, some assumptions must be met for the test to be validated. The assumptions that relate to the t test include the scale of measurement, a random sample, data that results in a normal distribution, a reasonable sample size used and homogeneity of variance. The first assumption made regarding t test s concerns the scale of measurement. Within this study, the t test is a scale of measurement applied to the data collected follows an ordinal scale. The second assumption made is that of a

simple random sample, the collected data from a representative randomly selected portion of the total population. Stratified random sampling was used on the secondary data points received from the large retail organizations. This method allowed for the sampling of each subpopulation of the initial population separately. In this study, the archival data was separated into groups outliers were removed based on extreme variances both positive or negative. The third assumption is the data, when plotted, results in a normal distribution, bell-shaped distribution curve. This is demonstrated in histogram figures 1-3. Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007 stated that variables normality could be evaluated by histograms and statistical tests for normality and skewness. Histograms yielded a bell-shaped curve, the distribution of the variable under study was deemed as normal. If the histograms were skewed, the variables were transformed. The fourth assumption is a reasonably large sample size is used. Larger sample size means the distribution of results should approach a normal bell-shaped curve. This study has 715 employee data points pre and post-training. Which exceeds the minimum number of participates needed to prove saturation. The final assumption is the homogeneity of variance. Homogeneous, or equal, variance exists when the standard deviations of samples are were approximately equal.

### **Study Results**

The archival dataset collected comprised of 715 employees within a large retail organization in South Carolina. Throughout 6 weeks, between August 2017 and September 2017, the large retailer location facilitated four to eight training sessions with a blend of employees. The training that each of the employees received was based off an andragogy style training that was facilitated by members of management trained to

facilitate the course. Each training course is the same outline; each training class had 15-20 employees with segments that reviewed information that would help the employees understand and overcome the objections of relating to the metrics of sales, item locates, and opening credit card applications.

### **Tenure of Employees**

Knowles (2012) stated in the theory of andragogy that adult learners in the training environment should use the knowledge of their peers to help them understand the material and implementation of the training. As a facilitator, allowing tenured employees to be an active part of the deliverance of the material can help overcome objections as well as encourage others the need for changes (Knowles, 2014). Of the 715 employees in the study, 147 employees (20.55%) had 0-1 year of service, 258 (36.08%) employees had 2-4 years of service, 87 (12.16%) employees had 5-7 years of service, 47 (6.57%) employees had 8-10 years of service, 128 (17.90%) had 11-19 years of service, 48 (6.713%) had 20 or more years of service. Andragogy training models have employees play an active part in the training, using their experience to connect the new aspects of the training with what they currently know (Knowles, 2014). The significance of having 36.08% of employees with a tenure of 2-4 years is that the experience and knowledge that they bring to the interactive sections of the training.

### **Research Question 1**

Research Question 1 was what changes in participant pre/post KPI sales metric occur when an andragogy training model within a large retail organization located in South Carolina is facilitated? The mean, median, mode, standard deviation, and other

descriptive statistics were presented in Table 1 to describe central tendency with the employees' KPI sales percent to goal metrics before and after the andragogy model of training was administered to the employees.

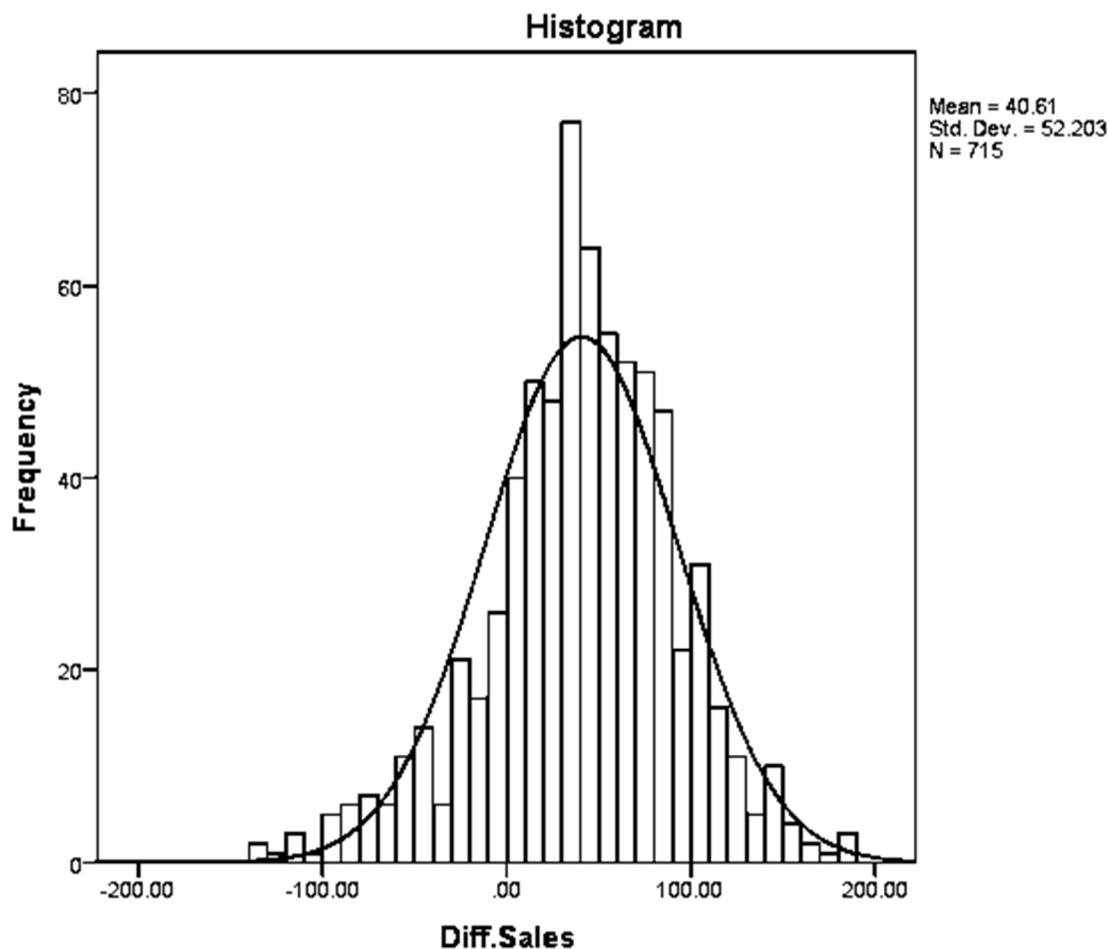
Table 1

*Pre/Post training Results of Sales Percent to Goal*

<i>Statistics</i>		AMTD%	NMTD%
N	Valid	715	715
	Missing	0	0
Mean		118.663%	78.048%
Median		118.900%	75.700%
Mode		0.000%	0.000% <sup>a</sup>
Std. Deviation		48.840%	28.336%
Variance		2385.380%	802.902%
Kurtosis		0.380%	1.313%
Std. Error of Kurtosis		0.183%	0.183%
Sum		84843.928%	55804.600%

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

The frequency distribution of differences between pretest and posttest metrics (N = 715) were plotted as a histogram as shown in Figure 1. Even though the sample size was greater than the minimum required, a Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test for normality (D = .025, df = 715, p = .000) as suggested by Field (2013, pp. 187-188) showed that the data was not normally distributed.



*Figure 1 Histogram of the Difference in Sales Percent to Goal*

It was hypothesized there would be no significant variance in the participant pre/post KPI sales metric when an andragogy training model was facilitated within a large retail organization in South Carolina. Because of normality concerns, both the bootstrap test (Field, 2013) and the paired t test were conducted. The results of the bootstrap for the paired samples t test showed a bias of 0.27 and  $p = .01$  while the results of the paired t test were  $t(715) = 20.8$ ,  $p = .000$ . Based on the significant p values for both tests, the  $H_0$  hypothesis was rejected.

The mean of the KPI sales percent metrics shown a decrease with a percent change of -34.227 ( $78.048 - 118.663 / 78.048 \times 100\% = -34.227\%$ ) from August and September 2017 to November 2017 (Table 1). The median of KPI sales percent metric had a decreased percent change of -36.333 ( $75.700 - 118.900 / 118.900 \times 100\% = -36.333\%$ ) from August and September 2017 to November 2017 (Table 1). Multiple modes existed, however, 0.0 is the most common variable and lowest within the data set. The percent change within standard deviation showed a decrease calculated -41.982 ( $28.336 - 48.840 / 48.840 \times 100\% = -41.982\%$ ) from August and September 2017 to November 2017 (Table 1).

## Research Question 2

Research Question 2 was what changes in participant KPI item locate metric pre/post occur when an andragogy training model within a large retail organization located in South Carolina is facilitated? The mean, median, mode, standard deviation, and other descriptive statistics were presented in Table 2 to describe central tendency with the employees' KPI item locate percent to goal metrics before and after the andragogy model of training was administered to the employees.

Table 2

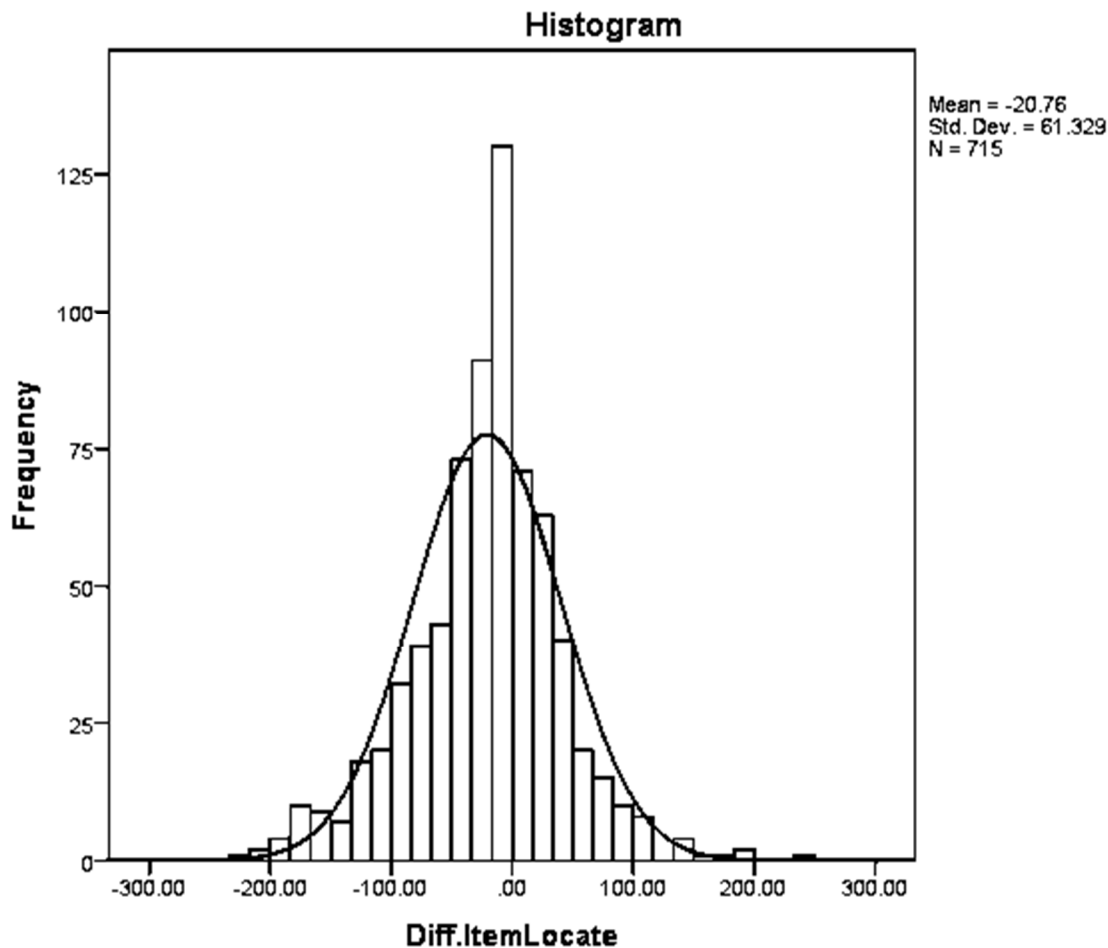
*Pre/Post training results of item locate percent to goal*

<i>Statistics</i>		AMTD IL%	NMTD IL
N	Valid	715	715
	Missing	0	0
Mean		49.345%	70.106%



Median	38.000%	57.000%
Mode	0.000%	0.000%
Std. Deviation	48.136%	54.278%
Variance	2317.095%	2946.056%
Kurtosis	2.479%	0.589%
Std. Error of Kurtosis	0.183%	0.183%
Sum	35282.000%	50126.000%

The frequency distribution of differences between pretest and posttest metrics ( $N = 715$ ) were plotted as a histogram as shown in Figure 2. Even though the sample size was greater than minimum required, a Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test for normality ( $D = .074$ ,  $df = 715$ ,  $p = .000$ ) as suggested by Field (2013, pp. 187-188) showed that the data was not normally distributed.



*Figure 2 Histogram of the difference in Item Locate*

It was hypothesized there would be no significant variance in the participant pre/post KPI item locate metric when an andragogy training model was facilitated within a large retail organization in South Carolina. Because of normality concerns, both the bootstrap test (Field, 2013) and the paired t test were conducted. The results of the bootstrap for the paired samples t test showed a bias of 0.10 and  $p = .01$  while the results of the paired t test were  $t(715) = -9.05$ ,  $p < .0005$ . Based on the significant p values for both tests, the  $H_{o2}$  hypothesis was rejected.

The mean of KPI item locates percent metric showed a percent change of 42.073% ( $70.106 - 49.345 / 49.345 \times 100\% = 42.073\%$ ) from August and September 2017 to November 2017 (Table 2). The median of KPI item locates percent metric showed a percent change of 50% ( $57 - 38 / 38 \times 100\% = 50\%$ ) from August/September 2017 to November 2017 (Table 3). Multiple modes existed; however, 0.0 is the most common variable and lowest within the data set. The standard deviation of KPI item locate percent metric showed a percent change of 12.760 ( $54.278 - 48.136 / 48.136 \times 100\% = 12.759\%$ ) from August and September 2017 to November 2017.

### Research Question 3

Research question 3 was what changes in participant pre/ post KPI opening credit application metric occur when an andragogy training model within a large retail organization located in South Carolina is facilitated? Mean, median, mode, standard deviation, and other descriptive statistics were presented in Table 3 to describes a central tendency with the employees' KPI credit card percent to goal metrics before and after the andragogy model of training was administered to the employees.

Table 3

*Pre/Post training results of credit percent to goal*

Statistics		AMTD Credit%	NMTD Credit
N	Valid	715	715
	Missing	0	0
Mean		62.998%	56.368%
Median		50.000%	40.000%

Mode	0.000%	0.000%
Std. Deviation	57.925%	52.881%
Variance	3355.359%	2796.450%
Kurtosis	0.689%	1.002%
Std. Error of Kurtosis	0.183%	0.183%
<u>Sum</u>	<u>45043.500%</u>	<u>40303.080%</u>

The frequency distribution of differences between pretest and posttest metrics (N = 715) were plotted as a histogram as shown in Figure 2. Even though the sample size was greater than minimum required, a Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test for normality (D = .081, df = 715, p = .000) as suggested by Field (2013, pp. 187-188) showed that the data was not normally distributed.

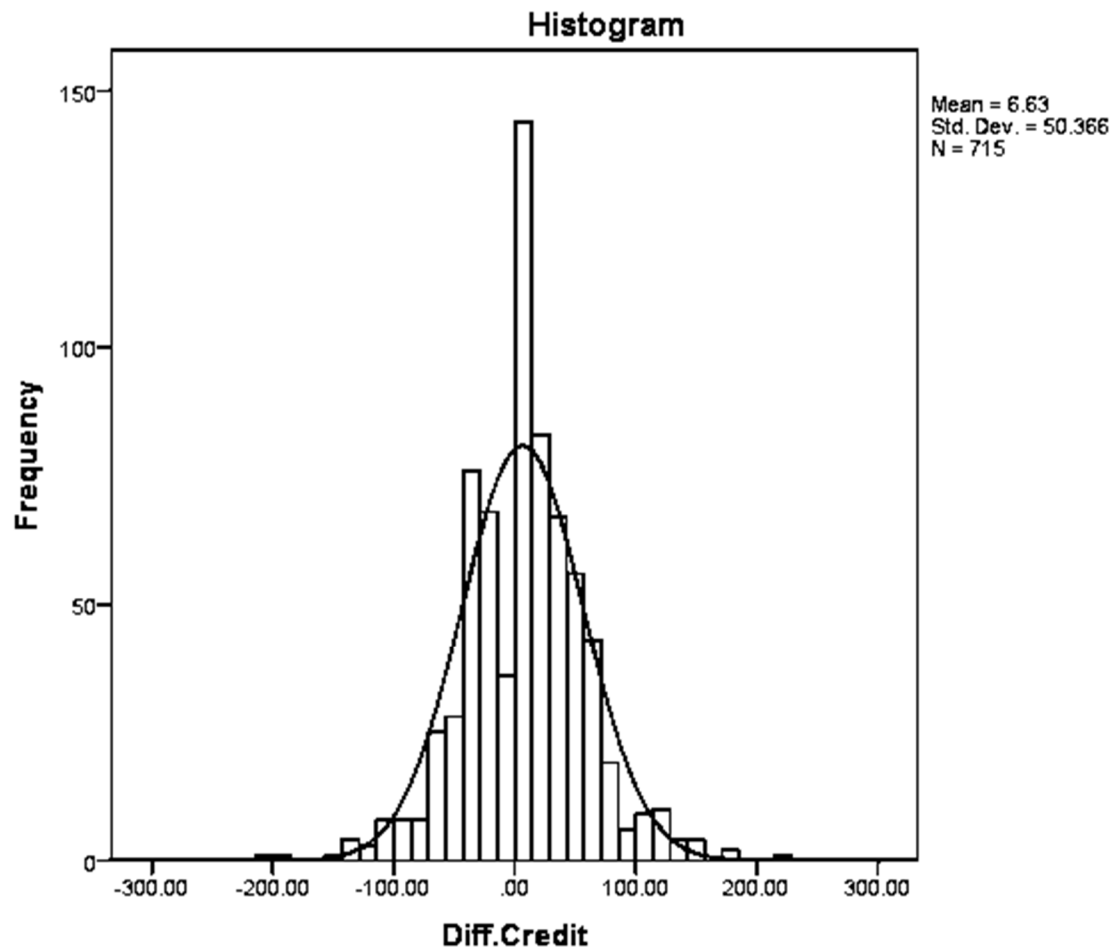


Figure 3. Histogram of the Difference in Credit Applications

It was hypothesized there would be no significant variance in the participant pre/post KPI credit metric when an andragogy training model was facilitated within a large retail organization in South Carolina. As a result of normality concerns, both the bootstrap test (Field, 2013) and the paired t test were conducted. The results of the bootstrap for the paired samples t test showed a bias of  $-.17$  and  $p = .01$  while the results of the paired t test were  $t(715) = 3.5$ ,  $p < .0005$ . Based on the significant p values for both tests, the  $H_03$  hypothesis was rejected.

The mean of KPI Credit percent metric had a percent change of -10.524 ( $(56.368 - 62.998) / 62.998 \times 100\% = -10.524\%$ ) from August and September 2017 to November 2017 (Table 7). The median of KPI Credit percent metric had a percent change of -20% ( $(40 - 50) / 50 \times 100\% = -20\%$ ) from August and September 2017 to November 2017 (Table 7). Multiple modes existed, however, 0.0 is the most common variable and lowest within the data set. The standard deviation of KPI Credit percent metric had a percent change of -8.708 ( $(52.881 - 57.925) / 57.925 \times 100\% = -8.708\%$ ) from August and September 2017 to November 2017 (Table 7).

### Summary

This study was conducted to determine what changes in participant pre/post KPI sales metric occurred when an andragogy training model within a large retail organization located in South Carolina was facilitated. The data used was collected from employees that were part of an andragogy style training that was intended to increase metrics that the employees were rated on. In August 2017 and early September 2017, all the employees went through the same andragogy style training. The metrics used came from the scorecards of that employee within the August and September 2017 timeframe and then again in November of 2017 to determine if the employees' metrics of sales, item locate, and credit showed an increase, decrease or remained the same. Based on multiple analysis, it was found that there was a significant negative variance in the employee performance of the percent to the goal within the sale metric. There was a significant positive variance in the employee performance of the percent to the goal within item locate metric, and there was an of significant negative variance to the percent to the goal

within the credit metric. Chapter 5 includes an evaluation of the findings and an assessment of the validity of the evidence about the literature review and the context of the theoretical framework previously discussed in Chapter 2. Limitations of the study as they were related to generalizability and reliability. Additionally, I drew and discussed the methodological, theoretical conclusions and implications, as they were related to social change. Finally, I provided a series of recommendations for future research and practice.

## Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this quasi-experimental design using one-group repeated measures and the dependent t test (paired samples) study was to determine variance on key participant performance metrics from androgynous training methods used in large retail organization in South Carolina. The KPI metrics were analyzed from a participant sample of 715 employees as generated from existing reports (secondary data) collected before and after training an andragogy style training was administered. Retail organizations use metrics to determine the productivity of employees, including how the employees were reviewed for pay increases and promoted up within the organization (Golhar & Alex, 2017). The dependent variables studied were sales, item locator, and opening credit card applications. The independent variable is a training model administered using andragogy theory.

This study was a quantitative dependent t test , with a quasi-experimental design using one-group repeated measures and the dependent t test (paired samples) study to determine variance on key participant performance metrics from androgynous training methods. The quantitative study coincides with numbers that signify an emphasis to quantification in data collection and analysis and, as such, is appropriate for the data needed to produce information needed as reflected in the gap of the literature. A quantitative method allowed for a significant amount of data to be analyzed via a vast number of people or sources (Merriam, 2009). This study included an analysis of pre- and post populated metrics from 715 employees fitting the criteria for this methodology.



The use of a dependent t test design was appropriate for this study to establish if there is a definite relationship between the types of training received and the metrics related to job performance. Johnson (2001) stated that the dependent t test design allows the researcher the ability to investigate the relationship between two or more variables. Advantages of a dependent t test study include that a collection variable that is analyzed based on their pre and posttraining scores. Johnson stated that the method also benefits the researcher when the variables were not able to be produced in a laboratory. Using archival data can allow for more data to be collected in a shorter period and evaluate the previously collected data to improve the performance of future training. Archival data can also be used to recreate the same study or to expand on the study to further the knowledge that can be gained from different statistical methods or a baseline as new information is added to the archive.

### **Interpretation of Findings**

Knowles' (1984) theory of andragogy, Gardner's (1991) multiple intelligences, and Kolb's (1984) experimental learning comprised the theoretical framework of this study. Research by Knowles, Kolb, and Gardner (2006) provided assorted, but similar understandings regarding the process adult learn and how different models were used supporting the theory that individuals learn differently, with an emphasis on how adult learn differently than child learners.

Knowles' (2012) theory of andragogy was a common theme among the research regarding adult education. That concept proved that adults have different motivations to learn and methods that were more conducive for adult learners to use the knowledge that

they were learning. Gardner's (2011) theory of multiple intelligences supplemented supporting evidence that individuals learn differently. Multiple intelligences theory brings productivity and flexibility to teaching and learning creating an environment for the learner to be more successful (McFarlane, 2011). In Gardner's theory of multiple intelligence, each person has intellect specific to different traits. Supporting adults learn differently and using the training model created by how they learn best would be beneficial. Kolb's (1984) intensive framework provided an experience-based model of learning that identified four recurrent stages: experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and doing. Kolb's theory showed relationships between learning styles and how adults learn and the benefits of educating using models and techniques that would cater to the learner.

The works of Knowles (1984), Gardner (1991) and Kolb (1984) were the inspiration to further research about how adults in large retail organizations were trained, the models used, and the ROI based on the known performance indicators. As I researched current literature in training adults in large retail organizations, I discovered a gap in the analysis of the effectiveness of training material in retail, as it relates to models created based on how adults learn (Cohen & Billsberry, 2014; Knowles, 2014).

### **Research Question 1**

Research Question 1 was what changes in participant pre/post KPI sales metric occur when an andragogy training model within a large retail organization located in South Carolina is facilitated? Within this metric, there was a significant negative variance in the overall KPI metric percent to goal. There were employees within the database that

did show an increase; however, there the majority of the employees remained the same or showed a decrease in the sales percent of goal metric.

### **Research Question 2**

Research Question 2 was what changes in participant KPI item locate metric (pre/post) occur when an andragogy training model within a large retail organization located in South Carolina is facilitated?. Based on the analysis there was a significant positive variance, in the employees' item locate KPI metric; therefore, concluding that there was a variance between the training and the increase of the employee metric item locate. Finding suggests that the training on the item locate sales section did improve the employee KPI scores.

### **Research Question 3**

Research Question 3 was what changes in participant pre/post KPI opening credit application metric occur when an andragogy training model within a large retail organization located in South Carolina is facilitated? Within this metric, there was a significant negative variance in the overall KPI metric percent to goal. There were employees within the database who did show an increase. However, there the majority of the employees remained the same or showed a decrease in the sales percent of goal metric.

Research Questions 1 and 3 showed a negative variance within the metric after training using an andragogy method of training. Research Question 2 showed a positive variance in the metric after using an andragogy method of training. For Knowles' (2012) andragogy theory to be successful, there were five key aspects that must be considered

and used to ensure that there is a successful transfer of knowledge and ability to know how to apply the new knowledge to their foundation and implement it daily practices (Knowles, 2012).

The first principle is self-concept (Knowles et al., 2005). Adult learners go from being a dependent learner to a self-directed learner as they mature (Knowles, 2014). If the learner is not a self-directed learner, then pedagogy style teaching styles may need to be used based on the employees' learning ability (Knowles, 2012). This may not be known by the retail organization or the facilitator causing the results of the training not to be consistent with those employees. The second principle of Knowles (2012) andragogy theory is an experience. Creating groups based on the employee's tenure within each training session can help balance the training environment. Having a mix of newer and tenured employees can affect the transfer of knowledge having some training environments to be more effective than others. The skills the tenured employees have been often used to motivate to increase newer employees' knowledge on a topic, and how it could be implemented in real life situations. Within this study, there was an overall good mix of tenured versus new employees; however, how the employees were grouped were not disclosed to determine if that was an influence within the employees who did see an increase, stayed the same, or had a decrease in the metrics analyzed within the research questions.

Having the readiness to learn is the third principle for Knowles' (2012) theory. The motivation to learn is internal in most adults, according to Knowles (1980). Adults learners were more willing to seek education as they find that they may be required to

know more to fulfill their ever-increasing roles (Knowles, 2014) and metric requirements within the large retail organization. Researchers have proven that adults exhibit a willingness to acquire information when their knowledge foundation does not sufficiently prepare them for the more complex roles that they were undertaking (Brookfield, 1986; Davenport & Davenport, 1985; Knowles, 1984; Lee, 1998). Also, adults have been incentivized to learn new skills due to career changes can also be an incentive to use the training in daily work situations ((Havighurst & Glasser, 1972; Knowles, 1984). Merriam (2002) stated that readiness to be taught occurs at the moment that the learner decides that it is crucial to gain the information needed to accomplish their desired goal. In Research Questions 1 and 3 there was not a positive change in the overall metrics. Employees, both tenured and new, may not understand the importance of the training may have caused metrics to remain the same or reduce as a result of not implementing the skills in the training. The fourth principle is the orientation to learning (Knowles, 1984). As an adult, the learner needs additional information to function within their respective positions (Knowles, 2012). As a result, they will be inclined to seek out the essential knowledge or skills needed to fill those roles adequately (Knowles, 2012). As with any organization, there were employees that strive to do well and others that were content with doing the minimum. This study did not explore the orientation of each of the employees to determine the results of the research questions were affected by this principle.

The last principle within Knowles' (2012) theory of andragogy is the motivation to learn. Adult learners need to have motivation or purpose for learning the material

(Knowles, 1990). The motivation for an adult learner in this study was to increase the KPIs by increasing their metrics within sales, item locates and opening credit applications. Employees were experiencing the work environment on different levels and seek to obtain the reasons why and how the training will be implemented in their daily routines (Knowles, 1975). The results of this study did not exclusively support the theories from the literature review; however, the results gave a foundation to how adult learners need to be trained as well as supporting evidence that Research Question 1 and 3 proved to have a negative variance within the metrics, and Research Question 2 showed a positive variance in the metrics of the majority of the employees. Improvements in one of the metrics analyzed led me to have confidence that there is evidence that an andragogy model if implemented continuously, would show a rise in ROI in the large retailer industry. The reasons for success increases within each metric was not to be seen throughout each of the research questions. Which could be related to many factors which could be examined with further research using a questionnaire after the courses to survey the employees as well as determining internal or external deterrents causing the reduced scores.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Several limitations could have influenced or weakened this study; often these shortcomings were not under the control of the researcher (Student, 2016). It is important for the researcher to be perceptive of both internal and external validity (Onwuegbuzie, 2000). Internal validity can impact the outcome of the study with concerns that the research may be affected by the scholar and have the possibility of skewed data

(Onwuegbuzie, 2000). External validity can impact the topic of generalization; the concern is derived from knowing the degree that the outcomes of the research study can be replicated in other settings or to a larger population (Onwuegbuzie, 2000). The desire is to increase internal validity so that the external validity decreases (Onwuegbuzie, 2000). Reliability of the data can also be a factor when research data is being analyzed. In the case of this study, archival data from employee status checks were downloaded into SPSS to create a database. This data can be accessed by future researchers as well as the data sets be recreated if needed to verify the results of the study. Trustworthiness of the data is also a limitation that needs to be addressed by the researcher (Onwuegbuzie, 2000). Ensuring that the archival data is valid and is stored in a secure place will allow others to recreate and verify the analysis. If the source of the data is not verified, the study could be seen as invalid and not contribute to reducing the gap within the area of study.

The limitations of a study could impact the outcome. The limitations of the study were obvious reasons for the reduced metrics, the cost of the training model outweigh the ROI, and metrics being influenced by other employees. There were also employees who were experienced, tenured within the organization, and typically excel in the tracked metrics, without the need to have the training to be successful. Internal validity limitations could also include who is facilitating the training, given that the andragogy style training is different from pedagogy style training. The trainer may not be comfortable with letting the group lead critical parts of the training or with accepting their hands-on knowledge of working on the floor.

External validity reasons that could impact the study outcome is natural disasters that could affect the metrics of the employees' due to loss of sales or clients that they would typically to serve. Sales trends could also dictate the employees' ability to increase sales based on reduced traffic. Construction from maintenance can reduce the number of clients as well as make the shopping environment less appealing, leading to reduced sales and reduced conversion rates. The added security of not having personal information about the employees and using raw data allowed for the research to be focused on the results of the training and how the training related to the metric scores of the employees without possible biases.

### **Recommendations**

The following is a compilation of recommendations based on the findings from this topic of study. The differences in learning styles of andragogy versus pedagogy were supported in previously published research (Forrest & Peterson, 2006; Knowles, 2005). Andragogy, as a theory or practical approach to adult education, has been verified when implemented correctly can increase the ability for adults to learn (Knowles, 2014). Training or educating adults continues to present itself as one of the practical approaches to adult training and education. Though not universally accepted, andragogy has significant support in the education and organizational training communities (Fornaciari & Lund Dean, 2014; Gibson, 2011; Karim, Huda, & Khan, 2012). Recommendations for future studies can be made based on the research, experience, and findings of this analysis.



The scope of this study included the metrics of one state within one large retail organization. The sample size used in this analysis exceeded the criteria needed to hit the saturation point within South Carolina. It is suggested that similar studies were used to expound on the analysis of large retail organizations in multiple states creating a more extensive population sample which, in turn, would also reduce the gap in the literature on training in a large retail work environment. It is also possible that other regions within this specific large retail organization implemented the training more efficiently. In this study, expanding on the locations that were not analyzed would help determine if the andragogy-style training was implemented correctly throughout the majority of locations and determine if the training shows an overall increase or decrease in metrics that may not have been influenced by demographics or environment.

Recommendations include more research be explored within the andragogic practices of the training facilitators. The results of this study showed an increase in one of the metrics and a decrease of two of the metrics. Since this was not a mixed methods study findings on the quality of the training was not researched. Research on the implementation of the training, focusing on retailer specific trainers who deliver the andragogy training model versus a manager with little to no training in the method intended or training adults is recommended. Future researchers could expand on if there is any variance between the adult trainers age, adult teaching experience, and previous use of andragogic practices. Exploring these factors may determine if social elements, such as generational experiences, relate to a trainer's implementation of andragogical practices. It is recommended that future researchers consider exploring whether adult

educators of different social backgrounds, in different countries, or in specific settings have different rates of implementation of andragogy practices within a large retail organization. This exploration could lead to recommendations for how to increase the effectiveness of the adult trainer.

It is recommended putting into place a system to ensure that as new employees were hired, they will also complete the andragogy training model as well as introduce refresher models and offer advanced training for those who could sharpen their skills. The more training that is given has a better opportunity to get the employee more versed in the expectations and have an opportunity to get results faster. Based on the study results employees that were more tenured showed fewer increases than those who were newer to the large retail organization. Organizational leaders and trainers within the large retail organization should put into practice andragogy as part of the new hire training curriculum for all new and continue to work with tenured employees to increase their KPI metrics. Adults employees who were introduced to the andragogic principles from the start of their training were more likely to accept the andragogic style of their trainer (Birzer, 2003; Knowles, 2005; Wilson, 2004).

Additionally, employees can unexpectedly find themselves in the position of an organizational trainer or adult educator through the course of employment without previously being provided with any additional andragogy training or guidance. Many educators continue to use pedagogical approaches with adult learners. By working with the employees to train and educate there would be more information as to if the type of training is working to increase the return on interest and increase morale within the

workplace. Within this study, research analysis has been added to current literature that could benefit large retail organizations in the importance of training their adult employees using models that were best suited for them to learn. Understanding what models work best across multiple retail organization could help align training and increase the ROI.

### **Implications**

Walden University's approach to higher learning includes having the students incorporate positive social change within their study. This is an imperative pledge of commitment to ensure the study has the potential to contribute to positive social change. My pledge to incorporate positive social change was an important aspect and basis of my study. Researched by seeking data to support changing the culture on how education within large retail organizations was training their employees. By training the employees using an andragogy method, the large retail organizations could find a higher ROI on the training as well as increased morale. The theory of andragogy introduces various instructional insinuations to achieve optimum edifying results. The facilitator in the training environment would allow the adult learners to be self-directed by assuming the role of the facilitator rather than a lecturer. Since proven by Knowles (1984) lecturing can inhibit the adult learner and eliminate an interactive learning environment that is crucial to the adult learning process. In this capacity, the facilitator's role can also become a mentor as well as an accessible reference for how the training will impact their current work environment. Giving insight into what is being learned to how it will impact their work currently.

Facilitators using strategies such as case studies, role-playing, simulations, and self-evaluation were most useful. Teacher and trainers adopt a role of a facilitator or resource rather than lecturer or grader. Knowles (1984) provided an example of applying andragogy principles to the design of training. There is a need to explain why specific things were taught; examples include why the metric is important, how would you achieve the goal, why there is a goal and what were benefits of attaining the goal. Instruction should be task-oriented instead of memorization; learning activities should be in the context of common tasks to be performed. Instruction should consider the wide range of different backgrounds of learners; learning materials and activities should allow for different levels/types of previous experience with retail work and selling practices.

Adults were self-directed, instruction should allow learners to discover things for themselves, providing guidance and help when mistakes occur. In real-world terms, andragogy means that instruction for adults needs to focus more on the process and less on the content taught. Knowles (1989) stated that andragogy does not fit neatly into any of the categories of philosophers whom often want to categorized theories. Knowles further stated that “what this means in practice is that we educators now have the responsibility to check out which assumptions were realistic in a given situation” (Knowles, 1990, p. 64). Knowles’ statements lead one to believe, and then confirmed through use, that andragogy could be used in many ways and would have to be adapted to fit individual situations depending on the industry and or environment.

However, Knowles (1990) did not adequately account for the learning process; research was concentrated on the differences in how adults and children learn. As

proven by the research theories of Kolb's (1984) and Gardner (1993,1999) several individual differences can factor into and affect the quality and nature of learning. Although Knowles first viewed andragogy as being a separate entity from pedagogy, revised his views over time and stated the view that andragogy and pedagogy as being on a continuum, noting that there were times when either approach might be appropriate based on circumstances and needs of the learner (Knowles, 1984).

This study proved a positive variance with the employees analyzed within the item locate metric. Giving evidence and more supporting information that the andragogy style of training increased the majority of employee metrics within that large retailer in South Carolina. Information gained from the outcome of this study has the potential to be used to increase morale from employees who have better status checks and increased productivity from learning in a fashion that promotes them learning more effectively. L&D leaders could select to use models created for adults, which could also reduce the number of training programs that were proven not as effective. Retailers using the best-suited training model could also impact social change by educating their employees in the KPIs needed to advance their careers. Corporations using non-effective training model create lower morale due to truncated employee buy-in to the program or training (Conklin, 2012). As indicated previously, trained employees could increase their opportunities for advancement within their respective organizations as a result of acquiring the requisite skills. Large retail organizations will benefit from this study and future studies by having the tools to train their adult employees better.

This approach gives the adult learner the ability to use self-reliance while refraining from isolating the student in the process. The gradual diminishing of the facilitator's active input in teaching effectively fosters an environment in which the learner achieves a sense of self-sufficiency. The facilitator is proficient in the skill set but can also learn from the conversations within the training environment. The facilitator has adequate access yet allows the adult learner to learn with independence.

Adult learners benefit significantly from self-designed learning projects. Again, the facilitator's role as a resource and encourager is invaluable for such an active learning process. With self-directed learning projects, adult learners can control their learning pace to intertwine with their learning style. Knowles (1980) valued the experience learners brought to the educational environment that focused on what the adult learner needs to learn most effectively. That experience was viewed as an essential resource for both learners and the facilitators (Knowles, 1980). He differentiated the quality of experiences of adults versus children based on in social and psychological terms (Knowles, 1980). Knowles documented that in many observations' adults were the best resources for one another. Those methods encouraged group discussion and collaborative assignments that would rely on the expertise within the training environment.

A pledge of positive social change is an imperative commitment to Walden University's approach to higher learning. This study has the potential to contribute to positive change by changing the culture of how employers within large retail organizations were training their employees. By training the employees using an andragogy method, the large retail organizations could find a higher ROI on the training

as well as increased morale. The theory of andragogy introduces various instructional insinuations to achieve optimum edifying results. The facilitator in the training environment would allow the adult learners to be self-directed by assuming the role of the facilitator rather than a lecturer. Since proven by Knowles (1984) lecturing can inhibit the adult learner and eliminate an interactive learning environment that is crucial to the adult learning process. In this capacity, the facilitator's role can also become a mentor as well as an accessible reference for how the training will impact their current work environment. Giving insight into what is being learned to how it will impact their work currently.

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### **Conclusions**

Aspects of Knowles' (1980) theory of andragogy would be beneficial for corporate educators and their adult learners. As discussed in the literature review, Knowles theory of andragogy is based on five primary principles: self-concept, personal

experience, the readiness to learn, orientation to learning, and motivation to learn. Knowles theory of andragogy suggests that involving the adult learner in the class environment will encourage learning and implementation of the material (Knowles, 2014). There is an abundant amount of andragogical, developmental, and cognitive literature to continue to suggest that differences do exist between adult learners and child learners as discussed in Chapter 2. Many methods and theories contribute to the training materials used in a large retail organization. It is vital for educationalists to understand that several factors motivate adults to learn new concepts and skills. The literature has also indicated that it is essential for educators to use the training material and training methods that were best suited to their employees.

The benefits of using a training model based on andragogy models would lead to a more interactive and receptive group. By facilitating the information and an open forum, it also allows for more real-life experiences and relevant situational instances to be shared with others that may not be as experienced. Knowles (2012) demonstrated that pushback from the adult learners could be overcome by presenting andragogy training model in smaller group settings. Setbacks listed could include, major retailers finding it difficult to change most of the training material from pedagogy styles to more andragogy styles without having to alter their current delivery methods significantly. Facilitating the training material in small groups, via the open forums in a discussion format could be considered challenging for larger corporations who traditionally delivered the training via PowerPoint in large (auditorium) settings. There would also be an increased investment

in time for large entities who adopted using andragogy style training model within larger stores grouping employees in smaller groups could take longer to complete the training.

The results indicated that although students in the andragogical style program were successful in increasing their percent to the goal of the item locate metric, sales per hour and credit card penetration results overall were not increased. As discussed in previous chapters in a work environment that uses andragogy methods, there would be benefits to understanding the intelligence of their employees and incorporating methods best suited to them. Malcolm Knowles's definition of andragogy was the "art and science of helping adults learn" (Knowles, 1984; Lee, 1998; Pratt, 1988). Trainers and educators must continue to rely on the art, rather than the science, of teaching adult learners to reduce the gap and continue to find methods to teach adults in large retail organizations.

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## Appendix A: Data Use Agreement

## DATA USE AGREEMENT -

This Data Use Agreement (“Agreement”), effective as of 4/21/2017 “Effective Date”), is entered by and between Jacqueline F. Conroy (“Data Recipient”) and XXX (“Data Provider”). The purpose of this Agreement is to provide Data Recipient with access to a Limited Data Set (“LDS”) for use in research in accord with the HIPAA and FERPA Regulations.

1. Definitions. Unless otherwise specified in this Agreement, all capitalized terms used in this Agreement not otherwise defined have the meaning established for purposes of the “HIPAA Regulations” codified at Title 45 parts 160 through 164 of the United States Code of Federal Regulations, as amended from time to time.
2. Preparation of the LDS. Data Provider shall prepare and furnish to Data Recipient a LDS in accord with any applicable HIPAA or FERPA Regulations.

Data Fields in the LDS. **No direct identifiers such as names may be included in the Limited Data Set (LDS).** The researcher will also not name the organization in the doctoral project report that is published in ProQuest. In preparing the LDS, Data Provider or shall include the **data fields specified as follows for 682 employees within South Carolina**, which is the minimum necessary to accomplish the research:

Associate training used: Computer-based training, vendor training, on the floor training, group training, or specified training methods used within the organization.

Average Monthly Sales before training

Average Monthly Sales after training was given

Monthly Credit results before training

Monthly Credit result after training was given

Monthly Average item locate sold before training

Monthly Average item locate sold after training was given

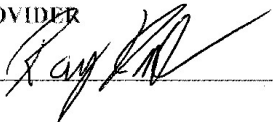
3. Responsibilities of Data Recipient. Data Recipient agrees to:
  - a. Use or disclose the LDS only as permitted by this Agreement or as required by law;
  - b. Use appropriate safeguards to prevent use or disclosure of the LDS other than as permitted by this Agreement or required by law;
  - c. Report to Data Provider any use or disclosure of the LDS of which it becomes aware that is not permitted by this Agreement or required by law;



- d. Require any of its subcontractors or agents that receive or have access to the LDS to agree to the same restrictions and conditions on the use and/or disclosure of the LDS that apply to Data Recipient under this Agreement; and
  - e. Not use the information in the LDS to identify or contact the individuals who are data subjects.
4. Permitted Uses and Disclosures of the LDS. Data Recipient may use and/or disclose the LDS for its research activities only.
5. Term and Termination.
  - a. Term. The term of this Agreement shall commence as of the Effective Date and shall continue for so long as Data Recipient retains the LDS, unless sooner terminated as set forth in this Agreement.
  - b. Termination by Data Recipient. Data Recipient may terminate this agreement at any time by notifying the Data Provider and returning or destroying the LDS.
  - c. Termination by Data Provider. Data Provider may terminate this agreement at any time by providing thirty (30) days prior written notice to Data Recipient.
  - d. For Breach. Data Provider shall provide written notice to Data Recipient within ten (10) days of any determination that Data Recipient has breached a material term of this Agreement. Data Provider shall afford Data Recipient an opportunity to cure said alleged material breach upon mutually agreeable terms. Failure to agree on mutually agreeable terms for cure within thirty (30) days shall be grounds for the immediate termination of this Agreement by Data Provider.
  - e. Effect of Termination. Sections 1, 4, 5, 6(e) and 7 of this Agreement shall survive any termination of this Agreement under subsections c or d.
6. Miscellaneous.
  - a. Change in Law. The parties agree to negotiate in good faith to amend this Agreement to comport with changes in federal law that materially alter either or both parties' obligations under this Agreement. Provided however, that if the parties are unable to agree to mutually acceptable amendment(s) by the compliance date of the change in applicable law or regulations, either Party may terminate this Agreement as provided in section 6.
  - b. Construction of Terms. The terms of this Agreement shall be construed to give effect to applicable federal interpretative guidance regarding the HIPAA Regulations.
  - c. No Third-Party Beneficiaries. Nothing in this Agreement shall confer upon any person other than the parties and their respective successors or assigns, any rights, remedies, obligations, or liabilities whatsoever.

- d. Counterparts. This Agreement may be executed in one or more counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original, but all of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument.
- e. Headings. The headings and other captions in this Agreement are for convenience and reference only and shall not be used in interpreting, construing or enforcing any of the provisions of this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, each of the undersigned has caused this Agreement to be duly executed in its name and on its behalf.

<b>DATA PROVIDER</b>
Signed: 
Print Name: _____
Print Title: <u>Director of HR</u>

**DATA RECIPIENT**

Signed: Jacqueline Conroy  
Print Name: Jacqueline Conroy  
Print Title: PhD Candidate