Missionary Thinking in the Perspective of Adult Education Principles and Bible Study

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Abstract

Adult education is formulated as a process that fosters a desire to ask questions and learn continuously throughout life. The study aims to answer the questions: What is the Bible as the basis for teaching design? What are the characteristics of adult education? What is the correct and effective formulation of a missionary for adult education? The answers are: 1) The Bible as the basis for teaching design means Bible values are the source and guide of all curricula; 2) Characteristics of adult education, both in the field of work and other experiences, are independent, think for their interests (future) and have diverse backgrounds; 3) Appropriate and effective missionary Bible studies for adult education are as follows: a) curriculum that reflects God's missionary vision (Missio Dei); b) a curriculum model for a missionary approach that uses information, stimulation, or projection and a learning process for missionary approach which is developed based on the interests of adults by integrating all forms of activities.

Keywords: Adult Education, Bible, Missionary

Abstrak

mandiri, memikirkan kepentingan sendiri (masa depan) dan memiliki latar belakang yang beragam. (3) Pelajaran Alkitab misionaris yang tepat dan efektif untuk pendidikan orang dewasa adalah sebagai berikut: (a) kurikulum yang mencerminkan visi misionaris Allah (missio dei). (b) pendekatan model kurikulum misionaris yang menggunakan informasi, stimulasi atau proyeksi dan pendekatan proses pembelajaran misionaris yang dikembangkan berdasarkan minat orang dewasa dengan mengintegrasikan segala bentuk kegiatan.

Kata-kata Kunci: Alkitab, Misionaris, Pendidikan Orang Dewasa

Introduction

Adult education (andragogy) is education that takes place in the form of self-direction to ask questions and seek answers to the needs of knowledge, reason, and skills at that time. Adult education is formulated as a process that fosters a desire to ask questions and learn continuously throughout life and in all activities as a learning dimension. UNESCO defines Adult Education as the whole process of organized education, regardless of content, level, method, whether formal or not, which continues or replaces education in schools, colleges, and universities and job training, which makes people who are considered adults by society develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or professional qualifications, and result in changes in their attitudes and behavior in the dual perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced and free social, economic and cultural development. So it is not surprising that in 1925 Thorndike conducted a study (published in 1928) on adult

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education and found that “adults learn through their”.\(^5\) Adult education and learning can take the following forms, such as formal education, non-formal education, informal learning, and incidental learning.\(^6\) Of course, adjusted to the time and needs. If he has a long time, then he can develop his education through formal education by getting a degree. On the other hand, if time is limited, they can develop themselves by entering non-formal education. Thus, adult education requires a lifelong learning process.\(^7\)

In this regard, Hurlock divides adults into three periods as follows: First, early adulthood, which extends from the time legal maturity is reached until approximately the age of forty years). Second, middle age, which generally begins at the age of forty years and lasts at the age of sixty years (also experienced within twenty years). Third, old age, which starts from the end of middle age until someone dies.\(^8\) Adult education in higher education\(^9\) requires a certain time process and without being forced to want to increase knowledge, skills, and change attitudes in order to develop themselves as individuals and increase participation in social, economic, and cultural development in a balanced and complete manner.\(^10\)

This article aims to find formulate a biblical understanding that is appropriate and effective for adult faith growth. In more detail, the research questions that need to be answered are: What is meant by the Bible as the basis for teaching design? What are the characteristics of


\(^{10}\) Suprijanto, *Pendidikan Orang Dewasa* (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2007), 14.
adults? What is the correct and effective way to formulate a biblical missionary for adult education?

Method

Writing this scientific paper uses a descriptive qualitative method\(^\text{11}\) which is more focused according to the title and uses a literature review to answer research problems, specifically examining the literature such as books and scientific articles in online journals related to the research title.

The descriptive qualitative steps are: 1) identifying significant problems to be solved through descriptive methods; 2) limiting and formulating the problem clearly; 3) determine the objectives and benefits of the research; 4) conduct a literature study related to the problem; 5) determine the framework of thinking, and research questions; 6) designing the research method to be used; 7) collect, organize, and analyze relevant data; 8) make a research report.\(^\text{12}\)

Result and Discussion

The Bible as a Teaching Basis

Calvin said that the Bible is a source of teaching. The Bible is the life and benefits of Bible teaching.\(^\text{13}\) The Bible is the power of the teaching and is the laying of the biblical curriculum.\(^\text{14}\) The Bible is absolutely true and there is not the slightest error. The Bible is final. There is no other bible apart from the Bible of Jesus Christ. The Bible was written by God’s chosen people who were inspired by the Holy Spirit, so the Bible is the Word of God.


\(^{13}\) Roger Nicole, *John Calvin dan Inerrancy* (Jakarta: LRII, 1996), 22-23.

**Understanding the Bible as a Teaching Basis**

Jesus was the source of all life! which makes a person from a bad life good, a life of doubting the future to a life full of the future, a life that always feels lacking becomes always fulfilled, a life that is always dissatisfied becomes satisfied. Paul himself said: “I have firm confidence in the gospel, for the gospel is the power of God to save everyone who believes” (Rom 1:16). The word “salvation” (salvation; Greek Soteria) emphasizes the effect of salvation. Soteria refers to ‘body health, preservation, safety’\(^\text{15}\) but deeper that salvation is due to the “justification”, “redemption” of God (the power of God in the previous phrase). Salvation is, positively, living in honesty and bringing many blessings from God (Rom. 5:10-11; 1 Cor. 1:18; Eph. 2:13). However, negatively, people who are not saved are exposed to God’s wrath (Rom. 5:9), away from God (Rom. 5:10), fell into sin (Matt. 1:21), lost his life (Luke 19:10), lived in the power of the devil (Lk. 8:36), fell sick (Lk. 8:48), live in danger (Matt. 8:25-26), and become a corrupt generation (Ac. 2:40).\(^\text{16}\)

The meaning and power of the Bible are so extraordinary that it is appropriate for the Bible to be the basis of teaching. That is, the Bible is not only the content (curriculum) to be taught for adult education, but the Bible is the rule in teaching design. The rule is that the Bible is the basis or limit of the material and strategies that can be used in developing the teaching, education activities, and supporting effective adult learning systems.\(^\text{17}\)

**Teaching Plan**

Teaching method is a means of outlining the transformative expression of biblical values. Suprijanto formulated a teaching design consisting of several points as follows: 1) Identification of the general objectives of teaching; 2) Conducting teaching analysis; 3) Identification of basic behavior and characteristics of students; 4) Formulating


\(^{16}\) Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 1988), 68.

performance objectives; 5) Developing the points of reference text of benchmarks; 6) Develop teaching strategies; 7) Develop and select teaching materials; 8) Design and evaluate formats; 9) Revise teaching materials; 10) Design and conduct a summative evaluation.\(^\text{18}\)

Sidjabat calls it a kind of “curriculum guideline,”\(^\text{19}\) the contents of which are: courses, credits, explanations and objectives, topics of discussion, learning resource materials. That is a guideline for developing Lecture Plans or Lecture Program Units (syllabus).

Meanwhile, Lecture Program Units (SAP) is a one-semester learning activity design, answering three main questions: (a) What should be learned (learning objectives); (b) What or how the procedure, and what learning resources are appropriate to achieve the desired learning outcomes (learning activities and resources); (c) How we know that the expected learning outcomes have been achieved (evaluation).\(^\text{20}\)

**The Power of the Bible**

The Bible not only provides guidance for believers so that their faith will be more fruitful but also is the key to spiritual growth. The Bible which is the guide and the basis for teaching the life of believers leads to eternal life: praise God (Dan. 4:34), have faith in God (Dan. 12:7), and do good (Rm. 2:7), and have eternal life (1 John 1:2).

The phrase “eternal life” (1 Jn. 1:2: Greek *sume* (life) *aimenion* (eternal))\(^\text{21}\) refers to the child’s life (Jesus’ incarnation) to earth bringing spiritual life (Jn. 6:57; Rm. 1:17; 8:13b; Gal. 2:19,20; Heb. 12:9), changing conditions that were previously sinful into living in God, bringing hope, and changing human character. In this regard, Vine describes the meaning of life as follows: “To live means to experience that change, which to be the portion of all in Christ who will be alive upon the earth

\(^{18}\) Suprijanto, 60–67.


\(^{21}\) Tonny Andrian et al., “The Concept of Time Management Based on Ephesians 5:15–17 and Relevance to Contemporary Christian Leaders,” *HTS Teologise Studies / Theological Studies* 77, no. 3 (2021): a6425, [https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v77i3.6425](https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v77i3.6425)
at the Parousia of the Lord Jesus and which corresponds to the resurrection of those who had previously died in Christ.”

The word “eternal” refers to time, place, and season without an end, but to enter into eternity must go through God’s judgment at His second coming. So, the way to get eternal life is for someone to accept Jesus as his Savior so that he gets a guarantee of salvation. Until the day of judgment comes, Jesus will reveal that eternal life.

**Gospel Transformation**

The gospel transformation (preaching, teaching, testimony) is God’s Great Commission that must be given to all people throughout the earth (Matt. 28:16-20; Mrk 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; and John 20:21-23). Jesus taught everyone that no one can get to the Father, except through the Lord Jesus (John 14:6). This is the essence of the message of salvation for humans in the world. Jesus said, only through Himself, there is a way of salvation, but Jesus gave people the freedom to decide: whether to follow Jesus or not. Jesus is the same as the Father giving people the choice to choose “eternal life” or “perish” in which people will die in their sins if they do not believe that He is the Savior (John 8:24).

Jesus is a role model of transformation and taught His followers how they can live a fruitful life, by being close to Him (John 15:1-16). Joy and obedience will be signs of their life. They will become friends, not only servants (v. 15), but they must also be prepared to face challenges and persecution. Likewise, when Jesus spent most of His life on earth serving His own people, the Jews. It is so clear that He also aspires to a worldwide gospel ministry (Lk. 13:29; Matt. 24:14; 15:21-28; 8:5-13).

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23 Ibid., 383.


Jesus’ desires that the Christian life could bear fruit (John 15:1-16). For that, every disciple of Jesus must be ready to face the challenges of the world (John 15:18). If that happens, then the goal of missionary work (is for all nations from various directions to come before the Father’s throne; Lk. 13:29) will be achieved. The Bible as a study material. The Bible can answer all of man’s spiritual needs. The Bible reveals His will and plans are known through the Bible. The Bible is the norm of study. The Bible is normative truth. The essence of the Bible is to carry out God’s vision, both missionary vision (winning as many lost souls as possible) and pastoral vision (believers’ faith is growing) with a focus on living like Jesus Christ. Thus, the transformation of the gospel means preaching the gospel, where the evangelist must deliver according to the Word of God.26

Characteristics of Adults

Understanding Adults

The definition of “adult” is still much debated. Some say that adults in terms of ages are those aged between 16-18 years. In terms of psychological characteristics, a person who can direct himself does not always depend on others, wants to be responsible, independent, dare to take risks, and can make decisions. In terms of biology, an adult is a person who has shown secondary sexual characteristics. In men, among others: the growth of Adam’s apple on the neck, changes in the voice to be large and heavy, the growth of body hair such as mustache, beard, sideburns, and chest hair. In women: the occurrence of menstruation and the growth of breasts.27

It is legally considered that an adult begins when a person turns 21 years old (even though he is not married) or when someone gets married (even though he is not yet 21 years old) up to 40 years. So, indeed the notion of adults becomes confusing. It can be estimated that in general “adults” have had various experiences both in their work and other

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27 Suprijanto, 11–12.
experiences and have diverse backgrounds. Understanding Adult to be carried out both for lecturers and students.28

**Maturity Traits**

Characteristics of adults are task-oriented, not self- or ego-oriented: First, Mature people's interests are oriented towards the tasks at hand. Second, clear goals and efficient work habits; A mature person sees the goals he wants to achieve clarity. He knows what is appropriate and what is not and works guided towards it. Traits influence maturing adolescent identity through goal-oriented moral actions which promote purpose and meaning.29

**Adult Learning Process**

Learning is a process. Factors that influence learning success: adult learning characteristics, learning atmosphere, educator function, educator attitude, and educator personality.

Adult learning is a gradual process, the factors that influence learning, the characteristics of adult learning, the learning atmosphere, the function of the educator, the attitude of the educator, and the personality of the educator.30 These factors are essential for successful adult learning.31

In this regard, Suprijanto divides the learning process into two, namely: First, internal factors occur in the learner, going through six stages 1) motivation; 2) attention to lessons; 3) receiving and remembering; 4) reproduction; 5) generalization; and 6) carry out the task of learning and feedback.32

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32 Suprijanto, 40.
For Lunandi it is said that internal factors include: Physical and non-physical factors. Physical factors are personal characteristics such as age, hearing, and vision while non-physical (psychological) factors such as the level of aspirations, talents, interests, abilities, and social context.\textsuperscript{33}

Second, external factors come from outside the learner’s self or the environment: the state of the room, learning equipment, learning resources, or encouragement to learn from family and friends.

Missionary Thinking in the Perspective of Adult Education and Bible Studies

*Adult Education Missionary Vision*

God's vision is Missio Dei,\textsuperscript{34} which Jesus (Missio Christi) continued, then carried by the Holy Spirit. The essence of God's vision is “...go and make disciples of all nations and baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 28:18-19). God's vision is the commandment of the great commission in the preaching of the Gospel.

For ordinary adults (believers), the command to preach the gospel is not easy to do. Adults need learning and training in how to share the gospel. Therefore, we can start with basic learning: what is the meaning of the great commission (Gospel), its vision, and mission? After that, it can be continued by carrying out evangelistic practices among them, and finally, it can be deployed to the community. However, these activities are always monitored or accompanied by their mentors. In this way, adults will gradually become disciples of Christ, who are learners.

The vision of adult education must carry out God's vision that is missionary, which is also the goal of the curriculum for adult education. Meanwhile, the design of learning materials (knowledge) for such a curriculum can be understood as the entire content of existing subjects which are a reflection of God's missionary vision and goals. This is in line with the opinion of Lois E. LeBar who said that Christians cannot fulfill their goals by using a man-centered curriculum, but a God-centered


curriculum. So, God’s Word is the basis of the curriculum center because no book can be compared with God’s Word\(^{35}\), and reading God’s word emerges spiritual awakening to evoke the spirit of mission.\(^{36}\) Thus Adult Education needs to prepare a Bible-centered curriculum.\(^{37}\)

**Adult Education Curriculum**

Adult education curriculum about preaching the gospel is the main thing in achieving God’s vision (God’s great commission).\(^{38}\) Of course, the curriculum emphasizes the formation process:\(^{39}\) Commitment to Jesus, Growing Relationship with God and His People, to Witness to Those at the Beginning. The following Kraft diagram provides direction on the position and from where a person will begin to improve himself to achieve: Commitment to Jesus, Growing Relationship to God, and being a witness of Christ.\(^{40}\)

There are three stage of the curriculum (Table 1) that increase a person’s motivation to share the gospel. The *first stage*, curriculum is aimed at making a person committed to Jesus. How to do it? If a person is in the “capture of Satan,” then he must be freed from the grip of Satan. It requires spiritual warfare or confrontation from the powers of darkness. Therefore, he needs to struggle to ask God to give him the power to be able to carry out spiritual warfare. If he wins that battle, then his commitment to Jesus will increase. If he does not have enough


knowledge of God, then he needs knowledge of God. If he is an unfaithful person, then he needs to grow in faithfulness. He needs to learn to understand God's faithfulness.

Table 1. Stages of The Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Start</th>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Satanic Captivity (Demon Prisoner)</td>
<td>Freedom to Understand (Freedom to understand)</td>
<td>Power Encounters</td>
<td>Commitment to Jesus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ignorance/Error (Ignorance/mistake)</td>
<td>Enough Understanding (Sufficient understanding)</td>
<td>Truth Encounters (war of truth)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Christian Allegiance</td>
<td>Challenge to Commit to Jesus</td>
<td>Allegiance Encounters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Commitment to Jesus</td>
<td>Spiritual Warfare to Provide Protection, Healing, Blessing, Deliverance</td>
<td>Power Encounters (War of power)</td>
<td>Growing Relationship to God and His People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>Truth Encounters (War of truth)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Challenges to Greater Commitment and Obedience</td>
<td>Allegiance Encounters (War of allegiance)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Growing Relationship to God and His People</td>
<td>Authoritative Prayer (Power of prayer)</td>
<td>Power Encounters (War of power)</td>
<td>Witness to Those at the Beginning of Stage 1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>Truth Encounters (War of truth)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Challenges to Commitment</td>
<td>Allegiance Encounters</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Curriculum stage two, is to make the relationship between God and His people grow. How to do it? Stage 1, if he needs an understanding of spiritual salvation that provides protection, healing, blessing, and deliverance, then he needs to experience the power of God at work in his life. He needs to experience protection, healing, and blessings from God. Stage 2, if he needs true teaching about God's Word, then he needs to grow in God's Word. This is to cultivate his relationship with God. Stage 3, when he is tempted, he is dependent on God's faithfulness; maybe he needs to experience how God's faithfulness is shown in the battle against Satan.

Curriculum stage three, is so that one can begin to testify to others. How to do it? If he needs the power of prayer in his witnessing ministry, then he needs to experience the power of God in his ministry. That experience will make him a witness filled with the power of God. If he
needs teaching to know God more deeply, then he needs to experience the truths of God’s Word. Thus, he can testify because of the Word of God. If he falters in various trials, then he needs to experience being strengthened by the power of God.

**Collaborative Curriculum Model Approach**

Characteristics of adult education with missiology materials: 1) missiology learning is carried out not only by giving theory but also by practice; 2) adults are more likely to study in groups than individually. So, with this in mind, an effective learning model can use the theory of “Model Collaborative-Cooperative Learning” which was initiated by G. P. Harianto et al. The group model can help improve the character of students, not create competition, and increase the ego of students, but together achieve the predetermined goals. In the classroom, a facilitator (educator) provides information and missiology skills. The facilitator gives a stimulus to the students. Stimulus is material that contains as complete information as possible so that students do not have the opportunity or only have very limited opportunities to develop the material that has been provided by the facilitator. The role of the learner is to absorb information “like a sponge” from the facilitator’s mind and learning materials, both theory and practice.

In applying the “Collaborative-Cooperative Learning” model, the facilitator uses lectures and occasional classroom practice. After that, groups were formed and the facilitator served as a mentor in the group. After the group work is finished, the group presents in class and is re-evaluated by the facilitator. This learning model until the number of meetings and the length of time that has been determined. In this way, adults can take part in missiology lessons effectively: happy and excited to practice in the field.

**Conclusion**

The Bible as the basis for teaching design means biblical values as the source and guide of all curricula. The Bible underlies the teaching and learning process of adult education. That’s because the Bible has the

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power to turn a bad life into a good one, an anxious future into a certain future, and a discontented life into a peaceful one.

Characteristics of adults. “Adults” have had various experiences both in the field of work and other experiences, are independent, think for their own interests (future) and have diverse backgrounds. Even so, adults are still influenced and they experience changes in self-interest, the need for interests that are for personal gain such as recreation, and interest in social activities.

Missionary Bible studies that are appropriate and effective for adult education are as follows: First, a curriculum that reflects God’s missionary vision (Missio Dei). Second, 1) a missionary curriculum model approach that uses information, stimulation, or projection; and 2) a missionary learning process approach which is developed based on the interests of adults by integrating all forms of adult activities such as: seeing, reading, observing, listening, moving limbs, talking, conversing, thinking, contemplating, observing, feeling something, touching or holding, smelling, writing or composing, doing something, and others.

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