

Incorporating Intercultural Understanding Capability in Christian Studies Years 7-9 in Lutheran Education

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Incorporating Intercultural Understanding Capability in Christian Studies Years 7–9 in Lutheran Education

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Keywords

Australian curriculum, capabilities, Christian Studies, curriculum, framework, intercultural understanding, Lutheran education

Abstract

In 2012, the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) embedded seven General Capabilities, including the intercultural understanding capability, to the nationally adopted curriculum that guides school education in Australia. The way in which capabilities have been incorporated varies from state to state, from sector to sector, and from school to school. Currently, there is no study that examines the integration of intercultural understanding into Christian Studies in the context of Lutheran secondary education.

This qualitative case study research addresses the research problem: How do Lutheran schools embed the Australian Curriculum capability intercultural understanding within their Christian Studies program? In order to investigate the research problem, two research questions were explored: (1) How do educators implement intercultural understanding in their Christian Studies program on the basis of their Christian Studies Curriculum Framework? (2) In what ways does the Christian Studies program allow for students to develop intercultural understanding?

The framework for this study is provided by Dewey's constructivist approach of inquiry-based learning and student-centred learning, and Vygotsky's model of social constructivism. These constructivist theories are applied in this study in two ways—by examining the educational practices and materials based on constructivist ideas, and by incorporating a constructivist approach to the interview process. This study is concerned with understanding how students develop intercultural understanding as well as how educators implement this capability into their Christian Studies program and units of work. For a qualitative case study that aligns with the theoretical framework of constructivism, literature from Stake (1995) is employed.

Qualitative data were collected from the key documents—the Christian Studies Curriculum Framework (CSCF) and the Christian Studies units of work from Years 7–9, and the two semi-structured interviews—one with a writer of the CSCF document (2015) and one with a teacher who wrote and implemented the Christian Studies units of work in their school. An inductive approach to the data coding and a thematic analysis were used for this qualitative research, which revealed three key themes. These include (1) curriculum, (2) pedagogy, and (3) culture and religion. Sub-themes identified in curriculum include structure and content, and service-learning. Within the theme of pedagogy several sub-themes were identified—*inquiry-based learning*, *student-centred learning* which includes *authentic learning*, *reflective learning* and *collaborative learning*, and *teachers’ planning*. Sub-themes identified within the culture and religion theme were *texts* and *activities*.

The findings from this research will assist Lutheran schools as well as other religious and non-religious schools to examine ways of incorporating the intercultural understanding capability into their programs as well as discover ways for students to develop intercultural understanding.

Statement of Originality

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

Juliet Anne Beattie

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The veneration of Mary is inscribed in the very depths of the human heart (Martin Luther, 1522).

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Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACARA	Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
AEC	Australian Education Council
AEM	Australian Education Ministers
ALWS	Australian Lutheran World Service
CS	Christian Studies
CSCF	Christian Studies Curriculum Framework
GUHRERC	Griffith University Human Research Ethics Review Committee
IU	Intercultural Understanding
LEA	Lutheran Education Australia
LEQ	Lutheran Education Queensland
LS	Learning Service
MCEETYA	Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training, and Youth Affairs
MOVEET	Ministers of Vocational Education, Employment and Training

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

In Lutheran secondary schools across Australia, the core subject of Christian Studies is usually compulsory for all students in Years 7–9, including non-Christian students. Christian Studies is a religious education program that provides a range of religious and non-religious perspectives with a main focus on Christianity for students to explore in the classroom (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015). Lutheran Education Australia published the Christian Studies Curriculum Framework (CSCF) in 2005, with a revision in 2015 (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015).

In 2009, the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) was established to assist with the implementation of the new Australian national curriculum. By 2012, seven General Capabilities—Literacy, Numeracy, ICT Capability, Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social Capabilities, Intercultural Understanding (IU) and Ethical Understanding—were added to the Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2012b). The General Capabilities interconnect the skills and knowledge for students to develop their learning across multiple facets of their lives, within the curriculum and co-curriculum programs, and in life outside school (ACARA, 2013b). IU is one of the capabilities addressed through the content of the learning areas, and in subjects such as Christian Studies, as well as through the learning continuum. The Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2015) states that IU addresses the personal, interpersonal and social capabilities that all students are expected to achieve through their schooling (Halse et al., 2015). Learners value and critically view their own cultural perspectives and practices as well as those of others, through interactions with people, texts and contexts across the curriculum, to become active and informed citizens of the world (Tambyah, 2018; ACARA, 2013b; MCEETYA, 2008). The IU capability cultivates values, beliefs and dispositions, such as empathy, respect, critical awareness and positive behaviours associated with understanding multicultural dimensions in schools and societies.

1.2 Purpose of the study

This study sets out to explore how the intersection of IU and Christian Studies is incorporated in a unique context. Specifically, the aim of this research is to investigate the historical

development behind the composition of Christian Studies in Lutheran schools, and to audit both the CSCF and a Lutheran school's Christian Studies units of work in Years 7–9, in light of the Australian Curriculum capability IU. There are numerous studies in the area of IU but very few with regard to IU in religious education in Australia. This lack of research requires remedy, as Halafoff (2015, p. 376) argues:

[M]ore quantitative and qualitative research is needed in Australia to investigate existing levels of religious and interreligious literacy, and attitudes towards religious diversity, among Australian young people in order to discover which factors assist or impede intercultural and interreligious understanding.

There is no existing study that investigates how IU is incorporated into Christian Studies in Lutheran education, and hence this study provides a good opportunity to develop a deeper understanding by attending to this gap. The main benefit of this study is that it will provide a foundation for discussion about IU in Christian Studies in Lutheran schools and point to directions for further research about IU in Religious Education in other faith-based schools.

1.3 Research questions

The purpose of this study is to address the research problem:

How do Lutheran schools embed the Australian Curriculum capability IU within their Christian Studies program?

In order to conduct research of an exploratory nature, an appropriate methodology and theoretical lens must be used to provide an opportunity for the phenomena to be explored. In this case, because the Australian curriculum is built using a largely constructivist approach to learning, a constructivist lens will be applied. Therefore, Dewey's constructivist approach of inquiry-based learning and student-centred learning, and Vygotsky's model of social constructivism will provide the main theoretical framework for this study. In order to investigate the research problem, the following research questions will be explored:

1. How do educators implement IU in their Christian Studies program on the basis of their CSCF?

2. In what ways does the Christian Studies program allow for students to develop IU?

1.4 Significance of the study

Since the dismantling of the White Australia policy, there has been an increase in cultural and religious diversity in Australia, triggering research into cultural and religious studies (Bouma, Cahill, Dellal & Zwartz, 2011). According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016), of Australia's population of 24 million, more than 6.6 million people, or one in four of the population, were born overseas, with England, New Zealand, China and India being the top four countries of origin for Australians born overseas. This illustrates how culturally diverse Australia is as a nation, and this diversity is reflected in Australian Lutheran secondary schools in Queensland, both in their academic, cultural and religious programs, and also their culturally and religiously diverse student enrolments. For example, one secondary Lutheran college in Queensland reported that approximately one hundred of their students were from either New Zealand, South Africa or the United Kingdom, and students at the school indicated they spoke one or more of the following languages at home: German, Russian, Vietnamese, Dutch, Afrikaans and Punjabi (2018). (Further details are provided in Appendix A.)

According to a recent Lutheran Education Australia Statistical Report (2017), of a total of 8956 students in secondary schools in Queensland, 3235 students indicated being either from a religious background other than Christian, or having no religious affiliation. This represents roughly one third, and indicates that IU is a pertinent issue to research on a dual level: in Australian society as a whole, and within the Lutheran education system.

This research seeks to make an original contribution to understanding how the Christian Studies Curriculum in Lutheran schools, using the national document, explores IU within the schools' work programs. This study may also lead to further studies in the field of religious education across other faith-based schools and non-religious schools in Australia. This is a significant area of research for education that falls under ACARA's capabilities goals of promoting intercultural respect and familiarity. The implementation of IU in Christian Studies is the core of this study and as Byrne (2014, p. 4) argues, the "educational aims of IU need to address the religious aspects of culture". By exploring religious and cultural diversity in Christian Studies it will be possible to develop an understanding of how students can develop IU.

1.5 Structure of the thesis

This introductory chapter outlines the context, purpose and significance of the study. The research problem is addressed and the research questions that will guide the thesis are delineated.

Chapter Two presents a review of the literature related to IU and Christian Studies in Lutheran education. The research questions are used to guide the structure of the literature review. The chapter begins with discussions on the background to the Australian Curriculum, and the establishment of the General Capabilities in the Australian Curriculum, with a focus on IU. Following this is a review of Lutheran education in Australia and Christian Studies in Lutheran schools. The literature review then moves to the focus of the study with discussions on IU in Christian Studies. Finally, the chapter presents a review of the challenges and limitations to implementing IU capability in the Australian Curriculum within the Christian Studies program in Lutheran schools.

Chapter Three explores the theoretical framework that underpins the study. It commences with an overview of constructivism, which emanates from the work of Piaget (d.1980). This section considers the work of educational constructivists Dewey (d.1952) and Vygotsky (d.1952), and then draws more explicitly on how their approaches can be applied in the study. These understandings underpin the research questions, literature review and methodology. Chapter Three also explores the research design adopted in the study, and describes the qualitative case study approach and how the methodology aligns with the theoretical framework. The chapter then provides information about the participants, the role of the researcher, and the semi-structured interviews. Following this is a discussion of the details of the data collection method, procedures and timelines for the study. The chapter concludes with a discussion about the approach to analysing the data, and the ethics and limitations of the study.

Chapter Four outlines the findings of the study, the three main themes being: Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Culture and Religion. The chapter begins with Curriculum, focusing on the structure and content of the CSCF document and reviewing the service learning aspects of the Christian Studies program and units of work in light of IU. The chapter then explores pedagogical aspects of teaching and learning in Christian Studies with a view to IU. These aspects include: inquiry-based learning, student-centred learning such as authentic learning,

reflective learning and collaborative learning, and teachers' planning. The last section of the chapter examines the teaching of culture and religion through texts and activities aligning with IU.

Chapter Five provides a succinct summary of the key findings, outlines the limitations of the study, and makes recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This literature review focuses on two key features—IU in the Australian Curriculum, and Christian Studies in Lutheran education—in order to understand the research problem. The literature review examines the shaping of the Australian national curriculum and provides insight into the General Capabilities, with an emphasis on IU. It then explores the history of Lutheran education and the subject of Christian Studies, in order to comprehend the relationship between Christian Studies and IU.

2.1 Brief overview of the Australian Curriculum

One of the earliest ideas for a national approach to curriculum in Australia came from discussion, review and research into the core curriculum from 1977 by the Council of the Curriculum Development Centre. In 1980, the document *Core Curriculum for Australian Schools* (Curriculum Development Centre, 1980) was published. However, discussions about the core curriculum from the different state authorities were fruitless, as they were unable to agree on a core curriculum framework, and the Curriculum Development Centre was absorbed into the Commonwealth Department of Education in 1981 (Brennan, 2011). By 1989, the Australian Education Council released the *Hobart Declaration on Schooling* (Australian Education Council, 1989) which included common and agreed national goals for schooling in Australia. This document was superseded a decade later by the *Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century* (Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs, 1999). This declaration itself was supplanted in 2008 with the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (MCEETYA, 2008). This declaration explored social matters mentioned in the earlier Adelaide Declaration and defined them precisely by stating that in order to be “active and informed citizens”, young Australians needed to “appreciate Australia’s social, cultural, linguistic and religious diversity” (MCEETYA, 2008, p. 9). The declaration further stated that the confident and respectful learner will develop their personal values and attributes, such as empathy and respect for others. Among many other objectives, the declaration stated that the curriculum supports young Australians to develop a range of generic and employability skills to become informed citizens of the world (MCEETYA, 2008).

To achieve the goals articulated in the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (MCEETYA, 2008), the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and

Reporting Authority (ACARA) became operational in 2009. ACARA wrote several key documents, such as *The Shape of the Australian Curriculum* (2009), *Curriculum Development Process Version 6* (2012a), and *Curriculum Design Paper Version 3.1* (2013a) to develop and implement the Australian Curriculum. ACARA used the broad outline from the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (MCEETYA, 2008) to establish the three-dimensional design of the Australian Curriculum: learning areas, capabilities, and cross-curriculum priorities, as depicted in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Three dimensions of the Australian Curriculum

From Structure of the Australian Curriculum, ACARA, 2018 (<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/structure/>). Copyright [2010 to present] by © Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). Reprinted with permission.

The Australian Curriculum consists of eight learning areas: English, Mathematics, Science, Humanities and Social Science, The Arts, Health and Physical Education, Languages, and Technologies. The three cross-curriculum priorities—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures, Asia and Australia’s Engagement with Asia, and Sustainability—are embedded throughout the learning areas. Similarly, the seven General Capabilities—Literacy, Numeracy, ICT Capability, Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social Capability, IU, and Ethical Understanding—are also integrated within the learning areas (ACARA, 2012c).

Since their establishment, ACARA has met with much criticism from numerous stakeholders associated with education. Some of these criticisms are explored in the *Review of the Australian Curriculum Final Report* (Australian Government Department of Education, 2014). These include concerns about the rushed development of the curriculum, minimal timeframes for feedback, the lack of a conceptual framework, unclear guidelines for cross-curriculum priorities that have confused educators about whether they are compulsory or not, an over-crowded curriculum to appease various stakeholders, and the claim that important stakeholders such as parents, some principals and experts in special education have been overlooked in the process. One of the most contentious issues is the place of religion, belief systems and values in the Australian Curriculum. Some key aspirations from the *Melbourne Declaration* about students being able to understand the ‘spiritual and moral’ dimensions of life appear to be neglected in the current Australian Curriculum. McGaw (2013) pointed out that the Australian curriculum had made some provision in the curricula learning areas of Civics and Citizenship, History, and Geography for the treatment of religions and other belief systems. However, given that there is no prescribed study of any particular religion or comparative religious groups, the coverage of religious belief systems will depend on the available resources to teachers and their students, as well as teachers’ access to professional learning opportunities (McGaw, 2013, p. 51). This can be very limiting to students’ knowledge of cultural issues, particularly considering that religious groups have played a significant part in Australian culture. For example, the Chinese Buddhists during the gold rush era or the Afghan Muslim cameleers who contributed to the transportation of goods throughout remote Australia, may be missed from the curriculum due to lack of resources or teacher knowledge. However, faith-based schools have more opportunity to cover these topics, owing to religious education programs, which are likely to provide increased opportunities for students to develop IU capability.

2.2 History of the General Capabilities

The General Capabilities of the Australian Curriculum were influenced by a number of educational committees’ reports about key skills and competencies that would assist young Australians in the workforce. During the late 1980s, many countries, including Australia, were focusing on generic employability skills (Cushnahan & Batman, 2009). This prompted the establishment of the Australian Education Council Review Committee. In 1991, Brian Finn, chair of the committee, wrote *Young People’s Participation in Post-Compulsory*

Education and Training, also known as the Finn Review. Chapter Four of the report identified six Key Competencies that the committee recommended for education and training programs for all post-compulsory education students aged 15-19 years, stipulating that “school and TAFE programs should be coherent and broad enough to incorporate the Key Competencies” (Australian Education Council Review Committee, 1991, p. 43). These six Key Competencies were Language and Communication, Mathematics, Scientific and Technological Understanding, Cultural Understanding, Problem Solving, and Personal and Interpersonal skills. Further details were nested under each key area. For example, under Cultural Understanding were: Understanding and knowledge of Australia’s historical, geographical and political context; Understanding of major issues, e.g. environmental, technological and social priorities; and Understanding of the world of work, its importance and requirements (Australian Education Council Review Committee, 1991, p. 58).

In 1992, Eric Mayer chaired a joint committee of the Australian Education Council (AEC) and the Ministers of Vocational Education, Employment and Training (MOVEET) to further develop the competencies recommended by the Finn Review. The committee emphasised the notion that the Key Competencies would entwine knowledge and skills. This approach to learning would allow students the capacity to not only ‘know’ something but be able to ‘do’ something with that knowledge. The committee proposed seven Key Competencies in an approach that differed from the Finn Review. Cultural Understanding and Personal and Interpersonal Competence were now replaced with Working with Others and in Teams. The committee expressed their views about young Australians requiring a strong foundation of knowledge about society and culture that would be essential for their preparation in the workforce. They discussed the notion of cross-cultural understanding that was incorporated in the descriptors of the Key Competencies but had concerns that content for cross-cultural understanding would prove difficult to integrate in the post-compulsory years of education and training, i.e., Year 11 and Year 12. This was due to the lack of resources, time availability to integrate the content, and educators who may have limited knowledge about the content. Nevertheless, the committee recommended that steps be taken to make cultural knowledge explicit and accessible for all young Australians.

In 2010, ACARA developed seven capabilities for the Australian Curriculum, which appeared to incorporate aspects from Finn’s committee, and the joint committee of AEC and MOVEET. After consultation and feedback on the draft General Capabilities in the

Australian Curriculum Consultation Report (ACARA, 2011a), these seven capabilities were endorsed (ACARA, 2013b). Each capability has an icon that is displayed in the learning areas' content descriptors and elaborations. There are three parts of each General Capability: an introduction to explain the purpose and scope, elements that underpin its learning continuum, and the learning continuum itself. The IU Learning Continuum (ACARA, 2011b) can be seen in Appendix B.

2.3 IU in the Australian Curriculum

It appears that, to construct IU as a General Capability in the Australian Curriculum, ACARA took the Key Competency of Cultural Understanding from the Finn Review, which focused on knowledge and understanding, and combined it with Mayer's notion that competencies are functional skills. Finn and Mayer's competencies are somewhat utilitarian, where outcomes must be work-related and assist the Australian economy to become more productive in a challenging global environment (Australian Government Department of Education, 2014). The origins of IU are located in several fields of study, such as languages, geography, linguistics, sociology and cultural studies (ACARA, 2013b). While there are many definitions of culture, the IU capability adopted the definition of culture used in the ACARA document *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Languages* (2011c, p. 16) is as follows:

... a complex system of concepts, values, norms, beliefs and practices that are shared, created and contested by people who make up a cultural group and are passed on from generation to generation. Cultural systems include variable ways of seeing, interpreting and understanding the world. They are constructed and transmitted by members of the group through the processes of socialisation and representation.

Hill (2006) suggested that IU in schools encompasses both cognitive learning in the form of knowledge about one's own culture and those of others, and embracing the affective domain of empathy and respect. This can be observed in students who engage with others through interreligious and intercultural dialogues to become insightful about global, cultural and religious issues. Halafoff, Arwech and Boisvert (2015, p. 252) argued that encompassing diverse religions and non-religious worldviews is crucial to accomplish the Australian Curriculum's goals of fostering respect for religious diversity and students' spirituality. However, with religious and cultural diversity in education, there needs to be more tangible support given to schools in Australia, as Cushner (2015, p. 10) indicated that approximately 90% of Australian teachers are Anglo-Celtic and monolingual. To assist teachers with the

integration of the IU within the learning areas of the curriculum, ACARA designed the learning continuum (Appendix B). This has three interrelated organising elements: recognising culture and developing respect; interacting and empathising with others; and reflecting on intercultural experiences and taking responsibility (ACARA, 2013b). The competence for IU can be achieved from the developmental continuum which is characterised by six levels of outcomes, from Foundation to Year 10. Competence can be obtained from recognising the level on the developmental continuum which provides support and challenges, often engaging students in systematic and well-planned exposure to intercultural interactions, nudging them onwards to increasingly complex levels (Cushner, 2015, p. 11). Some areas of learning have the capacity or opportunity to embed the capability of IU more than others. Christian Studies in Lutheran schools is one learning area that can create opportunities to develop IU for their students, largely due to the cultural diversity in Lutheran schools. This will be explained in the next section.

2.4 The changing nature of Lutheran education in Australia

Lutheran education in Australia has always been diverse in culture. The first Lutheran school in Australia was established in 1838 by German settlers (Bartsch, 2003). Students learnt about German culture and language, and the Lutheran Mission Society conducted classes using the local Kaurua language for Aboriginal students (Bartsch, 2003). Many students came from a Lutheran background, and Christian Studies was instructed in a Lutheran confessional theology (Bartsch, 2003). Lutheran schools were very popular in Australia during the early 1900s. However, after World War I, there was a growth in anti-German sentiment, which resulted in the closure of 49 Lutheran schools in South Australia and approximately 40 schools in Queensland (Hauser, 2003; Bartsch, 2003).

Towards the end of the 20th century, many Lutheran schools reopened and the demography of the student population changed, due to disputes concerning State Aid, the overwhelming impact of World War One, the enormous immigration program post World War Two, the abolition of the White Australia Policy (1895-1972), and the implementation of the policy of multiculturalism (Nuske, 2011, p. 81). Albinger (2010) pointed out that Lutheran schools underwent a transformation in Australia, from origins of limited numbers of rural church-related schools to serving suburban middle-class Australians with a range of religious views and affiliations. With the increase of non-Lutheran students during the 1970s and 1980s, Lutheran schools changed their approach from an exclusively Lutheran perspective to a

religious and non-religious worldview, which is described in the CSCF (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015, p. 6) as follows:

The CSCF requires a Christian Studies classroom environment in which students can explore a range of religious and non-religious perspectives they encounter in an increasingly pluralistic Australian society, determining the source of their own beliefs and values and understanding the role religion plays in society.

Bartsch (1996) observed that while Lutheran schools may reflect the increasingly pluralistic and multicultural environment, they also reflect their own particular culture. Part of this culture includes Christian Studies—a classroom subject that allows students to explore the interacting influences of the various ‘cultures’ in which they participate (Bartsch, 1996, p. 135). Thus, students can draw on their personal and interpersonal connections to gain various cultural insights in Christian Studies, which may develop their IU. This will be explored further in Section 2.6. First, however, it is essential to gain an understanding of the background and nature of Christian Studies in Lutheran schools in order to grasp how IU can be embedded in Christian Studies. This is the topic of the next section.

2.5 Christian Studies in Lutheran schools in Australia

Jennings (2004) states that Lutheran schooling has a dual emphasis, the church and society, and this has been a contentious issue with regards to teaching and learning in Christian Studies. Like many Christian denominational schools during the last few decades, Lutheran education faded out the catechetical approach that was popular with evangelical Christians, and moved towards a pedagogical approach in religious education. The catechetical approach focused on students rote learning information from the Catechism with little opportunity for interpreting Christian theology, as the Catechism consisted of questions and answers which students would memorise. The pedagogical approach allows for a range of effective strategies and approaches that can tailor learning to each student, regardless of cultural and religious background. However, the Christian Studies curriculum needed to address the requirements of the Lutheran Church jointly with Lutheran Education Australia. This was challenging, as it meant producing a Christian Studies format consisting of Lutheran theology and a curriculum design reflecting current educational practices, along with a worldview of religious and cultural understanding (Nuske, 2001; Jacqueline, 2011).

School leaders and Lutheran Education Australia have long accepted the pluralistic nature of both student and teacher populations in Lutheran schools (Albinger, 2010; Jennings, 2004). By the 1990s, Lutheran Education Australia developed the LIFE curriculum materials to assist educators teaching Christian Studies in Lutheran schools, as many teachers were from a non-Lutheran background (Jennings, 2004). This led to the auditing of Christian Studies conducted in all Lutheran schools in 2002, which prompted the development of the CSCF released in 2005 (Jacqueline, 2011). The CSCF, which was updated in 2015, is structured into four strands—Christian Beliefs, Christian Church, Christian Living and Christianity in the World (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015). According to Jacqueline (2011, p. 115), educators were uncomfortable teaching concepts from the Christianity in the World strand, as they were anxious and fearful broaching the topic of other religious faiths, spirituality and issues. To assist educators with the materials in CSCF, including aspects of world religions, Lutheran Education Australia and Lutheran Education Queensland organised regular professional development activities, such as the EQUIP and Pathway programs. The programs covered areas of theology, religious faiths and spirituality, among other aspects which would resolve many of the concerns educators had. However, each school would need to decide who would be attending these professional development activities based on a number of factors such as budgeting, staff replacement availability and staff commitments. Likewise, it is the responsibility of each school to develop their Christian Studies program using the CSCF and incorporating the IU capability from the Australian Curriculum. The next section discusses approaches to embedding IU capability in Christian Studies, which is central to the research problem of how a Lutheran school embeds the Australian Curriculum capability IU within their Christian Studies program.

2.6 Implementing Intercultural Understanding in Christian Studies

Some educators believe it is imperative that schools planning units of work for Christian Studies and embedding the IU capability should adopt an interpretive-dialogical approach in the classroom. According to Nuske (2001, p. 61), an interpretive-dialogical approach allows the teacher and students to engage in authentic expressions of their own presuppositions, while still fostering sensitivity towards different worldviews. Students are able to construct their perceptions of reality or notions of truth through dialogue, which triggers critical thinking and inquiry-based learning rather than an indoctrination approach. An interpretive-dialogical approach assists in overcoming religious prejudice, bigotry or rigid notions of truth

as students are able to question, discern and discuss aspects that differ from Lutheran Christian beliefs or other beliefs raised by the educator or other students. Nuske (2001) also suggested that an interpretative-dialogical approach acknowledges that each worldview constitutes a horizon of beliefs formed within socio-cultural contexts and influenced by historical events and experiences. This approach allows students to develop along the IU learning continuum illustrated in Appendix B. For example, level 5 of the learning continuum—Analyse the dynamic nature of cultural knowledge, beliefs and practices in a range of personal, social and historical contexts—would be achieved by the end of Year 8 through the interpretative-dialogical approach. That is, students and teachers should be engaging with different worldviews, fostering sensitivity towards other opinions, and creating an atmosphere that promotes an empathetic understanding of cultural and religious diversity (Nuske, 2001). This practice allows students to acquire skills for evaluating cultural meaning and critical analysis through the powerful mode of communication, dialogue. Alexander (2005, p. 2) asserts that dialogue requires skill to engage with ways of thinking other than our own as well as the ability to question, listen, reflect, justify and explore ideas. Teachers who encourage their students to participate in guided classroom conversations about religious and cultural issues will empower them to become active members of their learning.

It is vital that, along with an interpretive-dialogical approach to learning, students are engaged in an inquiry-based model of learning. Nuske (2011, p. 77) argued that educators feel comfortable teaching Christian Studies when the pedagogical approach of critical inquiry governs the classroom culture. Inquiry learning involves students exploring their own beliefs, attitudes and values, as well as those of their peers, in a respectful manner. Wilson and Wing (2003) formed a view that inquiry learning encourages learners to assess the intricacy of their world, and form concepts and generalisations, instead of being told basic answers to complex issues. Christian Studies in Lutheran schools contributes to students' exposure to Christianity and Lutheranism, and can extend their cultural horizons beyond what they might absorb from the media and home (Rossiter, 2010, p.131). Fostering critical awareness of the nature and impact of religion in society is a significant contribution that Lutheran schools can make to modern Australian education (Jennings, 2011, p. 109). Thus, Christian Studies is a key learning area for students to discover IU through the worldview lens with the interpretive-dialogical approach and an inquiry-based model of learning. The following section reviews the challenges and limitations concerning the ways Christian Studies incorporates the IU capability.

2.7 Challenges and limitations

The literature review identified a number of key issues concerning the implementation of IU in learning areas such as Christian Studies. Bartsch (2003, p. 21) addresses challenges for Christian schools that adopt the multi-cultural and multi-religious context, posing some insightful questions:

How can the church school operate counter-culturally to help students develop an integrated worldview, based on clearly articulated values, which also includes a religious dimension?

How can the church school remain true to its heritage and present truth claims of its own tradition while respecting the integrity of others?

What terminology can church schools use to communicate with students and parents from multi-cultural, multi-faith backgrounds?

What educational terminology is appropriate in the multi-cultural, multi-faith context?

The Australian Lutheran Church and Lutheran Education Australia, along with all stakeholders in Lutheran schooling, can communicate the importance of this issue in Lutheran education to support their goal in terms of producing an academically rigorous Christian Studies program which respects the views of Lutheran and other religious and non-religious beliefs. Otherwise, as Nuske (2001, p. 56) has pointed out, without diversity of beliefs, indoctrination and evangelisation will replace good pedagogical practice by default. IU is imperative in education, and it is crucial that students develop skills to positively and appropriately learn from people of other religious and social cultures (Walton, et al. 2012).

Walton, Priest and Paradies (2013) stated that the onus is often on educators to implement effective strategies to promote IU in the classroom. Their empirical research indicated that teachers need to feel self-assured before discussing complex issues about cultural diversity and race with their students. Additionally, they pointed to studies that highlighted the need for teachers to critically explore their own attitudes or prejudices towards cultural diversity to model appropriate behaviours and facilitate classroom discussions. Similarly, Watkins and Noble (2016, p. 55) argued that while students are the focus of educational reforms, teachers should be as well: “[W]e cannot teach young people the skills to understand and live in a

culturally complex world unless the training of teachers equips them with the capacities to nurture these skills”. Christian Studies teachers need educational tools and strategies to promote IU, yet they face many challenges in this area compared to other teachers.

Christian Studies teachers are expected to teach to a group of students who have a wide spectrum of previous knowledge, and religious and cultural experiences (Bartsch, 1996). Educators need to be sensitive to and aware of the religious and cultural diversity in their classroom in order to have a successful learning environment. Educators also need to be aware that adolescents are influenced by educational authorities, and thus it is essential that educators’ perceptions and attitudes about religion and culture are communicated explicitly and modelled respectfully to students (Bensted, 2017). There can be no assumptions that students and educators share a common set of beliefs, and respect and sensitivity are essential for a genuine, open dialogue (Jacqueline, 2011, p. 116).

Hassim (2013, p. 9) adds to this discussion, pointing out a recurring challenge for educators: that students’ learning about culture will not equate to their developing IU—which appears to be a common misconception among educators. That is, educators need to do more than just impart cultural knowledge to their students and must facilitate a range of activities to engage students in developing their IU. This may be achieved through cross-cultural programs, celebrating cultural days, intercultural dialogues between students, and guest presenters. Hassim (2013) argues that IU is part of the transformative paradigm whereby realities are constructed and shaped by social, cultural and ethno-racial values. Thus, Christian Studies is a key learning area that has the opportunity to construct these values and foster IU based on valuing personal beliefs and respecting others accordingly for students to become responsible global citizens (Nuske, 2011). While there has been much discussion about the approaches to IU and challenges for educators, further research is needed into this area of study to provide a more in-depth analysis of how IU is embedded into the Christian Studies program in Lutheran schools.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework and Research Design

The previous chapter reviewed literature on the background of the Australian Curriculum, the history of the General Capabilities, the IU of the Australian Curriculum, the changing nature of Lutheran Education in Australia, Christian Studies in Lutheran schools in Australia, and implementing IU in Christian Studies. The literature review reveals that there is limited information about the writers of the CSCF document and Christian Studies teachers' views on IU. There was also limited information about how IU including ACARA's IU learning continuum was implemented into the Christian Studies program.

This chapter will first explore the theoretical framework, namely constructivism, that can help conceptualise the issues related to this study. The chapter will also provide an explanation of the research design adopted in the study in order to achieve the purpose stated in Chapter 1—to investigate the research problem of:

How does a Lutheran school embed the Australian Curriculum capability IU within their Christian Studies program?

Section 3.2 examines the methodology used in the study and links explicitly to the research questions stated in Section 1, which are:

- 1. How do educators implement IU in their Christian Studies program on the basis of their Christian Studies Curriculum Framework?*
- 2. In what ways does the Christian Studies program allow for students to develop IU?*

Section 3.3 provides details of the two participants in the study and Section 3.4 outlines the role of the researcher, while Section 3.5 describes the interview protocols used for data collection and justifies why these protocols will be employed. Section 3.6 discusses how the data will be analysed, and finally Section 3.7 outlines the ethical considerations of the research and any potential problems and limitations.

3.1 Theoretical Framework

The Australian Curriculum draws on constructivist theories of learning. In the *Review of the Australian Curriculum Final Report*, the rationale for this is explained by the Australian Government Department of Education (2014, p. 218):

[C]onstructivism is associated with so-called 21st century, life-long learning where the focus, instead of being on essential knowledge, understanding and skills, is on generic capabilities and skills and the process of learning and where students are described as ‘digital natives’ and teachers as ‘guides by the side’.

Constructivism refers to a theory about learning which involves constructing and developing one’s own knowledge and meaning (Liu & Chen, 2010, p. 65). The earliest theory of learning dates back to the Catholic Church, around 500 A.D. which involved priests transferring knowledge to the passive, receptive learners (Kivunja, 2014; Monroe, 1995). This transmission style of learning is one of four foundational pedagogical paradigms—the others being behaviourist, cognitive, constructivist and social constructivist (Kivunja, 2014). Many constructivists regard Jean Piaget (1896-1980), a child psychologist, as a foundational figure (Phillips, 1995). Piaget believed that children, rather than being mere recipients of stimulation, would investigate and act upon their world while learning about it (Fox, 2001). Barrett and Long (2012, p.77) echo Piaget’s thinking when they state that teaching and learning in a constructivist framework involves the learner taking an active role in assimilating new knowledge into their existing mental framework. Piaget argued the idea that learners’ prior knowledge and experience would influence how they respond to new information (Barrett & Long, 2012). In this learning environment, the teacher is not at the helm of students’ learning, as students will construct their own view of the world and make meaning for themselves.

Constructivist theorists John Dewey and Lev Vygotsky largely echoed this idea. However, their theories differ from that of Piaget as they focus more on the social and cultural aspects that have an impact on students’ learning. While Piaget’s cognitivist paradigm focused on learning being an individualistic experience, Vygotsky’s social constructivist paradigm focuses on the social experience. Vygotsky’s model of social constructivism leads students towards learning designed to provide them with social and cultural knowledge, while Dewey’s model of constructivism situates the educator as the classroom facilitator whose role is to empower individual learners (Hyslop-Margison & Strobel, 2008).

Through constructivism, 21st century learning is evident in classrooms that employ inquiry-based learning and that are student-centred, unlike traditional classroom practices. Dewey and Vygotsky’s theoretical framework underpins the IU capability in the Australian curriculum. Mayer (2008, p. 7) noted that both educational theorists focused on the role of

cultural activity on the human mind and looked towards educational systems to assist with the authentic appreciation of methods and tools, believing this would increase an understanding of cultural diversity as well as changes that were occurring around the globe. Dewey (1916, p. 21) pointed out the value of intercultural and interreligious dialogue among students who intermingle with others of different race, religion and custom, asserting that intercultural and interreligious dialogue creates a new and broader environment for all. Vygotsky (1978, p. 57) also proposed the benefits of social engagement for students, arguing that the cultural development of a student appears on two levels: the social and the individual level, suggesting that social interaction and individual reflection were essential for students' learning and cultural development.

By applying Dewey's notion of inquiry-based learning and the student-centred approach, the study was able to investigate both the CSCF and the Christian Studies units of work by interviewing the Christian Studies teacher and the curriculum writer about how teaching and learning was carried out in the classroom and in what ways the Christian Studies program allowed students to develop IU. Questions were posed to the interviewees about the activities that were designed to assist students in their inquiry-based learning and the ways students developed their IU. It was important to investigate whether students excelled in this type of learning environment, and whether teachers preferred this style of teaching and learning. Given that the Australian Curriculum utilises constructivist theories of learning, it was crucial to investigate these approaches and to examine if they were beneficial to students' learning and their development of IU. Vygotsky's social constructivist theory was also applied, as the research investigated whether a student's cultural development occurs on two levels—on a social level by their engagement with society and in class, and on a personal level reflecting on what they have learnt, and how this affects them.

There are a few misunderstandings about incorporating constructivist theories in education. Hyslop-Margison and Strobel (2008, p. 85) emphasised that constructivism is not an excuse for students to provide inadequate warrant for their beliefs, perspectives and claims. It is vital that teachers question students' claims and prompt them for evidence to prove the legitimacy of the claim, especially when other students are listening passively. Phillips (1995, p.73) suggests that classroom discussion may regress to relativist views, whereby one perspective is equally as good as another, leaving students' concern for evidence and argument lacking, as well as missing a social or moral compass, as every comment is deemed acceptable and

true. Hyslop-Margison and Strobel (2008) further argue that the statement ‘all knowledge is constructed’ is an unhelpful assertion, given that some traditional approaches to teaching, such as lecturing, can be equally effective.

In this study interviews were conducted only with educators, and therefore no claims related to the students’ perspectives with regards to constructivism in education can be made. The research focuses instead on a discussion of constructivist theories of learning with the educators, as well as what practices are used, and how these practices are applied in the classroom and in the Christian Studies documents.

3.2 Methodology

According to Leavy (2017, p. 133), the method that a researcher selects should be based on the ability to best address the research purpose and assist in answering the research questions as well as the pragmatic issues such as time, resources and the researcher’s skill. For these reasons, the method of research used here is a qualitative case study approach, which is an effective method for this study given the limited timeframe and resources available, and the developing skills of the researcher. A qualitative case study presents an in-depth comprehension of the case in which the researcher collects various forms of qualitative data such as interviews, documents, and audio-visual materials (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 98). In the case of this research, this includes analysis of primary sources (i.e., the responses of the two interviewees) and secondary sources (i.e., the CSCF document and years 7–9 Christian Studies units of work).

For a qualitative case study methodology that aligns with the theoretical framework of constructivism, literature from Stake (1995) was employed. According to Harrison, Birks, Franklin and Mills (2017), Stake (1995), an educational psychologist, was among the first to apply a constructivist orientation to the case study, resulting in more emphasis on inductive exploration and holistic analysis that permeated in the dense descriptions of the case. Stake (1995, p. 102) argued that constructivism assists a case study researcher to justify the narrative descriptions in the final report. Harrison et al. (2017) explained that the ultimate objective of case study research is to conduct a comprehensive analysis of an issue within its context, in light of the issue from the participants’ perspective (Merriam, 2009; Simons, 2009; Stake, 2006; Yin, 2014). In this study, this approach was explored by interviewing the participants, as the researcher was able to construct meaning about the issue through the

participants' viewpoints. This was advantageous as the interviewees gave their accounts of their realities in detail to the interviewer. The participants were able to provide greater insight and depth of knowledge about the Christian Studies curriculum and units of work, and this contributed to filling the gaps identified in the literature review.

Harrison et al. (2017) indicated that the case study, which is predominantly exploratory and explanatory in nature, is utilised to achieve an understanding of the issue in real life situations and is recommended to answer 'how' and 'why' (or less often 'what') research questions (Flyvbjerg, 2011; Merriam, 2009; Simons, 2009; Stake, 2006; Stewart, 2014; Yin, 2014). Stake (1995, p. 20) stressed that case study researchers need a set of two or three refined research questions that assist in structuring the interviews and document review. Stake (1995) identified three types of case studies: intrinsic, instrumental, and collective. An intrinsic case study is when there is an intrinsic interest in a case, and an instrumental case study is when the focus is on an instrumental case in order to understand a particular issue or problem (Stake, 1995). When more than one person or subject is chosen in a study it becomes a collective case study. This study adopts an instrumental case study approach, where the six sources of evidence—two interviews, one curriculum document, and three units of work—are investigated, with an aim to provide answers to the research questions as well as to understand the research problem.

3.3 Participants

The two participants in this research are both women who work in the Lutheran education system. The interviewees, referred to by the pseudonyms of Debbie and Gabby, both have European ancestries. Debbie is one of the writers for the CSCF 2005 and the revised 2015 version, and has previously been an educational officer for Lutheran Education, working in various roles, including working closely with the Christian Studies Curriculum. Part of her role is to give advice and organise professional development activities for teachers of Christian Studies. Gabby is the Middle Years leader for Christian Studies at a Lutheran college, and she wrote the 7–9 Christian Studies units for her school. Part of Gabby's role is to assist Christian Studies teachers in the implementation of the Christian Studies units of work. Gabby has been in the role for four years and has been teaching for over 20 years, with 15 years in Lutheran schools. Both respondents are Lutheran in faith, and have worked in several Lutheran schools in Australia. Therefore, they are suitable respondents to interview in order to examine the research questions, as they have an excellent understanding and

experience of the Christian Studies curriculum and units of work, and a case study provides the opportunity to explore the participants' responses.

3.4 Role of the researcher

According to Yazan (2015, p. 137), Stake (1995, 2006) envisages the qualitative case study researcher as interpreter and collector of interpretations, which entails them reporting their rendering or composition of the constructed reality or knowledge collated in the investigation. The role of the qualitative researcher and interpreter is fundamental to the process as they view reality as subjective, based on meanings and understanding (Harrison et al., 2017; Stake, 1995, 2006). Following Stake's (1995) recommendation in pursuing meanings and understandings, the researcher, with the assistance of the participants, uncovered knowledge through direct interpretations of the interview and the thematic findings that were employed. The researcher used an emic (or inside) perspective, and an etic (or outside) view in the investigation. This is due to the professional affiliation the researcher has with one of the participants and their working environment, as well as prior knowledge of some of the content in the CSCF document which according to Morris, Leung, Ames and Lickel (1999) would demonstrate an inside perspective. Due to the nature of this familiarity, it was important for the researcher to acquire an outside view, by interviewing a participant who had no direct associations with the researcher prior to the study, and also by examining unseen content. This was an opportunity for the researcher to compare meanings and understandings between the participants, which would assist with illuminating any assumptions the researcher may have had because of familiarity. Stake (1995, p. 50) argued that the researcher requires sensitivity and scepticism when interpreting their findings. The researcher considered these aspects of the study by implementing an interview protocol and following the content analysis procedures. These will be discussed in the next two sections.

3.5 Interview protocol

Stake (1995) stated that data collection can begin at any time. He further declared that numerous sources and methods of data collection can be applied, but suggested interviews and observations were ideal for collecting data. In order to explore the research questions, it was vital to collect and examine secondary and primary data, as seen in Figure 2 below. Secondary data, specifically the CSCF document and the Year 7–9 Christian Studies units of work, was analysed. Primary data was collected through two semi-structured face-to face

interviews. For this qualitative research, the semi-structured interview process was suitable because, as Kumar (2014, p. 177) pointed out, the process has the ability to be very flexible as the interviewer has the freedom to think and formulate questions around the topic as the interview progresses. Interview questions were formulated and tailored to each participant beforehand (refer to Appendix C) to give the interviewer an idea of the direction of the interview. Interviewees were informed of the purpose of the study, the process of the interview, and general topics to be covered, but were not given the exact interview questions. In this way, the interviewees were not able to predetermine their responses, and thus in-depth information was obtained. The interviews were held in the participants' chosen location so they would feel comfortable with the familiar environment. The conversations were insightful and it was clear that the interviewees were not worried about time constraints, as they seemed to forget the time as they shared their stories. This method of interviewing was ideal for the study, as the interviewees were thoughtful and highly engaged with the topic, pausing at times in the interviews to reflect on their responses. Both participants also took notes as reminders concerning information they thought would be useful to the researcher and later emailed through some documents, such as the Service Learning document. The two interviews were recorded using a Sony IC Recorder, and using the program Zoom, data was transferred to mp3 format to be transcribed and coded.

Figure 2 illustrates the data collection methods, beginning with the research questions as a starting point. First, following the arrows on the left-hand side, the secondary sources (the CSCF document and the units of work) were analysed, and manually coded in NVivo, and themes were identified, reviewed and defined. Second, following the arrows on the right-hand side, the primary sources, (i.e. the two interviews) were conducted, transcribed, and manually coded in NVivo, and themes were identified, reviewed and defined. The reason for examining the secondary sources first was to ensure that the interviewer had an in-depth understanding of the sources and to tailor questions about the sources to the participants in order to elicit further findings. An additional review of the secondary sources was required after the interview. Validating the findings and reporting occurred at the end of the thematic content analysis. Further details of the thematic content analysis will be discussed in the next section.

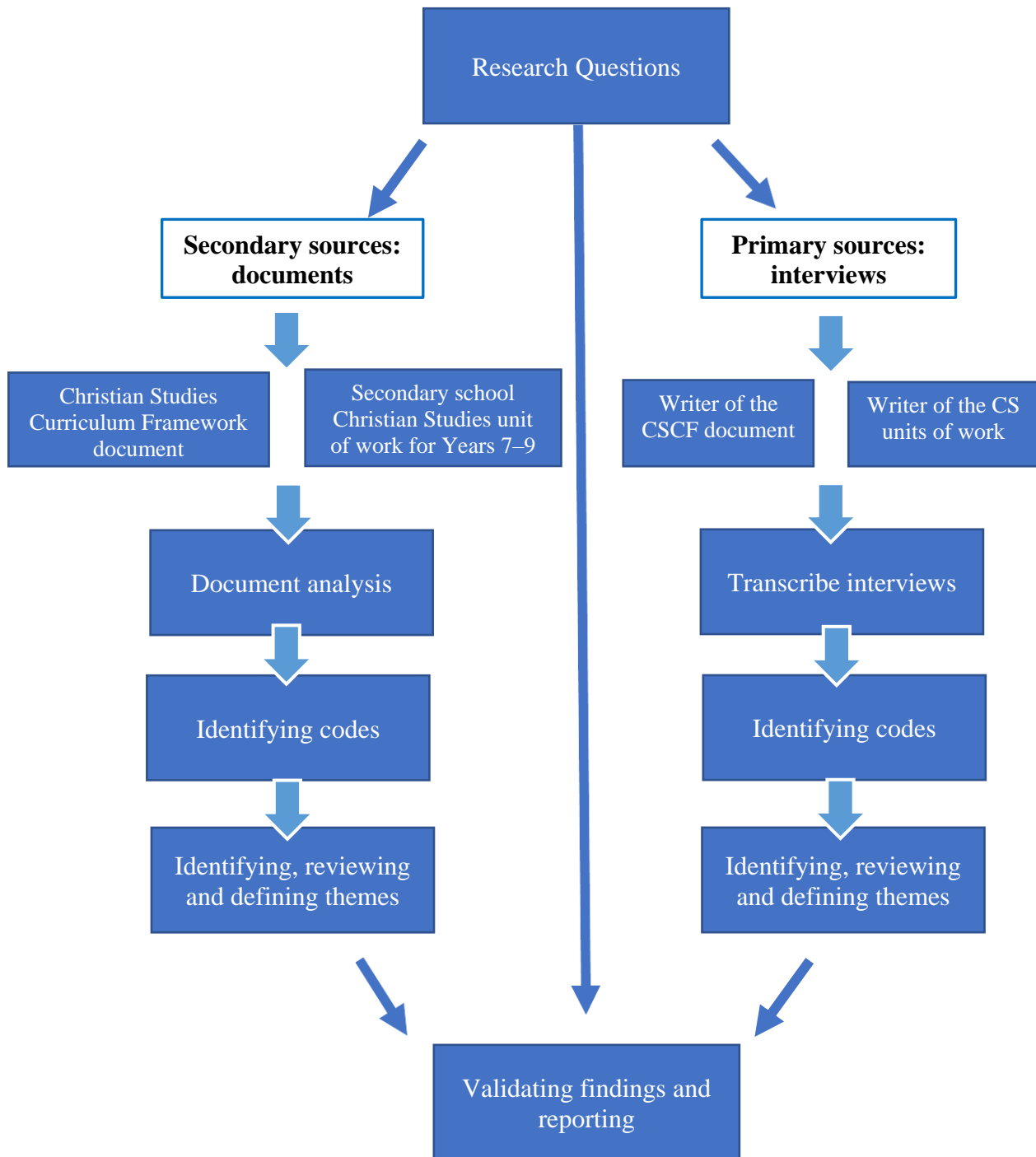


Figure 2: Data collection methods and analysis flowchart

3.6 Analysis

Stake (1995, p. 71), described analysis as “a matter of giving meaning to first impressions as well as to find compilations” and says that each researcher, through their experience and reflection, will use a particular style of analysis that works for them (Stake, 1995, p. 77). An inductive approach to the data coding and a thematic analysis was used for this qualitative research, as seen in Table 3.1. According to Creswell and Poth (2018, p. 21), “[T]he logic that the qualitative researcher follows is inductive, from the ground up, rather than handed down entirely from a theory”. The data was analysed using Creswell’s (2015, pp. 235-264) six steps: (1) preparing and organising the data, (2) exploring and coding the database, (3) describing findings and forming themes, (4) representing and reporting findings, (5) interpreting the meaning of the findings, and (6) validating the accuracy of the findings.

Table 3.1: Research methods and thematic analysis

Research Questions	Research Method	Data	Data Analysis
How do educators implement intercultural understanding in their Christian Studies program on the basis of their Christian Studies Curriculum Framework?	Document analysis	CSCF document and CS units of work	Thematic content analysis
	Semi-structured interview	Interview transcript	Thematic content analysis
In what ways does the Christian Studies program allow for students to develop intercultural understanding?	Document analysis	CS units of work	Thematic content analysis
	Semi-structured interview	Interview transcript	Thematic content analysis

The first step in preparing and organising the data was to transfer information into a Word document—the interview (by listening to the audio recording and writing a transcript), and sections of the CSCF and parts of the units of work that were relevant and related closely to the research questions. These Word documents were then filed in NVivo and duplicate copies of the data were kept on a password protected laptop, Google Drive and hard drive.

The second step was to explore the data, which Creswell (2015) suggests is a time to consider if more data is needed. Using Creswell’s (2015) coding process, several steps were involved

to code the data. Step 1 was to read the data, step 2 was to divide the data into segments, step 3 was to label the segments with codes, and step 4 was to reduce overlap and redundancy in the codes. Data analysis and management was completed using the software tool NVivo to manually store and code the data. According to Welsh (2002) and Richards & Richards (1994), some researchers have claimed that using software for the data analysis process can add rigour to qualitative research. Welsh (2002, p. 4) further proposed that the search facility in NVivo is an asset to facilitate the interrogation of the data, and can be one way of achieving accuracy. The purpose of using electronic software such as NVivo for the study was therefore to assist in organising and managing the documents and interview materials more effectively.

The third step in Creswell's (2015) data analysis is developing themes that answer the research questions and form a comprehensive understanding of the study, through description and thematic development. According to Creswell (2015), there are several types of themes such as ordinary themes that are expected in the study, unexpected themes that do not surface during the study, hard-to-classify themes that contain ideas which are difficult to place into one theme or overlap with several themes, and major and minor themes. In order to add additional rigour and insight into a study, Creswell (2015) emphasises that researchers should layer themes or interconnect them. Layering themes involves organising basic themes into more sophisticated ones, building on the idea of major and minor themes. Interconnecting themes allows the researcher to connect themes displaying a chronology or sequence of events.

Steps 4 to 6 of Creswell's (2015) data analysis require substantial, critical written analysis for the thesis. After analysing the data for description and themes, the researcher reported the findings in context of the research questions. Findings are displayed visually in tables, which will enhance the concepts the researcher wishes to portray, while simultaneously summarising the findings in a narrative discussion. Findings will be discussed in the next chapter. Interpreting the findings was crucial for the researcher as they reflected on their own personal interpretations as well as making comparisons with literature which illustrated both the limitations of the study and suggestions for future study (Creswell, 2015). Finally, validating the findings meant that the researcher was able to determine the accuracy and credibility of the findings. This was achieved by triangulation whereby the researcher corroborated the evidence using different methods of data collection, which in this study was

the interviews and the documents. Stake (1998, pp. 443-444) stated that as “no observations or interpretations are perfectly repeatable, triangulation serves ... to clarify meaning by identifying different ways the phenomenon is being seen”. Both participants and supervisors were given the interview transcripts to check and to ensure the accuracy of the information.

3.7 Ethics and limitations

Ethical approval for the research project was obtained from Griffith University Human Research Ethics Review Committee (GUHRERC) prior to beginning recruitment of participants (see Appendix D). To seek approval to conduct research in a Lutheran school, an application was also submitted to Lutheran Education Australia (LEA). LEA approved the research (see Appendix E). After the final approval from confirmation, information about the research project and a consent form (refer to Appendix F) was given to the principal of the Lutheran school and to the participants. According to Creswell and Poth (2018, p. 151), to gain support from the participants and to maintain an ethical relationship with the interviewees, the researcher must convey to participants the details of the study and not engage in deception about the nature of the study. To ensure the participants' rights, such as their right to privacy and protection from harm, processes and procedures were carried out, including pseudonyms used for written and recorded notes, and sites were unnamed. Also, to maintain confidentiality, the storing of data is located on the researcher's personal home laptop and personal online storage space, both of which are password protected. The transcript will be disposed of in five years. As an insider to the study, the researcher tried to ensure their own presumptions or biases did not influence or affect the findings. For this reason, a copy of the transcript was given to the supervisors and participants to peruse and make any changes necessary although no changes were requested.

There are a few limitations to this research project that need to be acknowledged. Firstly, a potential problem is the limited number of participants for the interviews. Having two opinions, one from a school perspective and another from the national office (LEA) about the research project limits the study to their views. Both interviewees were gently prompted for further details during the interview and both participants spoke about their perspective in depth with follow up emails with attached documents they believed would assist the researcher. Other limitations to this study include time, resources, and types of participants. That is, due to the limited time and resources with the investigation only two participants were interviewed, and these participants share similarities; being both female, Lutheran,

mature educators of European origin. This could be limiting in issues relating to gender, generation, religion and cultural aspects of the study. Their views were often similar, and other aspects may have been overlooked and may have appeared if other participants were involved. Nevertheless, the participants had a great deal of experience and expertise in the study area. Another limitation is that students were not interviewed; they would have been able to discuss their personal development of IU from the Christian Studies program. However, the study was limited in time and resources. Perhaps this could be achieved at PhD level in the future.

This chapter first outlined the theoretical framework, of constructivism, and the research method employed in this study, being a qualitative case study approach. It discussed the interview protocols with the participants and the data collection methods, and then explained the procedures for the study, and the analysis process using Creswell's (2015) six steps. Finally, the chapter concluded with a summary of the ethical procedures, and limitations to the study.

Chapter 4: Findings

This chapter presents the findings of this study. Thematic content analysis of the CSCF document, the Christian Studies units of work, and the two interviews revealed three key themes across the data. These themes are: (1) curriculum, (2) pedagogy, and (3) culture and religion. Sub-themes were also identified and are outlined in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Thematic content analysis

Codes	Group Codes	Themes	Sub-themes
Inquiry learning Knowledge and elaboration Learning environment Service-learning Students equipped with skills	Knowledge and elaboration Ways of knowing Service-learning Students equipped with skills Student opportunities	Curriculum	Structure and content Service-Learning
Pedagogy Student-centred learning Teachers' planning Ways of knowing Worldview lens Authentic learning Collaborative learning Open dialogue	Pedagogy Learning environment Teachers' planning Inquiry learning Student-centred learning Authentic learning Collaborative learning Open dialogue	Pedagogy	Inquiry-based learning Student-centred learning: Authentic, Reflective and Collaborative Teachers' planning
World religions and spiritualities Cultural and religious activities Religious and cultural literature Student opportunities	Cultural and religious activities Religious and cultural literature World religions and spiritualities Worldview lens	Culture and Religion	Texts Activities

Data from the documents and the two interviews were collated and stored in NVivo, which assisted in manually structuring a coding system. From the thematic analysis, 17 codes were identified. These 17 codes were reviewed and grouped according to their similarities and content which formed the three key themes. The three key themes then formed the sub-themes. Definitions of themes and sub-themes combined with examples can be seen in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Key themes and sub-themes with examples from the thematic analysis

Theme	Definition of theme	Sub-theme	Definition of Sub-theme	Example
Curriculum	The Christian Studies Curriculum Framework document (CSCF) and Service Learning Framework (SLF) document.	Structure and content	The structure and content refer to the organisation and information in the CSCF document.	There are four strands in the CSCF (2015) document: Christian Beliefs and Service Learning Framework (CB), Christian Church (SLF) document. (CC), Christian Living (CL), Christianity in the World (CW). The Christianity in the World strand explores the diverse religious and cultural expressions of belief and life (CSCF, 2015, p.9)
		Service Learning	Service learning refers to the SL framework document that is embedded in Christian Studies (CS).	Gabby: "Something that we're trying to incorporate more into our curriculum is service learning." Service-learning concepts: Boundary crossing – When we serve others who are differ from ourselves in some way, we step over boundaries and enter a new space where WE become the other. We have a greater awareness of our own cultural biases and perspectives that shape our thinking. (SL, 2017, p.7)
Pedagogy	Approaches and methodology used for teaching and learning in CS.	Inquiry-based learning	Inquiry-based learning refers to an approach used by CS educators for student learning.	Inquiry learning encourages learners to examine the complexity of their world and form concepts and generations instead of being told simple answers to more complex problems. (CSCF, 2015, p.12) Students research the social and cultural context in which Jesus lived and draw conclusions about how he chose to respond to people and events. (Year 9 CS Unit of work, 2018)
		Student-centred learning	Student-centred learning refers to an approach used by CS educators for student learning. Reflective, authentic and collaborative learning are integrated with student-centred learning.	The pedagogy of Christian Studies must open doors that connect the content of the framework with the learner's world – both the inner life and perceptions of the external world. (CSCF, 2015, p.7) Authentic: Students can research news stories that provide examples on showing Grace in our communities, forgiveness of others. Stories that could be considered: The Stolen Generation, natural disaster stories. (Year 8 CS Unit of work, 2018)

Reflective: Debbie: “You can also provide opportunities for reflective journals and in those spaces see students reflecting on what the learning has meant for them”.

Collaborative: A collaborative learning environment acknowledges and respects that students have diverse backgrounds, needs and interests (CSCF, 2015, p.6)

Gabby: “we have opportunities for students to actually work in pairs or group work where they might be given a particular situation and come up with ... what would this scenario be ... how what would the response be for a Muslim, for a Buddhist, for a Christian.”

		Teachers’ planning	Teachers’ planning refers to educators’ professional development in order to create: units of work, the learning experience, and providing a learning environment suitable for students to develop intercultural understanding.	The CSCF requires a Christian Studies classroom learning environment in which students can explore a range of religious and non-religious perspectives they encounter in an increasingly pluralistic Australian society, determine the source of their own beliefs and values and understand the role religion plays in society (CSCF, 2015, p.6)
Culture and Religion	Cultural and religious aspects depicted in the CSCF, CS units of work, or statements mentioned by the interviewees.	Text	Texts refers to the cultural and religious texts that are utilised in CS.	Students develop skills to examine scripture and analyse its cultural and historical contexts (Year 7 CS Unit of work, 2018)
		Activities	Activities refers to educators creating learning activities about culture and religion to develop students’ intercultural understanding.	Gabby: “[I]n year 8 we do what we call the Church excursion. That unit is linked with Abrahamic faiths. Year 8 students actually visit two sacred places, one being a Christian church ... Greek Orthodox Church. And we also take them to the synagogue.”

4.1 Curriculum

The Lutheran CSCF (2015) and Service-learning (2017) frameworks are two documents that can assist educators to implement IU into their work programs and units of work. This section will discuss the structure and content of the CSCF document in light of IU and the influence it has for Christian Studies teachers and students, and the Service-learning framework document that is utilised in Christian Studies.

4.1.1 Structure and Content

The structure and content of the CSCF (2015) document can assist educators to implement IU in their Christian Studies program. The four strands in the CSCF document—Christian Beliefs (CB), Christian Church (CC), Christian Living (CL), and Christianity in the World (CW)—each have three key ideas which identify the essential concepts for the strand (CSCF, 2015, p. 9). Examples of the key ideas for each of the strands that can be aligned to IU are given in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: The strand and key ideas applicable to IU

Strand	Key idea number	Key Idea
CB	3	A Christian worldview is shaped by the biblical teaching of sin and grace
CC	2	The Christian community is shaped by and shapes its cultural and historical contexts
CL	2	Christians are called to love and serve all people
CW	1	Religious beliefs and ideas shape people's thinking and actions
CW	2	People express their spirituality in various contexts within and beyond Christianity
CW	3	People make decisions using a range of religious perspectives and ethical framework

IU depicted in the key ideas embraces a worldview knowledge that is religious, cultural, social and historical and which centres on Christianity while concurrently exploring other religious contexts. This worldview knowledge might appear to exemplify the cognitive

domain of IU, but according to Hill (2006), it is not enough, as the affective domain is interconnected and inseparable if one is to obtain IU. The findings with regards to the affective domain will be discussed further in the service learning section.

Another feature of the CSCF (2015) document is bands. Bands are stipulated in the CSCF (2015) document to indicate the developing characteristics of the learner while acknowledging the diversity of backgrounds and prior learning experiences (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015, p. 10). Educators who write units of work will reflect on the given band levels when writing their school Christian Studies program and unit of work in light of their students' background and learning experiences. Each school will decide at which year level a band commences and finishes. For the purpose of this study Band C (Years 6,7 & 8) and Band D (Years 8, 9 & 10) have been analysed for the focus on Years 7–9. An example of linking the ACARA's IU learning continuum level 5 with the CSCF (2011b) Band C is illustrated in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4: The IU learning continuum level 5 with the CSCF Band C

Intercultural Understanding learning continuum (Recognising culture and developing respect element)	CSCF (2015) Band C (evidence of student learning demonstrated through ways of knowing)
Level 5 states that by the end of Year 8, students: explain ways that cultural groups and identities change over time and in different contexts	Christian Church key idea 2: compare how practices of the early Christian church have changed over time and place (eg worship practices, baptism, communion, fellowship, liturgy)
Level 5 states that by the end of Year 8, students: Analyse the dynamic nature of cultural knowledge, beliefs and practices in a range of personal, social and historical contexts	Christian Church key idea 2: describe roles played by cultural contexts, church traditions and the authority of the Bible in practices and beliefs of various denominations
Level 5 states that by the end of Year 8, students: Understand the importance of maintaining and celebrating cultural traditions for the development of personal, group and national identities	Christian Worldview key area 2: compare various rituals and symbols of cultural and religious events and analyse their significance to the individual (eg football culture, Indigenous culture)

The IU learning continuum outlines what students are expected to achieve at a particular level. There are three interconnected elements in the IU learning continuum. Table 4.4 displays the recognising culture and developing respect element focusing on level 5, which is

typically achieved at the end of Year 8. The CSCF (2015) Band C shown in Table 4.4 gives some examples of how students can demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of specific content that aligns with the IU learning continuum. For example, as depicted in the table and according to the IU learning continuum, at the end of Year 8 students will explain ways that cultural groups and identities have changed over time. When reviewing the CSCF (2015) document it became clear that this example can be achieved in Christian Studies, as students compare cultural and religious changes in the Christian church over time and place. One way for educators to implement IU in their Christian Studies work program and unit of work could be to align the IU learning continuum with the CSCF (2015) band levels of each strand and key ideas that are associated with IU.

Another way for educators to implement IU and also to increase the ways students might develop IU is to introduce content that is contemporary, especially cultural and religious events in society that can be explored by students. It may not be easy to update the Christian Studies curriculum document frequently to include current events, but educators can include media and current affairs items when planning their units of work. The curriculum writer pointed out that there have been some content changes in the CSCF (2015) document since the LIFE program, which included contemporary events in society. When asked about the LIFE program, Debbie said:

I was involved in the development of the Christian studies curriculum for Lutheran schools; it was the first national curriculum, the LIFE Curriculum. It was the curriculum that we had at the time ... it was prior to the Christian studies curriculum framework [the CSCF 2005] although in some ways it wasn't so much a framework as it was a curriculum resource ... written around a [Lutheran Christian] theological framework.

Debbie further elaborated on how the events of September 11 led to changes with the LIFE program that would have an impact on the content and structure of the CSCF document, which was published in 2005. She recalls visiting a small rural community just after the event, and having a conversation with another educator. This discussion led to topics around Muslims in Australia and fundamentalists in all religions. Debbie reflected on her visit and the changes that were to occur with the CSCF. She acknowledged that:

... a big shift for the CSCF was about understanding world religions, which was particularly absent because LIFE was a theological framework around

Christianity. Of course it didn't have any other world religions in it and other spirituality in broader senses of spirituality than just Christian. So CSCF addressed all of that.

According to Salter and Maxwell (2018), two years after the Adelaide Declaration was published, educational policies and practices became influenced by the events in the US. Multiculturalism was being associated with a fractured society, and issues of conflict and terrorism added another element to the educational arena at the time (Salter & Maxwell, 2018; Tilbury & Henderson, 2003). It was at this time that IU was becoming a pivotal aspect in educational curriculums such as Christian Studies. Of particular relevance was the inclusion of Islamic content, as the media, after September 11, often conveyed negative attitudes towards Muslims (Kabir, 2006). Bouma and Halafoff (2009) pointed out the findings from an Australian study which found that fear, prejudice and negative stereotypes towards Australian Muslims has decreased with knowledge about the 'other' (Issues Deliberation Australia/America, 2007, p. 8). Both the 2005 and 2015 CSCF document include Islamic content and theological notes about how to interpret key ideas and concepts. This can be seen in the CSCF document (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015, p. 94) in a section that guides educators about the teaching of Abrahamic religions, and in particular, Islam:

[I]t is important that students gain a sympathetic understanding of Islam and the various expressions of Islam will need to be addressed so that the extreme forms so often represented in the media are not the major source of information for students.

Religious content in the CSCF document (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015, p. 95) also extended beyond the Abrahamic religions, which:

... allows for the exploration of the worldview represented by other world religions (eg. Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Sikhism) and the way in which different cultures influence and are influenced by those religions.

Exploring a diverse range of religious and cultural content in Christian Studies may encourage students to develop their knowledge of IU. Bouma and Halafoff (2009, p. 17) argued that many people may identify with a religious group but have little knowledge and understanding of their religious background. Students in Lutheran Education, through subjects such as Christian Studies, have an opportunity to learn about Lutheran Christianity

as well as other religious and cultural perspectives. Details of the cultural and religious texts and activities will be explored further in section 4.3.

4.1.2 Service learning

While there are numerous definitions of service learning (Tinkler, McGann & Tinkler, 2017), Lutheran Education has adopted the meaning primarily from Billig (2002), who defines service learning as an educational method that involves students providing service to genuine community needs in order to learn knowledge and skills that are linked to the curriculum. While some features of service learning are similar to community service and charity work, such as focusing on social justice issues and assisting the underprivileged, a service learning approach entails greater educational links. The origins of service learning can be dated back to educational theorist such as John Dewey, Jean Piaget and David Kolb (Billig, 2000; Li & Lal, 2005; Kinsley & McPherson, 1995; Giles & Eyler, 1994). These scholars found that when students are actively engaged in their own learning with a clear purpose they are more likely to learn at their best (Billig, 2000, p. 659). In a similar way to the content and structure of the CSCF, educators in Lutheran schools can incorporate aspects of service learning to assist with implementing IU into their Christian Studies program and units of work. Service learning can also assist students to develop their IU as service learning involves the three domains of cognitive (the head), affective (the heart), and behaviour (the hands) (Lutheran Education Queensland, 2017; Billig, 2004) within religious and cultural contexts. Gabby clarified the purpose of service learning's concept of head, heart and hands for students when she explained:

[G]etting them to think ... the head is what's the information but then how does that actually change your heart to actually what do you want to do to with your hands.

According to Sipos, Battisti, & Grimm (2008), the head, hands and heart concept stems from Bloom's taxonomy of engaging cognitive, psychomotor and affective learning domains (Krathwohl, Bloom & Masia, 1964). The cognitive feature of IU encompasses knowledge about one's own culture as well as other cultures, and includes similarities and differences between the cultures (Tinkler et al., 2017; Perry & Southwell, 2011; Hill, 2006). The psychomotor and behavioural aspects of IU are comprised of cultural interactions, while the affective aspects of IU are comprised of empathy and respect towards others. Mattix Foster,

Cunningham, & Wrightsman (2015) claimed that educators can strengthen the development of IU through service learning as it integrates service activities with cultural content and provides an opportunity for reflection on the service experience (Wade & Yarbrough, 2007).

Lutheran Education Queensland (2017, p. 5) indicated that service learning in Lutheran education is a way of learning and teaching that is embedded into curriculum areas such as Christian Studies. Gabby reiterates this is:

[S]omething that we're trying to incorporate more into our curriculum [Christian Studies] is service learning so kids understand community, story, and coming as a guest.

The Service-learning framework is a standalone document containing seven interrelated learning concepts that can be implicitly found in the CSCF (2015) document and units of work. These service-learning concepts include; innate dignity, boundary crossing, coming as a guest, presence, story, stewardship and community (Lutheran Education Queensland, 2017; Price, 2008; Murdoch, 2015). Gabby commented about how to implement the learning concepts into the units of work by saying:

[W]e don't try and incorporate all those concepts all at once; we try and maybe pick one or two for each unit ... really hone in on it so that they [students] understand really well what it means, community, what it means to come as a guest, what it means to still have a story.

Some students in Lutheran secondary schools have been introduced to service learning from their primary school days, especially if they attended a Lutheran feeder school (Year 7 CS Unit of work, 2018). Students in Year 7 learn about innate dignity, which focuses on the uniqueness and self-worth of every human being, and the idea that through God's love people are invited to honour the dignity of everyone with whom they interact (Lutheran Education Queensland, 2017). Year 7 students understand the concept of innate dignity through classroom activities and by listening to various organisations such as 40 Hour Famine, Make Poverty History, I-Can, World Vision, Lifeline, Salvation Army, and Australian Lutheran World Service (ALWS) during their chapel service and in their Christian Studies lessons (Year 7 CS Unit of work, 2018). These social justice organisations speak about working with those less fortunate, and provide opportunities for students to participate in service-action

whereby students apply their knowledge of innate dignity to assisting the underprivileged in society. As part of their learning activities in class, students in Year 7 are asked to read the biblical passage Deuteronomy 24:17-22 and reflect on the story of how God wants people to care for others less fortunate than themselves—foreigners (e.g. refugees), orphans and widows (Year 7, Unit of work, 2018). Students are given two questions to ponder concerning the connection between the biblical passage, the social justice organisation and their own lives with regards to the concept of innate dignity: How do you help people less fortunate? How could you help people in the future?

While connecting with various social justice groups, students learn about boundary crossing—when we serve others who differ from ourselves in some way, we step over boundaries and encounter a new dimension where we become the other (Lutheran Education Queensland, 2017). By entering a new space, students are able to have a greater awareness of their own cultural bias and perspectives that shape their thinking (Lutheran Education Queensland, 2017). Li & Lal (2005, p. 217) remarked that service-learning components in the curriculum can be a powerful transformative pedagogy. Students can connect their knowledge of social justice issues including cultural and religious aspects to practice when they assist others, which can change their attitudes and perspectives, and thus develop their IU. Debbie explained the newfound knowledge that students embark on in service learning and how they are called to action:

[W]hat are the needs of the world as I'm [i.e., a student] learning about this environmental aspect that's calling me to take some actions ... this learning to serve the world. What's the action I'm going to take as a result of having had this learning whether it be about environment ... about Indigenous communities, refugees and the local Christian congregation. I have this meaning. So what action am I being called to do or do I see as a logical progression from my learning that I'm undertaking here.

According to the Service-learning framework (Lutheran Education Queensland, 2017), when students step over boundaries they come as a guest. Gabby described this concept as:

[The] idea of coming as a guest, [means] that you respect who the people are, what their background is and what their story is. When you are trying to help someone who is in need you have to come with sensitivity and ... come as a guest means that you show respect for

where they're at and who they are, where they've come from. And that might include some ... cultural background and then their cultural differences.

Coming as a guest means gently and respectfully entering another's space (Lutheran Education Queensland, 2017). Lutheran Education in their Service-learning framework document (Lutheran Education Queensland, 2017) cited an excerpt from Taylor (1965) who wrote a book about his encounters as a Christian with several non-Christian African groups, which further illustrates the concept of come as a guest:

Our first task in approaching another people, another culture, another religion, is to take off our shoes, for the place we are approaching is holy. Else we may find ourselves treading on people's dreams. More serious still we may forget that God was here before our arrival.

Through this service-learning concept students are able to develop their behavioural and affective domain within IU by exhibiting respect and empathy for others. Mattix Foster et al. (2015) argued that service-learning can be a valuable tool for building IU as it has the potential to improve the development of student attitudes that support relationships between people of different cultural groups.

Other service-learning concepts are story and presence. Presence is demonstrated by our attentiveness to the situation and the other person once we come as a guest (Lutheran Education Queensland, 2017). The Service-learning framework (Lutheran Education Queensland, 2017) suggested that presence is actively listening, being present for the person and the relationship, and being a fellow-pilgrim—not a tourist—as we walk in solidarity together (Lutheran Education Queensland, 2017). Story is understanding that every person, community and religion has a story to share with humankind (Lutheran Education Queensland, 2017). Gabby emphasised that stories are:

... another key concept of service learning. What their stories is [sic] So understanding their story, whatever that story might be, and if it's a story where they come from a different culture, they come from a different understanding.

In Year 7 Christian Studies, students listen to the story of Pastor Matt Anker who describes how God, working through ordinary people, expresses how individuals can love one another (Year 7 CS Unit of work, 2018). Students are then asked to write down three statements about Pastor Matt's story that touched their heart and to consider the meaning of the word Lutheran for both an Australian and African context. (Year 7 CS Unit of work, 2018). Students are guided to compare their answers to social justice groups such as the Salvation Army, Red Cross and World Vision, and answer how Christian life can become more about serving people in the community (Year 7 CS Unit of work, 2017). Vinaya, Manchaiah, & Zhao (2012) mention that stories are a simple yet powerful way of engaging people due to their emotional aspects and because of the coherent sequential progression of events which makes stories easy to remember. It is through story-telling and story-listening that students are able to develop their IU as the stories are able to convey cultural contexts and cross-cultural meanings.

The final two service-learning concepts—stewardship and community—can also assist students to develop their IU. Stewardship as a service-learning area explores the interdependence of all life on earth such as social, financial, and environmental sustainability as well as the responsibility people have in nurturing all of creation (Lutheran Education Queensland, 2017). Gabby detailed how students are learning about IU through the unit on stewardship in Christian Studies:

[I]n Year 9 Christian Studies we have a unit called God's world, our world ... which is our stewardship unit on the environment and how we can be better stewards of God's world. There are intercultural understandings in that unit ... because students are actually looking at not just what's happening in our own backyard, our national issues ... [but also] global issues and ... fair trade. Why are people being paid minuscule money in sweatshops around the world? What's going on with the governments and the owners of those big companies? Why aren't they looking after these people? And to understand the culture of the country.

According to ACARA (2013b), IU in curriculum areas and units of work such as the stewardship unit enables students to develop responsibility and to learn about respecting the human rights of others and the value of democracy, equity and justice (MCEETYA, 2008). The final concept is community, which emphasises the importance of relationships—with God and one another—that are integral to people's identity (Lutheran Education Queensland,

2017). The Service-learning framework acknowledges that every person has many roles and responsibilities and that mutual respect, collaboration and social responsibility are crucial to the wellbeing of the community (Lutheran Education Queensland, 2017). An example of this concept can be seen with the Aware Day that is celebrated in Lutheran schools as a way of students connecting with both the Lutheran community and the wider community about social justice issues. Gabby commented about the purpose of Aware Day:

[A]ware Day is at the beginning of March ... that's put on by ALWS. Some of the things that they actually do with regards to social justice issues ... they might actually come here and do a day ... Students experience ... a better understanding [of] some of the social justice issues and it might be a focus on a particular place in the world so it could be Cambodia or Sudan, or Ethiopia or something like that.

Gabby further elaborated how she and her colleagues seek to align the service-learning concept with the Year 7 unit and in doing so develop students' IU as they explore various countries. She explained:

What we're doing is we're looking at a unit called Here We See Jesus and we look at how Christian organisations and Christian people actually serve others. And a lot of that might happen in countries where there's a lot of poverty or homelessness or social justice issues. So that could be a connection with culture.

Community and the other service-learning concepts in Lutheran education can be utilised by educators to assist with implementing IU into the Christian Studies program and units of work. The service-learning concepts can also engage students in IU through the three domains of cognitive, affective and behavioural as they acquire cultural knowledge which can lead to social action, and comprise emotions of empathy and respect for others. Mattix, Foster, Cunningham, & Wrightsman (2015) state service-learning can provide rich opportunities for students to enhance their IU and competence.

4.2 Pedagogy

Christian Studies educators are able to select the pedagogical approach that is suitable for their class, as the CSCF (2015) is flexible in that it does not prescribe a single approach. However, according to the CSCF (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015, pp. 7, 11) document, teachers are encouraged to select an approach that is: inclusive of the diverse needs,

backgrounds and worldview of the students; that is intellectually challenging; that equips students to address their questions; and that integrates relational, cognitive, affective and spiritual dimensions to promote connectedness, meaning and empathy. Inquiry-based learning, and student-centred learning—namely authentic, reflective and collaborative learning—will be examined in this study to demonstrate how educators can implement IU in their Christian Studies programs and units of work.

4.2.1 Inquiry-based learning

Inquiry-based learning stems from the work of Dewey (1938) and is commonly defined as a collaborative, student-driven process where knowledge is constructed rather than transmitted (Preston, Harvie & Wallace, 2015, p. 73). Shih, Chuang, and Hwang (2010), point out that traditional approaches to learning involved the transmission of knowledge from the educator to the educated whereas inquiry-based learning encourages students to be active rather than passive learners (Creedy, Horsfall, & Hand (1992). Inquiry-based learning is one of the pedagogical approaches that educators are encouraged to utilise in Christian Studies in Lutheran schools (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015). It is also a pedagogical tool that can assist educators to implement IU into their Christian Studies program and create ways for students to develop their IU. The CSCF (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015), referring to Wilson and Wing Jan (2003), noted that inquiry learning inspires learners to examine the complexities of the world around them forming concepts for themselves instead of being told simple answers to complex issues. Inquiry-based learning enables students to discover different worldviews through critical inquiry and interaction with local, national and global communities and cultures (Perry & Southwell, 2011). Debbie discussed the inquiry-based approach in Christian Studies:

[W]e believe there is a pedagogy that is actually really supportive of this ongoing growth and development of their [students'] beliefs and values so we use an inquiry approach. So our pedagogical approach is also not about 'here is the Christian position, swallow it'...We actually believe that we provide many engagements to help our kids inquire into the questions that matter to them.

According to Preston et al. (2015), there are various inquiry models dating back to the 1980s; however, many models follow a simple framework which Gilbert (2014, p. 75-77) summarises as three stages. The first stage is planning the inquiry to establish framing

questions, the second stage is researching and analysing the evidence, and the final stage is reflecting and responding to the inquiry (Preston et al., 2015, p. 78). These stages can be applied in Christian Studies to assist the educators' implementation of IU into their programs and units of work, and to help devise ways for students to develop their IU. Gilbert's three stages of inquiry model can be used with Year 8 students who form their own inquiry questions about a topic, research their topic to find evidence, and then reflect and present their findings to the class (Year 8 CS unit of work, 2018). Students in Year 8 can develop their IU as they adopt the inquiry-based approach through planning and establishing questions on the Abrahamic faiths (Judaism, Christianity and Islam). Rather than educators giving students all the information about the three Abrahamic religions, students construct their own research inquiry into the topic (Year 8 CS unit of work, 2018). Possible student questions mentioned in the Christian Studies unit of work (2018) include; What are the Abrahamic Faiths? How do the Abrahamic Faiths link together? Why do Muslims pray five times a day and Jews three times a day? Scott (2015) argues that in order for students to develop higher-order thinking skills, they must engage in authentic and relevant inquiry-based learning. The Christian Studies unit of work (2018) mentions several authentic and relevant questions that can cater for students who are not engaged in the topic or find the topic meaningless due to their beliefs, such as: I'm not a Christian, so why is this relevant? Do stories hold any significance to me? Can anyone learn from the Bible? How do I respond to the message?

According to the CSCF (2015), the inquiry-based approach in Christian Studies makes learning personally relevant, creates deep thinking, and broadens students' knowledge and understanding of the content. When Gabby was asked about inquiry-based learning in Christian Studies, she said:

[T]he inquiry base is very much where people should be able to ask questions freely and explore and hear different worldviews ... Getting them [students] to think a little bit more outside the box. And I guess then that sharing — authentically sharing some of their insights and what they've learnt.

Students in Christian Studies are able to explore the diverse worldviews depicted in cultural and religious topics through the inquiry-based learning approach. For example, students in Year 9 Christian Studies research the social and cultural context in which Jesus lived and

draw conclusions about how he chose to respond to people and events (Year 9 CS unit of work). Lupton (2014) stipulated that religious beliefs are influenced by historical and cultural contexts which allow people to interpret and evaluate their own belief system and identity. According to the CSCF (2015), students in Lutheran Education have an open opportunity to nourish their growing spirituality at the same time as engaging in intellectually challenging experiences that actively involve them in journeys of inquiry and constructing their own meanings.

Christian Studies teachers also employ the inquiry model collaboratively with students which can also enhance students' IU. For example, in Year 8 Christian Studies, educators scaffold inquiry questions and activities for students to investigate, such as: research and investigate the key features of Judaism, Christianity and Islam; analyse the significance of life events (e.g. birth, marriage and death) and their rituals in various cultural and religious contexts; identify some of the major differences and similarities in rites of passage of monotheistic religious traditions, such as bar mitzvah and confirmation (Year 8 CS unit of work, 2018). Inquiry learning is a collaborative process involving students and educators working together to negotiate aspects of the curriculum (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015; Wilson & Wing Jan, 2003). Debbie revealed how she utilised the inquiry-based approach in her classroom:

[I]n my own classroom I had used an inquiry approach, so we would do some kind of engagement activities to have a look at some things that they would develop their own questions [about] and I would take all of their questions that they had put together and I would discern, you know, these seem to be common questions, and these would then become the questions that everyone would research. Then they have their own personal inquiry and we talk about how they might find out answers to that.

Shih et al. (2010, p. 51), pointed out that various approaches to inquiry-based learning such as structured inquiry, guided inquiry and open inquiry can be used in an inquiry activity to assist students in collecting data and discovering relationships between variables. Lupton (2012), referring to Bell, Smetana and Binns (2005, p. 31), argued that directing students to research solely by searching library or internet materials does not constitute an inquiry lesson, as students are not analysing data to answer their question of interest. Lupton (2012, p. 12) suggested that educators and students are co-learners and co-constructors of knowledge where the process of inquiry includes collecting and analysing data which involves higher

order problem solving, critical thinking and reflection (Callison, 2006). Debbie described how she scaffolds and guides her students when conducting an inquiry-based learning activity. She also elaborated how she monitored students' progress and encouraged them to share their findings with the class:

[S]o they might interview the principal, they might interview the local pastor, they might interview some people on staff about material. If it was biblical material or if they needed to look into the Bible encyclopaedias and Bible handbooks for the kids to investigate into the different questions that they had. I found I learnt as much as they did when they were exploring these things. And then we would share that. You know, we would regularly be doing whole class sharing. So at the end of a session: What are you working on? What are you finding out? What seems to be the good resources? So keeping track and monitoring what they're doing as they're finding out the various pieces of information and modifying the searching or the resources that we needed to have available for them as we went along and then sharing their information.

Tilbury and Henderson (2003, p. 85) stated that inquiry learning enhances the ability for students to identify issues of relevance and examine key questions by evaluating, reflecting and sharing their understanding of the issues. This can be seen in Debbie's class as students discuss the process of their inquiry and share their findings with the class. Lupton (2014, p. 4) argued that inquiry learning is grounded on examining a variety of questions throughout the inquiry and that the questioning framework had three main purposes: 1) to generate focus questions, 2) to evaluate information and data, and 3) to evaluate the process of inquiry. Debbie discussed the role of the educator when arranging an inquiry-based lesson and how she would ask students questions throughout the lesson to ensure they are actively participating in the process of inquiry. She explained that it is a process of:

... always investigating new questions, giving them [students] charge of how are you going to find that out? How are you going to explore that? They are equipped with that sense of investigating these ideas for themselves and then finding meaningful ways to share it. So they teach another group of kids ... go back and actually connect.

Inquiry-based learning is one of several pedagogical approaches that Christian Studies educators can adopt to assist in implementing the IU capability within the Christian Studies

program and units of work. It can also contribute to students' development of IU as they actively examine religious and cultural aspects of the Christian Studies curriculum.

4.2.2 Student-centred learning

The CSCF (2015, p. 7) underlines a student-centred approach in Christian Studies where the focus is on the learner's world—both the inner life and perceptions of the external world. In contrast to traditional classrooms, Dewey's learner-centred classroom is a space in which students construct their own knowledge through personal meaning, rather than educator-imposed knowledge and teacher-directed activities (Williams, 2017; Schiro, 2013). Students are challenged to see themselves as affiliates of diverse communities—classroom, family, religious, local and global—from whom they can learn and draw inspiration, and to whom they can contribute and make a difference (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015, p. 7). The three learning approaches—authentic, reflective and collaborative—are utilised in Christian Studies and are a way for students to develop IU. This will be articulated in each of the sub-themes in the next section.

4.2.2.1 *Authentic learning*

Authentic learning can assist educators implementing IU into their Christian Studies program as well as being a tool that can allow students to develop IU. Authentic learning can be defined as a pedagogical approach that enables students to become aware of the relevance and meaningfulness of their learning, and that evolves around authentic tasks—real life experiences, real world problems and stimulations (Nicaise, Gibney, & Crane, 2000, p. 80). Fischer and Mazurkiewicz (2011, p. 6) suggested that there are six key features of authentic learning: (1) rigorous opportunities for student learning; (2) skills relating to the workforce; (3) knowledge gathered from various fields; (4) diverse forms of communication (5) interactions between the learners and the wider communities and (6) sharing and serving the needs and goals of the community. These six key aspects can be explored within the Christian Studies program and its practices.

Fischer and Mazurkiewicz (2011, p. 6) emphasised that student learning in authentic education is immersed in high levels of expectations and understanding which reflect the complexity of issues, events and individuals that exemplify the reality of contemporary society. The CSCF (2015, p. 8) document concurs with this, stating that authentic learning

brings new understanding, and transforms and challenges students to think critically and laterally about increasingly complex issues, and to take action. The CSCF (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015, p. 8) document further elaborates that authentic learning requires a rich learning environment in which students are given rigorous opportunities to: think in new ways; interact with a range of people, data and media; share their growing understanding; embrace the new and different with thought, creativity and respect; and make connections between learning and their experience of the world. This can be illustrated by a Year 7 Christian Studies unit (2018) in which students learn about the leadership of Moses from a slideshow and then complete a job application posing as Moses applying for the position of “Leader to God’s People”. Students are asked to complete sections of the application, such as position, qualifications, experience, essential qualities and characteristics, and referees (Year 7 Christian Studies Unit of work, 2018). Through these authentic learning activities students are given the opportunity to delve into the social, political and cultural aspects of the Hebrews in Moses’ time from the Old Testament and apply this knowledge to a social convention in society today—completing a job application for an employment position.

These rigorous authentic learning opportunities for students develop various skills relating to the workforce. Fischer and Mazurkiewicz (2011, p. 6) pointed out that it is rare for an adult to sit quietly at their desk and complete pages from a workbook. They stressed that students should be given skills necessary to lead a fulfilled and productive life—skills modelled by individuals in the community from various disciplines and fields of work (Fischer & Mazurkiewicz, 2011, p. 6). In her interview, Gabby mentioned how students in her Christian Studies class apply their knowledge to the real world:

[D]elve a little deeper and then have a look at ... that concept or the idea of what you’re trying to develop ... that deeper understanding, not just learning to know but learning to be able to apply and to be able to recognise, whether it be in the classroom or outside the classroom. But they’re able to take their knowledge and their understanding and be able to see it and apply it and examine it in the real world ... It makes them reflect but also allows conversation and for them to discern.

Gabby also reflected on not having textbooks that students follow in Christian Studies but instead utilising other learning resources to obtain knowledge and skills. In order for students

to gain an authentic cultural and geographical understanding of Israel and the Abrahamic religions, students use technological programs such as Google Earth. Gabby noted:

Yeah, going on Google Earth. And with the Abrahamic faiths, you know, looking at sacred places and actually going to the Western Wall and the Golden dome and Mount Arafat and Mount Sinai—just going to those places they [students] can see the terrain.

Gabby revealed how students are immersed in the cultural, social and geographical learning aspects of the Abrahamic faiths in Israel during the term, and that for their assessment task students apply their knowledge to a popular, current, travel career—a tourist guide. She explained:

[S]o their task for that, for the Abrahamic faiths, is that they pretend that they are tourist guides and they actually take ... their tourists [other students] on a bit of a tour of two sacred sites, and in that process they have to research the sacred site so they're gathering evidence and gathering information from the resources that we have in the library.

The Abrahamic unit gives students an opportunity to develop their IU as well as providing authentic learning experiences relating to knowledge and skills used in the workforce.

Fischer and Mazurkiewicz (2011, p. 6) argued that knowledge is not stagnant but ever changing with new discoveries and interpretations. They claim that authentic education works to continually gather knowledge and new findings from various fields for students to evaluate, reflect and critique along with established information (Fischer & Mazurkiewicz, 2011, p. 6). Nicaise, Gibney, and Crane (2000, p. 80) described how learning around authentic tasks requires discussions and discourse for students to debate their stance, discern information from various perspectives, and cultivate critical thinking and social interactions (Brown, 1992; Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Vygotsky, 1978; Wiburg & Carter, 1994). For example, Debbie discussed how the CSCF (2015) contains a section called Christianity in the World, which nurtures IU for students as they revise the familiarity of spirituality while being lured into the unfamiliar cultural context of spirituality, encouraging students to reflect on and question the information. Debbie pointed out:

[I]n the CSCF there's Christianity in the World, that whole section is really where it is quite different, and you might find ... people practising spirituality in different ways. That

would be where we'd be really picking up, you know, Indigenous spirituality, or I used to use Anzac Day because people used to talk about it as our national sacred day. So what is it invoking? Why did we go back in this day? What are the beliefs and values around what it means to be a person that resonate on these days? So that section ... that really will give you a window into how we would see that intercultural understanding.

Similarly, Gabby also described how IU in Christian Studies projects information and understanding to students about the way other cultures approach their spirituality.

Another key element that is imperative in authentic learning is the various forms of communication—spoken, written and visual (Fischer & Mazurkiewicz, 2011, p. 6). Fischer and Mazurkiewicz (2011, p. 6) state that communication is informed by a continuous stream of ideas from people in society, as well as by people deciphering and questioning the same ideas through a process within the learning environment. Debbie observed how students were equipped with social and cultural knowledge and skills through diverse forms of communication:

[U]sing social networking for example, if that's really important for them [students] to look at something ... is a way of engaging them, thinking that how does this connect into this bigger idea that we're looking at from a Christian perspective. Always investigating new questions, giving them charge of how are you [students] going to find that out? How are you going to explore that? They are equipped with that sense of investigating these ideas for themselves and then finding meaningful ways to share it. So do they teach another group of kids? Do they go back and actually connect with that environmental group and volunteer? ... It has to be authentic learning, so do they prepare something for another, you know, local community group, take action in a refugee shelter or something like that? ... What do we do with this knowledge?

It is through these authentic learning, communicative opportunities that students are able to develop IU. Through social networking, students begin to grasp knowledge, analyse new ideas, and interact with others. Velasco (2015, p. 87) stressed that intercultural communication is about social structures and interactions defined by understanding, acceptance, respect, equality, diversity and celebrations. Velasco (2015, p. 87) stipulated that the challenges to intercultural communication—cultural assumptions, prejudices, stereotypes and miscommunications—require strategies to overcome these encounters, such as self-

awareness, avoiding stereotypes, inquiry, respect, and accepting differences and obstacles that can transpire in communication.

Fischer and Mazurkiewicz (2011, p. 6) suggested that the interactions between the learners and the wider communities are another paramount component of authentic learning for students and also a tactic to build IU. Both educators and students encounter a diverse world that is multi-faith, multi-ethnic, and multi-lingual, and thus it is pivotal that learners frequently interact with society and its issues in order to genuinely comprehend the world around them (Fischer & Mazurkiewicz, 2011, p. 6). Gabby pointed out that students make connections between what they have learnt in Christian Studies and their experiences with the wider community:

... so they [students] are making good connections between what they're being taught and their experiences, and they're putting the two together. ... It's interesting that when the unit is over and we start the new unit someone might say they went somewhere or they went to a synagogue or we passed the synagogue. It actually brings up a conversation about different things. Or someone's got a hat on their head. It looks like one of those kippah.

Students' interactions with the wider community, combined with their authentic learning experiences in Christian Studies, can develop their IU.

The last key element that Fischer and Mazurkiewicz (2011, p. 7) advocate for an authentic education is students engaging in creative, purposeful products that serve the broader community's goals and needs. According to Fischer and Mazurkiewicz (2011, p. 7), these purposeful products are the means through which schools can contribute to the improvement of society. Debbie explains this concept:

[I]t sits with that inquiry approach too, where you have that taking action, applying what you've learned. It is about meaningful and authentic learnings ... It involves the hearts and the hands, and one of our principles says you go off and do something. It's about ... authenticity and learning that is for a purpose to serve the needs of the world. Actually, for us, education is not just about getting a job. Education is about helping our young people who contribute to the world in really meaningful ways.

This key element can further be depicted in the Year 7 Christian Studies unit (2018) where students explore how people's beliefs link with their actions and responses to the world around them. This unit fruitfully applies Fischer and Mazurkiewicz's (2011) concept for students to not only gain social and cultural knowledge about the world but also envisage how individuals like themselves can become a medium to helping or solving the world's problems. Finally, Fischer and Mazurkiewicz (2011, p. 8) indicated that significant time and effort be placed on each of the six elements for students to learn in an authentic environment whereby students are drawn to the social and cultural contexts as they share with, interact with, and interpret others in society.

4.2.2.2 Reflective learning

Reflective learning is another approach of student-centred learning that is utilised by educators in Christian Studies to implement IU. Reflective learning and practices are derived from the early works of John Dewey (1933, 1938) who observed that genuine reflection involves contemplating authentic problems that could not be solved by formal logic alone (Li & Lal, 2005, p. 218). Dewey's (1933, p. 6) definition of reflection is:

Active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends, constitutes reflective thought.

Reflective learning can be depicted in the Christian Studies program and units of work through student activities such as journal writing, critical reflection and group discussions, and surveys for assessments and the end of each unit of work. Reflective learning activities are concomitant with the ACARA (2011b) IU learning continuum level 5 (End of Year 8) and level 6 (End of Year 10) which state that:

[T]ypically, by the end of Year 8, students will reflect critically on the representation of various cultural groups in texts and the media and how they respond.

[T]ypically, by the end of Year 10, students reflect critically on the effect of intercultural experiences on their own attitudes and beliefs and those of others.

Aspects of the two IU learning levels are further stressed in the CSCF (2015), which implied Christian Studies needed to adopt an educational approach which encourages students to

address issues of current concerns to prepare themselves for a life in the global community as they form and adapt worldviews. To achieve this, the CSCF (2015) insisted that ‘respectful dialogue’ between faith traditions of the school, and the beliefs and values of other traditions and philosophies should be discussed in light of students’ own worldviews. Such a dialogue would employ learning experiences, and development of skills and competencies such as critical inquiry and in-depth reflection, involving students and educators becoming more aware of their own personal beliefs and religious ideas, as well as of the language, images and metaphors which are used to express those beliefs (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015). Debbie revealed how these IU continuum aspects are beneficial to students in Christian Studies:

I think in the ways that we’ve talked about where we’ve said it develops their beliefs and values. It develops their awareness. It’s a lens through which they can see the world from a Christian perspective but also have a window into other faiths. So the Muslim tradition, Jewish tradition [are] considered [within] the place of spirituality in the broader Australian culture. What is perceived to be important in Australian culture in terms of spirituality.

IU equips students to be active members of the global community and aims to develop reflective and critical judgement as well as skills to recognise and question the underlying prejudices, bias and assumptions in order to transform ways of living for the better (Tilbury & Henderson, 2003).

Journal reflective writing is a learning task in Christian Studies in which students are given time to ponder on a cultural or religious topic that is part of the unit of work. This can be seen in the Year 7 Unit of work (2018) where students investigate and compare descriptions of creation in the Old and New Testament. After exploring ideas and beliefs, and raising questions about the different cultural and religious creation stories, students encapsulate their thoughts in a structured journal writing task (Year 7 Unit of work, 2018). In the unit, students write in their journal responses to the following questions—How do I think the world came into being? Where do I think people come from? (Year 7 Unit of work, 2018). Reflective journaling can offer students the chance to process what they have learnt, revisit prior knowledge and thoughts, and cogitate on whether their beliefs and attitudes are substantiated through the process or whether their perceptions have changed. The reflective journal can be an influential and ongoing cycle of past, present and future as it lets the writer review their

thoughts from the past as they read it in the present, meditating on their personal experiences, which can transform their beliefs in the future. Debbie described how educators can provide opportunities for reflective journaling with their class and how the activity can have an impact on students' beliefs and values:

... you can also provide opportunities for reflective journals, and in those spaces see students reflecting on what the learning has meant for them. How it might have shaped or changed their own beliefs and values; thinking has tapped into their emotional intelligence.

Li and Lal (2005, p. 218) refer back to Dewey's notions of a reflective thinker—one who constructs a reflective judgment to resolve circumstances of ambiguity, controversy and trepidation about the current understanding of an issue and about preconceived conjectures. For example, students may have a preconceived notion about destitute or underprivileged people in society; however, after participating in the service-learning program and reflecting on their experiences, students may have a more accurate and transformed outlook about this social justice issue. Gabby mentioned how students change their attitudes and beliefs after reflecting on their service-learning experience:

[A]nd so there's a lot of that [students changing beliefs], so that will actually come with discernment and reflection and as it says it's service learning, you learn through your service; it actually changes who you are.

It is paramount that students are able to critically reflect and respond openly to diverse social and cultural issues that are discussed in class. Hill (2004, p. 60) suggests that schools should promote critical reflection on what students observe, and that through reflections and discussions, students will listen and respond to other viewpoints by exerting empathy and becoming more aware of the community around them. Hence, through critical reflection students can develop IU.

Another reflective learning approach educators use to implement IU in their Christian Studies program and unit of work is when students complete a reflection task as part of their Christian Studies assessment. After a unit of work such as the Year 7 Unit about the universe (2018), educators and students reflect and identify what worked well, both during and at the conclusion of the unit. This can be achieved in the form of a survey that students complete, teacher feedback or from the reflection assessment task. Gabby indicated how reflections in

the assessments task can be useful to both students, who have an opportunity to disclose their opinions about the unit or misconceptions about a topic, and to the educator, who can address issues raised by the students, clarify misconceptions, and make adjustments to their unit of work for the following class. Gabby noted:

I guess in their reflections in our assessments, we always try to include a reflection, and getting them to reflect on what they've learnt and what they understand and how they might be able to ... not so much to contribute, but how they can deepen their understanding. So through reflections, I guess that's always a good way. That's probably a good way to end it [the unit]. It's a good way of students indicating ... we [educators] are able to measure if we've made some kind of an impact here, in their reflections.

Quinton & Smallbone (2010, p. 127) argued that the transition for students who graduate and start employment requires a significant shift in thinking which includes acquiring the ability to self-reflect and become familiar with other reflective practices as well as demonstrating these transferable skills (Smith & Pilling, 2007). Thus, aspects of reflective learning can assist educators in implementing IU into their Christian Studies program and unit of work, as well as allow for students to develop IU and critical thinking skills.

4.2.2.3 Collaborative learning

Collaborative learning is also a student-centred approach to learning that is endorsed by Christian Studies educators in Lutheran schools. Educators have utilised collaborative learning when implementing IU into their Christian Studies program and unit of work, and have used this learning strategy to support students acquiring IU. According to Barton and Baguley (2014, p. 97) collaborative learning evolved largely from Lev Vygotsky's (1978) theories, such as the concept of a Zone of Proximal Development, which compares the distance between a person's achievement working unaccompanied to their achievement under the guidance of more proficient peers. Vygotsky claimed that collaborative learning is indispensable for one's mind to construct knowledge and formulate meaning (Barton & Baguley, 2014; Thousand, Villa & Nevin, 1994). Over time, educationalists have recognised strategies which accentuate collaborative processes, such as peer teaching and cooperative learning groups, which facilitate students learning more effectively (Barton & Baguley (2014, p. 97). The CSCF (2015) declared that Christian Studies classrooms require a collaborative learning environment—acknowledging and respecting students from diverse backgrounds, needs and interests. Lutheran education believes that people are created to live in a

community by being co-creators and co-carers with God, and that communities are places where people grow and learn with each other, interdependently (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015). The following will discuss the various collaborative learning strategies that educators utilise in Christian Studies to assist with implementing IU into their program.

Blogging is one method of collaborative learning where students and educators can accomplish interconnectedness and IU, and through which students can learn about and engage with diverse cultures, and create connections with others based on reciprocal respect (Batham, 2012, p. 17). A classroom blog is a pedagogical tool that, according to Thomas (2017, p. 112), has been shown to enhance learner engagement, stimulate knowledge, and increase socio-cultural interaction in the classroom. Classroom blogs can be an ideal conduit for embedding IU into the Christian Studies program, which can broaden students' experiences and expose them to other cultures, consequently building IU (Batham, 2012, p. 14). Although Gabby does not use blogging herself, she indicated how some staff use it with their class:

I have not used blogs in the classroom. ... Felix [pseudonym for another teacher] has actually created a closed Facebook page where ... students can become a part of this chat group. I'm not familiar with Facebook, but anyway, it's an opportunity for them to be able to have this online discussion ... so there's discussion between students and staff and people are able to freely speak or freely write and have their opinions but they have to be respectful, obviously. And anyone can join as long as you abide by the rules of being respectful and allow[ing] people to have their voice and opinions.

While blogging and other online discussion forums are an ideal opportunity for students to engage with others in a productive encounter of IU, it is essential that educators closely monitor the various blogs. This is a delicate endeavour for the creator of the online discussion forum, as they must balance the respectful voices and opinions of others, and more importantly ensure that the information given in each blog is accurate and factual. Batham (2012, p. 17) stipulated that educators who blog most effectively are ones who read and view their class blogs as well as other class blogs with their students, ensuring quality commenting is applied and harmonious relationships are garnered within the community. As more educators become mindful of the benefits of blogging with their classes, it can become a valuable tool where collaborative blogging projects can offer additional formalised

opportunities to create partnerships with other classes internationally and to appreciate diversity by recognising commonalities and differences (Batham, 2012).

Group discussions are another method of collaborative learning that educators use to embed IU into their Christian Studies program. Gabby remarked on how group discussions were incorporated in Christian Studies and how this led to students constructing their own meaning and inquiries from listening to others. Gabby asserted:

I guess we try and incorporate discussions ... Students feel free to be able to have their say [and] ... to contribute [or] offer an opinion. And from that often ... it might actually you know [lead to] other questions, other thoughts [and] ... from what somebody says ... aid in [an] inquiry.

In Christian Studies, students are mentored to listen actively by identifying the issues underlying the discussion, and entering into an open and respectful dialogue with people whose religious, philosophical and ethical views differ from their own (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015). In the Year 8 unit called Together with God (2018), students investigate how Christians express their spirituality in terms of their relationships with others, and their perception of a higher being. As a classroom collaborative activity, students brainstorm and discuss everything they know about Christianity while the educator constructs a web on the board to display their responses (Year 8 Unit of work, 2018). Students also respond in a classroom discussion about the spiritual features of their school environment such as the chapel, home class and prayer services, and debate the relevance of Jesus' message for Christians and other people today (Year 8 Unit of work, 2018). In order for students to develop their IU in Christian Studies, educators must seek to create an environment that provokes students to move beyond their narrow personal and social worlds and provide them with opportunities to experience and explore domains oblivious to them (Magen-Nagar & Shonfeld, 2018, p. 2). An example is in the Year 8 unit (2018) where students examine and discuss different forms of worship for Anglicans, Catholics, Lutherans and other denominations, including Indigenous Christians.

Students in Christian Studies participate in collaborative learning through various classroom activities. These collaborative learning activities can contribute to students' IU as they respectfully articulate their own point of view based on reasoning, interaction and inclusion while being empathetic to different opinions and acquiring knowledge about cultural and

religious aspects of life (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015). For example, in Year 7 Christian Studies (2018) educators organise a pair conversational activity involving students interviewing each other about aspects of their identity, such as their cultural background, hobbies and special interests. During the activity, students listen attentively to their partner as they later report back some information about their partner to the class. Another collaborative learning activity illustrated in Year 7 Christian Studies (2018) is when students first write a list of beliefs that people might have and later they share a couple of ideas with the class. Afterwards students write down their personal beliefs by completing a t-chart with the heading ‘I believe ... but don’t believe ...’ and with their partner students classify each belief into groups arranged by their similarities (Year 7 Unit of work, 2018). The class discusses how beliefs form the basis of different religions, and students further discuss the purpose of creation, debating whether humans have cared for creation or not (Year 7 Unit of work, 2018). Gabby explained the collaborative learning opportunities that her students have, and the benefit of the interaction:

We have opportunities for students to actually work in pairs or group work where they might be given a particular situation and come up with what would be in this scenario ... What the response would be for a Muslim, for a Buddhist, for a Christian. Giving [students] scenarios and how they [religious groups] might respond according to their beliefs. I guess that also helps with the social context as well.

Collaborative learning is not only active, but interactive, as students exchange ideas and information building on their own world of knowledge, which assists them with IU (Magen-Nagar & Shonfeld, 2018; Harasim, 2012). This can be depicted in the Jigsaw activity in Year 7 (2018). Students form groups of five and each student receives a number between 1 and 5. All students with the same number join together to read one creation story from a different culture. Students then summarise their story on a worksheet called Creation Around the World. Afterwards, students join back with their original groups and complete the remaining sections of the worksheet together (Year 7 Christian Studies, 2018). According to Magen-Nagar and Shonfeld (2018, p. 3) research has found that collaborative projects can improve students’ engagement and incentive to learn (Kaendler, Wiedmann, Rummel, & Spada, 2014). These collaborative learning activities can be linked to ACARA’s IU learning continuum, as students typically by the end of Year 10 should “understand the importance of

mutual respect in promoting cultural exchange and collaboration in an interconnected world” (2011b).

4.2.3 Teachers’ planning

This section will review aspects relating to teachers’ planning in order to comprehend how educators implement IU into the Christian Studies Program and discover ways for students to develop IU. The sub-theme teachers’ planning refers to teachers’ professional learning and development with the purpose to create units of work and educational experiences, and provide a learning environment suitable for students to develop IU. For Christian Studies teachers to grasp the CSCF (2015), including the theological map of the framework and the IU capability from the Australian curriculum, as well as ensuring that their teaching strategies are current with educational practices that are beneficial to students’ learning, the educators engage in professional learning and development. Debbie noted that teachers in Lutheran schools across Australia are expected to fulfil the accreditation requirements. She added:

[The] system ... expects that teachers are accredited to teach in a Lutheran school or to teach Christian Studies. And so that’s these courses, Pathways and Equip, that we run that teachers will complete those to get a basic understanding of our philosophy and theology and our pedagogy in this space. So that’s the expectation that is all enacted at a local school level and some principals are stronger on that than others.

Professional development is also extended to principals in Lutheran schools. Debbie discussed how a principals’ conference was held in an Aboriginal community in Central Australia, which was once a Lutheran mission site established by two German pastors:

[W]e took the principals to Hermannsburg in Central Australia for their principal conference a couple of years ago and I think it was an eye opener for all of us that we went to, not a Lutheran, but a broader museum where they showed us the record keeping [about the two cultures—Aboriginal and German] that now is being used by people internationally. This work of these German pastors recording language, and they were there for eight years before there was a conversion. So they went there, they loved the people, they got to know them, they wrote their language, they understood their culture before it was any sense of, ‘Well, we’ve got someone special we want to talk about.’

Principals who attended the conference were able to share their cultural experience and knowledge with their own school communities by various mediums such as newsletters, assemblies, and guest speaking. This was one way for educators to develop students' cultural understanding of Aboriginal and German people in Australian society during the 1800s. Debbie explained how not only students but early career teachers and those who have been appointed to work in the Lutheran Education system may be unfamiliar with Lutheran culture and spirituality. For this reason, Lutheran schools organise professional development workshops as part of their induction process for staff. Debbie elaborated on the professional development workshops offered to teachers:

[W]e have courses for teachers that are new to schools that come in and they learn about the culture in Lutheran education in Pathways and then the teaching of Christian Studies, and those courses reflect the philosophical and educational approach ... We get the teachers to investigate things for themselves to arrive at the different understandings because some have quite a bit of understanding about Christianity. Some have quite a limited understanding so some do investigations in Equip ... Christian Studies leaders have workshops in each of the regions ... and the content of that varies depending on their needs and interests ... In some ways it's intercultural understanding; how do we take this piece of theology and help our students understand it or our staff understand it in meaningful ways, so it is a bit of intercultural understanding. We've got this religious belief here. How do we stand with a foot in the context of our teachers or students and help them understand this in ways that are meaningful for them in language that makes sense, in metaphors, in applications?

Professional development, as well as sufficient time allocation for each unit, appropriate staffing, resourcing, and a process of consultation will ensure the effective implementation of the CSCF (2015). The CSCF (2015) document provides direction for teachers to plan and develop their own units for their students. Christian Studies teachers are expected to create a dynamic school program, enabling students to develop, articulate and act on their understanding of the world (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015). They also need to construct engaging and stimulating units of work incorporating a wide range of teaching strategies to cater for the diverse needs of students and learning styles as well as using an array of resources to create a religiously literate environment (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015). Students partaking in Christian Studies bring a range of faiths, spiritual understandings and experiences embodied in differing worldviews, which have implications for planning and

teaching as well as accommodating varying levels of religious literacy and engagement (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015). Skerrett (2014, p. 237) argues that a hindrance to engaging religious literacies in schools includes: teachers' lack of knowledge and understanding about world religions; their minimal personal religious convictions, practices, and identities; and a lack of professional planning and support for teachers associated with religious literacy education. To combat some of these issues, professional development programs, as well as teacher consultation with regional officers from Lutheran Education using theological material, are employed. Debbie mentioned that teachers are encouraged to use the theological materials with a mindset of assisting their students:

[I] mean we [Lutheran Education Australia] ask them [teachers] to read the theological material, to read that with a headset of what is important for my students. So how do I think this will make a difference to my students so they can answer that? Why am I teaching this? That's the first question we want them to think about. Not to just be going through the motions of here's this piece of theology and I don't know what it means but here you go kids, here you get it. We want them to understand their real life connections and this understanding about God or relationships or the planet for their lives and for the students' lives. So they have to think that through, so they read the theology, think what this means for them and then they start to plan the unit of work around that curriculum strand. They would turn to the section where the framework is and then look at the outcomes that are there and then, depending on their students, actually choose which is the appropriate band for their own students.

According to the CSCF (2015) document, teaching and learning in Christian Studies needs to occur in a supportive, inclusive and safe environment that nurtures respect and understanding for different religious views and the communities in which they are expressed. Debbie stressed the importance of teachers connecting with their students' cultural and spiritual perspectives as well as their lives when discussing the theological concepts to make the learning more meaningful to them. She stated:

I think for Years 7–9 particularly, when the students are going through that developmental stage of saying, "You know what? My beliefs and values are my own" ... It's important for teachers to make connections with the students' lives that are meaningful. So [teachers ask themselves] what is the concept of this theological idea sits or connects with that is going to be meaningful for my students? Is it belonging? Is it identity? Is it self? Is it relationships? What are the concepts, the broad concepts, that this theological idea sits

with? I guess it's a cultural understanding too, what are different cultural perspectives on the sense of self today? You could look at Indigenous perspectives, the selfie world like mass media social networking sense of self, and then the church's perspective on self, the Christian church's perspective and I guess even within that if you had all the Year 9 students you could look at the different religious perspectives on that.

The Lutheran perspectives on theological concepts are essential learning in Christian Studies and teachers will integrate aspects of the school's life, such as pastoral care and worship services, to assist students' experiences and understanding of Christian culture. Debbie observed how the Growing Deep webpage (which is found on the Lutheran Australia website) also assisted in this endeavour:

[W]e believe that Christianity is central to our identity, so we will teach about it. We will involve our students in experiences of it, so worship service, experiencing forgiveness in the way we do pastoral care, and restorative practices with students, that's another way that we live out our Christian faith ... service in pastoral care. ... Growing Deep ... it's got in there, the culture, and it talks about the intentions that we keep, so a culture of challenge but also support, a culture of affirmation, but also inspiring you to be better than you can be. And so ... [the] Growing Deep document at the front of it also has a Lutheran lens that kind of articulates, I guess, the Christian culture that we hope to develop in our schools.

When planning units of work, including lessons for Christian Studies, teachers will encompass a worldview ensuring that students comprehend both the Christian perspective and the cultural, religious and secular positions. Gabby stated:

[T]hey're looking at things of worldview and they're not just looking at religious worldviews ... [but] also looking at secular worldviews, and the students have got a fairly good, fair, firm foundation of Christian worldview, even though none of them may be Christian but they've actually been exposed to a Christian worldview ... They've been exposed to the Islamic worldview and a Jewish worldview ... they've been exposed to a lot of those things already and even an atheist worldview. You know, the human worldview.

Walton, Paradies, Priest, Wertheim, & Freeman (2015, p. 219) propose four IU factors that require consideration by teachers when developing effective approaches to the IU capability

from the Australian curriculum. These are: (1) engaging students from diverse backgrounds, (2) critical reflection on prejudices and assumptions rather than only imparting cultural knowledge, (3) cultural reflexivity, including empathy and cultural perspective, and (4) positive interpersonal and intergroup experiences. Debbie commented on the diverse backgrounds of students and the growing need for Christian Studies teachers to include aspects of this cultural diversity within their planning, as these aspects are very much part of Australian culture:

[F]or me it begins with the students, and their emerging beliefs and values around who they are and what they believe—their own spirituality. For example, it is about the role of education in helping them grow their own sense of understanding about what do I [the student] really believe? What is really important to me? Who am I in these local, national, [and] global contexts? What is my role and responsibility in the world? So it's understanding their own cultural perspective and that, in our increasingly multicultural student community as well as staff community, means understanding all of those maybe cultural factors that come in, whether it be Indigenous or Asian heritage or Middle Eastern or we had an African gentleman [who] came to visit us today. So understanding how that features, as well as our Australian culture ... the establishment and growing of their own beliefs and values that they actually do have, things that they believe and value.

Debbie pointed out how vital it was for teachers to critically reflect on, and discuss with their Christian Studies classes, the misconceptions and the role of the media in representing religious and cultural groups:

[I]ntroducing them particularly in the religious domain to understanding what do Christians believe and value, and working at helping them see that maybe some of the things that the wider community believe about Christianity are misconceptions and what are really important things for Christians, as opposed to what the media might suggest ... are important or misconceptions they might have ... it's all about rules, so it's helping them understand the Christian perspective, but ... all of the diversity within that too.

Debbie reflected on a teacher who was planning a Christian Studies lesson about the Christian Church's ritual of baptism, and how the teacher connected the religious ritual to students' cultural understanding of the concept of belonging. Debbie added:

[T]he teacher looked at baptism, and she saw that that was really a concept about belonging, and so she looked at where the kids belonged and they all looked at why they belong in different groups and the advantages and disadvantages of belonging in groups as an entry into belonging in the Christian church and the rite of passage of Baptism.

Finally, Debbie said that educators discussing with their own communities their participation in conferences such as the principals' conference in Central Australia, and interactions with people and groups in the community, such as the Lutheran Synod gathering, can lead to positive inquiries for students in understanding aspects of religious and cultural issues.

Debbie stated:

[S]o we just had our big synod so we would have, I would imagine ... kids that were interested in that topic of women's ordination, for example, helping them understand that in a group such as the Christian church, some churches ordain women and some don't. What are the beliefs and values that sit behind that? How is this helpful and harmful for the mission and ministry of the church into the future? And discussion of those kinds of ideas and awareness of the Indigenous story that we just talked about [referring to the Indigenous groups that shared their stories with the Lutheran pastors]. So what were the beliefs and values of those early pastors that shaped the way they interacted with those Indigenous people? How is that in some ways our situation today, when we deal with a very secular society? How do we, as Christians, work to understand the things that are important in wider society, to make connection with people today about what Jesus did?

Walton et al.'s (2015, p. 219) four factors of developing effective approaches to IU can be applied by Christian Studies teachers through [1] their planning of professional development in learning how to engage diverse students with aspects of cultural diversity, [2] reflect on misconceptions and the role of the media, [3] connect cultural perspectives to the units of work, and [4] interact with religious and cultural people and groups in society.

4.3 Culture and Religion

The section will discuss how Christian Studies educators in Lutheran schools encompass an array of religious and cultural texts such as sacred texts—Bible, Torah and Quran—and other texts, such as stories, artwork, and visual media, to assist with implementing IU into their Christian Studies programs and thus develop students' IU. This section will also review how

cultural and religious learning activities, such as classroom tasks, excursions, celebrations, and guest speakers are strategies that educators use to implement IU into their Christian Studies programs.

4.3.1 Texts

In Christian Studies educators in Lutheran schools utilise an array of religious and cultural texts, both literary and non-literary. These texts can be considered to assist with implementing IU into the Christian Studies program as well as to enrich students' IU. Sacred texts, such as the Bible, the Torah and the Quran, and other texts, such as picture books, poetry, artwork, newspapers, stories, and visual media, are used in Christian Studies to understand cultural and historical aspects of religious groups, and identify cultural stereotypes and symbolic language (CSCF, 2015). Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 examine the Bible in-depth to uncover the culture of the writers and listeners of the sacred text, giving insights into the meaning of the text for people in the past, as well as context for contemporary readers (CSCF, 2015). Students in Year 8 are given an overview of the Bible, which is divided into two major sections, the Old Testament or Hebrew Scripture, and the New Testament, or Christian Scripture (CSCF, 2015; Year 8 CS Unit of work, 2018). Educators use the Children's Illustrated Bible DVD to introduce the Abrahamic religions to students, who learn about the different meanings of the events and concepts shared between the three religions (Year 8 CS Unit of work, 2018). Year 8 students examine the Old Testament; in particular, the first five books they learn form the Torah—Pentateuch—and the beginning of the Jewish sacred text (Year 8 CS Unit of work, 2018). Through various multimedia texts, such as YouTube clips and documentary films, students discover the beliefs, divergent branches, and festivals of Judaism, such as the Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Hanukah (Year 8 CS Unit of work, 2018). Students are also taught about Islam, including the Islamic prophets in the Quran—Abraham and Muhammad—as well as sacred sites such as the Ka'bah, and Islamic beliefs, such as the Five Pillars of Islam (Year 8 CS Unit of work).

Rader (2015, p. 18) argues that people develop IU when they learn about their own cultural beliefs, languages and histories as well as those of others. Debbie explained how scripture, through the biblical character Paul, illustrates the notions of IU, as Paul interacted with

people of other faiths and cultures, which Debbie claimed is key for IU in our society today.

She commented:

[I]ntercultural understanding, ... that's for all of us; it's a big challenge, and it comes from the Scriptures too. You know Paul, when he went to Athens, you know, spent time there and he knew, it says in the scriptures. He listened intently and said, 'Oh, I can see that you're really religious and spiritual. Could I tell you about my spiritual encounters with my God?' I think that's for us today, particularly in Australia, which is a bit anti-Christianity and anti-faith, to just really form relationships and get to know that culture of our community, and then speaking to that with love and grace.

Gomez (2011, p. 55) suggested that literature can help construct our understanding of reality and the perceived world, as well as making us more culturally empathetic, respectful, and broadminded towards diverse expressions and cross-cultural experiences. The Bible is a literary text that has many cross-cultural expressions, due to the many writers, different biblical figures, and diverse readers. The Bible is affiliated with Judaism through biblical characters—Jesus and Moses—and also with divergent Christian denominations. The divergence of Christian denominations is due to the significant growth of Christian churches since the recordings by the Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts, when the gospel messages quickly spread to people of diverse lands, cultures and languages (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015). Historical events, social structures and new discoveries have influenced the changes in Christianity over time and Lutheran educators have noted these changes in their Christian Studies programs, in order for students to have a thorough cultural and religious understanding of the scriptures which intentionally will develop their IU (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015). An example of Christian divergent beliefs about the scriptures is mentioned in the CSCF (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015, p. 46-50):

[T]he Bible and God's word can be viewed in different ways. Some people teach that the Bible contains God's word—that is, there are parts of the Bible which are not God's word. Others (sometimes called "fundamentalists") teach that the Bible is the word of God—that is the Bible, rather than Jesus Christ who is the word to which the Scriptures bear witness, is the centre of faith. The position of the LCA [Lutheran Church of Australia] is that the Bible is God's word through which God speaks particularly through Jesus Christ. Some people (sometimes called "liberals") view the Bible as purely a historical document and do not accept the authority of the Bible as a whole. Some Pentecostal groups see the

Bible as being potentially God's word: only if the Holy Spirit breathes life into it does the Bible become more than lifeless words.

In order for students to grasp the social, cultural, historical and religious contexts of biblical scripture, Lutheran education encourages educators and their students to use several tools and techniques for the interpretations of scripture—hermeneutics—including the exegesis of biblical texts (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015). In Christian Studies, cultural and religious texts are deconstructed and examined by students who are taught to use language, symbols, metaphors and imagery to appreciate the Christian story and deepen their understanding of other faith groups (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015). This can be seen to complement the IU learning continuum (ACARA, 2011b) outcomes in three ways: (1) exploring ways that culture shapes the use of language in a variety of contexts, (2) critically discerning the representations of diverse cultural aspects in texts and the media, and (3) challenging stereotypes and prejudices in the representations of groups in national and international identities. For example, students in Year 7 Christian Studies employ language and literacy conventions and tools to analyse the biblical text, giving them an understanding of key messages and cultural contexts (Year 7 CS Unit of work, 2018). Debbie emphasised the importance of using biblical commentaries, a tool that can assist with interpreting scripture in order to contextualise the biblical text:

[Y]ou could go into a lot of commentaries and ... we're not literalist. There is an interpretation and contextualisation, what the text means to the people at the time. What does that mean to us today? What could God be saying to me personally? We believe that there is an important need to look at the context in which this was written, who it was, and why would have people gasped if Jesus touched a leper? We need to understand the cultural norms of the time, the unclean and clean, for these stories to even make sense. Biblical commentary encyclopaedias, all that's very important for us.

Welsh (2011, p. 37) points out that culture is entrenched in language in the form of assumed or inferred meanings that are interconnected through shared understandings and contextual dependency. Welsh (2011, p. 37) further implies that IU relates to the ability to comprehend the 'hidden meanings', deductions and contextual meanings that are implicit in language. When students in Year 8 are learning about the birth of Moses in Exodus 2:1-10, they can adopt the literary convention of intertextuality—the relationship between texts—to find how the scriptural story borrows the theme of heroism from a folktale which was told centuries

ago about King Sargon in 2300 BC, where a prodigious leader as a baby is saved from death by the same people that he will later overthrow (Boadt, 1984). This illustrates how students can develop their IU, as they discover the cultural world of the Hebrews and Egyptians from the story of Moses in Exodus, and discover how the story is meaningful to Jews and Christians, both past and present. Students can also compare and contrast the two stories—the story of the birth of Moses and the story of King Sargon—giving them an opportunity to obtain critical thinking and IU skills.

Perry & Southwell (2011, p. 458) noted that exposing students to various texts and representations of a culture can develop their critical understanding of the cultural aspects of language and cultural depictions (Byram and Feng, 2004; Kinginger, Alison, and Simpson, 1999; Shanahan, 1997; Ware and Kramersch, 2005). For example, students in Year 7 Christian Studies are required for their learning activity to collect information from a range of texts such as the Bible, encyclopedias, picture books and films to identify the nature and practices of the different cultural and social groups with whom Jesus interacted (CSCF, 2015). Multimodal texts, such as films and animated television programs, are integrated in Christian Studies to assist with students discovering familiar and unfamiliar cultural and religious aspects. Common for Christian Studies educators is to use popular culture to portray segments of the biblical scripture—for example, screening an episode of *The Simpsons* that incorporates religious dialogue to parody the Christian Church's practices and beliefs. Gabby reflected on her teaching practices, which entailed showing a film about Jesus to her Year 8 class in order for them to learn more about the culture and society at the time. She stated:

[In] the Year 8 Term 2 unit ... it talks about discipleship, and we actually show a little DVD on the disciples of Jesus and going back to 2000 B.C. and what it was like back then for the people, for the disciples, the type of world that they lived in, the lifestyle that they had. Some of the food that they ate, their way of life. What society was like, how they bartered. The issue with the Roman government. Yeah, it's an interesting DVD.

There are various ways Christian Studies educators can assist students in critiquing film texts to shed light on religion and IU. By examining the historical, political, cultural and religious aspects of a biblical film, students can gain insight into the development of a film, which will assist them in interpreting the biblical text (Goldburg, 2004). Students can engage in critical

thinking approaches and language conventions in order to perceive how texts have been constructed to position them.

As Graham (1997, p. 38) pointed out, film has the power to stimulate, convince and affect viewers. For example, films about Jesus, such as the 1973 film *Jesus Christ Superstar* modernise the biblical events rather than portraying a genuine historical and cultural perspective. Goldberg (2001, p. 133) noted how the film reflected the anti-Vietnam war sentiments during the seventies, as Jesus resembles the “typical” American who is fed up with authorities, government and war. Goldberg (1998, p. 46) also advised that people’s understandings of the biblical text and themes are often driven by such popular culture rather than by the ancient text itself. As students engage in various reading approaches, such as invited or preferred or alternative reading, this will promote their understanding of how reading positions determine the way in which ideologies are received and are constructed by social and cultural processes (Moon, 2001). For example, reading across the text (such as engaging in a feminist reading) allows the students to challenge aspects of the invited reading, and according to Goldberg (2004, p. 38) will encourage them to question how biblical women are altered, embellished or invented. Finally, another method that students can adopt to develop their cultural understanding of biblical texts is to analyse film techniques such as cinematography, which includes camera shots, lighting and colour, as well as sound effects and music, while viewing a biblical film. This would allow students to notice the Hollywood conventions—for example, ‘evil’ characters like Judas and Delilah are usually garbed in red, while Jesus is in white, representing his ‘good’ character. By paying attention to the various contexts that surround a film, students will begin to perceive how the film has been constructed to position them as viewers, culturally, socially and religiously.

4.3.2 Activities

Cultural and religious learning activities, such as classroom tasks, excursions, celebrations and guest speakers, are strategies that educators use to implement IU into their Christian Studies programs. Rader (2015, p. 21) suggested that educators provide learning opportunities and engaging activities that recognise and pay tribute to the cultural traditions of students in their social settings—the classroom, the school community, and the wider community. Gabby reminisced about a memorable cultural activity in her Christian Studies class, where she read to her students the biblical passages from Exodus about the Hebrew people and how they prepared for the traditional Passover meal. To ensure her students

experienced an insightful and appealing learning opportunity, Gabby recreated the Hebrew ritual in the classroom using modern consumable goods such as chocolate. Gabby noted:

... we did a chocolate Passover, and I was reading about the Passover in Exodus about the Hebrews. How the Hebrews were instructed by God ... to prepare for the Passover and having to kill ... the two year old lamb and baking, making their unleavened bread ... the bitter supper ... and that bittersweet. I had different foods and we actually had the table set out for the Passover and each course was a particular part of the Passover. It had meaning, and the chocolate represented that. So it got them to understand the culture of the Jewish people, the culture of the Hebrew people, and what was important to them and why it was important to them. And that ... actually showed how different religions or different cultures add meaning to its [referring to biblical passages] meaning.

This cultural activity in Gabby's class encapsulated both the Hebrew people of the Bible and today's Jewish customs and rituals associated with the Passover, as Gabby read from the Old Testament scripture as well as reconstructing the Passover meal for her students to ponder on the sacred event. Retrospectively, students would begin to connect the two cultures—the Hebrew people during the time of Moses, and the Jewish people today who continue to commemorate this ritual. This ancient sacred ritual also parallels the Christian ritual represented in the Eucharist, both in doctrine and in practice (Boulton, 2013; Scotland, 2016; Marcus, 2013). Boulton (2013, p. 18) advised that an understanding of the Eucharist as a Christian rendition of the Passover is vital for comprehending the Eucharist–Passover or Jewish–Christian relationship. Hence, students can develop IU when encountering cultural learning activities, such as the modernised Passover event which has inferences from a Hebrew, Jewish, Christian, and a modern cultural context.

Students in Christian Studies can enhance IU when they participate in various social, historical and cultural activities in class. Welsh (2011, p. 41) stated that for students to identify with 'otherness' and foster understanding and empathy, it is crucial that educators teach IU from one's own culture, in addition to the other culture, sharing experiences, focusing on the similarities and differences, but avoiding negative stereotypes. The CSCF (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015) stated that students should examine and describe various religious and cultural ethical codes for living, such as the Ten Commandments, the Five Pillars, the Rights of the Individual, and the Dreaming stories, and their influence in society. Students analyse historical and contemporary people, for example Martin Luther and

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and their responses to problematic moral and ethical decisions, and examine the consequences of their decisions (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015). In this ethics unit, students outline various strategies used by religious and social groups to make effective decisions on moral and ethical issues, as well as contemplating their own decision making (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015). Students in Christian Studies also explore how social and historical contexts shaped the early and medieval churches, and the split between the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015). Students in Christian Studies are also introduced to the divergent branches of Christianity—Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant—and learn about significant events, movements and people that shaped the church during the Reformation and Renaissance eras (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015). Students gather information and present their findings about the different Christian denominations represented in their class and the school community as they conduct interviews and surveys (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015). Debbie commented:

... we're really blessed by having Christians of other denominations in our schools. When we talk about intercultural understanding, to have around the table when you're talking about something like Martin Luther College [pseudonym name] a Catholic, a Lutheran, a Uniting, a Baptist perspective is enriching for all of us. And then someone that's new saying, well I don't even get it [referring to the religious perspective], so I think, you know, within our staff we have intercultural understanding occurring and I think if you have really clever school leaders they capitalise on that and could use that to even model what should be happening in our classrooms. I'd be sad to think that our kids walk away thinking that being in a Lutheran school was about learning to just say certain things ... the answer is always Jesus or something like that.

It is through these various cultural learning activities that educators divulge to students information about the historical Christian figures such as St Francis, John Calvin, and Martin Luther, whom the Lutheran Church's theology and doctrines are based upon (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015). From the religious and cultural learning activities, students in Christian Studies, regardless of their spiritual background, are taught the Lutheran perspective and are exposed to other religious groups, giving them a broader worldview. According to the CSCF (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015, p. 92), within a multi-faith and multicultural context, Lutheran education nurtures a Christian worldview—the revelation of God through scripture, coupled with germane insights from various sources, including other cultures, faiths and worldviews.

In Year 7, students engage in a variety of cultural learning activities surrounding social justice issues, which allows for students to develop IU as they develop emotions of empathy and compassion for others. In the Year 7 unit called *Here We See Jesus* (2018), students discover global world issues and discuss how different people are discriminated against by others because of their race, their skin colour, or some other prejudiced reason. For example, students watch a video clip stimulus called *People with Albinism in Burundi* and afterwards ruminate on the following questions (Year 7 Unit of work, 2018):

How does this situation make you feel? Explain why. Are the people living with Albinism treated fairly? Explain why/why not. Have they done anything to deserve this treatment? Does it make you want to do something to make the situation more just? Do we here in Australia treat others unfairly because of the way they look? Answer honestly. Are there people in the world who have done things that you find ‘unforgivable’—they are just too hard for you to love?

Gorski (2009, p. 89) remarked that authentic intercultural practice, when sifting through social justice issues, involves the deconstruction of power, privilege, oppression, and the consciousness or lack of consciousness that these conditions engender in the oppressor and the oppressed. As part of this cultural learning activity, students brainstorm ways that young adolescents can make an impact on their world—at home, at school, locally and globally (Year 7 Unit of work, 2018). Martens et al. (2015, p. 614) refer to Banks (2004, p. 301) and stated that students should develop global identifications and retain a profound understanding of the universal community, which may inspire them to take action as global citizens in solving the world’s challenging problems. Educators are guided to encourage students to begin formulating a plan of work in service to others, as previously mentioned in the Service-learning section of the thesis. While it is not formally mentioned in the Year 7 unit of work (2018), learning about social justice issues such as the people with albinism in Burundi prompts opportunities for students to learn about people with albinism and also cultures that may be unfamiliar to them, such as the culture of Burundi. The injustice towards, and prejudiced treatment of, the people with albinism in Burundi incites sentiments of empathy and compassion in students as well as being an avenue for Year 7 students to develop IU.

Technology such as video clips about social and cultural issues can be utilised to facilitate IU, making cultural learning activities easily accessible and visually stimulating for students.

Davis, Cho, and Hagenon (2005, p. 386) pointed out that educators often enhance the intercultural dimensions in education with technological tools such as emails, the internet and computer simulations. In the Year 7 unit *Here We See Jesus* (2018), students watch a YouTube video about The Good Samaritan story. The narrated story and the animated characters in the video clip can amplify students' understandings of the biblical story, including the social justice message and the cultural contexts. For example, reading the parable of The Good Samaritan gives the reader a simple view of the story, without any cues to deconstruct the text in order to completely comprehend the meaning. However, technological means such as a narrated video can divulge greater clarity of meaning. According to Clark (2014, p. 301), The Good Samaritan story appears on the surface to be exhorting selfless service to one's neighbour in need; however, examining the text in its social and cultural context, the reader will discover the story to be a rhetorical engagement deeply established in the cultural attitudes and religious practices of Palestine in the first century. That is, the Samaritan was an outcast in society at the time and it was forbidden to touch an outcast. Samaritans were treated poorly by the Jews and it is unclear whether the injured man was a Jew or Gentile, nevertheless the Samaritan did not consider the race or religion of the injured man when assisting him. Marcoccia (2012, p. 356) points out that any online tool such as discussions, emails, forums and blogs can be used for intercultural communication, as well as to deepen the understanding of the other's global perception. As part of the Abrahamic unit in Year 8 (2018), students are encouraged to use a range of digital technological resources such as Google Earth to locate the Middle East, and YouTube to observe sacred places like the Wailing Wall. Martens et al. (2015, p. 610) argue that with advances in technology making communication globally instantaneous and with an increasing demographic diversity it is essential that people respect and value others who live, believe and think differently from ourselves. Thus, technology used in Christian Studies can assist students to develop IU.

Guest speakers and religious and cultural excursion activities are other strategies that Christian Studies educators employ to develop students' IU. Gabby indicated that she appreciated having guest speakers conversing with students about specific topics that are connected to the unit of work. She commented:

... we do bring in guest speakers, yes. Not as many as I'd like. I think that's something that we're working on ... We actually brought ... [a] Muslim [woman] and she actually did a

contract for one term ... I kept her details, as I knew we were doing rituals next and I got her to come in and talk to us about the death ritual for Muslims and the kids really found it fascinating. And I also brought in one of the guides from the Buddhist temple ... and actually got him to come in and talk about meditation ... We've also had Destiny Rescue come in talking about the places they've been to, especially in Thailand, rescuing girls.

Elhassan and Yassine (2017, p. 30) point out that language can be a significant influence, especially when storytelling, as storytellers can transform the listener with their experiences and wisdom. According to Rader (2015, p. 17) valuing languages and cultures should be an essential component in schools, as it is the first step towards developing IU. While it may not always be possible to arrange a guest speaker for a classroom visit, Christian Studies educators coordinate learning activities for student excursions. Gabby explained that she organises excursions centred on the unit of work for her students:

[I]n Christian Studies ... in Year 8 we do what we call the Church excursion. That unit is linked with Abrahamic faiths. Year 8 students actually visit two sacred places. One being a Christian church, and we take our students, some of our students, to the Greek Orthodox Church. And we also take them to the synagogue. The city synagogue.

Garbe (2012, p. 39) pointed out that excursions can provide students the ability to investigate, and offer answers to inquiry questions, to reflect and evaluate what they have learnt, and furthermore take charge of their own learning (Paris & Ayres, 1994).

Similarly to guest speakers and excursions, celebrating cultural days and religious events in Lutheran schools can also assist students to develop IU. Debbie recalled how some staff celebrated religious events such as the Reformation by articulating the importance of the day for Lutherans in an email to staff, hoping the details filtered through to students. Debbie observed:

[P]ossibly the Reformation is celebrated on a day in October but increasingly the diverse backgrounds of our staff mean that some, say CS leaders, will actually just email their staff and say 'Today's Reformation; we're celebrating Reformation.' This was about Martin Luther ... who, you know, nailed the theses and so began the Reformation.

Debbie further discussed the cultural days such as NAIDOC week that Lutheran schools promote and celebrate:

... NAIDOC week, certainly our regional offices promote those days, and we put on our LEA website resources for reconciliation week. We believe, because of our culture in Lutheran education and our church's long history with Indigenous people ... having a strong relationship with Indigenous groups ... [is] our mission. Having a church group having strong relationships with organisations that promote strong awareness of Indigenous issues is central to our identity in Lutheran schools.

Martens et al. (2015, p. 611) emphasise that once learners appreciate the significance of culture in their lives, they can respect and understand its importance in other people's lives (Pattnaik, 2003). This can be illustrated with students in Christian Studies who learn about various Australian expressions of spirituality, such as Indigenous spirituality (e.g., the Dreaming and relationship to country), Australian spirituality represented in cultural and historical events such as Anzac Day, Australia Day and attending a football match, and Christian spirituality demonstrated in daily life through rituals and celebrations (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015). Spirituality crosses boundaries of religion as people seek to understand life and Christians believe communities, cultural activities, beliefs and faith give meaning and a sense of connectedness in the global world (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015). Radar (2015, p. 17) stresses that we live in a world where IU is fundamental to all humans, as we live in a diverse, interconnected and interdependent world where global issues require individuals to develop knowledge and understanding to communicate and collaborate across cultures.

Chapter 5: Summary and Recommendations

This research aimed to explore how Lutheran secondary education integrates the IU capability from the Australian curriculum within their Christian Studies programs. The study aimed to provide details of how educators implement IU into their Christian Studies program and units of work from Years 7–9, as well as how students develop IU. With very little research about IU being incorporated into religious education programs such as Christian Studies, this research contributes to an understanding of how the Christian Studies curriculum in Lutheran education explores IU within their work programs. The thematic content analysis of the interviews, CSCF (Lutheran Education Australia, 2015) document, and the units of work in Years 7–9 highlighted a number of themes and sub-themes showing how students can develop IU when educators embed IU within their Christian Studies work program and units of work.

The study sought to answer two research questions:

1. How do educators implement IU in their Christian Studies program on the basis of their Christian Studies Curriculum Framework?
2. In what ways does the Christian Studies program allow for students to develop IU?

Section 5.1 of this chapter will summarise the key findings, providing succinct answers to the research questions. Section 5.2 will address the limitations of the study, and section 5.3 will highlight recommendations for possible future research in this area.

5.1 Summary of key findings

The major findings of this research were discussed in detail in Chapter Four of this thesis. This section will summarise the findings for each sub-theme in order to answer the two research questions. Table 5.1 summarises the findings for the first research question: How do educators implement IU in their Christian Studies program on the basis of their Christian Studies Curriculum Framework?

Table 5.1: Findings for Research Question One

Sub-theme	Findings
Structure and Content	Through the four strands, and Band C & Band D in the CSCF (2015), document can be aligned to ACARA's IU learning continuum
Service learning	Integrating the seven service learning concepts
Inquiry-based learning	Using Gilbert's (2014) three stages of inquiry model
Authentic learning	Applying Fischer and Mazurkiewicz's (2011, p. 6) six concepts of authentic learning into the Christian Studies program
Reflective learning	Using reflective learning activities, such as journal writing, critical reflection and group discussions
Collaborative learning	Using collaborative learning activities, such as student peer teaching, blogging, online discussion forums, group discussions, and interactive lessons
Teacher planning	Applying Walton et al.'s (2015, p. 219) four factors for developing effective approaches to IU and encompassing a worldview
Texts	Utilising an array of religious and cultural texts
Activities	Through cultural and religious learning activities, such as classroom tasks, excursions, celebrations of cultural days and religious events, and guest speakers

Each of the sub-themes—structure and content, service learning, inquiry-based learning, authentic learning, reflective learning, collaborative learning, teacher planning, texts, and activities—discusses how educators can implement IU into their Christian Studies program. Key ideas from the four strands in the CSCF (2015) document—Christian Beliefs (CB), Christian Church (CC), Christian Living (CL), and Christianity in the World (CW)—can be aligned to IU. Similarly, Band C (Years 6,7 & 8) and Band D (Years 8, 9 & 10) in the CSCF (2015) document can be linked to ACARA's IU learning continuum levels 5 and 6 (2011b). Educators can integrate aspects of service learning, such as the seven interrelated learning concepts—innate dignity, boundary crossing, come as a guest, presence, story, stewardship and community—to assist with implementing IU into their Christian Studies program. They

can also employ the inquiry-based approach in Christian Studies to make learning personally relevant to students, create deep thinking, and broaden students' knowledge and understanding of the cultural and religious content. This can be achieved by educators using Gilbert's (2014) three stages of inquiry model in their class, in which students: (1) form their own inquiry questions about a topic, (2) research their topic to find evidence, and (3) reflect on and present their findings to the class. Educators can also implement IU by applying Fischer and Mazurkiewicz's (2011, p. 6) six concepts of authentic learning into the Christian Studies program: (1) rigorous opportunities for student learning; (2) skills relating to the workforce; (3) knowledge gathered from various fields; (4) diverse forms of communication (5) interactions between the learners and the wider communities and (6) sharing and serving the needs and goals of the community. These six concepts include the cultural, social and geographical features that can be utilised in the Christian Studies Program to implement IU. Educators using reflective learning activities in Christian Studies, such as journal writing, critical reflection and group discussions, and surveys for assessments at the end of each unit of work are related to ACARA (2011b) IU learning continuum level 5 and level 6. Educators' use of collaborative learning activities, such as student peer teaching, blogging, online discussion forums, group discussions, and interactive lessons, can be linked to ACARA's IU learning continuum as students typically by the end of Year 10 should "understand the importance of mutual respect in promoting cultural exchange and collaboration in an interconnected world" (2011b). Walton et al.'s (2015, p. 219) four factors for developing effective approaches to IU can be applied by Christian Studies teachers through their planning of professional development and learning which will assist in their classroom to engage diverse students with aspects of cultural diversity, reflect on misconceptions and the role of the media, connect cultural perspectives to the units of work, and interact with religious and cultural groups in society. When planning units of work, including lessons for Christian Studies, teachers can encompass a worldview ensuring that students comprehend both the Christian perspective and other cultural, religious and secular positions. Educators can utilise an array of religious and cultural texts, both literary and non-literary, that can be seen to assist with implementing IU into the Christian Studies program as well as to enrich students' IU. Sacred texts, such as the Bible, the Torah and the Quran, and other texts such as picture books, poetry, artwork, newspapers, stories, and visual media can be used in Christian Studies to understand cultural and historical aspects of religious groups, and identify cultural stereotypes, and symbolic language. This complements the IU learning continuum (ACARA, 2011b) outcomes in three ways: (1) exploring ways that culture shapes the use of language in

a variety of contexts, (2) critically discerning the representations of diverse cultural aspects in texts and the media, and (3) challenging stereotypes and prejudices in the representations of groups and national and international identities. Cultural and religious learning activities such as classroom tasks, excursions, celebrations of cultural days and religious events, and guest speakers, are strategies that educators can use to implement IU into their Christian Studies program. Technology, such as video clips about social and cultural issues, can be utilised to facilitate IU and make cultural learning activities easily accessible and visually stimulating for students.

Table 5.2 summarises the findings for the second research question: In what ways does the Christian Studies program allow for students to develop IU?

Table 5.2: Findings for Research Question Two

Sub-strand	Findings
Structure and Content	Students explore a diverse range of religious and cultural content
Service learning	The service-learning concepts can engage students in IU through the cognitive, affective and behavioural domains
Inquiry-based learning	The inquiry learning enhances the ability for students to identify religious and cultural issues
Authentic learning	Students engaging in authentic tasks, such as real-life experiences, social problems and issues, social networking, and intercultural communication
Reflective learning	Students reflecting on their personal beliefs and religious ideas as well as language, images and metaphors
Collaborative learning	Students engaging in collaborative learning activities such as blogging to connect with others
Teacher planning	Teachers using Walton et al.'s (2015, p. 219) four effective approaches for students to develop IU
Texts	Students engaging in multimedia and literary texts to discover various religious and cultural beliefs and practices.
Activities	Students encountering cultural learning activities

Each of the sub-themes—structure and content, service learning, inquiry-based learning, authentic learning, reflective learning, collaborative learning, teacher planning, texts, and activities—discusses ways that the Christian Studies program allows for students to develop IU. Exploring a diverse range of religious and cultural content in Christian Studies may encourage students to develop their knowledge of IU. The service-learning concepts can engage students in IU through the cognitive, affective and behavioural domains, as they acquire cultural knowledge that can lead to social action, and exhibit emotions of empathy and respect for others. Students in Christian Studies are able to explore the diverse worldviews depicted in cultural and religious topics through the inquiry-based learning approach. Inquiry learning enhances the ability of students to identify issues of relevance and examine key questions by evaluating, reflecting and sharing their understandings of cultural and religious issues. They can develop IU through authentic learning opportunities in Christian Studies, such as by becoming aware of the relevance and meaningfulness of learning that revolves around authentic tasks, such as real-life experiences, social problems and issues, social networking, and intercultural communication. This will equip them with social and cultural knowledge and skills that can lead to understanding, acceptance and respect towards others. Students engaging in respectful dialogue in Christian Studies develop their learning experiences, and skills and competencies such as critical inquiry and in-depth reflection, involving them becoming more aware of their own personal beliefs and religious ideas as well as using language, images and metaphors which are used to express their beliefs. Collaborative learning activities such as blogging can engage students with diverse cultures, stimulate cultural knowledge, increase socio-cultural interaction in the classroom, broaden students' experiences, and create connections with others based on mutual respect which can develop students' IU. When teachers use Walton et al.'s (2015, p. 219) four effective approaches to IU, students: (1) engage with others from a diverse background, (2) critically reflect on prejudices and assumptions rather than simply accepting cultural knowledge, (3) express empathy and cultural perspectives, and (4) exhibit interpersonal and intergroup experiences. Through various multimedia texts such as YouTube clips and documentary films, students discover various religious and cultural beliefs and practices. Students engaging with literary texts can construct their understanding of reality and the perceived world as well as becoming more culturally empathetic, respectful, and broadminded towards diverse expressions and cross-cultural experiences. Students can develop IU in Christian Studies when encountering cultural learning activities including

learning about social, historical, ethical and social justice issues as they display emotions of empathy and compassion for others as well as knowledge of diverse cultural and religious aspects of the issues.

5.2 Limitations

There are limitations to this study—in particular, the restrictions of the methodology and the number of participants. The content and structure of the CSCF (2015) document was not directly aligned with the IU learning continuum, and the accuracy of the findings would have improved given a more transparent CSCF (2015) document that was aligned with IU from the Australian curriculum including the IU learning continuum. Similarly, more explicit links between IU capability and the content material in the unit of work plans, would have been helpful, as the IU icon from the Australian curriculum was the only feature of IU that was used in the document, instead of details about how it is linked and how it can be implemented in the unit of work.

When examining the impact of the experiences with regards to the affective domain of students' participation in service learning, the findings were based on the Service-learning document (Lutheran Education Queensland, 2017) and the interviews by the two educators. However, these results would have been more comprehensive if students had been interviewed about their experiences of service learning.

5.3 Recommendations for future research

The findings of this qualitative study are applicable to Christian Studies in Lutheran schools in Australia, based on the experiences of the two interviewees, the Christian Studies curriculum document (2015) and the Year 7–9 units of work (2018). Further research is needed with other educators in Lutheran schools across Australia to determine whether the same experiences and examples apply to them. Additionally, there were no student participants in this study which limited the research; studies could be conducted with students across one or more learning areas in the Australian curriculum in Lutheran schools to compare findings within Christian Studies.

Another approach for a future study in a doctoral program could be a mix of qualitative and quantitative methodologies to investigate two religious education programs from two faith-based schools, such as Catholic and Muslim, including a number of participants from the

school communities, such as teachers, students and parents, to compare the outcomes with those of this investigation. Comparing religious education programs utilising the IU capability from the Australian curriculum would give further depth to this area of research. Nevertheless, this study makes the first attempt to understand how IU from the Australian curriculum is being implemented in a religious education program—Christian Studies in the Lutheran educational environment.

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Appendix A: School data from a Lutheran College in Queensland

Table 1

Student Enrolment data from a Lutheran school in Queensland 2018

Student Cultural Background		Student Language Spoken at Home	
Country of Birth	Students	Languages	Students
Australia	1186	English	1240
England	53	Not Stated	36
New Zealand	21	German	11
UK, Channel Islands, Isle of Man	12	Russian	6
South Africa	11	Vietnamese	5
	Total	Dutch	4
		Afrikaans	4
		Punjabi	4
		Total	1353

Note: Only double digit responses reported for country of birth, and only responses above or equal to 4 reported for languages

Appendix B: Intercultural Understanding learning continuum

Intercultural Understanding learning continuum						
Sub-element	Level 1 Typically, by the end of Foundation Year, students:	Level 2 Typically, by the end of Year 2, students:	Level 3 Typically, by the end of Year 4, students:	Level 4 Typically, by the end of Year 6, students:	Level 5 Typically, by the end of Year 8, students:	Level 6 Typically, by the end of Year 10, students:
Recognising culture and developing respect element						
Investigate culture and cultural identity	share ideas about self and belonging with peers	identify and describe the various groups to which they belong and the ways people act and communicate within them	identify and describe variability within and across cultural groups	identify and describe the roles that culture and language play in shaping group and national identities	explain ways that cultural groups and identities change over time and in different contexts	analyse how membership of local, regional, national and international groups shapes identities including their own
Explore and compare cultural knowledge, beliefs and practices	identify, explore and compare culturally diverse activities and objects	describe and compare the way they live with people in other places or times	describe and compare a range of cultural stories, events and artefacts	describe and compare the knowledge, beliefs and practices of various cultural groups in relation to a specific time, event or custom	analyse the dynamic nature of cultural knowledge, beliefs and practices in a range of personal, social and historical contexts	critically analyse the complex and dynamic nature of knowledge, beliefs and practices in a wide range of contexts over time
Develop respect for cultural diversity	discuss ideas about cultural diversity in local contexts	describe ways that diversity presents opportunities for new experiences and understandings	identify and discuss the significance of a range of cultural events, artefacts or stories recognised in the school, community or nation	discuss opportunities that cultural diversity offers within Australia and the Asia-Pacific region	understand the importance of maintaining and celebrating cultural traditions for the development of personal, group and national identities	understand the importance of mutual respect in promoting cultural exchange and collaboration in an interconnected world

Intercultural Understanding learning continuum						
Sub-element	Level 1 Typically, by the end of Foundation Year, students:	Level 2 Typically, by the end of Year 2, students:	Level 3 Typically, by the end of Year 4, students:	Level 4 Typically, by the end of Year 6, students:	Level 5 Typically, by the end of Year 8, students:	Level 6 Typically, by the end of Year 10, students:
Reflecting on intercultural experiences and taking responsibility element						
Reflect on intercultural experiences	identify and describe memorable intercultural experiences	identify and describe what they have learnt about others from intercultural encounters and culturally diverse texts	identify and describe what they have learnt about themselves and others from real, virtual and vicarious intercultural experiences	explain what and how they have learnt from a wide range of intercultural interactions and experiences	reflect critically on the representation of various cultural groups in texts and the media and how they respond	reflect critically on the effect of intercultural experiences on their own attitudes and beliefs and those of others
Challenge stereotypes and prejudices	identify examples of the acceptance and inclusion of others in given situations	discuss the effects of acceptance and inclusion in familiar situations	explain the dangers of making generalisations about individuals and groups	explain the impact of stereotypes and prejudices on individuals and groups within Australia	identify and challenge stereotypes and prejudices in the representation of group, national and regional identities	critique the use of stereotypes and prejudices in texts and issues concerning specific cultural groups at national, regional and global levels
Mediate cultural difference	identify similarities and differences between themselves and their peers	recognise that cultural differences may affect understanding between people	identify ways of reaching understanding between culturally diverse groups	discuss ways of reconciling differing cultural values and perspectives in addressing common concerns	identify and address challenging issues in ways that respect cultural diversity and the right of all to be heard	recognise the challenges and benefits of living and working in a culturally diverse society and the role that cultural mediation plays in learning to live together
Interacting and empathising with others element						
Communicate across cultures	recognise that people use different languages to communicate	describe how the use of words and body language in interactions	recognise there are similarities and differences in the ways	identify factors that contribute to understanding in	explore ways that culture shapes the use of	analyse the complex relationship between language, thought and

		may have different meanings for various cultural groups	people communicate, both within and across cultural groups	intercultural communication and discuss some strategies to avoid misunderstanding	language in a wide range of contexts	context to understand and enhance communication
Consider and develop multiple perspectives	express their opinions and listen to the opinions of others in given situations	express their own perspectives on familiar topics and texts, and identify the perspectives of others	identify and describe shared perspectives within and across various cultural groups	explain perspectives that differ to expand their understanding of an issue	assess diverse perspectives and the assumptions on which they are based	present a balanced view on issues where conflicting views cannot easily be resolved
Empathise with others	imagine and describe their own feelings if they were put in someone else's place	imagine and describe the feelings of others in familiar situations	imagine and describe the feelings of others in a range of contexts	imagine and describe the situations of others in local, national and global contexts	imagine and describe the feelings and motivations of people in challenging situations	recognise the effect that empathising with others has on their own feelings, motivations and actions

Appendix C: Interview Questions

Interview Questions to CS unit writer

Topic: General Questions

- Q1. Could you tell me about your history of working with Lutheran Education?
 Q2. What is your current role and responsibilities in Lutheran Education?

Topic: Cultural Aspects

- Q3. I've read on the school website that there is approx. 30+ students who are Indigenous – would you know about other cultural groups at the school?
 Q4. Could you tell me about some of the cultural aspects that are celebrated/participated at the school? *NAIDOC week? International day? Refugee week? German Day? etc.*
 Q5. Would any of these cultural aspects become or could become part/align with the Christian Studies curriculum?
 Q6. Could you discuss the cultural excursions that students in Years 7–9 would attend? *This could be the different Christian churches, mosque and synagogue as part of the Abrahamic topic covered in Christian Studies.*

Topic: Curriculum and Professional Development

- Q6. One of the General Capabilities of the Australian Curriculum is Intercultural Understanding – could you tell me what intercultural understanding means to you with regards to Lutheran education/Christian Studies?
 Q7. Could you tell me about Professional Development activities that you or your colleagues have attended in the area of Christian Studies and/or Intercultural Understanding? Could you discuss the EQUIP program - what this is and the benefits, if any?
 Q8. Could you explain to me how a unit of work is written and implemented in the classroom? Who is involved? What resources are used? How do you plan?
 Q9. Is there much interaction between the States with regards to the implementation of the Christian Studies Curriculum framework? *Online resources? LIFE program?*
 Q10. How do/can educators, like yourself, implement intercultural understanding in their Christian Studies program on the basis of their Christian Studies curriculum framework? *Religious/cultural activities/ literature*

Topic: Students' development

- Q11. In what ways does the Christian Studies program allow for students to develop intercultural understanding?

Q12. How do you know if students are developing intercultural understanding? *Skills? assessment? surveys? behaviour (demonstrating empathy?) opportunities?*

Q13. Could you tell me some inquiry-based activities that you or your colleagues may use in the classroom that would assist in students' learning? [Refer to the LEQ sheet about inquiry based]

Q14. When thinking of a student-centred approach to learning, educators might integrate authentic, reflective and collaborative learning experiences for their students. Authentic (real world scenarios) Reflective (deeper learning, critically analysing, reflecting on actions, developing metacognitive skills), collaborative (groups of learners problem solving, completing a task through social action). Could you give me some examples of how student-centred approach is utilised in Christian Studies for Years 7–9?

Interview Questions to CS Curriculum Writer

Topic: General Questions

Q1. Could you tell me about your history of working with Lutheran Education?

Q2. What is your current role and responsibilities in Lutheran Education?

Q3. What role did you have with the CSCF document?

Topic: Cultural Aspects

Q4. Could you tell me about some of the cultural aspects that are celebrated/participated in Lutheran school? *NAIDOC week? International day? Refugee week? German Day? etc.*

Q5. Would any of these cultural aspects become or could become part/align with the Christian Studies curriculum?

Topic: Curriculum and Professional Development

Q6. One of the General Capabilities of the Australian Curriculum is Intercultural Understanding – could you tell me what intercultural understanding means to you with regards to Lutheran education/Christian Studies?

Q7. Could you tell me about Professional Development activities that you or your colleagues have attended or organised in the area of Christian Studies and/or Intercultural Understanding?

Q8. Could you discuss the EQUIP program - what this is and the benefits, if any?

Q9. Could you explain service learning and how this could possibly develop staff and students intercultural understanding?

Q10. Could you explain to me how a unit of work is written and implemented in the classroom? Who is involved? What resources are used? How do you plan?

Q11. How much interaction is there between the States with regards to the implementation of the Christian Studies Curriculum framework? *Online resources? LIFE program?*

Q12. How do/can educators, like yourself, implement intercultural understanding in their Christian Studies program on the basis of their Christian Studies curriculum framework?
Religious/cultural activities/ literature

Topic: Students' development

Q13. In what ways does the Christian Studies program allow for students to develop intercultural understanding?

Q14. How do you know if students are developing intercultural understanding?
(Skills? assessment? surveys? behaviour (demonstrating empathy?) opportunities?)

Q15. Could you tell me some inquiry-based activities that you or your colleagues may use in the classroom that would assist in students' learning?

Q16. When thinking of a student-centred approach to learning, educators might integrate authentic, reflective and collaborative learning experiences for their students. Authentic (real world scenarios) Reflective (deeper learning, critically analysing, reflecting on actions, developing metacognitive skills), collaborative (groups of learners problem solving, completing a task through social action). Could you give me some examples of how student-centred approach is utilised in Christian Studies for Years 7–9?

Appendix D: Research Approval by Human Resource Committee

Amend

Main Details | Investigators | Departments | Questionnaire | Coversheets

This tab is read-only

Cancel Print Form

Created by: 2975223
Record number: 13084
Protocol number: 2018/595

Date entered*: 09/07/2018
Program Type: Undergraduate ▾

Requested start date*: 01/08/2018
Requested end date*: 02/02/2019
Approval date: 11/07/2018
Expiry date: 01/02/2019

Protocol title*: Christian Studies in Lutheran education interviews for qualitative research

Protocol type: Negligible Risk ▾

Internal ref:

TRIM id: 03/08/12475

Clearance status: Fully Approved ▾

Appendix E: Research Approval by Lutheran Education Australia



26 July 2018

Juliet Beattie
(Email juliet.beattie@griffithuni.edu.au)

Dear Juliet

We acknowledge receipt of the *Application to conduct research in a Lutheran school*, dated 13 July 2018, together with the accompanying supporting documentation.

Lutheran Education Australia is pleased to approve this research titled *Incorporating intercultural understanding capability in Christian Studies 7–9: The case of a Lutheran Secondary School in Queensland*.

We understand you will choose one Lutheran secondary school in Queensland in which to focus your research.

We look forward to receiving a full copy or summary of the findings of the research when completed.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "SERd!" followed by a large, stylized flourish.

Stephen Rudolph
Executive Director
Lutheran Education Australia

Appendix F: Interview information sheet and consent form

Intercultural understanding capability in Christian Studies

INTERVIEW INFORMATION SHEET

Research Team

Supervisor: Professor Donna Pendergast
School: Dean of Education and Professional Studies
Contact Phone 07 3735 1082
Contact Email hosdeaneducation@griffith.edu.au

Supervisor: Dr Adis Duderija
School: Lecturer school of Humanities, Languages
and Social Science
Contact Phone 07 3735 7661
Contact Email a.duderija@griffith.edu.au

HDR student: Juliet Beattie
Contact Phone 0409 269 882
Contact Email juliet.beattie@griffithuni.edu.au

Research Project

The purpose of this project is to investigate the question: How does a Lutheran school embed the Australian Curriculum capability Intercultural Understanding within their Christian Studies program? This research will make a unique contribution to understanding of how the Christian Studies Curriculum in Lutheran schools, using the national document, explores intercultural understanding within schools' work programs. This study may also lead to further studies in the field of religious education across all faith-based schools and non-religious schools in Australia. It is expected that the findings may assist other Lutheran schools in Australia with their Christian Studies work program and delivery of the capability.

You will be interviewed for approximately 30–60 minutes about the Christian Studies Framework document and the Christian Studies Years 7–9 units of work in light of the capability Intercultural Understanding. The interview will be audio recorded for transcription purposes. You can request a copy of the transcription which will be sent to you by email.

Research results will be reported in an academic thesis, and may also be disseminated via journal articles and/or conference presentations. A copy of these can be sent to you by email at your request.

Risks

There are no foreseeable risks associated with participation in this research. Your name and the location of your work place will be anonymised in research outputs. However, please note that even though there are several Lutheran schools in Queensland, and several writers of the Christian Studies Curriculum Framework document, it may still be possible for third parties to infer your identity.

Confidentiality

Interview data will be de-identified and remain confidential. The information you provide will be presented in research publications in a way that will not identify you by name or workplace.

All audio recordings will be erased after transcription. However, other research data (interview transcripts and analysis) will be retained in a password protected electronic file for a period of five years before being destroyed.

Participation is voluntary

Participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Questions and further information

Should you need further details about the project you can contact the members of the research team using the contact details in this Information Sheet.

The ethical conduct of this research

Griffith University conducts research in accordance with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research*. If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of the research project please contact the Manager, Research Ethics on 3735 4375 or research-ethics@griffith.edu.au.

Privacy Statement – non disclosure

In accordance with Queensland Information Standard 42:

“The conduct of this research involves the collection, access and/or use of your identified personal information. The information collected is confidential and will not be disclosed to third parties without your consent, except to meet government, legal or other regulatory authority requirements. A de-identified copy of this data may be used for other research purposes. However, your anonymity will at all times be safeguarded. For further information consult the University’s Privacy Plan at <http://www.griffith.edu.au/about-griffith/plans-publications/griffith-university-privacy-plan> or telephone (07) 3735 4375.”

Intercultural understanding capability in Christian Studies

CONSENT FORM

Research Team

Supervisor: Professor Donna Pendergast
School: Dean of Education and Professional Studies
Contact Phone 07 3735 1082
Contact Email hosdeaneducation@griffith.edu.au

Supervisor: Dr Adis Duderija
School: Lecturer school of Humanities, Languages
and Social Science
Contact Phone 07 3735 7661
Contact Email a.duderija@griffith.edu.au

HDR student: Juliet Beattie
Contact Phone 0409 269 882
Contact Email juliet.beattie@griffithuni.edu.au

By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understood the information package and in particular:

- I understand that my involvement in this research will include a 30-60 minute interview

- I understand that the research may include audio recording of my participation
- I have had any questions answered to my satisfaction
- I understand the risks involved
- I understand that there will be no direct benefit to me from my participation in this research
- I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary
- I understand that if I have any additional questions I can contact the research team
- I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time, without explanation or penalty
- I understand that my name and other personal information that could identify me will be removed or de-identified in publications or presentations resulting from this research
- I understand that I can contact the Manager, Research Ethics, at Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee on 3735 4375 (or research-ethics@griffith.edu.au) if I have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the project; and
- I agree to participate in the project.

Name	
Signature	
Date	

