Sociological Methodology

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Professor

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Assignment

### *Developmental Readings*

Review Assignment #3, the course essential elements, assigned readings, and recommended readings to identify selections of books and scholarly articles to identify and select developmental reading sources and entries.

* Refer to the “[Student Guide to Developmental Readings](https://drive.google.com/file/d/161V_FaYR2BnNGCSFUlWPjUSIQzcH04Hq/view?usp=share_link)” for updated information on sample comments, rubrics, and key definitions related to developmental readings.

**Source One:** Heddendorf, R. & Vos, Matthew. (2010). *Hidden threads: a christian critique of*

*sociological theory.* University press of America. Lanham, md. **[Seminal].**

**Comment 1:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Christians, social scientists, neither, or both, discover serendipity, the experience of finding valuable or agreeable things that were not sought, or the feeling, as they were not aware of seeking, as they read,”(Heddendorf & Vos, 2010).

**Essential Element:** Faith Integrated Sociological Analysis

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** The quote above is additive to my course of study. It

is a serendipitous thought when one can use their personal wisdom to understand

that continuous learning for life is essential to finding value. Instead of believing

that study for knowledge only is the key. As one believes, as they go, presently,

the feeling that that comes with personal growth brings great satisfaction.

**Contextualization:** In my role as school administrator, it is a privilege to model

lifelong learning to teachers, staff, families, and students. It is astounding to me

that others really are not interested in further schooling. They do not see the value

in it. Who does not value a new “Aha” moment?

Many times, it is interesting to ask teachers of their future goals. Some look at me with tired eyes and remark they do not have time. They want to know how I find time for extra study. They do not want to think about it. They have yet to have modeled to them the value and serendipitous feelings that Christians can portray when they are energized by researching and studying the gospel of Christ along with the study. How will we model to them that Jesus Christ is the strength they need to take on challenges of learning? Is this not necessary, as teachers and parents are examples to young children that want to learn and have the capacity to do so? Children need to know about “Aha” moments that come while working through a challenge.

**Comment 2:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “In studying contemporary forms of social thought, most evaluate their own views and problems. This can make a view overly biased by avoiding facts, rather than observing them objectively, to act more decisively,” (Heddendorf & Vos, 2010).

**Essential Element:** Faith Integrated Sociological Analysis

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** The quote above can be additive and variant to my

topic of study. Additive, in that when others do study and contemplate

sociological ideas in culture today, they determine their thoughts by what they

have experienced or currently believe. If they predetermine others without

knowing them, or caring enough to ask winsome questions, they will not make

relationships to point to Christ and continue to isolate others by avoiding facts of

who they are and what their story is.

The quote is variant in that many people do not know that their beliefs

influence their thoughts which determine their behavior. When they do not

believe in the joy of studying others to relate to them, they may judge others from

their own bias and the relationship can diminish.

**Contextualization:** Society today, on a whole, is very self-centered. The

Christian school community and Christian church has a wonderful opportunity to

be an example of Jesus to the world. Some of these institutions are teaching from

their own biases, without asking and learning “how” do we make an impact on

families and children today.

Some Christian schools would rather go back to how things

were before the world pandemic of 2020. Parents come to my office and want

advice on what to do with their misbehaving children during months of online

learning and wearing masks. They do not feel equipped to understand their truama

to raise them properly, but yet, they want to be kind to them by giving them what

they want as the children keep manipulating them. They are tired from their own

trauma and mental health.

My personal belief is that we cannot go back to how things were, whatever that means. We are a society that is progressing to the furthest point of the pendulum. However, we can be an influencer by studying what is happening today. We need Christian clinical sociologists to come alongside the church and Christian school to work together, for the future of our children. How will we make this happen? Time, great effort in knowing our identity, and understanding patience in our everyday challenges.

**Source Two:** Graham, A., Phelps, R., Maddison, C., & Fitzgerald, R. (2011). Supporting

children’s mental health in schools: Teacher views. *Teachers and Teaching*, *17*(4), 479-

496.

**Comment 3:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “It is needed to pay close attention to the assumptions, values, beliefs and attitudes of teachers in relation to children’s mental health since these are integral to their confidence and skill in supporting children’s social and emotional well-being,” (Graham, et. al., 2011).

**Essential Element:** Sociological Framework for Cultural Analysis

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** Today, making relationships with teachers in our

school is of utmost important to school administrators and board directors. What

teachers believe about their students’ mental health and wellness can make a

teacher an advocate to the child’s learning. Additive to my topic of research, this

quote states that teachers’ knowledge in this area adds to their skill to help

students’ academic success.

Teachers need confidence in their own knowledge on a child’s mental health and wellness to support students every day in the classroom. Students, parents, and school constituents can see a teacher’s value put toward the child’s mental health and wellness by the outcomes that the teacher displays when challenged by children who are not ready to learn because of trauma.

**Contextualization:** In the Christian school some teachers are

wanting to learn more about their students’ mental health and they ask me, as the

Principal of the middle school what be done to facilitate teaching mental health

and wellness for children. Can we add professional development classes so

teachers could choose to take it, but not make it mandatory?

At first, we decided to make an optional PD course on this topic and asked for help from a nearby Christian counseling clinic to work with us. It was astounding how few teachers attended the 6-month class this past fall, only about 20% were interested. But now, by word of mouth, other interested teachers want to take part. Why? Many of the attending teachers were able to learn about their own trauma through the pandemic. Why is it so hard for some teachers to want to learn to be better able to understand their own mental health and support parents and their children? Why does it take so long for them to understand the need of these dear children?

**Source Three:** Gunawardena, H., Leontini, R., Nair, S., Cross, S., & Hickie, I. (2024). Teachers

as first responders: classroom experiences and mental health training needs of Australian

schoolteachers.*BMC Public Health, 24*, 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-023->

17599z.

**Comment 4:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “School teachers are often the first to respond when a student presents with a mental health issue in the classroom. This places a burden on schools that impacts staff, healthcare workers and teachers in school. More broadly it places a responsibility on the education system to address students’ mental health,” (Gunawardena, et. al., 2024).

**Essential Element:** Interdisciplinary Approach to Social Analysis

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** Since the above quote states that teachers are the

first line of contact with children who have mental health issues, schools need to

be proactive to provide help for teachers. It is wonderful when a school has a

nurse, counselor, and other trained staff to facilitate these needs, if they can afford

them.

Additive and variant to my research, the quote states clearly that the education system should be the one to address mental health of children. Additive, because teachers and school staff should trained to help meet the needs of students with mental health challenges. But variant, in that the education system has the only responsibility. Clearly, for the Christian school and church who know that, “Train up a child in the way he should go (teaching him to seek God’s wisdom and will for his abilities and talents). Even when he is old he will not depart from it,” (Proverbs 22:6). Parents are the ones responsible for training. However, a parent may choose to partner with a school for their child’s teaching and learning. Schools can help in the training of children.

**Contextualization:** One of the greatest responsibilities that I have a Christian

school principal is new student and family interviews. This process takes place

after our admissions department has vetted the new student’s application for

admissions, and all transcripts and references are submitted.

It is joy to read about the student and learn of him/her on paper documents. But the grandest thrill is meeting him/her in person and his parents. After getting formally acquainted, I start asking academic questions. Then spiritual ones including biblical worldview and what that means. Finally, comes the opportunity to tell of our wonderful Christian school and what parent partnering really means.

Most parents are excited that we proclaim that we know they are responsible to God for their child’s training and come alongside to assist. When the child is accepted as we believe his family is a fit for our school, it is interesting to note what happens in the partnering venture. Some parents take it seriously and it works. However, some did not evidently understand. How will we more effectively assist these parents in training of their children if we do not have parental support?

**Comment 5:**

**Quote/Paraphrase: “**Given the increasing demand on teachers to address the

mental health of children and adolescents, an urgent review of mental health

training for teachers is needed,” (Gunawardena, et. al., 2024).

**Essential Element:** Interdisciplinary Approach to Social Analysis

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** The quote is additive to my research on children’s

mental health and wellness. Analyzing the current mental health trends of

families, both parent and child, is necessary.

Equipping teachers now in our schools is a must. They are being daily bombarded with students’ challenges more that ever before. Reaching universities and colleges with the challenge of teaching their educational department how this is done effectively will bring new teachers already equipped with the knowledge. Student teaching experiences could bring the experience to the new teacher to make them ready for the school teaching of children with mental health challenges. This could be certainly transformational in Christian Universities.

**Contextualization:** How will we help teachers now with the abilities to help

students with mental health challenges and facilitate healing to them? This is

imperative so the child may learn academics successfully. None of our current

teachers had a course on this in college. But with worldwide changes in culture

today, we all need to know how to best help each other.

If our teachers are not well trained in students’ mental health, how will they partner with families? Do we mandate professional development courses on this subject? I believe we should. But in a private school, our school board must be informed and believe it before they will support it. Do I approach them? I’m praying about it.

Our private Christian school cannot afford a counselor now. Our administration team, including our nurse is available, but only able to recommend outside help and outside help cannot attend to the needs immediately. Most Christian counseling in the Indianapolis area has 6 months waiting lists. Churches in the area cannot help their own parishioners, and they are full with counseling their own. This is a great and worthy challenge.

**Source Four:** Paton, K., Gillam, L., Warren, H., Mulraney, M., Coghill, D., Efron, D., Sawyer,

M., & Hiscock, H. (2022). How can the education sector support children’s mental

health? Views of Australian healthcare clinicians. *PloOne,17(1).* <https://doi.org/10.137/>

journal.pone.0261827.

**Comment 6:**

**Quote/Paraphrase: “**Educators have identified many challenges to providing

this (mental health and wellness for students) support (e.g. non-core role, stigma,

overcrowded curriculum), understanding clinicians' views on the role of educators

and schools and how clinicians and schools could work together to achieve good

mental health outcomes are important questions,” (Paton et. al., 2022).

**Essential Element:** Sociological Framework for Cultural Analysis

**Additive/Variant:** It is good to know, particularly in this quote, that there is

worldwide recognition that something must be done to meet the challenges of

mental health and wellness for students in school. It is a challenge for us all,

whether we work in a Christain environment or not, to really believe that we all

could work together. The additive quote is necessary to consider as we all learn

more about this issue effecting our nation and the world and the future of our

children.

**Contextualization:** It is a fact that even in the public schools, there are not many

helps to students’ problems in mental health and wellness. As I talk with my

friends in the public schools, they report that counselors is the school district are

responsible to help but cannot meet the demands. As they travel from school to

school, they see only 20% of the needs of entire student body with mental health

issues.

With more student population growth each year, particularly in public

schools, how are we going to help students? In our Christian school, that has

approximately 600 students, we do not have the capacity or space to grow in our

current building. We cannot meet the demands of all our students with mental

health and wellness challenges, but we do have the support of most of

our families who take their children to counselors. This challenge is real. Can we

get the help that is needed from Christian counselors? Maybe. Could these

counselors teach our teachers and staff? Maybe.

**Comment 7:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Schools and educators could play a key role in prevention

and early intervention of children's mental health problems. However, before

recommending exactly how to do this, key evidence gaps need to be addressed.

**Essential Element:** Interdisciplinary Approach to Social Analysis

**Additive/Variant:** In this Australian journal’s quote above, it is evident that more

research is needed to adequately address key issues of prevention and intervention

of children’s mental health problems. It is true in all the world. More helps can

come from a number of resources in the community. It is imperative that those

who know the problem can relate it to the ones who can help with solutions to the

problem. This makes this quote additive to my research.

**Contextualization:** Schools and educators can be major role players in the

intervention and prevention of children’s mental health issues. However, they

must be on the same page in understanding what this issue is. There needs to be

trained people in the school to make this happen. Those who are passionate and

knowledgeable can lead the charge. It is strange that not everyone already

understands and makes adjustments in the classroom to help children with these

issues. Some teachers believe this is only the administrators’ or healthcare

professional’s responsibility.

Teachers are already challenged with getting the curriculum accomplished for educating children on their scope and sequence chart and have them ready to be promoted to the next grade. They do not want to learn something else that may keep them from getting their job done.

Does this come back to a teacher’s purpose? Why they are in the classroom? Do they believe God can supply all they need to help these children and parents in partnership? Or will they continue to call on the administration and nurse to fix their student, while at school?

**Source Five:** Shelemy, L., Harvey, K., & Waite, P. (2019). Supporting students’ mental health

in schools: what do teachers want and need? *Emotional and behavioural*

*difficulties*, *24*(1), 100-116.

**Comment 8:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “The amount of time teachers spend in contact with students

makes them well placed to notice symptoms and behaviors in students associated

with anxiety, depression, and other common mental health problems, such as

irritability, social withdrawal. and changes in concentration,” (Shelemy, et al.,

2019).

**Essential Element:** Interdisciplinary Approach to Social Analysis

**Additive/Variant:** Teachers do see and can know their students which is why this

quote is additive to my research. Teachers can address social needs of children as

they are with them the most hours of the day, but they do not have to do this

alone. They can share and ask questions of others who also see the children

consistently: Physical Education teachers, music teacher, art teaches, coaches,

front desk helpers, cafeteria helpers, maintenance crews, librarians, para-

professionals. All teachers and support teachers can play a part in the mental

health of students and make note of their needs.

**Contextualization:** Our Christian school community is valuable in seeing the

needs of students. Even conversations that parents have with their children and

other students as they ride together to a school event. Some parents come into the

office by appointment and pour out their hearts about their kids. They just do not

know what to do, yet at least one of our parents’ signature is necessary that says

at least one in the family is a believer to be able to have their children attend our

school and they must sign they belong to a local church. So, should we be

checking with the church to see if they are telling the truth?

How is the church helping students in mental health and wellness challenges? What is the youth pastor’s role in this? Maybe, conversation between pastors and youth leaders of Christian schools is necessary. Who will be the first to approach the other? I’m praying about it.

**Comment 9:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Existing mental health training programs need to

evaluate their acceptability to teachers and focus their materials on

teachers’ needs. In several teacher-led mental health interventions,

adherence to program manuals is low,” (Shelemy, et al., 2019).

**Essential Element:** Sociological Framework for Cultural Analysis

**Additive/Variant:** Additive to my topic, this quote states the acceptability of

teachers desire to know more. There are many courses to choose on the subject of

children’s mental health and wellness, but many of the courses are not mandated

by the administration. Research of best practices needs to focus on teachers’

needs.

**Contextualization:** How can teachers be responsible to learn what are

best practices for students’ mental health and wellness? Kids need to feel

warm, accepted, loved, and safe before they can learn academics. When

will we motivate teachers to take time to understand? Some teachers do not

enjoy their classes because of the behavior of a few students. How can

help them to love on that child and his/her family? Even as we give

teachers new strategies to help, do we inspect what we expect?

Administrators, school boards and staff need to model the learning

children’s mental health and wellness study to teachers and encourage

them to learn also. This will take research in sociological methods in

my opinion for all to begin to understand people and people groups in our

world, how best to serve them into relationship for the gospel of Christ. As

teachers see the joy and passion on administrator’s faces through small

group discussion and interactions, teachers may be changed and motivated

about learning more and more.

**Source Six:** *The amplified bible, expanded edition*. (1971). Zondervan corporation and the

Lockman foundation.

**Comment 10:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “…do not forbid the children from coming to Me; for the

kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these,” (Matthew 19:14).

**Essential Element:** Methods for Christian Social Change

**Additive/Variant:** Additive to research on students’ mental health and wellness, adult Christians need to understand the value of children from Jesus’ point of view. Jesus’ disciples were not taught a child’s value to society, therefore they encouraged others to keep children away from the Savior. However, Jesus Christ died for them also to give them new life and eternity with Him. He knew the kingdom of heaven belongs to them. Those children may not have understood Him and His purposes, but He exampled to us that they should not be excluded from Him.

**Contextualization:** In the day in which I was a child, as a preacher’s daughter,

my parents taught me, that children can be seen, but should not be heard. I never

asked them why? I should have.

I wonder how many children we see each day have been taught the same? In this generation of children, it appears that these thoughts have swung to the other side of the pendulum. Children are in such needs in our society today. They do not understand their value. Many parents do not, either. Some of these parents are hurting from their own childhoods and do not know just how much Jesus loves them now, and when they were a child. Nevertheless, the Christian school where I am on the Executive Leadership Team, does seek to understand the whole child in their learning of Jesus, academics, in their social life, in their family. It is not an easy task. Sometimes we do everything possible to help in a child’s mental health and wellness, but conclude, we do not have the best tools to help them. At that point, we give parents other recommendations and schools who may better assist their child. This becomes one of the hardest responsibilities of administration.

**Source Seven:** Wildenhaus, C. (2019). *Helping children manage anxiety at school: a guide for*

*parents and educators in supporting a positive mental health of children in school*. Good bye anxiety, hello joy. LLC.

**Comment 11:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Educators, parents and health care professionals should be

intentional to understand how anxiety affects children in the classroom and

implement consistent and authentic plans for students to gain independence and

confidence, needed for their best academic success,” (Wildenhaus, 2019).

**Essential Element:** Faith Integrated Sociological Analysis

**Additive/Variant:** Although intentionality is a hot word these days, in this

additive quote, parents and community helpers need to know a child’s

understanding of his purpose is to eventually learn independently and gain

academic confidence to overcome adversities. However, the quote may be variant,

if not explained with biblical worldview and intentionally learning with God.

**Contextualization:** In a culture today, where children spend 7-8 hours per day, at

school without parental involvement during the day, whoever has charge of the

child for the most hours will have major influence over what is taught to him/her.

Parent partnership with a Christian school is essential. It gives a

parent opportunity to be involved. A parent may ask questions, view

curriculum, and volunteer in the school to be an integral part. They can talk with

school personnel about questions they have concerning their child’s mental

health and wellness. They can ask hard questions: how does the teacher talk

about worry and anxiety? It is comforting for the Christian parent to see through

the school that Jesus Christ is the answer to life’s difficulties. He loves their

children more than they do.

At school, we know we are not the entire answer, but we can lead them to the One who is. We can pray with them about their child

and give other sources than can help them: their church, their Christian

community. Sometimes, there are not Christians readily available. It is assuring

to know that we all can have open communication and understand together God’s

principals, even through those who do not understand Him. God uses anyone,

anything, and at anytime, for His purposes.

**Source Eight:**

**Comment 12:** Yu, R., Perera, C., Sharma, M., Ipince, A., Bakrania, S., Shokraneh, F.,

Mosquera Sepulveda, J. S., & Anthony, D. (2023). Child and adolescent mental health

and psychosocial supportinterventions: An evidence and gap map of low- and middle-

income countries.*Campbell Systematic Reviews, 19*(3)<https://doi.org/10.1002/cl2.1349>

**Quote//Paraphrase: “**School-based interventions make up 61% of intervention

research on child and adolescent mental health and psychosocial support,” (Yu, et

al. 2023).

**Essential Element:** Sociological Framework for Cultural Analysis

**Additive/Variant:** This quote states that more than half of all intervention helps

for children are made because of children’s mental health status. This also

includes those children who receive psychosocial helps from trauma in earlier

childhood experiences and present trauma circumstances. This is astounding as it

is true in other data supporting that the numbers of children with mental health

and wellness issues continues to grow. The quote is additive to my research.

**Contextualization:** With statistics growing in children’s mental health and

trauma, I am faced with, “What will be do?” I do know of a Christian school who

will not accept students with trauma because they are not equipped to help them.

But should this keep a Christian school from researching and learning more about

it to help these students? I pray for continuous wisdom in these questions.

As our international families grow in our school and across the US, I

believe the Christian school must help. Does this mean we must require all our

staff and teachers be trained from biblical worldview on trauma and mental health

and wellness issues in families? I firmly believe we need to stay current with

what happens in our culture and learn new methods and strategies to lead all to

Jesus especially in mental health challenges. My challenge is “How?” That is

why I am a scholar practioner at OGS and have the privilege of studying

sociology, to change the world!

**Works Cited**

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