PHI1923 Contextualization for Social Change

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Assignment 2

### *Developmental Readings*

Create Developmental Readings from seminal sources and scholarly peer-reviewed

journal articles. Review instructions for Assignment #3, the course essential elements,

and course readings to identify selections of books and journals to create 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.

**Examining woman's work and value in society and Christianized “othering”**

**Source One:** Mati, A. (2022). The ontology of men and women’s relationships in contemporary African ecclesiology: Towards a theology of authority-submission in the church. *Hervormde Teologiese Studies*, *78*(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v78i1.7920>

**Comment 1**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “With the active involvement of women in the church and home, there is a need to study God’s design for the relationship between men and women. In reaffirming the divine order of this relationship, discussing the biblical gendered roles has been one of the major contending issues. So emerging ecclesiologies in Africa are beginning to challenge the traditional understanding of male headship in the church. Therefore, the article argues that the ontology of men and women’s relationship provides a better framework for understanding the nature of authority and submission in the church. This article states fairly the biblical foundation for the ontology of male and female relationship in the church from both the complementarian and egalitarian views” pp. 1

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element, culture and contextualization.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of male and female relationship in the church. The paragraph presents’ God’s plan for a complementary egalitarian relationship between man and woman in the home and the church. There are divine orders He intended through gender roles. However, there have been misconceptions around traditional views of male headship.

**Contextualization:**  As a Christian scholar and social worker, my passion and motivation is towards gender equality in the home, church and society at large and making efforts towards family life development and renewal. The mental load and imbalance that women carry with work, reflects socio-cultural factors such as gender role socialization, expression of societal norms and values that perpetuate gender inequality. My calling is around education and edification in this discourse.

**Comment 2**

**Quote/Paraphrase**: “Mathews (1996:13) provides two features of the male–female relationship. Firstly, man and woman share the same indispensable composition – equality of personhood as God’s image-bearers. Secondly, the man and the woman are distinct in their sexual roles and function; God calls the woman a helper – this designation further explains that although they are equal, they differ in expressing their personhood. As Adam’s helper, the woman holds an important role. The word helper refers to divine assistance, and this does not mean that she is equal with God; nevertheless, it explains that she is indispensable in God’s design for humanity. Paul provides insight concerning the relationship between men and women domestically and in the church. The concern is to grasp how men and women associate in the church. In 1 Corinthians 11:8–12, he teaches that the man symbolizes authority over the woman because she was created from the man and made for the man. However, in Christ, men and women are mutually dependent on each other (Gl 3:28). Although they are mutually dependent, Paul maintained that there is still an order. He acknowledged their personhood and equality as God’s image-bearers and pointed out their differences functionally.” pp. 2

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element, culture and contextualization.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive and variant to my understanding of gender roles and equality in the Christian church. The passage highlights that men and women are the same based on imago dei or personhood of God and different based on the roles they perform in society and the church specifically (equal to different). Woman expressed as helper from creation. But importantly does not make the woman a lesser being. Variantly, the paragraph goes on to explore Paul's reflection of the relationship between man and woman in Corinthian and the dynamics of authority and power, with men having authority over women.

**Contextualization:** The latter discourse has been at odds with the feminist theological thinking of modern-day society. The expressions in Corinthians have been taken out of context and used as subjugation and othering of women’s work and worth in society in general and church specifically. My own worldview is that men and women are complementary (as expressed in the latter part of the paragraph), and can co-leader in various arenas of church, work and family life.

**Comment 3**

**Quote/Paraphrase:**  “ A key implication as a covenant community of God’s people is that men and women are all equal members of this community. They all have the same membership status, privilege and responsibility. Although Allison, Kunhiyop and others did not say it directly, they believe that the male and female relationship is predicated on the work of Christ. Moreover, this community’s nature does not discriminate based on one’s sexuality. Many people assume that men are God’s priority above women, but God’s design in creation does not intend that one is superior and the other inferior. At the same time, Jesus Christ offers forgiveness and provides eternal salvation to both men and women. And the Holy Spirit empowers both men and women for the church’s edification. Seeing the church as God’s family and community of God’s covenant people has a broader consequence for developing a framework for male and female relationships in the church.” pp. 8

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element, culture and contextualization.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of gender equality and the male and female relationship in the church. The passage emphasizes equality and non-discrimination in the church. It highlights God’s purpose for women and men and that from creation, His intention was for equality and equity between the sexes for the edification of the church and the completion of His work.

**Contextualization:** Though the passage presents the core ideology of gender equality and that this is God’s expectation for His church. Traditionally and culturally, there have been church communities that have missed the mark. Still today there are some churches and denominations that do not allow women to hold leadership positions in the church and their role has been misaligned as only ‘helpers’ and carers as always supportive. Though the bible itself speaks of women’s roles as helpmeet, which is a virtuous role that would ought to be accepted with humility. The support can be towards co-leadership or leadership given the calling and purpose. My experience at Omega so far, has been a transformative one as I have been able to use my life experiences and refocus around spiritual formation. The learning has impacted my beliefs about theology without ministerial focus and how we can change the world of others through greater walk and communion with God.

**Source Two:** Selak, A. (2017). Orthodoxy, Orthopraxis, and Orthopathy: Evaluating the Feminist Kenosis Debate. *Modern Theology*, *33*(4), 529–548. <https://doi.org/10.1111/moth.1235>

**Comment 4:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Christian theology has a long history of distorting the issue of suffering and sacrifice, especially as related to women. Theologies, often created by men in power, have functioned to keep women in powerless, subservient roles. Perhaps no phrase better captures the misguided sentiment of instructing women to endure abuse than kenosis or “self-emptying.” Modern theological discourse agrees that it is inappropriate and inaccurate to use kenosis as a tool to keep women in oppressive or abusive relationships or environments. However, a common understanding of the meaning of kenosis remains elusive, especially within feminist theology.” P. 529

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element of culture and contextualization.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is an additive comment to the discourse around feminist theology and kenosis. Women being powerless in the church is not totally accurate in modern theology. However, there is evidence to support the subservient roles they continue to play. Kenosis has been also used in the sense where Jesus left his heavenly home as King and became a carpenter, a servant and abused by men. This debasing of women is likened to kenosis or self-emptying as women continue to be abased in feminist theology.

**Contextualization:** As a feminist, the researcher’s experience of women’s othering in the church is of great concern. The church remains one of only of few institutions that continue to exclude women from positions of power and relate them to subservient caring roles in the church. This Christianized othering in the church is of concern, given how the bible has been taken out of context to devalue the work and worth of women in some context. It must be expressed however that some denominations have broken the mold, and women have broken the glass ceiling but there needs to be greater policy and advocacy in this area.

**Comment 5:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “This three-pronged understanding of power is key to Hampson’s understanding and rejection of kenosis. To Hampson, kenosis is equated with powerlessness, a product of a patriarchal system. It is men who promote self-sacrifice as a worthy virtue for women, perpetuating a system where women’s self-sacrifice keeps them in situations of oppression.” pp. 532

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element of culture and contextualization.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of Kenosis. Kenosis, the idea of self-emptying and filling up with the Holy Spirit and the likeness of God is seen as powerlessness in patriarchal society. Patriarchal systems continue to pervade society including the Church. However, kenosis can be seen as a powerful place of Godliness.

**Contextualization:** My own thinking on this as a woman is ‘how can women elevate themselves within a Christian patriarchy? What change is needed in the self-talk of women? How can we begin to align with what God wants for us? How can Christian women rewrite their story within the theological discourse of Christianized othering and sociological work and worth discourse?

**Source Three:** Kengatharan, N. (2020). Shouldering a double burden: the cultural stigma of the dogma of gender role ideology and its impact on work–family conflict. *Journal of Advances in Management Research*, *17*(5), 651–667. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JAMR-03-2020-0033>

**Comment 6**

**Quote/Paraphrase:**  “Many research scholars underscore the importance of WFC owing to its harmful effects on individuals, families and organizations: lower job satisfaction, lower life satisfaction, life stress, lower involvement, lower perceived career success, absenteeism, higher turnover intention, lower well-being, tardiness, poor work-related role performance, depression, lower marital satisfaction, psychological distress, heavy drinking, cigarette use, anger, poor appetite, headache, stomach upset, fatigue and hypertension.” pp. 651

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element,

contextualization for constructive social change.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of work family conflict as it creates a deleterious picture of the negative impacts of unchecked work family conflict. There are some effects that can be considered obvious or more likely such as lower job satisfaction, lower life satisfaction, absenteeism, higher turnover intention and physical and mental health concerns such as hypertension, depression, poor appetite, headache and others highlight the real challenge that work life conflict can become. This expands the sociological worldview beyond conflict between paid work and the family to a notion of ill health which can be taken more seriously and expands the discourse, in the eyes of the positivist, beyond just another ‘another feminist mousing about private troubles’ that is steeped in individualism.

**Contextualization: S**tudying work family conflict and the importance of balance is important for changing my world and countless other women (and men) who have time based, strain based and behavioural based challenges with balancing paid work and other life commitments. As a social worker and social work educator, understanding the nuances and potential harmful effects are important to my professional practice to promote balance, social functioning and gender ideologies around these challenges. It is also crucial to expose the discourse to societal/structural and theological factors that are part of this interdisciplinary discourse.

**Comment 7**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Contrary to the traditional view, Slan-Jerusalim and Chen (2009) demarcated gender role ideology as “along a continuum from traditional (family responsibilities are primarily for women; work responsibilities are men’s obligations) to egalitarian (belief in an equal role distribution for men and women)” (p. 493). In the contemporary world, “women have made great strides in gaining entrance to firms and cracking the glass ceiling. . .” (Mainiero and Sulliva, 2005, p. 118). Albeit a relaxing of the separation of gendered roles (Livingston and Judge, 2008; Powell et al., 2019) pervades across many developed countries with individualist cultures, the traditional gender role ideology is still prevalent in nations with collectivist cultures (Hofstede et al., 2010; Minnotte et al., 2013). Therefore, the dogma of entrenched gender role ideology would be more seriously detrimental to working women than women at home as working women should shoulder the double burden of work and family responsibilities. Notably, Livingston and Judge (2008) opined that while the majority of women may perceive work as essential for economic benefits (family functioning) in less developed economies, they nonetheless see the family as their central role.” pp. 655

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element of culture and contextualization.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of gender role ideology worldview stemming from a sociological understanding. This quotation adds to my worldview around gender roles and how young people and children acquire this knowledge and identity. This ideology attributes a burden to women as primary caregivers and nurturers in the home and compounds the work life dichotomy and strain role theories of contemporary society.

**Contextualization:** From a professional standpoint; my calling is to change the world through resocialization of new gender role norms and thinking that will promote gender equity in roles. As a social worker, the impetus is around enhancing social functioning of women who have experienced strain and stress around being professional women and balancing work demands with family and other life responsibilities.

**Source Four :** Marie, R, S. (2014). Towards a gendered theology of work. *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, *149*, 126.

**Comment 8**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Society tends to refer to “work” as ‘paid employment.’ The Bible, however, embraces a broader definition of work that includes dominion over nature, service to others, and all productive activity. While it is difficult to define, there have been various attempts to describe the notion of work from a Christian perspective. For example, Bonino suggests that there are two dimensions of work revealed in the Biblical text of Genesis. The first dimension depicts work as a joyful task and a divinely appointed stewardship. The second dimension depicts work as being a punishment for sin and a painful duty and heavy burden” pp.127.

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element, approaches to contextualization.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of work. This statement draws to my attention the nuances around theology of work. In contemporary society, work is sometimes seen as dreary and a “painful duty.” From a theological perspective, work as a form of stewardship over the earth as God commanded in Genesis is a great reminder. This perspective helps to center and align us as workers for God and for his cause as opposed to work as a means to an end in a technology facilitated fast paced rat race society that often forgets about a purpose greater than ourselves.

**Contextualization:** Society’s definition of work has been thwarted and has recreated strain for the society and the modern day Christians who have forgotten the faith based purpose of work. From a personal standpoint and from my worldview as a social work christian scholar, ‘work’ needs to be redefined and reconceptualised to maintain the balance and alignment with family, the christian household and communion with God. Within a feminist contextualization, women’s work and worth has been devalued and othered within the discourse.

**Comment 9:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “The gender-based division of labor has contributed to socially ascribed gender roles that cause women to be primarily responsible for monotonous, exasperating, tiring, time consuming and economically unrewarding activities. Due to the social construction of differentiated gender roles, certain work roles fall almost entirely to women. However, this gendered analysis has not been prevalent in existing theologies of work. Rather, these focus solely on doctrinal, class or ethics perspectives. Furthermore, it is argued that these theologies of work are developed without first-hand knowledge of the experiences, struggles and challenges that workers themselves encounter” pp. 126

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element, culture and contextualization.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of gender-based division of labor and the importance of knowledge creation through sharing of experiences and narratives. Theologies of work should enhance faith-based knowledge through examination of christian worker’s experience with biblical and theological principles.

**Contextualization:** As a feminist ethnographer and researcher, I couldn't agree more that whatever the disciplinary/interdisciplinary approach (theology, sociology, demography etc) that is taken needs to address experiences and private lives of women that often become public troubles. That theology of work focuses on doctrinal, class and ethics perspective is definitely true in my country. The need for humanizing the problems of work for the Christian is clear.

**Source Five:** Guitián, & González, A.-M. (2022). Theology of work: New perspectives. *Scripta Theologica*, *54*(3), 757–787. <https://doi.org/10.15581/006.54.3.757-787>

**Comment 10:**

**Quote/Paraphrase: “**Along with revisiting the concept of work itself, it important to help integrate dimensions of work in which there is tension, and along these lines, to point out theological categories that can help in this task, such as covenant, virtue, service, solidarity, etc.This task involves looking at the meaning of work from a theological perspective that is attentive to human beings’ fundamental dimensions, namely, our individual (or subjective) and social dimensions, material and spiritual dimensions, the capacity to love, and the dynamism of the virtues that comes into play in work, etc. Achieving an integrative theological vision of work requires moving toward a second stage that addresses a multidisciplinary study on work (with contributions from theology, philosophy, sociology, law, economics, education and psychology, engineering, ecology, health sciences, etc.), pointing in three directions: The contemporary typology of work, the unique features of human work in light of artificial intelligence, and revisiting prevailing social and development models” pp. 779

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element, approaches to contextualization.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of theological work perspectives. The quotation promotes an interdisciplinary approach to looking at work. However, it also promotes a deeper theological meaning to work that is not just human but social, cultural and multidimensional.

**Contextualization:** Prior to now, I had not really understood the theological depth that exists in a faith-based exploration of work and its meaning. The process of interdisciplinary approach to the discourse will add a layer of rigor to my analysis of work, both paid and unpaid. The new world of work which has been sped up by the pandemic has implications for work flexibility and policy to improve the outcomes for workers, families, organizations and society. There are sociological and theological considerations as a Christian sociologist scholar practitioner. I have been looking at work and its meaning and how I can lead with God’s guidance on how to work purposefully and passionately in industry and community while ensuring opportunities for rest. This includes saying no to things that will distract from my purpose and passion and saying no when my plate is full and running over. This is a work in progress. My leader development process is therefore intuitive and self-reflective as I try to do inner work that reflects imago dei.

**Source Six:** Krznaric, R. (2007). *How change happens: Interdisciplinary perspectives for human development*. Oxfam.

**Comment 11**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “The empowerment of women has become one of the key goals of development intervention and involves ensuring that women have the ability to make strategic life choices where this ability was previously denied (for example through access to resources and involvement in decision-making). Such thinking can be traced back to the increasing focus since the 1960s on women’s rights, experiences and histories across a range of academic disciplines such as sociology, political science and history and to the rise of feminist economics.” pp. 38.

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element, contextualization for constructive social change.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive and variant to my understanding of women’s empowerment and worth. Given the history of women’s disenchantment and inequality, women’s empowerment has become the goal of development intervention. Many Disciplinary perspectives have taken a focus on women’s empowerment as a way to development of societies, this includes sociology, politics and political science and I would add theology. An interdisciplinary approach to women’s empowerment is key to change for women globally.

**Contextualization:** The empowerment of women is foremost on my mind and has been the focus of my work. Within the context as a woman leader planning for family, the researcher has reflected on these changes and for women within her industry and what it will and has meant. Additionally, the state of young women transitioning from university (my sector) into adult roles rests on the mind of the researcher given the unforeseen perspectives that this group often takes for granted. Contextually, my professional interest is geared towards how paid and unpaid work (including family) can coexist in harmony and how we can establish norms, starting with resocialization of gender roles and work structure changes to encourage symbiosis. As a social worker, enhanced social functioning of people (families and communities) is my calling to change the world and a key part of that is women’s empowerment from an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary perspective.

**Comment 12**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Changing attitudes and beliefs is a long strategy which moves beyond the assumptions of rational self-interested actors in economics and behavioural psychology to a more sociological emphasis on the importance of worldviews, ideology and consent as determinants of human motivation and action. It focuses on building personal relationships, mutual understanding and empathy as an approach to change, as well as reframing dominant paradigms.” pp. 43.

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element, contextualization for constructive social change.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive and variant to my understanding of change. Change is a long process that requires motivation and action. It moves within various worldviews and perspectives. Changing attitudes and beliefs focuses on building rapport, understanding and empathy.

**Contextualization:** As social workers, change is big on our agenda. Motivating change can be difficult depending on the client’s self awareness, attitude to change and readiness to transformation. Transforming people's problems can be at first daunting. I have often started with communication that is caring, transparent and client focused to ensure that clients are ready for transformation.

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