

Original Paper

The Identity Construction of Christian Women in Haiti

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Abstract

Identity construction is not an isolated reality; it is always the result of relationships with others and an inevitable process of socialization. The identity construction of women raises questions about their relationship with the Christian religion. This study on the identity construction of Christian women is situated within a constructivist and interactionist perspective of human and social relations. The objective of this article is, on the one hand, to assess the extent of Christian influence in the process of identity construction; on the other hand, the research seeks to understand the dynamics of subjectivation among these women. The results of this study, conducted with 12 women of Christian faiths, reveal an identity process that varies between internalization of religious values, adherence and discussion of religious values, and contestation of religious values.

Keywords

identity, otherness, women, Christianity, subjectivation

1. Introduction

In Haiti, women are underrepresented in many social spheres, such as in positions of power (UNFPA 2017). The same applies to hierarchical roles within Christianity, as evidenced by the absence of women in the Catholic Church's hierarchy (Pope, Priest, Cardinal, Bishop, among others). Even in the highest leadership positions of Protestant churches, one primarily finds Pastors, Bishops, Apostles, etc. Why, if women make up the majority of the population—52% (Barrère, Cayemittes, & Barrère, 2002)—are they still so underrepresented in this modern era that advocates for equality among human beings?

Indeed, this modern era seems to promote a desexualization of competence, focusing instead on human potential. Contemporary societies place all individuals on an equal footing, asserting legal equality. In this sense, it is an individual's potential that grants them the ability to fulfill certain societal roles, regardless of gender as a social classification (Boisclair & Saint-Martin, 2006; Théry, 2010; Quilliou-Rioual, 2014). This egalitarian vision of modern societies acknowledges no barriers between

individuals. However, in some religious spaces in Haiti, the reality appears quite different, revealing a socialization framework that tends toward inequality. Discussing socialization immediately leads to the issue of self-construction. Thus, Christianity in Haiti appears to be a vector of identity construction.

This research examines biblical and religious values both as influential elements in self-definition and as factors shaping gender identity. According to this study, the identity construction of women is shaped by their family and religious trajectories as well as individual indicators. Based on interviews conducted with twelve Christian women in Haiti, we found that biblical and religious values serve as the foundation for the discourses these women construct about themselves. These values also engage their reflexivity, which, in many cases, leads to a process of subjectivation. This refers to a subjective process that includes reflective aspects within the women in question. As a reflexive being, an individual is capable of attributing meaning to their lived experience (Kaufmann, 2004). It is through this process of subjectivation that the central issue of this article emerges. The research question is as follows: how do Christian women in Haiti construct their identity in relation to their religious affiliation?

2. The Concept of Identity

The definition of identity is far from unanimous among researchers, as the concept is highly fluid and changeable. However, understanding the process of identity construction necessarily implies an inseparable relationship between the self and the social context (Kunnen & Bosma, 2006; Barth, 1969). Identity can refer to unity, permanence, similarity, uniqueness, and differentiation in relation to another, even if that other exists only symbolically (Barus-Michel, Enriquez, & Lévy 2002). In fact, an individual in search of meaning in their own existence cannot separate themselves from their relationship with others, where processes of identification and distinction take place.

This dyadic nature (individual and context, identification and distinction) gives identity a dynamic quality, making it an undeniably relational phenomenon. Thus, discussing identity always refers to the set of social interactions that an individual engages in, including relationships with both moral and physical persons and with institutions. In this regard, Jn-Francois (2011) argues that identity encompasses the entire process of socialization, an individual's **habitus**, how they perceive the gaze of others, and how they integrate the roles and norms required by society and different social spaces. Therefore, identity construction occurs between collective identities, shaped through socialization, and individual mechanisms (Lenclud, 2008; Ollivier, 2009).

However, within the framework of modern societies, identity cannot be understood outside of an individualistic perspective. The individual is a singularity (Martuccelli, 2010), and this singularity plays a fundamental role in how a person exists, perceives themselves, and situates themselves in relation to others.

3. Women in Christianity

To understand the influence of Christianity on the identity of Haitian women, one must refer to the Bible. Indeed, the Bible defines how a believing woman should behave and exist. In other words, the Bible shapes specific attitudes and behaviors in Christian individuals, as illustrated in the scripture:

"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

From this, it is understood that being "born again" grants Christian individuals a whole new set of identity markers, distinguishing them from non-Christians. Thus, being a Christian woman implies a way of being in relation to oneself and to others.

To grasp the triad between identity, womanhood, and religion, two aspects must be examined:

1. The unequal relationship between men and women in Haitian society and within Haitian churches.
2. The enforced submission of Christian women.

A vast number of biblical verses advocate for gender inequality. The apostle Peter reinforces this perspective when he states:

"Husbands, in the same way, be considerate as you live with your wives and treat them with respect as the weaker vessel" (1 Peter 3:7).

Here, gender is used to determine human potential. According to this view, a woman is weak simply because she was born female, while a man is strong by nature. It is as if this is the natural order of things—men are endowed with strength, while women are inherently weak.

This unequal relationship is also present from the very origins of humanity, according to the Bible. In Genesis, the woman is described as a descendant of man, created from one of his ribs (Genesis 2:21-22), thus granting Adam a supposed superiority over Eve. This notion is reinforced in Paul's letter to Timothy, where he instructs his disciple to ensure women remain submissive:

"A woman should learn in quietness and full submission" (1 Timothy 2:11).

Paul justifies this order by referring to the creation story:

"For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. But women will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith, love, and holiness with propriety" (1 Timothy 2:13-15).

Thus, according to these verses, the first woman is designated as guilty. Through the biblical perspective, this guilt becomes an inherited burden for all women across generations. Women must constantly seek sanctification and purification for the sin committed by Eve. Men, on the other hand, are fortunate for not having succumbed to the temptation first and even luckier for having been created first.

It is important to note that this transgression is presented as an essentialist reality—attributed to all women, even those who never lived in the so-called Garden of Eden. The Bible portrays this transgression as something that has spread throughout the world, shaping Christian doctrine.

As a result, women are commanded to submit to their husbands as they would to the Lord (Ephesians 5:22). They are encouraged to follow the example of Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her lord (1 Peter 3:5-6). This denies women recognition, making their human potential invisible. This constant encouragement toward submission tends to produce individuals who uncritically internalize biblical values. A woman who assimilates these values may come to define herself from a position of inferiority relative to men.

The Bible presents an essentialist view of women, depicting them as inherently weak and incapable of achieving perfection because they were the first to sin. In short, women are held responsible for humanity's downfall. Even King Solomon, known as the wisest man in Judeo-Christian history, expressed a sexist and dehumanizing view of women:

"I applied my mind to know, to investigate and to seek wisdom and an explanation of things, and to understand the stupidity of wickedness and the madness of folly. I found more bitter than death the woman who is a snare, whose heart is a trap and whose hands are chains. The man who pleases God will escape her, but the sinner she will ensnare... Out of a thousand men I have found but one upright, but not one upright woman among them all" (Ecclesiastes 7:25-26, 28).

It is important to recognize that religious norms influencing identity are not egalitarian between men and women (Pouliot & Fortin 2013). According to them, women's identities are shaped by selective memories of tradition. In this context, *selective memory* refers to the systematic omission of the many injustices committed against women. These selective memories reinforce the traditional roles assigned to women, such as the man being designated as the head of the household (Ephesians 5:23-24).

Through this biblical perspective, women are often viewed primarily as:

- Caregivers responsible for the household and family,
- Wives of their husbands,
- Sexual partners,
- Subordinates,
- Mothers.

In the Bible, motherhood is depicted as a redeeming path that compensates for original sin (1 Timothy 2:15). Women are not portrayed as individuals who deserve intersubjective recognition or who can engage in subjectivation in the sense of the Frankfurt School thinkers.

Christian women in Haiti construct their identities as subjects within a context of gender inequality. In this perspective, it becomes evident that studying the personal identity of Christian women cannot be separated from gender relations. As Lipiansky, Taboada-Leonetti & Vasquez argue in Camilleri (1998), every human being is socialized according to a gendered model. Gender relations, along with gender-based inequalities and male dominance, play a crucial role in the identity construction of individuals.

Unequal social gender relations subject women to subjugation, reducing them to their deepest being, as they are subjected to domination and discrimination. These social gender relations can lead to the

assimilation of preconstructed identities. This gender dynamic is structured within a binary categorization (masculine and feminine), often criticized for classifying human beings in a rigid and essentialist manner (Boisclair & Saint-Martin 2006). This dual categorization imposes social roles that appear to be natural and, as a result, become normative frameworks—ultimately, vectors of identity.

4. The Invisible Woman in the Bible and in Haiti

In Haiti, women face a dual invisibilization. First, by Christian religion, which assigns the primary role and superiority to men. This notion of male primacy is widely disseminated and corroborated through the Bible, particularly in verses asserting that man was created first (1 Timothy 2:13). Consequently, men are deemed to hold the primary position in both social and religious functions. Women, by contrast, are relegated to a secondary position due to the original sin as presented in the Bible:

"And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman who was deceived and fell into transgression. But she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith, love, and holiness with propriety" (1 Timothy 2:14-15).

This leads to a social reproduction where women are often assigned an inferior status. This pattern is evident in the socialization of boys and girls in Haiti, where historically, education was reserved for boys while girls remained at home to perform domestic tasks. According to a 2015 study, 47% of boys were enrolled in preschool compared to 41% of girls; at the secondary level, the figures stood at 45% for boys versus 37% for girls (Avocats sans Frontières Canada, Kay Fanm & Office de la Protection du Citoyen, 2019). These statistics clearly illustrate an inequality of opportunity. However, gender equality movements have consistently advocated for equal education for boys and girls. Consequently, Haitian girls—who will grow into Haitian women—face multiple layers of inequality, with interrelated consequences. Even today, despite increased access to education, girls are not afforded the same opportunities as boys. This is reflected in the fact that key administrative positions, both in public and private sectors, have historically been dominated by Haitian men. These inequalities persist both in religious and social spheres across the country.

Haitian law further entrenches gender inequality by failing to recognize women as equal to men under the legal framework:

"The husband owes protection to his wife, and the wife owes obedience to her husband. The wife is obliged to reside with her husband wherever he deems appropriate; the husband is required to provide her with all necessities of life according to his means and status" (Haitian Civil Code, Articles 197-198).

Thus, Christian women in Haiti are doubly subjected to obedience and relegation to an inferior rank—first by Christianity and second by the legal structures of their own country. Given this context, it is crucial to explore how Christian women define themselves and navigate their own subjectivity.

5. Methodology

This study takes the form of a monograph and aims to understand how Haitian women define themselves in relation to biblical values. To achieve this objective, a qualitative approach was adopted, utilizing semi-structured interviews with twelve (n=12) Christian women. The purpose was to examine their processes of subjectivation and identity construction. The time and location of the interviews were arranged with the participants, and each session lasted between 45 to 60 minutes. Prior to recording the interviews, participants provided their consent through a consent form.

The study was conducted between May and September 2020 in Port-au-Prince and Montrouis (Haiti). Participants ranged in age from 22 to 48 years and were affiliated with various Christian denominations, given that Christianity is a multisectoral religion. For data interpretation, thematic analysis was employed, enabling the identification of social representations and judgments expressed by the respondents through an examination of discourse elements (Quivy & Van Campenhoudh, 1995).

Table 1. Sociodemographic Profile of the Participants

Name	Age	Marital Status	Religion	Role in Congregation	Education	Employment Status	Place of Residence
Nadia	40	Single	Evangelical Church	Co-leader of a choir	Bachelor	NGO employee	Port-au-Prince
Alia	29	Married	Pentecostal	Regular member	Bachelor	NGO employee	Saint-Marc
Nathalia	45	Single	Nazarene Church	Member of the women's group	Professional	NGO employee	Saint-Marc
Cathia	28	Single	Catholic	Member of a choir	Bachelor	Unemployed	Delmas
Junia	34	Married	Jehovah's Witness	Regular member	Bachelor	Self-employed	Gressier
Mathania	31	Married	Jehovah's Witness	Regular member	Bachelor	Private sector employee	Port-au-Prince
Sophia	22	Single	Pentecostal	Children's ministry leader	Bachelor	Private sector employee	Plaine
Cathiana	24	Single	Baptist	Regular member	Bachelor	Unemployed	Plaine
Kéthia	35	Married	Pentecostal	Sunday school instructor	Bachelor	Self-employed	Port-au-Prince
Célia	48	Married	Adventist Church	Regular member	Professional	NGO employee	Port-au-Prince
Nélia	25	Single	Church of Christ	Regular member	Bachelor	NGO employee	Plaine
Claudia	30	Married	Pentecostal	Member of a socio-religious group	Bachelor	NGO employee	Gressier

6. SURVEY RESULTS

The Role of Women in Marriage and Religious Congregations

The position of women within marriage aligns with their role in religious congregations. Women are consistently placed in an inferior position compared to men, in accordance with a male-dominated hierarchy that positions men as "dominant" and women as "subordinate." Identity construction occurs within this framework of socialization, shaping a sense of self that is often affirmed in a state of inferiority relative to men, who are perceived as providers of protection. Women are thus considered inherently weak. In this context, biblical verses asserting that "the man is the head of the woman" are frequently invoked to justify inequalities within marriage. Women are often relegated to a complementary role, positioned as supporters of men rather than independent actors. Some women adhere strictly to biblical teachings:

"In my congregation, women do not teach. This is a task assigned to men according to the Bible." (Junia, 34 years old).

"In the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, women do not teach; it is God's word as written in the Bible." (Mathania, 31 years old).

"My husband is responsible for both the spiritual and material aspects of our household. When he is present, I cannot lead family prayer—it is his duty. The Bible assigns this role to men. As women, we are the wives of our brothers; we are here to support our husbands in their tasks. It is as if we share the same role as our husbands. Although I am not involved in politics, I would not support a female candidate for the presidency, because by being president, a woman would exercise authority over men, which contradicts biblical prescriptions." (Geneviève, 31 years old).

This framework of identity construction confines women to predefined roles, preventing them from attaining higher positions in social hierarchies. Consequently, womanhood itself is conceptualized as belonging to the lower strata of the social order. However, some participants challenged the biblical representation of gender inequality, offering critical perspectives on its implications.

"I disagree with how women are represented in the Bible. They are underrepresented and rarely seen in valued social roles. To me, this narrative is constructed to serve a specific purpose. Moreover, the Bible recounts the history of the people of Israel, and in Haiti, we are attempting to transpose that history onto contemporary Christians." (Alia, 29 years old).

"The Bible was written for a specific people at a particular time. It reflects the values and norms of that era. For instance, the practice of wearing a veil was a cultural requirement at the time of the Bible's composition, but it is not necessarily relevant for contemporary women." (Claudia, 30 years old).

Subjectivation and Reflexivity

It is important to note that the identity discourse portraying women in a subordinate role is not universally accepted among the twelve interviewees. While many participants adhere to biblical values, some interpret scripture in a way that grants them greater agency. These women reject a rigid, hierarchical reading of the verse stating that "man is the head of woman," instead favoring an

interpretation that emphasizes collaboration, mutual understanding, and dialogue within marriage. Their capacity for exegesis demonstrates an effort to reinterpret biblical texts in a manner that serves their interests.

"I believe submission does not imply the enslavement of women, as another verse specifies that husbands must love their wives. If one loves another, they will not mistreat them. However, I do think that the cultural context of the Bible's authors influenced their writings. In other words, the individual characteristics of the authors played a role in shaping the text—though this does not negate the fact that the Bible is the work of God." (Nadia, 40 years old).

Reinforcement and Contestation of Female Submission in Religious Discourse

This representation of women is further reinforced by other participants who argued that submission should be understood as a form of collaboration between spouses, fostering discussion and dialogue. These women have developed their own interpretation of the biblical verse, attributing personal meaning to it. From the perspective of identity construction, this process engages the concept of subjectivation. Some women have questioned the male dominance advocated by the Bible.

"The biblical verse stating that man is the head of the woman strengthens male dominance in Haitian society. It reflects a commanding attitude in men, similar to that of a police officer or a soldier in the army." (Nélia, 25 years old).

Several women in this study expressed their disagreement with such verses, which they perceive as promoting male authority. For them, a relationship should be based on shared responsibility between partners, which is inherent in the very concept of a "spouse." A couple's relationship should be grounded in mutuality and cordiality. Cathia, the only Catholic participant in the study, aligns herself with those who believe that women should be treated as equals to their husbands. She explicitly rejected the notion of female submission, advocating instead for legal and social equality. However, she acknowledged that achieving such equality is a long-term process, as it is deeply rooted in socialization.

The interviews revealed a strong sense of religious belonging among the participants, highlighting their connection to their respective faith communities. As Ollivier (2009) points out, an individual's sense of belonging is shaped by collective entities. Similarly, Cohen-Scali and Guichard (2008) describe social identity as encompassing a sense of solidarity, which emerges through an individual's integration into a group. The women in this study actively embrace their Christian identities. However, for most participants, this does not imply an uncritical acceptance of all aspects of their religious identity. Rather, they engage in a process of selective identification, embracing only those aspects of Christianity that hold personal significance.

Throughout the interviews, participants frequently questioned certain biblical and religious values. This critical engagement is characteristic of reflexive thought, which fosters a process of individuation in relation to collective religious norms. In this regard, *"the prevailing model of social development today*

is that of the democratic individual, free to make their own choices” (De Gaulejac, 2011). However, this model remains an ideal rather than an absolute reality, as Kaufmann (2014) argues. Kaufmann emphasizes the increasing importance of reflexivity in contemporary life, positioning modern individuals as self-regulating agents who actively engage with social and existential issues. Among these issues, religion and fundamental questions of human existence take center stage. The following excerpt from the interviews illustrates this theoretical perspective:

“I believe that certain biblical verses were added to embellish certain ideas. This is particularly the case for the verse concerning female submission to men. Submission should be reciprocal, depending on the situation. I have not seen many women in the Bible occupying socially valued positions. Women in the Bible are primarily portrayed as companions to men. I noticed that the Book of Genesis presents women as ‘helpers’ to men, which led me to think that this implies a deficiency in men. If women represent potentiality, they cannot be reduced to subordination.” (Alia, 29 years old).

Subjectivation and the Reflexive Construction of Religious Identity

Overall, the interviews reveal a process of subjectivation. The central issue in identity construction lies in the human capacity to assimilate external elements into one’s own self-concept. As Lenclud (2008) has already pointed out, behind every social actor, there exists an agent who is self-aware and capable of questioning external realities through interaction. This tendency toward accommodation is also evident among participants who challenge biblical verses asserting male superiority, such as “*the man is the head of the woman.*” According to these women, the notion of male leadership in this biblical passage does not necessarily imply male domination. This suggests that women do not outright reject religion or the authority of the Holy Scriptures; rather, they strive to interpret these teachings in ways that are meaningful to them. Identity construction, fundamentally, is a process of meaning-making by the social actor.

For some women, if submission exists within a marital relationship, it should be reciprocal between spouses. Consequently, these women advocate for open communication. Other participants interpret submission as a form of necessary collaboration between men and women, likening it to a question a husband might ask his wife—“*Can we do this?*” Thus, individuals develop their own interpretations of the Bible and its verses. Without rejecting biblical and religious values, they seek to construct meaning while maintaining coherence within their faith. Christian women, therefore, appear to be individuals striving for a sense of congruence between self and religion.

This identity negotiation involves two crucial stages: first, the individual constructs a personal narrative and convinces herself of its validity; second, she shares this narrative with others, attempting to persuade them as well. In the process of self-construction, the individual seeks to ascribe meaning to the values she internalizes. Identity, in this sense, is a narrative process in which individuals act as the authors of their own stories. As such, their life histories maintain coherence through personal narration. In this regard, Kaufmann suggests:

"It is as if the modern individual dreams his life more intensely in order to construct it according to his own vision, while remaining extraordinarily attentive to ensuring that this dream is not merely an illusion, but rather something he perceives as real." (Kaufmann, 2004, p. 153).

Individuals strive for equilibrium both in their relationship with themselves and in their interactions with others, leading to what may be termed the subjective construction of meaning. This process of assigning personal significance to biblical verses indicates that the dynamics of individuation and subjectivation among these women are inherently tied to this meaning-making process. Any attempt to distinguish oneself in the process of self-definition, particularly in relation to an external other, necessarily involves a transposition of meaning that aligns with the individual's internal perceptions and representations. This process of subjectivation, questioning, and accommodation engages the reflexive dimension of identity formation. Reflexivity enables individuals to adopt a stance that diverges from collective identity norms (Kaufmann, 2004; Lenclud, 2008; Ferraresse, 2009).

Indeed, Haitian Christian women navigate a logic of differentiation in relation to others. In this context, reflexivity emerges as a crucial element in the identity construction of Christian women in Haiti. Finally, it is essential to recognize that identity formation is not a monolithic process (Giddens, as cited in Kaufmann, 2004). Individual identity develops dialectically through the interplay between self and other. The study findings reveal an identity construction process characterized by three key tendencies: (1) internalization of religious values, (2) adherence to and negotiation of values, and (3) contestation of religious values.

Internalization of Religious Values

An individual who adheres to collective values is not a passive or inert subject (Magnan-Mac Kay, 2011). On the contrary, individuals engage in an active process of assimilation. In this sense, the subject chooses to embody the essence of the values with which they identify. Among the women who did not question the biblical principles upheld by their congregations, their self-definition aligns with these values. This perspective can be summarized as follows: *"I define myself, I accept, and I assume what my religion advocates because it suits me and corresponds to the meaning I attribute to myself."* Ultimately, it is the individual who gives meaning to their choices (Kaufmann, 2004). This process of internalization, therefore, serves as an expression of Christian women's religious identity.

Thomasset (2007) argues that religious values cannot be viewed merely as pre-established and mechanically transmitted doctrines; rather, they emerge from an original system of individual interpretation. Within this framework, some women embrace the idea that women are subordinate to men. While these women also view themselves as competent professionals, they position themselves after their husbands within the family structure and defer to men in religious assemblies. This perspective reflects a self-concept in which the individual assumes a supporting role to men.

Adherence to and Discussion of Religious Values

Some participants internalize religious values yet, in certain circumstances, engage in discussions about

them. The construction of self is subject to variations depending on specific moments, highlighting the fluidity of the identity process. From this perspective, identity appears as a fluctuating phenomenon.

One participant, Nathalia, aged 45, states, “*The man is the head of the woman, as she was created after him.*” However, this same woman believes it is entirely acceptable for a woman to wear pants, artificial hair, or do as she pleases. Similarly, Nadia, aged 40, has opted to wear a hat inside her church as a substitute for the traditional veil. These examples illustrate that a woman who believes in gender equality may still choose to wear a veil in church, while another woman who upholds male superiority may reject the veil, wear pants, or adopt other behaviors that could be seen as subversive from a certain standpoint.

Thus, this identity trajectory includes individuals who sometimes adhere to biblical and religious values, while at other times, they distinguish themselves from these values. This identity construction oscillates between adherence and contestation.

Contestation of Religious Values

The study also revealed contesting discourses regarding religious norms, with several participants critically questioning certain biblical values. In these cases, the participants’ critical consciousness becomes evident. These women argue that the Bible and religious values do not fully recognize women’s potential. They assert that women are capable beings who should not be viewed as subordinates. They affirm their equality with men, a sentiment that was widely shared among participants.

In this context, biblical and religious values appear to clash with their reflexivity. These women explicitly stated that they do not accept submission. This aligns with Manon Garcia’s (2018) assertion, encapsulated in the title of her work: “*One is not born submissive; one becomes so.*” Submission, therefore, is not a natural given, nor does it stem from psychophysiological characteristics; rather, it is the product of social construction and individual assimilation. Submission emerges as a learned behavior in the relationship with others. Consequently, some individuals may emancipate themselves from these normative expectations and refuse to conform.

This represents the non-conformist stance adopted by these participants in response to biblical and Christian religious definitions of *what it means to be a woman*. Their identity construction, therefore, is an ongoing process—constantly being formed, unformed, and re-formed.

Conclusion

Whether values are embraced or contested, identity construction inevitably involves both the self and the other. Just as the self can transcend external values, others play a crucial role in shaping self-definition (Le Breton, 2004, cited in Magnan-Mac Kay, 2011). In other words, identity is constructed through a co-presence between self and others. However, it is important to recognize that individuals may, at times, distance themselves from this interplay through their capacity for individuation and subjectivation, thereby asserting their uniqueness.

The identity construction of Christian women is an ongoing process shaped by their relationship with

others. Given their collective affiliation with Christianity, this study focused on the biblical values and verses that define womanhood and prescribe how a Christian woman should behave. These verses, however, are heteronormative, dictating an idealized model of Christian womanhood. Ultimately, Christian women's identity construction is situated at the intersection of adherence to Christian values and reflexivity. Reflexivity enables them to question these values and attribute personal meaning to them, thereby fostering both individuation and subjectivation.

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