# Omega Graduate School

# Dissertation Research Prospectus (Proposal Draft)

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# Problem Statement

The problem is inconsistent church attendance, inadequate financial giving, and being prone to conflict may indicate a failure to overcome immigration trauma through posttraumatic growth among leaders **[***deacons/elders*] *of diaspora Myanmar churches* within the District of Columbia Baptist Convention (Sternberg, Gregorich, Paul & Stewart, 2016; Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004).

# Purpose Statement

*The purpose of this quantitative correlational study is to* examine the relationshipbetween immigration trauma and posttraumatic growth among leaders [*deacons/elders*] *of diaspora Myanmar churches* in the District of Columbia Baptist Convention*.*

# Background of the Problem (1-2 pages)

Describe the problem in the context of extant literature…

There have been four waves of immigration from Myanmar, (1) nonimmigrant students, (2) diversity lottery visas, (3) asylum seekers, and (4) refugees since early 2000. The majority of immigrants are Chin, Kachin, Karen, and others. The resettlement happened in the United States from Myanmar, India, Thailand, and Malaysia through non immigration, immigration, asylum seekers, and refugees due to education, employment, family reunion, religious persecution, ethnic discrimination, and extreme poverty to seek greener pastures that end up pursuing liberty, happiness, and opportunity.

The fundamental cause of immigration trauma came from significant ethnicity, regions, and representative cities from the eight constituent ethnic nationalities, the tension between Burman and Chin, Kachin, Karen, Karenni, Mon, Rakhine, Shan, and others. The immigration trauma begins with ethnic and sociopolitical prejudice, socioeconomic and poverty as a result of cross-border migrants to other countries. In other word, it is the willingness of Myanmar to victimize themselves as human trafficking through the smugglers to immigrate as Burmese irregular migrants in India, Thailand, and Malaysia who are experiencing poverty, push to find it necessary to escape from discrimination of ethnic minority, religious persecution, human right abuses and have not been able to pay a substantial amount to smugglers and human traffickers. The cross-border migrants are the risk-takers with some properties to sell and are getting a lump sum from retirement. Or have a guarantor pay for the amount illegal immigrants need to pay to the smugglers and human traffickers or for legal immigration to India, Thailand, and Malaysia to register at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refuge and Asylees.

The Chin, Kachin, Karen, and other Christians have planted more than four hundred churches according to ethnographical dialect linguistic groups wherever they have resettled within the past two decades in the United States. As a result, the diaspora Myanmar churches contributed faith tradition, ethnic identity, languages, and diversity among deacons and elders who have prone to conflict through the confusion between the church, politics, and society that increase the cause of the church splits among existing Chin, Karen, Kachin, and others. Thus, deacons and elders of diaspora Myanmar churches have often demonstrated a lack of sound understanding of beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, core stressors, and relationships. It is unknown whether the deacons and elders of diaspora Myanmar churches within the District of Columbia Baptist Convention are overcoming immigration trauma through posttraumatic growth.

To overcome immigration trauma is essential for the health and wellness of diaspora Myanmar churches of District of Columbia Baptist Convention and beyond to have biblically qualified men and women serving in the offices of elders and deacons. It is unknown how the existing deacons and elders meet those standards or fail them to the degree that their immigration trauma and posttraumatic growth status are questionable. The urgency of diaspora Myanmar churches is to have biblical role model deacons and elders who have overcome immigration trauma and pursuing posttraumatic growth, active participants, and responding to the call to serve with the gifts of ministry and mental health and trauma healing and are accountable for the edification of the church and the glorification of God.

# Significance

The significance of this study is to expand knowledge on whether improved relationships and spiritual growth relate to overcoming symptoms of immigration trauma [that affect leadership qualifications addressed in background]. *If more* leaders, *deacons and elders were overcoming* immigration trauma through posttraumatic growth *then more spiritually mature leaders and better functioning leadership team among diaspora Myanmar churches*within the District of Columbia Baptist Convention. As a result, a growing leadership team will lead to church growth.

This study will contribute to the gap in research on overcoming immigration trauma by identifying posttraumatic growth among leaders including elders [ministers, trustees] and deacons from the diaspora Myanmar diaspora churches within the District of Columbia Baptist Convention and other multiethnic protestant churches.

# Research Question

exists, if any, immigration trauma and posttraumatic growth among leaders **[***deacons/elders*] *of diaspora Myanmar churches* within the District of Columbia Baptist Convention*?*

# Hypotheses

**HO1:** No statistically significant relationship exists between immigration trauma composite scores and posttraumatic growth composite scores among **l**eaders **[***deacons/elders*] *of diaspora Myanmar churches* within the District of Columbia Baptist Convention [USA]*.*

**Ha1:** A statistically significant relationship exists between immigration trauma composite scores and posttraumatic growth composite scores among leaders **[***deacons/elders*] *of diaspora Myanmar churches* within the District of Columbia Baptist Convention [USA]*.*

H01a: \_\_\_ \_\_\_ (two subscales)

H01b: \_\_\_ \_\_\_ (two subscales)

Plenty of opportunity to examine relationships between subscales as corollary hypotheses as well.

# Research Methodology

This study will utilize a quantitative correlational methodology in which hypotheses were derived from the research question and will be tested using statistical analysis.

# Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

This study will blend immigration trauma theory and posttraumatic growth theory to form a conceptual framework of post immigration growth.

The literature review revealed inadequate research on immigration trauma and posttraumatic growth among leaders [*deacons/elders*] of diaspora Myanmar churches within the District of Columbia Baptist Convention. This research correlates the theoretical framework about immigration trauma (Sternberg, Gregorich, Paul & Stewart, 2016) with the theoretical framework about post traumatic growth (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996) to create a new conceptual framework for immigration related posttraumatic growth.

# Instrumentation

Validated survey instrument that measures attitudes, knowledge, beliefs, or behaviors… (quantitative)

This study will utilize the Stress of Immigration Survey (SOIS) by (Sternberg, Gregorich, Paul & Stewart, 2016) which measures immigration trauma.

The five domains of the SOIS are limited English proficiency, lack of legal immigrant status, disadvantages in the workplace, yearning for family and home country, and cultural dissonance with the U.S. (Sternberg, Gregorich, Paul & Stewart, 2016).

This study will utilize the Post Traumatic Growth Inventory (PTGI) by (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996) which measures posttraumatic growth.

The five domains of the PTGI are relating to others, new possibilities, personal strength, spiritual change, and appreciation of life (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996).

# Research Design

Correlational: examine the relationship between two continuous variables within the same group from a validated instrument (quantitative, deductive)

This quantitative study will utilize a correlational design because it will examine the relationship between immigration trauma and posttraumatic growth among leaders [elders, deacons] from members of diaspora Myanmar churches within the District of Columbia Baptist Convention (sample).

# Population and Sampling

The target population for this study will be leaders [elders, and deacons] from members of diaspora Myanmar churches within the District of Columbia Baptist Convention.

Convenience sampling will be utilized to ensure participants meet the study criteria until a sample size (G Power)

Permission will be obtained from the Executive Director/Minister of the District of Columbia Baptist Convention.

# Data Analysis Plan (Research in Method Literature, hint descriptive statistics)

Analyze for what?

## Quantitative

This study will test data for normality and relevant assumptions of appropriate statistical procedures. If data do not meet assumptions for parametric procedures (results apply to the population), nonparametric procedures (results apply only to the sample) will be utilized.

This study will utilize Pearson’s *r* bivariate correlation (if parametric) or Spearman (if nonparametric) to test the hypotheses for statistically significant differences.

This study will utilize Pearson’s Product Moment of Correlation (parametric) or Spearman’s Rank Correlation (nonparametric) to test the hypotheses for statistically significant relationships.

This study will include post-hoc statistical procedures such as power and effect size to aid the interpretation of the results.