**EDUCATION, CHURCH, AND REHABILITATION AMID THE**

**INFLUX OF MIGRANTS IN SANDIEGO, CALIFORNIA**

**ASSIGNMENT NO. 2**

**ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT PROSPECTUS**

**SR 890-52: DSL (SPRING 2024)**

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**Background and Sociological Theory and Faith-Based Analysis**

**Assignment 2:**

• Research and write the Background of the Problem section.

• Choose and apply a sociological theory and at least one action research theorist to

understanding the problem.

• Analyze the problem using NT Wright's "7 universal human longings."

•  Relate these longings to the problem in a faith-based context.

**Research and Background of the Problem**

Despite the sovereign right to secure the international border, border security has become a divisive and emotionally charged topic in the United States (Smietana Jr., 2024), especially in Sandiego, California. Smietana rightly observes that this issue of migration is divisive and emotionally charged. The divisiveness can be quantified based on partisan politics between the conservatives and the liberals on the one hand, even between the liberals and the progressives on the other. A considerable faction on both sides believes the Sandiego border migration has broken and is significantly impaired.

Historical Context: Sandiego communities share a common bond in history, cultural traditions, folklore, and tribal affiliation with most migrants from Asia (Chinese, Indians, and Vietnamese) and South America (Mexico, Peru, Venezuela, Cuba, Argentina) and Europe dating back to their ancestral origins in the Americas in the 1400s and 1600s. As a country of emigration, Mexico’s economy is heavily dependent on remittances sent home by Mexicans abroad, mainly but not exclusively from the United States (Serrano et al., 2021), and thus, the narrative of migrant ‘heroism’ is deeply embedded in Mexico’s official discourse (Newland and Patrick Citation2004). Vicente Fox’s administration's (2000–2006) goal was to create a proactive binational agenda to reinforce the cooperation stated in NAFTA. Among the elements of negotiation was the role of Mexico in controlling irregular transit migration and reducing the porosity in its borders;- The plan established ‘the commitment to Washington by the Vicente Fox administration in reducing the flow of undocumented migrants (Campos-Delgado, 2024).

The questions academia and political pundits ask are how and why immigration suddenly got out of control in Sandiego city and the county environs like a mirage in such a short time. Could the financial returns to South Americans, Asians, and the Eastern European governments (where these migrants come from) be responsible for countries other than the US not controlling their borders? Perhaps yes or no. However, the study shows that the root causes for the influx of migrants from Eastern Europe, Asia, and South American nations to Sandiego are due to poverty and persecution in their countries. Moreover, the other compelling reason for their migration to Sandiego is to attain financial well-being for themselves and their families. Furthermore, despite the colossal sum of money they pay to travel, the ‘Coyote gangs take undue advantage of these migrants, asking them to pay illegal hefty fines for the right of passage through the border town with interest upon earning a living in Sandiego.

Churches will play comprehensive roles in education, training, care, and rehabilitation besides pastoral flock sensitization. Meanwhile, the NGOs, human rights advocates, and locals will be educated about cost-effective migration, which requires the migrants to have access to odd jobs with minimum incomes to enable them to participate in the economy and look forward to future jobs. They must start from somewhere with some humility and fortitude.

The Pilot Scheme, CRJP Conceptual Approach: These action research projects may sound complex and cumbersome in context and plan. However, the sociological practitioner will consult with some theorists’ principles to develop feasible strategies bathed in secular and divine precepts (OGS.Edu, 2024) to navigate the study project and develop solutions that primarily accommodate the migrants already in Sandiego. A pilot scheme will design a fast-track continuum of care, rehabilitation, and job placement referred to in this study as the ‘CRJP Conceptual approach’ to weaning the migrants off Sandiego City's care in 30 to 45 days of initial group housing, food, medication, skill-set orientation, and job placement. The migrants will have to bear the cost of the CRJP for 5 to 10 years, with monthly installment payments beginning in the second year of gainful job placement or employment. This enables Sandiego City Council or the stakeholders to revamp their financial budgets and extend such a continuum of care backed by running financial reserves. The essence is to simplify the interventions involving collaboration, sharing information, and identifying and accepting to work together on what needs to be done to manage the CRJP rehabilitation through gainful employment of the migrants in Sandiego City. It will not be the usual finger-pointing by local legislators and politicians as it is presently. Efforts will be made to utilize a framework of other social and political policy initiatives to address, minimize, and manage the overwhelming impact of migrants on the socio-economic life of the community in Sandiego City.

The specific objectives will include Assessing how Sandiego City Council can utilize a continual flow of migrant labor in agricultural and industrial sectors to fill in the gaps in jobs Americans are not willing to do, like farming, Tree logging, Piggery, Poultry, Industrial and local painting, pest control work, and auto mechanics. Others include bus driving, butchers in meat factories or shops, construction laborers, corrections officers, hand laborers, material movers, food servers, dumpster drivers and laborers, roofers, security guards, taxi drivers, etc. Americans shy away from these jobs because of obvious reasons.

* A simplified action research process will involve identifying what needs to change, such as migrant joblessness and homelessness in Sandiego.
* To reflect and evaluate whether the change is successful. Moreover, to intervene by acting to change them (Reichard, 2024).

**Sociological Theories**

The sociological imagination theory of C. Wright Mills will be helpful in the Sandiego City migration intervention. “Sociological imagination is described as the “vivid awareness of the relationship between personal experience and the wider society” (Nowaczyk-Basińska & Kiel, 2024, Abstract). C. Wright Mills further posits that the relationship between individual experiences and larger social forces is crucial. Social problems are greater than the sum of their parts. Societal issues must be understood within their historical context. Social issues should be researched, and activism is insufficient (Reichard et al., 2024; Wright, 2024). Therefore, the sociological practitioner must invite the stakeholders and the community in Sandiego for open discussions on how migration issues can be best addressed through dialogic communication and education. The sociological practitioner will observe the meeting agenda (designed by the practitioner), record it, and come up with reports on how the migrant labor force and workforce can be best utilized to fill the gaps of the depleting labor force in Sandiego City and county in agro-allied industries.

This seems to underscore the theoretical concept of Kurt Lewin’s participatory and interactive process of planning, action, observation/and fact-finding (OGS.edu, 2024). In essence, Durkheim’s structural functionalism theory is echoed by Wasilah (2023). In the structural-functional approach, society is seen as a collection of interrelated parts. In society, reciprocity and symbiotic relationships are mutualism. A system is dynamic when it strives towards equilibrium. The existence of social dysfunction or social differences can eventually be resolved by itself because of adaptation and institutionalization processes (Abstract). The additives in Wassilah’s statement on “ adaptation and institutionalization processes” refer to change and capacity building. Micinski, N. R., & Bourbeau, P. (2024) lend credence to this. Many states lack the standing capacity – housing, food, medical, or legal assistance – if thousands of people cross their border in one day.

**Analysis of the problem using NT Wright's "7 universal human longings**.

"N.T.Wright uses the Gospel of John to reveal how Christianity presents a compelling and relevant explanation for our world when specific secular situations do not have immediate solutions. The concept of Wright’s seven universal human longings fits squarely in analyzing migrant unresolved situations in Sandiego city and county. Wright argues that every worldview must explain seven “signposts,” indicators inherent to humanity: Justice, Spirituality,

Relationships, Beauty, Freedom, Truth, and Power**.** He contends that if we do not live up to these ideals, our societies and individual lives become unbalanced, creating anger and frustration—negative emotions that divide us from ourselves and God. Using the Gospel of John as his source, Wright shows how Christianity defines each signpost and illuminates why we often see them as "broken" and unattainable. These signposts constitute the puzzles that lie behind most of the news stories. They are underneath the challenges that politicians would love to resolve once and for all but never can.

The Intervention in the Context of Justice, Love, and Relationship**:** The sociological practitioner’s intervention similarly relates to “Wright’s seven (7) human longings” in some ways. Often, churches and non-governmental organizations exercise their Christian faith, equitable justice, and fairness through advocacy, creating interdimensional relationships even with unknown migrants borne out of a sense of duty to extend God’s goodwill. There is a shared love and the divine or even natural will to provide the homeless and hungry migrants with necessities like food, shelter, and clothing (Luke 6:38). Undoubtedly, Isiah 30:18-19 states, “For the Lord is God of Justice.” “God cares deeply about justice . Part of the Christian faith's hope is that God will not allow injustice to be the last word. That is a central element in the Gospel's good news” (Wright, 2024, Introduction). The hermeneutical interpretation is that the Lord expects fairness and equity in our dealings with strangers (migrants) to be our neighbors’ keepers. At the same time, mete out justice, discipline, and rewards when and where necessary.

The Quest for Beauty and Relationship**:** Wright further posits that the world promises so much, smiling alluringly, telling us how good things are going to be, but it never turns out like that, and even if it does for a while, there is a dark, mean truth to be faced soon enough that underlines skepticism. About 90% of migrants are misled. They believe making such a hazardous journey of about three thousand or more miles to Sandiego offers them greener pastures and the utopian life promised to them by coyote gangs, luring them into paying astronomical fees running into thousands of dollars per person to engage in dangerous journeys. Perhaps when they watch movies of celebrities with flashy cars and gorgeous-looking homes, their mindset is fixated on the horrendous-looking journeys to Sandiego. Sometimes, they are fortunate or not to even find shelter, food, or clothing on their back.

The advocacy for Freedom, Truth, and Power**:** Interestingly, it is apparent that some Christian organizations and Churches conduct social and legal advocacy in Sandiego to assist the flowing migrants in Sandiego with residential and medical rehabilitation, as well as helping them navigate the asylum court systems. Wright reminds us that “we all know that justice matters, but even in the best systems, mistakes are made, innocent people are convicted, criminals get away with it, and we start to distrust judges, juries, and the whole system (Introduction). Upon arrival at the Sandiego border, city, or county, the migrants soon discover they do not have the freedom and rights despite the asylum process they are meant to pass through. Some migrants are deported, and some become homeless, without jobs for months and even years to come. “For many people who seem to whistle in the dark (Wright, 2024), they are powerless, awestruck with the realities of life, with little or nowhere to turn. Gradually, the facts of the situation begin to unravel before their naked, gaping eyes.

**To Relate these longings to the problem in a faith-based context**

The Faith Context is an integral element of the Christian worldview that finds its credence in biblical and divine truth fashioned out of teaching and believing, training and study experiences. The Christian worldview unfolds a multidimensionality of the biblical “culture-that communicates religious and sociocultural connections- which shows the diverse conceptualization of  *CHI,* God” (Uwen & Ukaegbu, 2024, Abstract). Uwen, Ukaegbu, and Wright seem to relate to similar pathways.

The Wright’s Pathways and John 1:1 demonstrate the sources of succor and supernatural interventions: “In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” The scripture represents and unfolds the divine power, nature, and humanity of God.

The first pathway, Wright’s caution, is to look more closely at these seven signposts and to explore what their brokenness might tell us. That is, it is customary to acknowledge one's vulnerability in the presence of daunting challenges and to see the peace, tranquility, and normality that come from God and be strong at the same time to tackle the issues of migration in Sandiego City with open intention and sincerity, whether there are easy or hard roads ahead. The promises from God’s word, Malachi 3:10: “rebuking the devourer” and Deuteronomy 31:8: The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged” are pretty compelling emotional fortitudes or constructs turning the weak into one with strength and hope to tackle the Sandiego migration issues. ”ii)

The second pathway, according to Wright, is that the followers of Jesus of Nazareth - understand the Christian message; it does indeed “make sense” of our world - It offers sharp and often surprising insights into these questions, which all humans in all societies have seen as vital; in putting together the challenges of the world.” The scriptures, Romans 10:17 and James 2:1, portray the consistency of hearing and acting on the word of God. The divine wisdom derived must be strengthened by meditation on the word of God, including mentoring and coaching.

These virtues must be paired with a proactive determination to overcome the confronting and daunting challenges of the migration issues in Sandiego City. Modern migration issues can be challenging; people, even politicians and local legislators, often want to give up on migration. They even engage in trading antagonistic insults at themselves. Wright reminds us that even when things do not go according to your plan and the secular way, you must always seek the divine to remedy and face the challenges that come your way with some hope and dignity. Shepherd, A. (2024). Rightly states that Christian traditions have imagined creation, how the doctrine of creation informs and is informed by various dogmatic commitments, and how the doctrine of creation relates to a range of human concerns and activities (Abstract). Shepherd’s additive “various dogmatic commitments” underscore the relevance of leaders blending with secular and Christian worldview education and temperament to face and overcome issues such as the Sandiego migration challenges.

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