SR 890 Research Project Prospectus

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Professor

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**SR 890 Research Project Prospectus – Assignment 2**

**Assignment 2: Background and Sociological Theory -Faith-Based Analysis**

* Research and write the Background of the Problem section.
* Choose and apply a sociological theory and at least one action research theorist to understand the problem.
* Analyze the problem using NT Wright's 7 Universal human longings
* Relate these longings to the problem in a faith-based context.

**Introduction:**

The more than 1.5 million Nonprofit Organizations (NPOs) in the United States are vital resources to communities, often providing services for the marginalized, overlooked, and underserved. Unfortunately, although most, if not all, are doing good work, the average lifespan of an NPO is ten years (Klein & Hill, 2024). Oftentimes, NPOs' missions direct them to bring a higher level of justice to an unjust world. As stated by Wright, “ We all know justice matters, but we all find it difficult or sometimes downright impossible to achieve it” (Wright, 2020, p.17). Fortunately, NPOs work towards balancing the scales of societal justice. Perhaps using “action research,” as a method to address some of the identified unjust (social) problems, can be a strategy to promote “much needed” social change (Croneymr & Huge-Brodin, 2024).

**Nonprofits need a long-term sustainability mindset (approach) prior to going into business:**

Planning, as described by Hall & Tewdwr-Jones, “is a general activity, is the making of an orderly sequence to actions that will lead to the achievement of a stated goal or goals” (Hall & Tewdwr-Jones, 2019, p.3).

A Bible verse in the book of Luke speaks to planning and being prudent before embarking on a project. In Luke 14:28, Jesus said, “For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?

Many say that Benjamin Franklin coined the statement, “If you fail to plan, you should plan to fail.” Whether Mr. Franklin authored the statement or not, the bottom line is that it is a good one that NPOs should embrace and implement consistently.

As stated, the average lifespan of NPOs is ten years. Perhaps too many NPOs do not conduct enough research before venturing out and starting their work. According to the National Association of Nonprofit Organizations & Executives (which I am a member of), nonprofits ultimately fail because they should not have existed in the first place. That is a somewhat harsh but true statement.

**Utilizing Lewin’s Model to plan strategically:**

Again, research suggests (in reference to their average lifespan, Klein & Hill, 2024) that many nonprofits fail to understand the importance of developing and adjusting a long-term business/strategic sustainability plan.

In order to strive for long-term sustainability, the Boys & Girls Club of Coachella Valley, Lewin's approach is utilized throughout the strategic planning process. Once the group comes to a consensus, they unfreeze the way things were currently done, implement the new, and re-freeze the new in place. For example, when they wanted to adjust the mission statement because it was too wordy, the group decided to open the door to a robust, candid conversation, which led to the need for change. The change was made from a three-paragraph to a two-sentence mission statement. The new mission statement was voted on and replaced the previous one.

The discussion regarding the mission statement fell under the unfreeze category, the change made is classified under the change/new category, and replacing the previous mission statement satisfies the refreezing component.

**Nonprofits are essential elements of society, having a significant economic and social impact:**

More than 1.5 million NPOs in the United States are a major economic driving force, employing 12.3 million people. Unlike for-profit businesses, NPOs aim to improve communities (Carter, 2019). The roughly 300,000 religious-based NPOs and countless other NPOs that provide social services are making a dent in leveling the “societal justice playing field” by advocating voting and simply attempting to exercise goodwill to all of humankind. In the book of Acts (10:38), the Word of God says (in summation), “Jesus went around doing good.” Like Jesus, nonprofits aim to insert some good in an often not-so-good world.

The need for nonprofits to sustain and grow is increasing; therefore, an approach to gaining knowledge along with the skills to keep them afloat is imperative. Action research is needed now more than ever to help NPOs formulate a well-thought-out plan to be a viable part of society in the long haul and better address identified social service gaps.

**References**

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