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IMMIGRANT NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS:
HOW DO THEY SERVE THEIR CONSTITUENCIES?

by

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B.B.A., Mercer University, 2003

A Research Paper
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master of Public Administration

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RESEARCH PAPER APPROVAL

IMMIGRANT NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS: HOW DO THEY SERVE THEIR CONSTITUENCIES?

By

Gustavo A. Amaya-Castro

A Research Paper Submitted in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Public Administration

Approved by:

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May 10, 2011

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GUSTAVO A. AMAYA-CASTRO, for the Master of Public Administration degree, presented on May 10, 2011, at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.

TITLE: Immigrant non-profit organizations: how do they serve their constituencies?

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Adrian Velazquez

Immigration has become one of the most important topics in the United States. According to the Census Bureau (2011) Hispanics are officially the biggest minority group in the nation. This has a direct impact on new legislation and federal, state and local government decision making. The consequences of these actions directly influence the way public administrators do their job. To better understand the changes and its consequences, all these levels of government must understand the situation and all factors involved to the best of their capabilities. This research paper explores the services a group of Mexican immigrant non-profit organizations provide to their constituencies, the objective of the services, the target population, and possible consequences in their communities. The findings suggest that the majority of the services could have an integrating effect into the American society while other could be exclusive in nature. However, future research on this topic is needed to understand better what are the direct benefits, advantages, strengths and weaknesses of each particular service and each organization. The topic is of great important to comprehend the impact that these organizations have on the American culture.

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Introduction

We live in a very dynamic and interconnected society in which globalization and international trade has opened many doors allowing individuals everywhere to be aware of the lifestyles and opportunities that other countries offer. A new exodus includes entire families who relocate every year, immigrants settle in, and rural areas and big cities continuously evolve with global economic shifts. This does not stop at countries' borders. Countries like the United States receive hundreds of thousands of new immigrants every year (MPI, 2007).

Across the U.S., ethnic/immigrant non-profit organizations are helping these settlers to remember and commemorate their shared experiences, settle in the U.S., open new businesses, and become part of their communities. One of the main objectives of these organizations is to create a sense of community among immigrants, providing immigrants with the tools to integrate into the American culture, while respecting their origins and traditions. As such, immigrant non-profit organizations attempt to achieve this objective by simply providing a place where individuals can meet, organize ideas, as well receive legal and financial advisement on how to adapt to the American culture without losing their own.

These services could also have an exclusive effect among immigrant groups and the American society. This research shows some possible resistance, criticism and possible hidden agendas that many of these non-profits and their services have from the society. This provides a more complete picture of the services these NPOs provide.

The objective of this paper is to answer the question: "What types of services immigrant/ethnic non-profit organizations provide to their constituencies?" Even though

the number of immigrants in the U.S. continues to increase every year as well as the number of ethnic/immigrant non-profit organizations, very little is known about the way they operate, the services they offer, and their target population. This research paper concentrates on Mexican immigrant non-profit organizations, since Mexicans comprise the highest number of immigrants in the country today (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). Consequently, it aims to serve as a starting point of discussion into a topic that encompasses a multitude of people and ethnic/racial groups, but without intending to be representative of this issue.

Why Migration?

According to the United Nations (2010), most of the world's 6.1 billion people never cross a country's border. Individuals are most likely to spend their entire lives near their place of birth, leaving a small group of people to venture into foreign lands. Most who dare to cross international borders move only a short distance to neighboring countries. Since most people live in developing countries, most international migration occurs from one developing country to another (Martin, 2002). There are very few countries that anticipate and welcome migration, but five countries appear especially appealing to immigrants: the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Israel, and Canada, as they welcome an average of 1.3 million immigrants per year (Martin, 2002).

Better job opportunities, personal security, access to educational opportunities, health care, and stable political systems are the most common factors attracting immigrants to new and different cultures. These economic and non-economic factors have been present since the migration of Europeans to the new world in search of land, freedom, and other opportunities denied by elite groups or climate catastrophes in their

places of origin. Moreover, Central America's political and economic conditions have pushed millions of immigrants to look for a better life in the U.S.

Statistics show that economic reasons drive most of the thousands of Mexican immigrants to cross the border into the U.S. every year (Cornelius, 2004). According to Philip Martin (2002), the three categories that shape the economic reasons are the demand-pull, the supply-push and the network factors (see table A). Economic migrants move to the U.S. in search of a better job, a pre-arranged job, to make money to help their families, and to live a more comfortable life. Non-economic migrants may come to the U.S. to meet with family members or escape political or social unrest. Although immigrants can be divided in either economic or non-economic, in many cases the reality is that they are influenced by both.

Table A. Factors that encourage migration (Martin, 2002)

Factors Encouraging an Individual to Migrate / **Type of Migrant**	**Demand-Pull**	**Supply-Push**	**Network/Other**
Economic	Labor recruitment, guest workers	Un- or under-employment; low wages; e.g., farmers whose crops fail	Job and wage information flows; e.g., sons following fathers
Noneconomic	Family unification; e.g., family member join spouse	Flee war and persecution; e.g., displaced persons and refugees/asylum seekers	Communications; transportation; Assistance organizations; Desire for new experience/adventure

History of Immigration to the United States

Immigration is not a new factor in American history. Since the British Colonies occupied the new world, migration has been playing an important role in the formation of the country. According to Martin (2002), through history, migration to the U.S. has

occurred in waves reflecting political, economic and environmental issues forcing mostly Europeans out of their home lands. The first wave contained mostly British immigrants who composed about 60 percent of the new nation's population. Religious freedom and more liberal environmental conditions opened the door to thousands of Germans, Irish, Jews and Italians in search of a better life. The second important wave hit in the first half of the 1800s during the opening of the American Frontier. During this period, 40 percent of the immigrants came from Ireland in search of more forgiving weather. The third wave occurred between the late 1800s and early 1900s. The 1910 U.S. Census showed foreign-born inhabitants made up 15 percent of the U.S. population and around 24 percent of the labor force at the time.

War World I and War World II occurred between the third and fourth migration waves. As the United States sent thousands of men to war, the federal government implemented several programs to ensure enough labor to maintain the levels of production in the U.S. (Bickerton, 2001). In 1917, Congress enacted the Immigration and Nationality Act. The statute allowed certain classes of Mexican workers, including agricultural laborers, temporary legal employment in the United States. During WWII, a shortage of manpower and good relations between the two countries gave birth to some programs that allowed thousands of Mexican workers to take over labor positions necessary to the American economy (Bickerton, 2001). The Bracero Program was the most popular of these programs. Mexican labor temporarily assumed jobs left behind by men fighting the war.

The fourth wave, the most relevant for the purposes of this paper, began in the early 1960s. It represented an important increase in the number of Hispanic immigrants

moving to the U.S. With laws already in place, not all immigrants met the requirements to obtain a permit to enter the country legally and even fewer were allowed to stay. Although the laws significantly reduced the number of people moving to the U.S., by the 1970s the number of new Mexican immigrants was greater than all European immigrants combined (Martin, 2002). Due to political and economic conditions, most of the immigrants that came to the U.S. (authorized and unauthorized) originated in Mexico and other Central and South American Countries (Spencer, 2005). Naturally, many of these immigrants looking to establish themselves in their new home have organized to promote and preserve their values, traditions and culture as well.

Ethnic Non-Profit Organizations

One of the ways in which immigrants have organized to adapt to their host culture, while preserving their cultural identity, is through the creation of non-profit organizations. Ethnic non-profit organizations share the same structure and regulations with regular nonprofit organizations in the United States (USA.gov for Nonprofits, 2010). One of the most common types of ethnical nonprofit organizations in the U.S. are Mexican immigrant non-profit organizations (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, 2010).

Mexican immigrant non-profit organizations operate throughout the United States. Their main objective is to provide services to Mexican immigrants that improve their lifestyles and facilitate their integration into the American culture while working on maintaining their cultural roots (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, 2010). These services enable immigrants to increase their education and that usually involves learning the new language and culture. The objectives of these organizations include the

eradication of social exclusion and the embrace of social inclusion (Casa Ciudad de Mexico, 2010).

Legal Restrictions

A unique characteristic shared by many of these Mexican immigrant non-profit organizations is the composition of their funding sources. Since an important portion of their funding comes from Mexican local, state and/or federal government(s), these NPOs must also follow laws and regulations established by the Mexican government (Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores, 2011). Similar to their U.S. counterparts, these organizations must keep open books and must furnish detailed information about their expenses when requested. Their objective must be to provide services to groups of individuals and funds cannot support any type of terrorism (Rosentein, 2006).

The most important limitations on their activities (according to international laws and treaties) include private benefit and inurement, political campaign intervention, legislative activities, and terrorism (United Nations, 2010 and Chinkin, 2008). Any violation of American, Mexican, or international laws could shut down the organization. Each country also has limits on the amount of money that can be donated under these circumstances (Chayes & Chayes, 1995). As such, it is important to explore the range of services provided in American communities.

Framework of Analysis

This research started with the collection of secondary data regarding 300 Mexican ethnical nonprofit organizations based in the United States. These organizations operate in different cities nationwide. The information was freely available on each

organization's website, the United States Internal Revenue Service, and various Mexican government agencies.

Initial probes resulted in over 1000 U.S.-based organizations listed by Mexican government agencies (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, 2010). By cross-checking this list with registered IRS non-profits (501c3 and 900), the list narrowed to 300 using the IRS search tool (IRS.gov, 2011). Organizations considered as non-profits in Mexico but that had not filed the appropriate documentation with the IRS have been excluded from this analysis due to their inability to raise funds and provide services under a formal framework.

The information regarding these nonprofit organizations, their services, activities and objectives came from their independent websites and other official Mexican governmental agencies, such as the Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior. Additionally, each organization was independently analyzed and divided according to the range of services provided.

An Analysis of the Services Provided by Mexican Immigrant Non-Profit Organizations

Mexican immigrant non-profit organizations (also known in Spanish as "Clubes de Oriundos") provide different services to their communities. For the purpose of this research, these services will be divided into "Areas of Interest." The areas of interest are those subjects in which these organizations use their assets and expertise to provide help to Mexican immigrants living in the United States, however, given governing U.S. laws, those services are not exclusive to Mexican immigrants but are extensive to all other members of the host community if they wish to participate. Community members do not

have to be native Mexicans or of Mexican descent to receive services (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, 2011).

The quantity and quality of services provided vary according to the size and capital of each organization. In some cases, organizations work from satellite offices (personal space) from which they allocate funds and assets to temporarily rent a space to provide a specific service. By working from satellite offices they avoid personnel and other expenses while assisting the needs of the community. Most of these NPOs are new or located in smaller cities or towns with a less significant immigrant population.

On the other hand, some older and much larger organizations (like Casas Guanajuato) continuously provide services due to their access to a larger pool of resources and a much bigger immigrant network (Orozco & Lapointe, 2004). In many cases, the organizations own buildings with rooms, gyms, offices and athletic areas that allow them to provide a much wider range of services. These organizations consistently present well-defined organizational structures with at least a president, secretary, treasurer and a wide range of on call volunteers. Usually, it takes several years for an organization to reach this point.

The role of the volunteers also varies according to the organization. In most of them, all the personnel (including the president) volunteer their time to achieve the organizational mission. For some events, the volunteers provide not only services but goods such as food and a physical space for some events (Samuel, 2010). In the case of those organizations registered as a 501(c)(3) and that file an IRS Form 900, volunteers can consider some of these donations as tax exemptions (U.S. Internal Revenue Services, 2011). For the smaller NPOs, the lack of these forms does not allow the use of any

donation as a tax write-off. To avoid paying an onerous amount of taxes, they can only accept sporadic donations in the form of goods (food and building) or services (volunteers and professional services) to benefit the community.

The finances of these organizations are more complicated than non-ethnic non-profit organizations. Again, the nature, structure and mission of the organization determine the type of funding they receive from both local or foreign donations as well as the possibility of qualifying for grants. In the case of registered Mexican Immigrant NPOs, the limitation on local donations and its management is only restricted by IRS regulations. In some special cases, donations can come from foreign sources such as private parties or the Mexican government. In these cases, international laws and Mexican/American treaties will determine the conditions and regulations of these donations (Avdeyeva, 2007).

In some cases the services provided can benefit Mexicans living in the United States as well as their communities of origin in Mexico. A small group of these NPOs work together with different levels of the Mexican Governments to achieve these goals (Casa Guanajuato Santa Ana, 2010). Mexican immigrants in the U.S. typically provide resources to communities in Mexico to improve education, infrastructure, and general living and working conditions for the community members that stayed behind (Casa Guanajuato Santa Ana, 2010).

For the purposes of this paper and in order to provide insight into the activities and services that these ethnic non-profits offer, it is necessary to categorize them. As mentioned before, these areas of interest are: legal, cultural, community, family,

education, science, technology and healthcare. Moreover, these areas of interest are further explored through the different types of services provided.

Areas of interest

A) Legal

At any point, an immigrant may interact with various components of the American legal system. In these cases, guidance is important to navigate successfully.

1. Legal services

Providing legal advice serves to promote the honesty and hard work of Mexican Immigrants coming to the U.S. as well as protecting their rights (Casa Guanajuato, 2010). This is done by providing professional legal counsel and related services for matters relating to American Laws. The objective is to protect Mexican Immigrants' rights and help with any legal documentation through a network of lawyers (certified in the U.S.). In most cases the immigrant does not need to pay for advice since the nonprofit covers the fees or it is performed by volunteers. In the case where further assistance is necessary, the fees are significantly lower than using counsel outside the organization.

Some of the most common legal services these Mexican immigrant nonprofit organizations offer are: business registration, migration status advice, application for visas (extensions, work visas, permanent residency, among others), transportation of deceased relatives or friends back to Mexico, human and civil rights violations, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) forms, and legal advice about criminal charges (Centro Comunitario Mexicano de Austin, 2010). Only an average of 16 percent of these NPOs provides legal advice to Immigrants (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, 2010).

2. Civic Services

Providing civil services facilitates the integration of Mexican immigrant communities into American communities (Conexion Americas, 2011). These organizations work in a network with other Mexican immigrant nonprofit organizations to provide information and advice to immigrants on how to participate more actively in their communities. The objective is to eliminate isolation and encourage immigrants to interact with other members of the community immigrants and Americans alike (Casa Guanajuato Santa Ana, 2010).

Some of the most common services are: seminars, group discussions, social activities, and civic activities during which immigrants learn about American laws, culture, language and other basic information necessary for a successful integration into the American community (Conexion Americas, 2010). Only an average of 16 percent of these NPOs provide civic services to immigrants (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, 2010).

3. Human Rights

Providing human rights advice ensures that the basic human rights of immigrants are respected in the United States (Casa Guanajuato, 2010). This is done by communicating to all immigrants their rights and obligations within the American community and encouraging them to report any violations of those rights. These organizations work together with the Mexican embassies and consulates to take action in those cases. These NPOs report any violation to the embassy which is in charge to send a complaint letter to the U.S. State Department and in some cases to other international

organizations like Red Cross and Human Rights Watch. Only the American government has the jurisdiction to take action on these issues.

Some of the most common complaints involve rape, physical/mental abuse, slavery, prohibition of using a native language, and kidnapping (Tennessee Immigrant and Refuge Rights Coalition, 2010). Most of these happen to undocumented immigrants who are threatened with deportation if they report the abuse. This part of the issue keeps the majority of these abuses unreported and unaccounted for. Although most of these organizations could provide some form of guidance in the case of human rights violations, only an average of 20 percent of these NPOs provide permanent human rights services to immigrants (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, 2010).

4. Politics

Providing political services defend the political rights of Mexicans immigrants residing in the United States (NEXO Legal, 2011). These political rights do not apply to them in United States but exclusively in Mexico. These nonprofit organizations fight for Mexican immigrant rights to elect their political leaders in their home towns, states and at the federal level.

Some of the most common services they provide are lobbying and the use of international pressure to ensure the participation of all Mexicans in the U.S. in any major political election in their regions of origin (Centro Comunitario Mexicano de Austin, 2010). The political nature of these services limits the participation of many U.S. registered nonprofit organizations allowing only an average of 11 percent of these NPOs to provide these services (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, 2010).

B) Business

Providing business services promotes and assists Mexican immigrants with starting new businesses in the United States (Mexican-American Chamber of Commerce, 2011). This is done by providing Mexican business owners with financial help and advice related to their businesses. The funds can come from either financial institutions willing to help immigrants (they usually ask for a recognized cosigner) or private donations or loans at very low interest rates. The objective is to develop their communities in the United States.

These nonprofit organizations provide mediation services that allow potential business owners to meet the right people or institutions to obtain funding. Before they contact possible investors, these organizations ensure that the applicant meets the necessary requirements to get a loan or a donation. In the case of donations, the proper paperwork must be submitted and followed (Department of the treasure, 2011). Due to the professional logistics involved (business lawyers, bankers and investors), only an average of 19 percent of these organizations provide these services (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, 2010).

C) Culture

Providing cultural services helps to keep the Mexican culture alive in immigrants and their descendants (Organizacion Mexicana de Nueva Inglaterra, 2010). It also helps them to better understand and respect the American culture (Casa Guanajuato Santa Ana, 2011). These organizations host cultural events in which typical Mexican music, dances, poetry, painting, clothing and history remind immigrants of their origins while teaching new generations (born or raised in the U.S.) of their Mexican roots. The objective is to

create awareness of the Mexican identity not to force it on Americans or non-Mexicans (Ramirez, 2004).

Some of the most common services these nonprofit organizations provide are: classes (dancing, painting, Spanish, History, and others), concerts, cultural dances and gatherings (Casa Guanajuato Santa Ana, 2010). Although almost all these NPOs defend their Mexican roots, only an average of 25 percent of these organizations offers cultural services (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, 2010).

D) Community

Community services strengthen the individual's role in the larger group. These services encompass activities internal or external to the United States.

1. 3x1 Program and Remesas (Farming and Homeland Improvements)

Providing these services improve the living conditions of the native communities of Mexican Immigrants living in the United States (Centro Comunitario Mexicano DFW, 2010). This is done by coordinating efforts, funding and logistics between Federal, State and Local Governments with Mexican immigrants in the U.S. The objective of the 3x1 program is the integration of all levels of governments with those living in the United State to improve the living conditions and working opportunities in their native towns and cities (Secretaria de Desarrollo Social, 2011). The combination of the 3x1 program with the funds sent by immigrants to family members in Mexico (remesas) has significantly improved the living conditions in those towns participating in the program (Garcia Zamora, 2005). The improvement of living conditions in these communities has decreased the levels of out-migration of their residents (Garcia Zamora, 2005).

Some of the most common improvements these programs achieve in Mexican communities are: better schools, better farming material and equipment, city improvements (water supply, irrigation, drainage, and others), health care centers and roads (Pliego, 2004). Since only a few States in Mexico participate in the 3x1 program, an average of 18 percent of these NPOs provide this service (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, 2010).

2. Community Development

Providing community development services improve the quality of living in immigrant communities in the United States and/or Mexico. These services work in two ways. For improvements in their communities in the U.S., these NPOs work together with local governments to find community projects. After the selection of the project, these organizations consolidate groups of immigrants to carry the tasks necessary to complete it. For improvements in their communities in Mexico, these nonprofits work with immigrants and their remesas and all levels of Mexican government using the 3x1 program. The main objective is to make their communities more appealing and secure for all residents (immigrants or Americans).

Some of the most common services provided are cleaning of parks, streets, empty lots, covering visible graffiti in public and private areas, selling abandoned buildings to keep animals and people out, and mowing and cleaning green areas needed for family use (Casa Aztlan, 2011). Although community development is part of the objectives of most of these organizations, only an average of 57 percent of them provide continue services to improve their communities in the United States and/or Mexico (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, 2010).

3. Sports

Providing organized sports services promote discipline, teamwork and social integration of Mexican immigrants living in the United States. This is done by encouraging immigrants to play sports that require strict discipline, group participation, and interaction with other members of the community (both immigrants and Americans). The main objectives are to avoid drug usage, to eradicate self-exclusion or social isolation, to encourage teamwork, create discipline, encourage good habits, and to create a network of people that could facilitate the integration of the immigrant to the community.

Some of the most common sports these organizations sponsor are soccer, boxing and baseball (Federacion de Clubles Unidos de Zacatecanos en Illinois y el Medio Oeste, 2010). Due to higher requirements for infrastructure and/or logistics, only an average of 19 percent of these NPOs provides organized sport services to Mexican immigrants (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, 2010).

4. Housing

Providing housing services ensures good living conditions for Mexican immigrants living in the United States and their communities of origin in Mexico (Casa Chihuahua, 2009). Like other services, this has two parts. To ensure better living conditions for Mexican towns, these organizations work with Mexican authorities through the 3x1 program. The combination of this program with the remesas sent from the U.S. facilitates improvements in those towns. For the immigrants living in the U.S., these nonprofits use a network of volunteers and benefactors to locate safe and comfortable living quarters accessible to most immigrants (Federacion Union

Hidalguense, 2010). In some cases, these organizations will pay one or two months of rent to allow the immigrant to get on his or her feet. Only an average of 18 percent of these nonprofit organizations provide this type of services and they are mostly to immigrants living in the U.S. (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, 2010).

5. Clubes de Oriundos

These services provide a place for Mexican immigrants from the same region to gather and share opinions, ideas and personal experiences (Hidalgo, 2011). These types of organizations gave birth to the present Mexican immigrant nonprofits organizations in the United States. Historically, as the number of participants grew, bigger organizations started to provide services to other immigrants to facilitate their integration to the American society (Hall, 2006). In those communities with small numbers of immigrants, these organizations provide equal services to all no matter the city or region of origin.

Although most of these NPOs qualify as Clubs de Oriundos, only an average of 51 percent of these organizations use such a title due to the wide range of services provided to all kind of immigrants (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, 2010).

E) Family

Family in the Mexican culture is important (Alesina & Giuliano, 2010). To ensure that family remains a high priority, these organizations offer services to immigrants that strengthen the family unit (Casa Guanajuato, 2010).

1. Gender and Family

Providing family services promotes and facilitates the integration and participation of immigrant families in their communities. This is done by engaging the

entire family in community events. The objective is for all family members to find interest in their communities. The more participation the greater benefit for the community.

Some of the most common services are family community rallies open to all immigrants or Americans (Una Mano Amiga Oriundos de Michoacan, 2010). These events allow families to meet other members of their communities and learn their views and opinions. Since several of the other services these organizations provide overlap with this objective, only an average of 6 percent of these NPOs provides permanent gender and family services (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, 2010).

2. Elderly Services

Providing elderly services ensures that senior immigrants receive the same assistance that younger groups get (Casa Guanajuato Dallas, 2010). Many of the services provided to other age groups also applied to senior immigrants with little to no adjustment. The objective is to ensure that the physical and mental integrity of this age group is taken into consideration.

Some of the special services provided to these groups are special movie nights, dances and social gatherings (Casa Guanajuato Santa Ana, 2010). Since they already benefit from most of the services provided by these nonprofit organizations, only an average of 11 percent of these NPOs provides special services to accommodate this age group (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, 2010).

3. Youth

Providing youth services improve the development of immigrant youth as well as their involvement in community matters (Mexican Dance Assembly, 2011). This is done

by organizing events that directly engage the youth on educational, ethical, developmental activities, group exercises as well as sports. The objective is to better prepare immigrant youth to become active and proactive members of their communities. These young members can maintain their Mexican roots while interacting and respecting the American culture.

Some of the most common services are sport tournaments, history classes, English/Spanish classes, and inter-organizational meetings where young people from different communities interact for a period of time (Casa Guanajuato Dallas, Casa Guanajuato Santa Ana, 2010). Only an average of 12 percent of these Mexican immigrant nonprofit organizations provide continues youth services (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, 2010).

F) Education

Education is a solution to poverty (Club Durango en Chicago, 2010). These services promote knowledge as a tool for advancement (Casa Guanajuato Santa Ana, 2010).

1. Educational services

Providing educational services increases the level of knowledge and skills of immigrants living in the United States (Melendez & Montero, 2007). This is done by providing programs, seminars, classes and online education to those immigrants who want to better themselves. Education is one of the keys to success (Robertson, 1997). The objective is to provide the right education for immigrants who want better career opportunities in the United States but lack the funds necessary to attend American Schools or Universities. Educational programs allow immigrants to find new opportunities that were otherwise undetectable to narrowed and uneducated minds.

These organizations provide educational services through online programs with certified universities both in the U.S. and Mexico, classroom classes and tutorials for those immigrants who want to obtain a GED, English classes for those immigrants who only speak Spanish, and tutoring for immigrants who need help with basic courses (like Math, chemistry and biology) (Casa Guanajuato Santa Ana, 2010). The logistics necessary to offer these types of services only allow an average of 36 percent of these NPOs to provide them (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, 2010).

2. Research & Academic

Providing research and academic services encourage Mexican immigrants to increase their education (Masters and PHDs) and to engage in research to better understand immigrant communities and their needs (GALEO, 2009). This is done by networks of nonprofit organizations working together with current students in important universities in the United States (such as MIT). Studies performed on Mexican immigration allow governments to better understand the phenomenon and modify laws and regulations according to the reality of the issue. These nonprofits typically contain small numbers of volunteers who are directly involved in academia or are current Masters or PHDs students (ClubMex, 2011).

These organizations provide tutorials and advice on how to apply to graduate programs and the potential research to improve immigrant community living (Asociacion de Calentanos en Dallas, 2010). Due to the highly educated nature of its members, only an average of 10 percent of these NPOs provides research and academic services (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, 2010).

3. Leadership Training

Providing leadership advice provides the necessary tools for immigrants to become future leaders in their communities (Casa Guanajuato Dallas, 2010). This is done by providing educational opportunities, skill development, and a better understanding of American communities including its laws, traditions and common behaviors. The objectives are not only the creation of future leaders of immigrant communities but also leaders that facilitate the integration of both the American and the Mexican culture.

Some of the most common services these organizations provide are classes (management, English, and others), seminars with successful members of the community, and the understanding of the American laws (Casa Guanajuato Garland, 2010). Only an average of 23 percent of these NPOs provide leadership development services (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, 2010).

G) Science & Technology

Providing science and technology services promote awareness among immigrants on the technical advantages available to Mexican immigrants in the United States. These organizations work with highly-educated Mexican students at important universities (such as MIT), professionals in advertisement and other technologies whose goal it is to inform the Mexican population in the U.S. of all the technological and scientific tools available to them. In many cases these NPOs make public the important achievements of Mexican immigrants to encourage others to prosper as well. Much of this information is delivered by e-mail, flyers, brochures, and magazines in both English and Spanish (Club mendoza de Arizona, 2010). Due to the highly technical nature of most of this information and the high levels of education necessary to utilize it, only an average of 7

percent of these NPOs provide this service (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, 2010).

H) Health Care

Providing health care services and advice promotes policies that facilitate access to health services for immigrants of all age groups. This is done by ensuring all immigrants know where to go or whom to consult when it comes to health related issues, as well as facilitate their access to the health care system. The main objective is to enlighten policy makers of the needs of the immigrant community so they pass laws that ensure access to all members of the community immigrants and locals alike (Hispanic Health Coalition of Georgia).

The most common service these organizations provide are by hosting volunteer doctors and nurses to answer basic questions related to health issues (Casa Chihuahua Community Alliance, 2010). When lobbying for health care law changes, only a few of these nonprofit organizations get involved. Only an average of 27 percent of these organizations provide this basic healthcare assistance service and a much smaller but unknown percentage fights for restructure of the American Health Care System (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, 2010).

Social and Political Conflict

The presence of these immigrant ethnic non-profit organizations and their services are at the center of controversy in many cities in the United States (Jefferson & Belgian, 1996). Many members of the American society (politicians and regular citizens alike) question what the real intentions behind their services are, their real effect, and how policy and/or political processes could be influenced by them. If these organizations aim

to help undocumented immigrants to integrate to their communities, and in many cases even start their own business in the U.S, could this not send a message to other immigrants to enter the country illegally since these organizations will help them to transition into the host culture? (Federacion for American Immigration Reform, 2011). **Correct the name of this last source throughout, shouldn't it be "Federation"?** This is a common argument regarding how any help given to undocumented immigrants in the United States could have a negative effect on public perception of immigration patterns. It is in this moment when immigration laws most maintain a controlled environment.

Surveys show that most Americans disagree with current immigration policies **(include percentage or comments on how your source reaches this conclusion)** and agree that laws against undocumented immigration need to be enforced **(include percentage or comments on how your source reaches this conclusion)** (Federacion for American Immigration Reform, 2011). Carens (2006) explained that some politicians use this public concern to push legislation to control this issue, and where congressional legislation is available, there are inevitably lobbyists trying to shape the content and influence the outcome. Normally, undocumented immigrants do not have the tools to influence legislation on their own (Federacion for American Immigration Reform, 2011).

It is here where existing immigrant non-profit organizations (that received funding from other countries) play an important role. These nonprofits educate all immigrants to stand up and fight for change in their favor, and use networking as a tool to combine efforts (Jefferson & Belgian, 1996). Networks of immigrants (documented and undocumented) can organize and lobby for immigration changes better than individuals.

According to lobbying reports, 521 corporations, trade associations, business groups, labor organizations, government entities, and nonprofit organizations engaged in lobbying on immigration-related legislation (Office of the Clerk, 2011). Just two percent of these organizations promoted positions supporting the implementation of existing immigration laws, controlling the approval of work visas, and reducing levels of immigration. The residual 98 percent of these groups had a direct financial or political interest in reducing immigration enforcement, and/or expansion of existing immigration quotas (Carens, 2006). Collectively, these organizations and associations reported spending hundreds of millions of dollars lobbying Congress. Although it is very difficult to determine the sum spent lobbying on immigration legislation, it is clear that all of the lobbying money expended by these groups must bring some benefit to themselves. Especially if some of the funding was generated by foreign governments.

One of the best known cases of immigrant lobbying influencing U.S. Policy is the case of the recently blocked Arizona Immigration Law (known as SB 1070). In an alleged effort to control undocumented immigration in the state, Governor Jan Brewer of Arizona signed the nation's roughest bill on this issue into law. The declared intention was not to harass all immigrants, but to identify, prosecute, and deport those who did not have the right documentation to be in the United States. The issue rapidly created two sides. One side supported the law while the other fought it under a discrimination flag. In many cities in the country, thousands of citizens took to the streets in support to this law (Miller, 2010). According to politicians like Republican Ruthie Hendrycks (2010), the issue of undocumented immigration and addressing it is overdue and since the federal

government is not acting on the matter, it is the job of state governments to gain control once and for all (Miller, 2010).

The other side is represented by immigrants of many nationalities. They called the law "a tool for harassment and ethnic discrimination" (Santana, 2011). **Include page number for this quotation** Both sides lobby to support their views and rights. In a final decision, the Supreme Court found that many aspects of the law were unconstitutional and blocked those areas from the final documents (Riccardi & Gorman, 2010). It would be interesting if, and to what extent, immigrant non-profit organizations and their services influence this and other American policies to benefit their own cause.

Conclusions

The analysis performed on a group of 300 Mexican immigrant non-profit organizations and the services they provide to immigrants in the United States attempts to provide a descriptive framework for analysis. The services aim to promote social integrating effects, but such an assertion requires further testing. First, Legal Services (Civic Services, Human Rights, Politics, Business Advice, and legal Advice) allow immigrants to comprehend American Laws better as well as their human rights, civil rights and obligations. Some of the goals regarding knowledge and respect for the law could include: maintaining or obtaining a legal status in the country, paying tickets, and even filing tax returns. On the other hand, knowing their rights and responsibilities as human beings and members of the community may ameliorate some of their fears of the unknown. This new knowledge may act as catalyst to encourage immigrants to become active members of their communities.

These legal services also help immigrants who try to open a new business in the United States. Those who open businesses, give back to their communities through participation in the economy. The benefits they provide range from the creation of new jobs to contributing to the tax base. Business owners also show the tendency to become part of other groups like their local chamber of commerce. This works as a strong incentive to integrate into their communities.

Second, cultural services not only keep alive old traditions from Mexico, but create a sense of respect and understanding of the American culture. Especially in the case of those who were born or raised in the United Sates with Mexican ancestry, allows them to keep traditions alive and acknowledge the best of both cultures. The more knowledge available to the members of any society, the lower the incidents of bias and unfounded discrimination against Mexican immigrants (Casa Guanajuato, 2010).

Third, Community services (Community Development, Sports, and Housing) encourage the involvement of Mexican immigrants in the improvement of the community living conditions. This is a key element to social integration (Casa Guanajuato Santa Ana, 2010). The services work as an incentive for immigrants to use their time and money to build, repair, or fix important areas in their communities. Some of these programs supplement the services provided by local government benefitting the life of all residents (immigrant and non-immigrants alike). The services also ensure that immigrants live in conditions that meet the local laws and regulations. By ensuring that all immigrants have a decent place to live, the services target overcrowded living quarters, homelessness, and abuse by landlords. This service advocates for immigrants' needs while abiding by the American regulations.

These community programs also encourage team sports or athletic activities among members of one or several communities. The objectives are discipline and relaxation but it also influences their level of integration with other community members. Immigrants learn to integrate through teamwork and competition.

Fourth, Family Services (Gender and Family Services, Youth and Elderly Services) engage all members of the family in social events. Activities work as an integrator in which common grounds attract diverse individuals that share the same interests (Casas Guanajuato, 2011). This exposure adds to a knowledge base on which to draw when making future decisions.

Fifth, Science & Technology services increase access and understanding of available technological advances. Those immigrants who know and understand the tools available for their success, often become important members of their communities. A web of networks allows them to communicate in more effective and efficient ways with family members and friends living beyond U.S. borders.

Sixth, Education (Educational Services, Research & Academic, and Leadership Training) provides immigrants with more tools to succeed in their communities. The higher the level of education, the more the immigrant has to offer to American Society. These services embrace English as a key element. Those who are bilingual become important assets to the entire community. Once the language is mastered, further opportunities arise. College degrees, graduate degrees, and research opportunities offer another avenue for increased social integration for both cultures. Well-educated and motivated immigrants often become great leaders in their communities.

However, not every action or activity could result in positive integration mechanisms. This research shows that a few of these services could foster the opposite effects. First, 3x1 program and remittances (homeland improvements) encourage immigrants in the United States to send money back to Mexico to improve living conditions in towns outside of the U.S., sometime at the expense of their own living conditions. Many Americans dislike the idea that this money is leaving the U.S. and is benefitting another country (Dizikes, 2010). Possible justifications for this behavior revolve around the furtive nature of undocumented immigration and the lack of security in their U.S. living conditions. As immigrants fear deportation, they may rather concentrate on creating better living environments in case they need to go back.

Second, Clubes de Oriundos offer individuals from the same areas the opportunity to gather and socialize. These actions could easily raise a self-isolation argument. Only individuals from a specific region in Mexico can be part of the group, reinforcing the stereotype that Mexicans only socialize with other Mexicans. Although the intentions are to gather individuals with common interests, the effect on the American perspective could easily be misinterpreted.

Third, NPOs often act as mediators between healthcare providers and immigrants. This is to ensure that immigrants know what to do and where to go in the case of a health emergency. Healthy individuals are capable of producing more for their societies. But, a small group of these organizations use political pressure to amend American laws allowing all immigrants (documented and undocumented alike) access to the entire American health care system. This specific service could represent a way of forcing non-contributing individuals into the American system.

Implications for the Future of this Research

This research provides the basis for more detailed future investigations. This analysis shows the most basic services and benefits that Mexican non-profit organizations provide to their communities in the United States and how these services help immigrants integrate into the American culture. Future research on this topic is needed to understand better what are the direct benefits, advantages, strengths and weaknesses of each particular service and each organization. The topic is of great important to comprehend the impact that these organizations have on the American culture.

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