

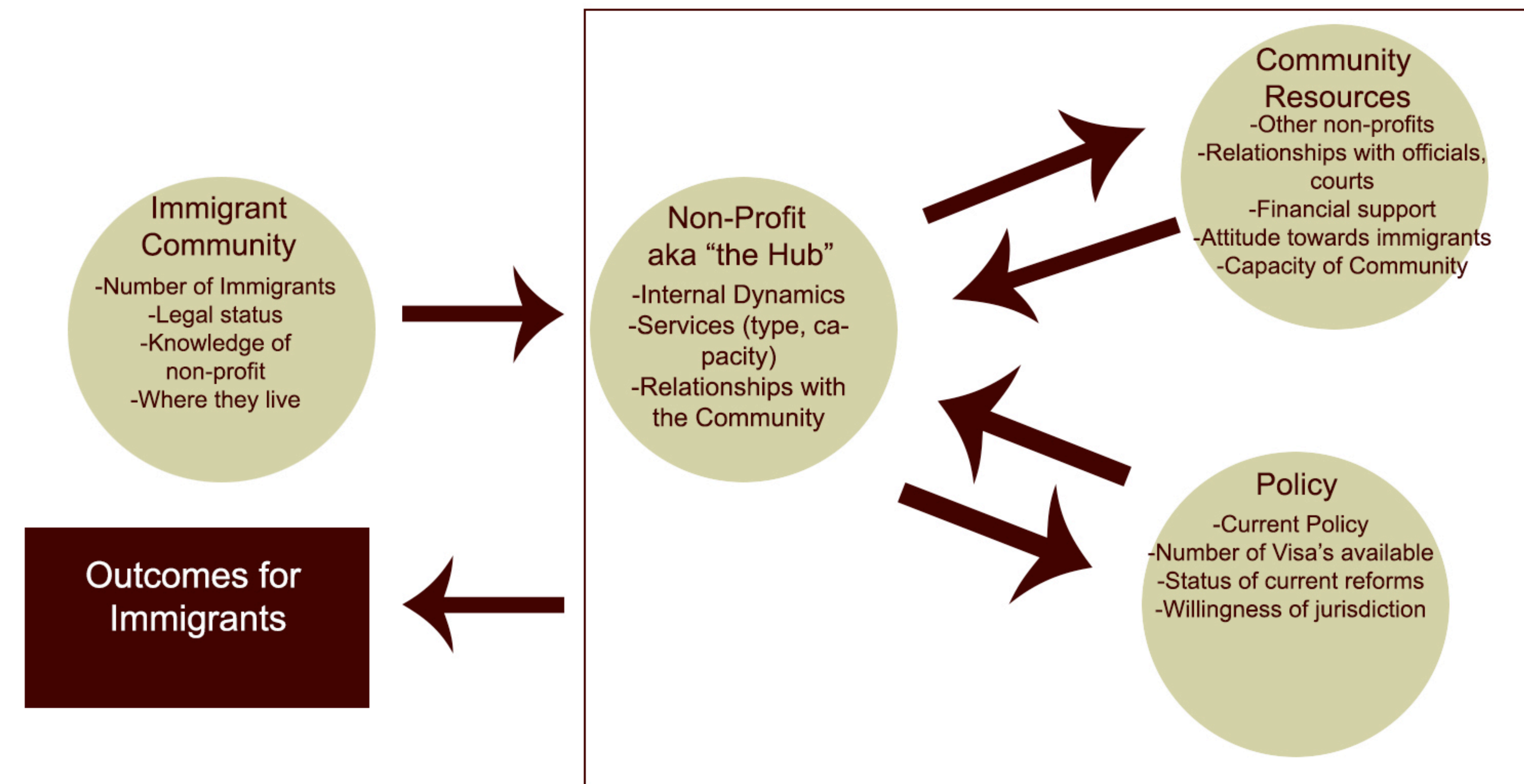
INTERACTIONS WITH THE OUTSIDE: EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN A NON-PROFIT, IMMIGRANTS, THE COMMUNITY, AND POLICY IN THE WASHINGTON D.C. METRO AREA



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Abstract

Past research has shown that the quantity and quality of resources available for immigrants in a destination city have serious implications for an immigrant's overall success. Previous research though, has failed to look at resources for immigrants in the context of a currently growing urban setting. It has also failed to look at resources through the lens of the non-profit and their relationship to the community. Consequently, this research looks at the interaction between a non-profit that serves low-income immigrants, the community, current immigration policy, and the immigrant population to understand the impact of this system on the growing Hispanic immigrant population in the DC metropolitan area. Over a period of 3 months the external and internal dynamics of the non-profit were observed through participant observation and through qualitative interviews. From this, the effectiveness of the current resource framework is assessed and the underlying processes involved in resource mobilization are analyzed. The implications of this system for the Hispanic immigrant population are discussed along with areas for future research.



Background Information

- Hispanic immigrants both those who are documented, and those who are undocumented have grown substantially in number over the last 10 years
- Consequently, it is important to examine how their unique needs are being met by the community.

	2000	2010	Percentage Change in Population
Documented Hispanic Immigrants (Entire U.S.)	14,100,000	18,800,000	33.3% increase
Washington D.C. of city population	24,769 (4.3 %)	30,167 (6.8 %)	21.8% increase
Undocumented Hispanic Immigrants (Entire U.S.)	8,400,000	11.2 million	27.1% increase
Washington D.C. of city population	20,000 (3.4% of city population)	25,000 (4.5% of city population)	25% increase

Sources: (Pew Hispanic Research Center, 2012; U.S. Census Bureau, 2000, 2011)

Research Questions

How do non-profits mobilize their resources to meet the needs of the Hispanic immigrant population and how effective are these strategies?

- What processes are involved in the mobilization of community resources for the Hispanic immigrant population?
- How do non-profits, community resources (funding, support, existing structures), policy, and the immigrant population interact to affect the effectiveness of the resource network?

Methodology

- Participant Observation
- Qualitative Interviews with Staff Members, Interns, and Volunteers at the non-profit
- Analyzation of other materials from the non-profit and community
- Use of Grounded Theory to analyze the final data

Data and Analysis

Internal Organizational Dynamics:

- Funding (model, sources [jurisdiction and type], what is done with it)
- Staff's Qualification/Background
- Services they provide
- Work environment
- Capacity of each department
- Relationships with other non-profits (actual agreement vs. reality)
- "non-profit" model
- The "hub"

Scope of Policy:

- What local jurisdictions permit
- Local, State, and National laws
- Application to an individual's situation
- Future Policy and how this affects immigrant communities

Community Resources:

- Knowledge, Support, and Reputation of Organization
- Capacity of area (i.e. Housing, Legal, etc.)
- Attitude of Community
- The non-profit environment
- Willingness of other non-profits
- Metro-area "councils"

Immigrant Population:

- Immediate needs vs. Long term needs
- Reputation of non-profit
- Where immigrants live

Conclusions

- How effective a non-profit can be at meeting the needs of their Hispanic immigrant population is not only dependent upon their internal dynamics, but is directly related to how well policy and the community mobilizes resources.
- This particular non-profit employed specific strategies to mobilize resources internally and strengthen external resources, which gave them an advantage over other organizations in the region.

Effective Mobilization

- Community Cooperation through formal channels
- Inclusive, open discussion of how to best allocate internal resources
- Relationships with local government officials and courts
- Policy informed by the experiences of non-profits

Ineffective Mobilization

- Conflicts with other non-profits due to lack of follow through with MOU's
- Geographical funding restrictions
- Lack of infrastructure (housing, non-profit capabilities, legal)
- Government inefficiency
- Ineffective funding strategies or Board of Directors

References

George Mason University Center for Regional Analysis. 2011. "Update from the 2010 Census: Population Change in the Washington DC Metropolitan Area" CRA Census Series. Retrieved September 20, 2012

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