Assessing the Scope of Immigrant Organizations: Official Undercounts and Actual Underrepresentation

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Abstract

We examine the official scope and actual coverage of immigrant civil society in seven California cities using a widely employed 501(c)3 database. First, we code immigrant organizations in official data and compare their number and proportion with population statistics; we find substantially fewer immigrant organizations than we would expect. Second, we measure the organizational undercount of immigrant civil society by calculating the number of publicly present immigrant organizations not captured in official data. We do this for four immigrant-origin communities (Indian, Mexican, Portuguese, and Vietnamese) using 160 key informant interviews and extensive examination of directories and media (ethnic and mainstream). We find a notable undercount, which varies by city and immigrant group. Considering both underrepresentation and undercounts, Mexican-origin organizations seem at a particular disadvantage. Our findings carry important implications for resource inequalities and advocacy capacity in minority communities, underscoring the need for further research on the vitality of immigrant civil society.

Keywords

civil society, immigrant, 501(c)3 organizations, undercount, civic inequality

Introduction

Like the roles they fulfill for native-born citizens, nonprofit organizations offer immigrants important human, social, and legal services (Cordero-Guzmán, 2005; LaFrance

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Associates, 2005; Marwell, 2007; Valenzuela, 2006). They can also serve as advocates to government agencies and wider society and act as a training ground for civic and political engagement (Bloemraad, 2006; de Graauw, 2008; Gleeson, 2008; Ramakrishan & Bloemraad, 2008a). These service and advocacy functions take on particular importance as the United States undergoes a new surge in its immigrant population. In 1970, less than 5% of U.S. residents were foreign-born; by 2010, it was 13%, or 40 million people (Migration Policy Institute, 2008; U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). Often immigrants' cultural, religious, or language needs are not met by existing groups, a situation aggravated by many immigrants' lack of citizenship or permanent legal status (Ramakrishnan & Bloemraad, 2008a).[1] As during the last wave of mass migration from 1880 to 1924, which spurred Hull House and similar civil society groups, contemporary migration flows have led to the establishment of new immigrant-oriented voluntary and nonprofit organizations (Cortés 1998, Cortés, Díaz & Ramos, 1999).

Yet despite this growth, a small, but mounting body of evidence indicates troubling underparticipation in, and underrepresentation of, immigrants in the third sector. Immigrant organizations make up a much smaller proportion of all nonprofit groups in six California communities studied by Ramakrishnan and Bloemraad (2008b) than their presence in the general population would suggest. Across California, Asian Americans and Latinos—the two minority groups with the highest percentage of foreign born, 65% and 41%, respectively—are significantly underrepresented on the boards or in the top executive positions of nonprofit organizations (De Vita, Roeger, & Niedzwiecki, 2009), a finding repeated in studies of selected cities (Bell, Moyers, & Wolfred, 2006; Hung, 2007) and in a nationally representative survey of nonprofits (Ostrower, 2007). If mainstream organizations were including immigrants in their membership and services, irrespective of who runs the organization, this imbalance would be less problematic. However, recent research suggests that many mainstream groups actively or passively keep out immigrants (Aptekar, 2008; Jones-Correa, 2005; Ramakrishan & Bloemraad, 2008a), while survey data on organizational membership indicates that immigrants appear less likely to belong to voluntary associations than U.S.-born citizens (Ramakrishan & Viramontes, 2006; Sundeen et al., 2009).

As researchers evaluate why immigrant organizations may be less numerous, or why immigrants' membership may be lower, a key issue is how scholars identify and count immigrant organizations. For example, conventional data sources often fail to capture certain types of immigrant organizations, especially those involved in transnational activities (Cortés 1998; Ramakrishan & Viramontes, 2006). Are there truly fewer immigrant organizations, or are they undercounted by standard techniques, rendering them invisible to outsiders?

More broadly, how should we evaluate organizational inequality in the nonprofit sector? Most studies concerned with diversity and the funding, activities, and leadership of nonprofit organizations employ standard ethnoracial minority categories, such as African American, Latino, and Asian American (Bell et al., 2006; De Vita et al., 2009; González-Rivera, Donnell, Briones, & Werblin, 2008; Hung, 2007). Such

studies shine a spotlight on inequalities, but they fail to fully acknowledge that the particular concerns of immigrants—around legal status, linguistic isolation, access to benefits and services, and settlement needs—are often distinct from those of native-born minority groups (Cordero-Guzmán, 2005; de Graauw, 2008; Valenzuela, 2006). This study focuses specifically on immigrant-origin nonprofits, which we define as organizations with a mission or activities that address the aspirations or problems of people with similar immigrant origins.[2] To examine inequality in the third sector, we examine both demographic underrepresentation—the number and proportion of immigrant organizations relative to the local population—and organizational under-counts within official data.

Many nonprofit studies rely on data sets compiled by institutions such as the National Center for Charitable Statistics (NCCS) from IRS registration data (National Center for Charitable Statistics, 2008). These data provide an important description of the universe of established organizations and facilitate geographic and temporal comparisons, benefits that we exploit to examine underrepresentation of immigrant organizations among official nonprofits.

However, official sources typically produce an undercount (Grønbjerg, 2002). Small and informal organizations are commonly overlooked (Colwell, 1997; Toepler, 2003). The existing literature has examined variation in nonprofit undercounts across communities (Grønbjerg & Paarlberg, 2001) and by nonprofit activity (Colwell, 1997; Grønbjerg, 1990), but to our knowledge, researchers have not evaluated organizational undercounts by the characteristics of the clients or members of such organizations. We consequently develop a methodology and analysis of undercounts among immigrant organizations in four national-origin communities in Silicon Valley, a region with the highest percentage of foreign-born residents in California and with one of the largest Asian-origin populations in the United States (Castellanos, 2009). We first craft an estimate of these organizations by focusing on formally registered nonprofits. Then, through an analysis of additional databases and directories, coupled with information from in-depth interviews with 113 community leaders and 47 key informants in our target cities, we examine the organizational undercount for the Indian, Mexican, Portuguese, and Vietnamese immigrant-origin communities. We attempt to assess the complete universe of publicly present nonprofit organizations for our target populations, by which we mean all groups known to local officials, to ethnic or mainstream media, or to key leaders and volunteers working in the nonprofit sector. We consider whether particular immigrant communities are especially prone to being undercounted, and whether undercount patterns vary by city size or organizational type.

In what follows, we first provide a discussion of the literature on measuring and evaluating nonprofit underrepresentation and undercounts. We then present our methodology, underscoring the innovations and limitations of this approach. Three major findings emerge. First, organizational inequality is high among officially registered 501(c)3 nonprofits: a much lower proportion of nonprofits are oriented to immigrant communities than we might expect given immigrants' demographic weight. Second, official data provide an incomplete picture of immigrant-origin nonprofits, missing a

half to a third of publicly present immigrant organizations. Finally, we find variation between migrant groups and across different types of cities and organizations. Considering both demographic underrepresentation and organizational undercounts, the Mexican-origin community appears to face particular inequalities within the third sector.

These findings provide important data on the understudied question of immigrant nonprofit organizing. We consider these empirical findings an important baseline for future nonprofit research. Our findings also carry significant implications for research on immigrants' civic incorporation. Underestimating the vitality of the immigrant non-profit sector may lead us to misunderstand issues critical to immigrant-origin com-munities, to misjudge the mobilization potential of immigrant organizations, as occurred most dramatically in the 2006 immigrant rights protests, (Voss & Bloemraad, 2011; Wang & Winn, 2006), as well as in Barack Obama's campaign for the Presidency, and to reinforce perceptions of political apathy or silence (Huntington, 2004). It might also fuel funding inequities in the nonprofit sector, which often privilege official 501(c)3 organizations, and perpetuate the dominance of mainstream organizations in areas ranging from cultural production to advocacy in public policy debates. This is particularly problematic since immigration is reshaping American society, a transfor-mation we would expect to see reshaping the U.S. nonprofit sector as well.

Evaluating Underrepresentation and the Undercount: Existing Literature

The building blocks for many quantitative studies of the third sector are data from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The benefits of IRS data are well-documented: much of the information on the form is mandatory, and thus more consistent than other sources; the standard format required of all filers changes little from year to year; the Form 990 (which gathers financial data from organizations) encourages more detailed reporting than other forms, such as audit statements; and since the law requires annual filing, longitudinal studies are possible, although data for the early years may be of lesser quality (Froelich, Knoepfle, & Pollak, 2000; Lampkin & Boris, 2002). Since these are data filed with a federal agency, IRS data also provide a way to compare organizations across the United States, which is not possible with data from state agencies that register or incorporate nonprofits. For all of these reasons, official data are a good starting point to evaluate demographic underrepresentation.

Despite these benefits, IRS data also present several drawbacks for compiling an accurate count of third sector vitality. While all private foundations must file a Form 990-PF annually regardless of size, religious organizations and nonprofits with less than US$25,000 in revenues are not required to do so. IRS listings thus typically leave out religious or small groups as well as those that do not have the resources to register for-mally or which are ideologically opposed to bureaucratization (Dale, 1993; Lampkin & Boris, 2002; Smith, 1997b). Limiting civil society research to official 501(c)3 listings carries an important undercount bias (Colwell, 1997; Grønbjerg, 2002).

Efforts aimed at identifying missing groups range from tracking down organizations that have 501(c)3 status but do not appear on official lists for a particular city because their tax-filing address is elsewhere, to enumerating all grassroots groups, including those that never officially register. Administrative data sources used to identify missing organizations not listed in IRS data include Secretary of State lists (Grønbjerg & Paarlberg, 2002), the U.S. Census of Service Industries (Grønbjerg, 2002), and city property data (Reiner, 2003). Nongovernmental data sources include sector directories (produced, for example, by hospitals, universities, the United Way, or large foundations), phone listings such as the Yellow Pages, or lists of foundation grantees (Toepler, 2003). Others conduct surveys to identify additional groups (Colwell, 1997) or use in-depth interviews and snowball techniques (Grønbjerg, 2002). In the state of Indiana, Grønbjerg and Paarlberg (2002) find that in conjunction with Secretary of State data the federal IRS listings provide 60% coverage of all organizations. Others claim that databases based on IRS data only capture 10% of all voluntary associations (Smith, 1997a, 1997b). Despite debate over the precise number, there is consensus that IRS data are not sufficient to enumerate the full universe of civil society (Smith, 1997a, 1997b; Froelich et al., 2000; Toepler, 2003).

We do not know, however, whether the undercount varies by the characteristics of those served by or active in nonprofit groups, an important question because it speaks to concerns about inequality in service, funding, and leadership within the third sector. A growing body of work tackles the question of such inequality (Bell et al., 2006; Cortés, 1998; De Vita et al., 2009; Hung, 2007; Ostrower, 2007), but most studies rely on NCCS data drawn from formal IRS registrations and Form 990 data, eliding undercount problems.[3] They also often compare African American, Hispanic, Asian and non-Hispanic White populations, overlooking important national origin dynamics within these broad categories and conflating long-established U.S.-born minority populations with new immigrant populations that face unique challenges. We consequently assess demographic underrepresentation for *immigrant* organizations, contributing to an emerging research field on immigrant nonprofits (Cordero-Guzmán, 2005; de Graauw, 2008; Ramakrishan & Bloemraad, 2008b). We also add to this body of work, and research on the undercount more generally, by focusing on the discrepancy between using official IRS data to evaluate immigrant organizing and using intensive fieldwork to draw a more complete picture of third sector vitality in immigrant communities. By considering both demographic underrepresentation and organizational undercounts, we gain a fuller picture of third sector inequality.

Research Method and Case Selection

This article draws on a study of immigrant community organizing among Indian, Mexican, Portuguese, and Vietnamese immigrant-origin communities in Silicon Valley, California. We focus on seven cities, which span two counties: Fremont (in Alameda County) and Cupertino, Milpitas, Mountain View, Santa Clara, San Jose, and Sunnyvale (all in Santa Clara County). We concentrate on this geographic area

not only to focus our analysis but also to leverage differences in city size and the size of the immigrant communities.

Geographic Focus: Silicon Valley

Like many metropolitan areas, Silicon Valley is characterized by a core city with several surrounding suburbs and bedroom communities, some of which are home to large, international firms. San Jose is the hub of Silicon Valley and the county seat, with almost 900,000 residents in 2006.[4] Fremont, Sunnyvale, and Santa Clara have populations of 208,000, 136,000, and 109,000, respectively, while Mountain View, Milpitas, and Cupertino count 71,000, 65,000, and 57,000 residents, respectively. In all these cities, well over a third of residents were born outside the United States; in Milpitas the proportion surpasses half (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). By collecting data in multiple cities, we are able to assess a broad regional area, responding to the call by De Vita and colleagues (2009) for more regional and local studies of diversity in the nonprofit sector.

Our regional focus is also important since existing research has centered almost exclusively on immigrant nonprofits and civil society in New York City (e.g., Cordero-Guzmán, 2005; Marwell, 2007), with some attention to other traditional immigrant destinations such as Boston (Gamm & Putnam, 1999), Chicago (Sanguino, 2008), San Francisco (de Graauw, 2008), and Los Angeles (Rivera-Salgado & Rabadán, 2004; Valenzuela, 2006). Yet today, a majority of immigrants live in suburbs rather than central cities (Singer, 2003). The dispersion of immigrants to new destinations demands scholarship with a broader geographical focus (Singer, Hardwick, & Brettell, 2008)

Demographic Focus: Indian, Mexican, Portuguese, and Vietnamese-origin Communities

We focus on four prominent immigrant communities in Silicon Valley, each with distinct migration histories, different modes of entry into the country, and significant variation in their socioeconomic profile. These differences mean that each community has a particular set of resources at its disposal for the creation of a "third space." First, the groups represent a range of immigrant histories. Mexican and, to a lesser extent, Portuguese immigrants have been migrating for more than a hundred years to the area. Some Mexican and Portuguese organizations consequently have a long history in Silicon Valley, generating ties with local bureaucracies and political structures. In contrast, Indian and Vietnamese migration only began on a large scale in the 1970s. These migrants had to establish organizations de novo, rather than build on previous efforts.

The immigrant communities also differ in their modes of entry into the country and their legal status. All four groups have significant proportions of people who arrived legally in the United States via family sponsorship, the primary means by which most

immigrants acquire visas to migrate to the United States. In addition, a large number of Vietnamese migrated under refugee or special visas related to U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia. Refugee status carries with it more public assistance with settlement than that offered to other migrants, including help setting up mutual assistance organizations, which facilitates nonprofit organizing (Bloemraad, 2005, 2006; Hein, 1997). In contrast, more than half of all Mexican immigrants in the United States are estimated to lack legal residency documents (Passel, 2006); fear of public scrutiny likely presents a significant barrier to civic engagement for this group. In comparison, the Portuguese, an older and more established group, have higher rates of legal permanent status and naturalization (60% of Portuguese immigrants are naturalized), while Indians represent the largest number of legal, temporary workers in the United States (Department of Homeland Security, 2007).

These groups also vary in the degree to which their members can mobilize human and financial capital, factors that facilitate civic engagement and voluntarism (Sundeen et al., 2009; Verba et al., 1995). Indian migrants have the highest levels of education as many enter with H1-B visas, temporary residency permits available to highly skilled workers in specialty occupations. The Vietnamese and Portuguese communities not only include some highly educated members but also a substantial number of low wage workers; large numbers of Mexican immigrants have very modest levels of education. Census Bureau data indicate that while fully 82% of Indian-origin residents had a 4-year college degree or higher level of education, only 28% of Vietnamese, 21% of Portuguese, and 10% of Mexican-origin residents did (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008). Given educational differences, it is not surprising that Indian immigrants enjoy one of the highest median household incomes in Silicon Valley (US$69,076 in 2000), while one quarter of all Mexican immigrant families live in poverty (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008). Portuguese and Vietnamese immigrants have comparable median

Table 1. Overview of Silicon Valley Cities and Immigrant-Origin Communities.

	San Jose	Fremont	Sunnyvale	Santa Clara	Mountain View	Milpitas	Cupertino	Total
Total population	898,901	208,455	136,162	109,363	71,153	65,215	56,592	1,545,815
Mexican	246,410	25,265	17,063	15,969	12,532	9,766	1,290	328,295
% of population	27.4%	12.1%	12.5%	14.6%	17.6%	15.0%	2.3%	21.2%
Vietnamese	89,371	5,596	4,198	5,249	767	7,562	892	113,635
% of population	9.9%	2.7%	3.1%	4.8%	1.1%	11.6%	1.6%	7.4%
Indian	32,709	33,072	16,780	13,046	4,226	7,168	9,903	116,904
% of population	3.6%	15.9%	12.3%	11.9%	5.9%	11.0%	17.5%	7.6%
Portuguese	14,977	5,353	1,098	4,115	728	655	568	27,494
% of population	1.7%	2.6%	0.8%	3.8%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.8%

Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census, 2005-2007 3-year average (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009).
Note: Figures for each ethnic group are taken from subcategories of the Census tallies for "Hispanic or Latino" (for Mexican), "Race" (for Vietnamese and Indian), and "Ancestry" (for Portuguese).

household incomes (US$48,805 and US$45,740, respectively, in 2000) although nearly three times as many Vietnamese families live in poverty compared to Portuguese (14.2% and 5.3%, respectively).

Members of these four immigrant communities are not dispersed equally across the seven cities, as shown in Table 1 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008). Over a quarter of San Jose residents are of Mexican descent, ranging from recently arrived day laborers, service workers, and small business-owners to second and third generation Cisco engineers and city officials. Ten percent of San Jose residents are Vietnamese, many of whom resettled as refugees during the 1970s and 1980s or later via family reunification or special entry provisions in the 1990s. Some Vietnamese own restaurants and other small businesses, while low-wage Vietnamese workers are typically employed in the few remaining electronic assembly plants or in the service industry. The Vietnamese second generation is now graduating from high school and college, and moving into white-collar and professional careers. Those of Indian origin are less likely to live in San Jose, but they make up more than 10% of the populations of Cupertino, Fremont, Sunnyvale, Santa Clara, and Milpitas, drawn to the area since the 1960s to attend graduate school, or more recently, to work in the high-tech sector. Although the Portuguese today form less than 2% of the population in the seven Silicon Valley cities in the study, they were amongst the earliest post–World War II immigrants to the area and are an established and recognized presence in Santa Clara.

Data Strategy: Counting Organizations

The starting point for our data collection was to assemble a database of all formally registered nonprofit organizations in the seven cities of our study. This database, built from NCCS data from the Urban Institute, represents the "official count" of 501(c)3 organizations in the area. We examine (c)3 filers because scholarly research on IRS data overwhelmingly focuses on these organizations to define the scope of civil society. We excluded private foundations, as these organizations fall outside our interest in publicly present organizations within civil society, and they are often treated as distinct financial entities in other analyses (see, for example, Boris & Steuerle, 2006; Desai & Yetman, 2005; Skelly, 1994).

The 3,499 organizations in the database for our cities were classified as "immigrant-origin" or "nonimmigrant" organizations by the authors. Our goal was to identify organizations that, through their activities or mission, serve the needs of immigrants, engage with transnational communities, or preserve the cultural practices of immigrant-origin communities. Similar to Cortés (1998), an organization was considered immigrant-origin if it focused on the problems or aspirations of a group with similar immigrant origins, though members, clients or leaders could be first, second, or third generation. Other studies, such as Hung (2007) and De Vita, Roeger and Niedzwiecki (2009), identify minority and immigrant nonprofits based on the origins of directors and board members, while Cordero-Guzmán's (2005) study of immigrant social service providers focuses on the

origins of clients. To cast as broad a net as possible, we did not limit our categorization by leadership or clientele thresholds, focusing instead on overall mission and activities.

Our approach is most consistent with Cortés' (1998) name-based technique, but we also relied on information from the group's mission statement, directories, media, and in-depth interviews. Following this approach, we first went through all 3,499 organizations to identify immigrant-origin organizations based on group name. Organizations were coded as possibly immigrant-origin if they included the use of a non-English language in the name (e.g., Centro de Servicios Legales del Pueblo Santa Clara, Co So Thi Van Coi Nguon), made specific mention of a foreign place or ethnic origin (e.g. Afghan Center; Friends of South Asia), or specifically mentioned "immigrant," "refugee," or some variation of these words in the name (e.g., African Refugee Community Services). We then investigated each of these possible immigrant-origin groups using the Internet, directories, media and informant interviews to confirm the categorization. We also used these additional resources to add overlooked immigrant-origin groups lacking a clear ethnic or immigrant name (e.g., Hands Across the Water). We conceptualized "nonimmigrant" organizations as those whose mission is not directed at any given immigrant-origin group (e.g., an Elks Lodge, a mainstream Parent-Teacher Association) and "immigrant-origin" organizations as those that largely serve a particular immigrant-origin community (e.g., the Santa Clara County Vietnamese PTA). We then identified, among all immigrant-origin nonprofits, those organizations catering specifically or in large part to people of Mexican, Vietnamese, Indian, or Portuguese origin.

Our next step was to identify community-based organizations *not* included in official data. To find these "non-NCCS" organizations, we followed a method similar to Grønbjerg's (2002, p. 1757) "informant/community based approach" and in line with the recommendations by De Vita, Roeger, & Niedzwiecki (2009) for more qualitative research approaches. We relied on references provided during 160 in-depth interviews with leaders of community groups, public officials, and government staff conducted from August 2005 to December 2006. We asked respondents to list all the organizations they knew in their city that are active within a specific domain, such as in the arts, health care or business development. We did not prime for immigrant or ethnic organizations. We did, among the domains we covered, ask about immigrant or refugee issues and ethnic and cultural groups as specific issue areas. From the list of *all* organizations generated by our respondents, regardless of activity, we identified all immigrant-origin organizations using methods similar to our NCCS categorization. If we could not find these immigrant-origin organizations in the official NCCS database, the group became a "non-NCCS organization." We also culled through ethnic newspapers and resource directories, and conducted web searches. We included any organization mentioned by local officials, nonprofit sector informants, or the ethnic or mainstream media. We sought to be as inclusive as possible, though our search probably identified groups that have moved beyond an early stage of development.

We then compared the list of publicly present immigrant organizations we generated through our fieldwork to the database of officially registered 501(c)3 groups;

those not in the NCCS database became "non-NCCS" organizations, our tally of the undercount. Since we likely missed embryonic or very informal groups, the undercount we document is, at best, a low estimate of the underrepresentation of immigrant groups in official 501(c)3 data; the actual undercount might be substantially greater.

The resulting list of "non-NCCS" organizations is diverse. It includes groups that organize particular annual events, such as the elaborate annual Diwali festival in Cupertino, and independent subgroups loosely linked to larger organizations, such as a grassroots Latino immigrant advocacy group that uses space provided by a sympathetic social service agency in San Jose. The list also includes chapters of organizations that may be formally registered outside the seven city area, but are active in Silicon Valley, as is the case for several Portuguese groups formally based in the state's Central Valley, but with activities and members in Santa Clara. *Not* included in our list are for-profit organizations, such as ethnic TV stations or newspapers, or government-sponsored organizations that rely entirely on public employees for staff support, such as the City of San Jose's Strong Neighborhood Initiative groups.[5]

Non-NCCS groups were allocated to a city and an immigrant group to permit comparison with the official NCCS list and census data. We follow the standard strategy of allocating organizations to a geographical area based on the address provided to the IRS for official NCCS organizations. This address is most likely to be where an organization's financial records are maintained although it may not be where the organization performs all, or even some, of its activities (Grønbjerg, 2002). For non-NCCS organizations, we used a set of allocation criteria to best match the organization to its main city of activity.[6] We also allocated groups to a particular national origin, relying on references to national origin in the group title, mission, and/or web site. All groups that identified as "Latino" or "Hispanic" were categorized as Mexican. This would be inappropriate in other parts of the United States, but it is a reasonable strategy in Silicon Valley, where 85% of all individuals identifying as Hispanic or Latino report Mexican origins. All Hindu, Sikh, and Jain organizations were assigned to the Indian national origin group.[7] Pan-ethnic organizations or groups oriented to communities of color were not assigned a particular national origin unless a key informant mentioned the group's specific relevance to one of the four communities in the study.[8]

Overall, our strategy amounts to a conservative assessment of the civil society undercount in these communities. Our undercount list includes numerous transnational or informal groups identified through interviews or other sources, but we do not have an exhaustive list of all the relatively invisible transnational groups, from Mexican hometown associations to Vietnamese anticommunist political groups, nor of all the informal organizations of concern to some scholars of undercounts (e.g., Colwell, 1997; Smith, 1997b). Unions, which are active in the Mexican community in particular, were not included since they are 501(c)(5) organizations, nor were social service agencies that are not ethnic-specific in mission. We also only included organizations that informants could specifically name. So, when interviewees told us about "that Mexican dance group," we did not count it unless we could positively identify the group. We nevertheless feel that we generated a comprehensive count of

Table 2. Demographic Underrepresentation: Official Count of 501(c)3 Organizations in Silicon Valley.

	Total Population	Total NCCS Organizations	Immigrant NCCS Organizations	Percent Immigrant Organizations (of total)	Percent Foreign Born in population	Percentage point difference, population and organizations	Percent Non-White in population[a]
San Jose	898,901	1987	412	20.7	39.0	18.3	50.7
Fremont	208,455	416	102	24.5	43.4	18.9	62.3
Sunnyvale	136,162	280	65	23.2	43.0	19.8	53.3
Santa Clara	109,363	277	52	18.8	37.9	19.1	53.4
Milpitas	65,215	127	32	25.2	51.3	26.1	75.1
Mountain View	71,153	222	46	20.7	40.0	19.3	42.5
Cupertino	56,592	190	46	24.2	47.8	23.6	62.6
Total	1,545,841	3499	755	21.6	40.8	19.2	53.8

Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics (National Center for Charitable Statistics, 2008); American Community Survey, U.S. Census, 2005-2007 3-year average (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009).
a. This percentage includes all individuals who do not identify solely as White.

organizations, especially those groups with public presence and relevance to members of these national-origin communities living in Silicon Valley, a list that is in some cases considerably longer than official NCCS sources.

Organizational Inequality: Official Data and Demographic Underrepresentation

Comparison of the proportion of immigrant organizations in official NCCS data (National Center for Charitable Statistics, 2008) with American Community Survey demographic data (U.S. Census Bureau 2009) reveals dramatic immigrant underrepresentation in civil society across all cities. The proportion of immigrants in the seven cities we study ranges from 38% in Santa Clara to more than 51% in Milpitas. The relative size of non-White minorities is even larger, ranging from 43% in Mountain View to 75% in Milpitas, as shown in Table 2.[9] Yet, across the seven cities, the proportion of immigrant NCCS organizations is about half of what we might expect based on population data, 21.6% of organizations (755 out of 3,499) compared to 40.8% of the population (630,187 immigrants out of 1,545,815 residents). Put differently, if immigrants were represented among official NCCS organizations in proportion to their share of the population, we would expect almost double the number of immigrant groups, 1,428 organizations.[10] To the extent that immigrant organizations articulate or serve needs different from mainstream groups, such dramatic civic inequality raises concerns from social service provision to interest representation.

We would not necessarily expect the proportion of immigrant organizations to exactly match city demographics, especially if nonimmigrant organizations were including immigrants in their membership, services, and activities in proportion to

their presence in the local population. However, several recent studies suggest that many organizations actively or passively keep immigrants out in several immigrant-dense communities in California (Ramakrishan & Bloemraad, 2008a, 2008b; Ramakrishnan & Viramontes, 2006) and elsewhere in the United States (Aptekar, 2008; Jones-Correa, 2005). In Santa Clara county, a recent survey of nonprofit activity found that immigrants had two to four times the service needs of U.S.-born residents but that immigrants received, on average, half the services that U.S.-born residents receive (LaFrance, 2005). This conclusion echoes the more general finding that few main-stream human service nonprofits focus their activities on minority populations and their concerns (Grønbjerg, 1990). In our research, we found that some groups, such as certain Toastmasters chapters or large mainstream social service agencies such as Catholic Charities, did include immigrants and people of color. Much more common, however, were cases of passive or active exclusion, such as with a high school PTA in Mountain View that did not want to offer translation during meetings and held meet-ings when virtually no public transportation was available for low-income immigrant parents, many without a drivers' license.

The stark underrepresentation of immigrant organizations varies somewhat across cities. The data hint at some correlation between the size of underrepresentation and the size of the city. Focusing on the gap between the proportion of foreign-born resi-dents in a city's population and the proportion of immigrant NCCS organizations among all officially registered nonprofits, the smallest gap, 18.3 percentage points, is found in the largest city, San Jose. The largest gaps are found among the two smallest cities, Cupertino and Milpitas, at 23.6 and 26.1 percentage points, respectively. Multivariate statistical analysis with these data is not feasible, so instead we calculated the number of immigrant-origin organizations per 10,000 foreign-born residents in each city. We find that all the larger cities, with a population more than 100,000, count 11 to 12 immigrant organizations per 10,000 immigrants. Among the smaller cities, the number varies from a high of 17 immigrant organizations per 10,000 immigrants in Cupertino to a low of 9.6 in Milpitas. If we calculate a similar ratio of nonimmigrant NCCS organizations per 10,000 *native-born* residents, we find that Cupertino, the smallest city in our study, has the densest nonimmigrant civil society, at a level far above that for immigrants: 49 nonprofit organizations per 10,000 U.S.-born residents. Mountain View is second highest with 41 nonprofits per 10,000 U.S.-born residents. All other cities have an organizational density between 27 (Fremont) and 33 (Santa Clara) per 10,000 U.S.-born residents. This alternate measure further underscores the immense gap between the density of civil society for immigrant and nonimmigrant residents.

These results lend support to the argument put forward by Ramakrishnan and Lewis (2005) that bigger cities are better placed to foster immigrant organizing due to their larger and more professional bureaucratic structure, which facilitates the development of formal policies and informal practices to engage and assist immigrant communities. It might also speak to possible "free-riding" dynamics where officials and residents of

smaller suburban communities rely on the services and activities of immigrant organizations established in large central cities within a region (de Graauw, Gleeson, & Bloemraad, 2012). The relationship between larger cities and more immigrant organizing would imply that research demonstrating a link between smaller city size and a denser mainstream nonprofit sector (Grønbjerg & Paarlberg, 2001)—a finding with some support in our data for *native-born* residents—might not hold for immigrants. If confirmed in other settings, these results highlight the need to modify third sector models when considering immigrant populations.

What is Missing? Organizational Undercounts

The official data can be read as a measure of civic inequality, which is our interpretation, but they can also be viewed as an objective measure of weak civic values or a lack of voluntary ethos on the part of newcomer populations, as was the controversial position of Huntington (2004). Such an interpretation rests, however, on the assumption that official data sources from the IRS 501(c)3 registration system accurately and adequately capture voluntary organizing and organizational vitality in immigrant communities.

Our search for organizations absent from the NCCS data set reveals a broader picture of immigrant organizing. For each national origin group across the seven cities, Table 3 displays three columns of data: the number of 501(c)3 organizations in the NCCS database, the number of all other non-NCCS organizations identified during fieldwork, and the resulting "undercount" of immigrant-organizations if we were to rely solely on NCCS data. The number of Indian, Mexican, Portuguese, and Vietnamese organizations increases substantially, from 282 in the official data to 457 when we include both NCCS and non-NCCS organizations. This means that NCCS data provide coverage of about 62% of all publicly present immigrant organizations in our seven cities of interest, a figure similar to the coverage rate found by Grønbjerg and Paarlberg (2002) in their analysis of nonprofit undercounts in Indiana.

Though the disparity we uncover is not very different from other empirically grounded estimates of the nonprofit undercount, such as that of Grønbjerg and Paarlberg (2002), our fieldwork suggests that the reasons for the undercount might differ across immigrant groups, as we discuss below. We would also argue that there is likely a certain threshold of civic presence that is necessary to effectively articulate and meet the needs of a community. Therefore, although the proportional undercount of nonregistered immigrant organizations is similar to what might exist in the population as a whole, the very low number of registered immigrant organizations—as demonstrated by our analysis of underrepresentation—make these undercounts arguably more consequential for immigrant populations.

The undercount differs by city and national origin group. Across cities, as seen in Table 3, there is some hint that immigrant organizations in big cities are more likely to be in official data sets. In both of the two largest cities in our study, San Jose and

Table 3. Organizational Undercount, by City and Immigrant-Origin Group.

	Indian			Mexican			Portuguese			Vietnamese			TOTAL		
	NCCS	Non-NCCS	% coverage	NCCS	Non-NCCS	% coverage	NCCS	Non-NCCS	% coverage	NCCS	non-NCCS	% coverage	NCCS	non-NCCS	% coverage
San Jose	37	16	70%	60	27	69%	8	5	62%	68	39	64%	173	87	67%
Fremont	37	16	70%	3	1	75%	1	3	25%	2	1	67%	43	21	67%
Sunnyvale	11	7	61%	2	5	29%	0	0	—	3	1	75%	16	13	55%
Santa Clara	5	6	45%	2	1	67%	2	6	25%	2	1	67%	11	14	44%
Milpitas	10	5	67%	2	6	25%	0	0	—	2	3	40%	14	14	50%
Mountain View	6	0	100%	2	13	13%	2	0	100%	1	0	100%	11	13	46%
Cupertino	13	10	57%	0	1	0%	0	0	—	1	2	33%	14	13	52%
Total	119	60	66%	71	54	57%	13	14	48%	79	47	63%	282	175	62%

Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics (National Center for Charitable Statistics, 2008); authors' compilation.

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Fremont, two thirds of publicly present organizations appeared in the official NCCS data. In contrast, the other cities, all with populations under 200,000, had undercounts of roughly 50% although as the denominators for these calculations decrease, small changes in the number of undercounted organizations have larger effects on proportions. Nevertheless, the fact that the undercount differs across cities—all municipalities in the same region—should give pause to researchers who want to use NCCS data to compare the vitality of immigrant organizing across U.S. localities. While the overall ranking of organizational density by city is roughly similar whether one uses NCCS data or the more robust count, the difference between cities changes somewhat. This variation requires further study.

The undercount also differs between national origin groups. NCCS data included only 48% of Portuguese and 57% of Mexican community organizations in the seven cities, compared to 63% of Vietnamese organizations and 66% of Indian organizations. Again, the ranking of organizational density using NCCS data or the more robust counts is stable, but the degree of difference changes. Variation in the undercount becomes even more acute when we consider particular immigrant-origin groups in individual cities, rather than across our seven cities, and when we examine specific types of organizations. According to official NCCS data, Mexican organizations are only present in significant numbers in San Jose, despite the fact that those of Mexican origin make up 12% to 18% of the population in five of the other cities. So, for example, in Milpitas, where 15% of the city's population reports Mexican origin, we found only two officially registered NCCS organizations, both religious groups: Ministerio Pentecostal Melquisedec and Iglesia Emmanuel, Inc. However, our field research revealed another six non-NCCS organizations, including three religious groups, one cultural organization (Ballet Folklorico Milpitas), and two educational groups (Latino Parent Potluck Club and the Milpitas Parents Pre-School, which is largely Latino). About a third of official NCCS organizations within the Mexican-origin community are churches—many evangelical Protestant—a higher percentage of officially registered religious organizations than across any of the other immigrant-origin groups.

Considering the type of activities undertaken by the non-NCCS organizations, we find that cultural, civic, business/professional, religious and educational organizations were likely to be undercounted in all four immigrant-origin communities. We also found some variation in undercount, by type, between the Mexican and Portuguese nonprofit sector, on one hand, and the Vietnamese and Indian sector, on the other. As with Mexican organizations, most registered Portuguese groups are religious or cultural groups, in addition to one large social service organization in San Jose, Portuguese Social Services and Opportunities. Of the non-NCCS Portuguese groups, most had Catholic and/or cultural missions.

This pattern differs for the Asian-origin communities, likely due to differences in their relative resources and migration histories. Many Vietnamese groups, almost two-thirds, are registered 501(c)3s. This is probably due, in part, to the legacy of financial and technical assistance from the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)

and the support of local officials who distribute ORR funds, as Hein (1997) and Bloemraad (2005) suggest. For example, many Vietnamese social service organizations, such as the Vietnamese Voluntary Foundation, began by offering refugee settlement services and today provide ESL classes, citizenship services, and employment assistance. Other registered organizations include cultural groups, language schools, the Santa Clara County Vietnamese Parent-Teacher Association, and several Catholic churches and Buddhist temples that cater to Vietnamese speakers. An emerging professional class of 1.5 and second generation Vietnamese has also registered various transnational aid groups. Among the groups not present in the NCCS database are several student groups at local high schools and colleges, smaller veteran and transnational groups, and a few cultural and service-provision organizations. Twenty of these nonregistered Vietnamese organizations engaged primarily in civic activities.

The immigrant community with the highest degree of formalized organizing, and the one best represented in official data sources, is also the most recently arrived, a surprising finding for those who hypothesize that immigrants need time to understand U.S. incorporation and tax regulations as well as to absorb the American tradition of voluntary organizing. Yet the Indian community—the most affluent group, as well as the one with widespread English ability and very high levels of education—exhibits the smallest undercount of their associational activities. Like the Vietnamese, professional Indians have established many transnational aid organizations, such as Adhishree, which supports abused or neglected children and poor seniors in India. Several prominent cultural and social service organizations are registered, including the India Community Center and the Lasya Dance company. There are also several Hindu and Sikh temples, as well as professional and alumni groups, such as a chapter of the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay graduates' organization. All of these groups are formally registered. Most non-NCCS Indian groups are cultural and transnational organizations, but they also include the Northern California Cricket Association (as well as the breakaway Bay Area Cricket Association).

Our interviews suggest that those active in non-NCCS Indian organizations perceive few economic incentives in formal registration; they can garner donations from community members and businesses despite the absence of tax benefits, and without relying on government or foundation support, which often requires registration. Given a position of relative affluence, registering for 501(c)3 status may be a time-consuming hassle that brings few benefits. This dynamic is very different for Mexican organizations that fail to register; the latter case appears driven by low levels of human and economic capital or linguistic barriers. The Vietnamese community also faces such barriers, but they receive some help from government officials and other civil society actors, assistance that is less forthcoming for those of Mexican-origin, given high levels of undocumented status among the immigrant generation.[11] In the future, researchers should unpack the reasons behind organizational undercounts as a lens onto civic hierarchies and resource inequalities.

Concluding Discussion and Lessons Learned

The premise of our research is that the tremendous growth in the U.S. immigrant population—now 40 million individuals—merits study by third sector scholars. Traditionally, ethnic diversity in the United States has been viewed from a racial minority perspective (Jones-Correa, 2007). However, the particularities of the immigrant experience—from individuals' legal status to their ability to speak English—raise unique questions, ones largely absent from the literature on nonprofit organizing. At the same time, migration scholars must pay greater attention to the 501(c)3 sector as a site of immigrant civil society activism.

In this spirit, this article assesses the scope of immigrant civil society using tools commonly employed by nonprofit scholars. There is a growing literature on diversity—and its absence—in the leadership of nonprofit organizations (Bell et al., 2006; De Vita et al., 2009), but very few studies have examined civic diversity by looking at the mission and activities of voluntary organizations. We see our research as a first step to obtaining baseline information that should be replicated in other cities and with other immigrant groups. For those wishing for a deep understanding of the third sector in particular locations, we recommend the mixed method strategy employed here, combining data from official tallies with intensive field work. For scholars interested in broad comparisons across localities, new or expanded surveys of nonprofit organizations are needed to collect more complete information on the origins, language needs, legal status and socioeconomic profile of clients, participants, volunteers, and leaders. Even then, statistical analyses of civic inequality should proceed cautiously given the methodological issues that arise from immigrant settlement and residential clustering.[12]

Our assessment was conducted in two parts. First, using official IRS data on all formally registered 501(c)3 organizations in seven Silicon Valley cities, we developed a methodology to identify immigrant organizations. Our data reveal a much lower proportion of organizations oriented to immigrant communities, only half as much, as we might expect given the demography of the region. The level of underrepresentation appears greater in smaller cities than larger ones, and it varies across immigrant-origin groups. Underrepresentation is especially severe for the Mexican-origin community: while 21% of the population in this area is Mexican origin, organizations with a mission or activities primarily dedicated to the Mexican-origin community only accounted for 71 of 3,499 officially registered 501(c)3 organizations, or 2% of the total.

Our baseline data are important because the consequences of organizational inequality can be substantial. Official 501(c)3 status is necessary for certain kinds of funding (Bell et al., 2006), so places with fewer registered nonprofit organizations will generate insufficient financial support for immigrant-centered services (LaFrance 2006). Beyond service provision, nonprofit organizations can engage in lawful advocacy and serve as intermediaries between immigrant communities and municipal officials (de Graauw, 2008), and they frequently become the public face of a community, to which the media turn for a perspective on local events (Jenkins, 2006). Without a robust 501(c)3 sector,

policy makers and media are likely to get a distorted perspective of the needs and issues facing immigrant residents, creating civic and political inequalities for immigrant communities (Ramakrishan & Bloemraad, 2008b). While the generalizability of our findings is limited to Silicon Valley, one of the most immigrant-dense and progressive places in the United States, the underrepresentation of immigrant nonprofits is likely more dramatic in places new to large-scale immigration and those where local officials and residents are less accommodating of immigrants. Thus, outside Silicon Valley, it is very possible that immigrant underrepresentation might be even more acute, underscoring the need for further research on civic stratification. Foundations, governments, and other nonprofit groups need to reach out to immigrant communities and nascent newcomer organizations to help those of immigrant origins understand and negotiate the process of incorporation and filing for nonprofit status (Wang & Winn, 2006).

Second, our research shows that official data provide an incomplete picture of voluntary organizing in immigrant communities. Nonprofit scholars have long known that statistical data sets, such as those compiled from IRS filings, carry an undercount bias. Based on our field research across seven cities and four immigrant-origin groups, we find that only 62% of publicly present immigrant organizations are found in official databases, a proportion similar to some other empirical studies of the undercount, but one arguably more consequential given low baseline numbers in some immigrant communities. Our measurement of the undercount provides a corrective to those who might read the low number of official Latino nonprofits as an objective indicator of limited community organizing or ingrained cultural distrust of civic engagement (Huntington, 2004). In the cities we studied, engagement takes place, but these activities are not always formalized.

We also demonstrate that the undercount varies across cities and across four immigrant-origin communities with different migration histories, socioeconomic profiles and relations to government. Indeed, it appears that in cities and in groups with more resources, a greater proportion of voluntary and nonprofit organizations are formally registered third sector organizations. To the extent that 501(c)3 status carries material and political benefits, research on undercounts helps us understand variation in the long-term viability of immigrant organizations and the civic and political influence of different communities. The substantial, and unequal, organizational undercount across national-origin communities supports existing cautions about using official data of registered nonprofits as a precise count of civil society.

At the same time, the relative ranking of organizational density among the immigrant communities does not change whether we use NCCS data or our more complete count. In each case, the tally of Indian-origin organizations is greater, per population, than the other four groups, and the density of Mexican-origin nonprofits is by far the lowest. NCCS data suggest that there are 1.0 Indian-origin organizations for every 1,000 Indian-origin residents of this region compared to 0.7, 0.5, and 0.2 organizations, respectively, per 1,000 Vietnamese-, Portuguese- and Mexican-origin residents. When we include nonregistered organizations, nonprofit densities rise to 1.5, 1.1, 1.0,

and 0.4 organizations per 1,000 people, respectively, for the Indian, Vietnamese, Portuguese, and Mexican-origin communities. Our research should reassure scholars that NCCS data provide an important benchmark for relative organizational inequality once researchers do the hard work of recoding the data with immigrant populations in mind. This means that NCCS data can and should be used for studies of immigrant civic participation and nonprofit development.[13]

Across both measures, our results provide evidence that patterns of underrepresentation and organizational undercounts reflect significant differences in the internal resources, legal status, or available external public support among immigrant communities. This suggests that resource inequalities between groups become replicated and reinforced in civil society. Our findings carry implications not only for how we measure and understand civic organizing among immigrants but they also raise questions about the causes and consequences of civic stratification among other communities in the United States.

Of course, equal representation for all subpopulations in civil society is neither possible nor perhaps desirable. We would probably not expect that 50% of all nonprofits should be dedicated solely to women's concerns and the other 50% to men; rather, many would hope that all civil society groups strive for gender diversity and an agenda that respects men and women's rights, while also acknowledging that in some cases, gender-specific groups might be desirable. In a similar manner, future research must examine the extent to which immigrants are being incorporated into mainstream civil society. Are existing organizations making language accommodations or developing targeted outreach strategies to newcomer populations? The alternative is a civil society landscape that advances very different interests than that of the rapidly changing U.S. population.

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Notes

1. In this article, we refer to "organizations" and "groups" interchangeably.

2. Legally, an immigrant is someone who is a foreign-born noncitizen with legal permanent residence. Migration scholars usually refer to all foreign-born individuals as immigrants, regardless of legal status. In this article, we use the term "immigrant organization" to refer to organizations that primarily serve, are run by, or focus on immigrant concerns: members, clients, or leaders of these organizations can be first, second, or even third generation, but the organizations' primary mission and activities are influenced by the group's immigrant origins. For example, a Vietnamese language school, set up by immigrant parents, but teaching Vietnamese to mostly U.S.-born children, would be, for our purposes, an immigrant organization. The same is true for an organization focused on furthering the culture of the homeland, providing services in non-English languages or addressing issues related to immigrants' legal status in the United States. We use the terms "immigrant" and "immigrant-origin" interchangeably.

3. These studies use the data directly or as a sampling frame to survey organizations. The Greenlining Institute uses a slightly different methodology, examining the list of organizations receiving grants from major U.S. foundations. But since many foundations require grantees to have 501(c)3 status, their findings do not help gain leverage on organizational undercounts.

4. Fieldwork took place in 2005 and 2006, thus we provide demographic data from the 2005-2007 American Community Survey (3-year average). ACS data come from U.S. Census samples. Estimates are subject to random sampling error and likely undercount immigrants. For our analysis, an undercount of immigrant residents will understate organizational inequality. On ACS sampling, see, http://www.census.gov/acs/www/AdvMeth/CollProc/CollProc1.htm

5. The list of organizations we collected during fieldwork in 2005-2006 was compared to the most recent NCCS Business Master File available (1/2006). Non-NCCS organizations fell into three main categories: (a) groups not formally registered as 501(c)3 organizations; (b) groups with headquarters outside Silicon Valley (which may or may not be formally registered) but with a significant membership and activities within one of our seven cities; or (c) registered groups that were not in the database or that were registered as another 501(c)3 category. The non-NCCS list also includes "ethnic" chambers of commerce, such as the Vietnamese or Hispanic Chambers of Commerce in San Jose, since informants identified them as publicly present organizations. However, because such groups are registered as 501(c)6 organizations, and therefore could not appear in our official 501(c)3 database, we do not include ethnic Chambers of Commerce in the calculation of the 501(c)3 undercount.

6. The allocation criteria involved the following steps: (a) If a group's city location could be identified through web searches, and that city was one of the seven cities in our study, the group was allocated to that city; (b) if an organization demonstrated activity in one of our 7 study cities, but the official group location was outside the seven cities (yet within Santa Clara or Alameda County), it was allocated to the city within our study where it was active; (c) if the city location was outside the seven cities, and outside of the South Bay, they were allocated to the city that the interviewee source represents, or if multiple interviewees mentioned the organization, the group was listed once for each city mentioned; (d) any government sponsored community organization that relied partly on government-funded staff (such as a city commission, city-sponsored neighborhood association, or school-sponsored group) was allocated to

the city of support; and (e) if no city location could be explicitly identified, and the interviewee source represented an entity outside the seven cities (e.g., a consular office), or the group was identified from a directory or web search, that group was allocated to San Jose.

7. Two Muslim organizations with a significant Indian membership were also included.

8. Nonregistered pan-ethnic organizations are enumerated in our data only if they are described as directly serving or representing one of our four immigrant-origin communities. We do this due to the heterogeneity of the "Asian American" population in Silicon Valley; there are significant linguistic, socioeconomic, and legal differences between the Indian and Vietnamese populations, and between these two groups and other Asian-origin communities (such as Chinese and Filipinos).

9. The immigrant population is not a simple subset of the racial minority population, hence the need for immigrant-focused research. A focus on racial minorities will exclude immigrants such as the Portuguese, and can exclude Hispanics who may identify as White in census tallies and surveys. Conversely, the African American community in Northern California is overwhelmingly nonimmigrant. To the extent that immigrant populations are undercounted by the Census Bureau, due to linguistic barriers or concerns about legal status, the underrepresentation of immigrant organizations will be even more acute than what we report.

10. In comparison, a recent study of nonprofit leadership found that whereas people of color made up 54% of Bay Area residents (including San Francisco, San Jose, and East Bay cities such as Oakland), only 24.5% of area nonprofits were run by a person of color and only 30% of board members were people of color (De Vita et al., 2009).

11. Space constraints prevent a thorough discussion of variation between immigrant communities. Important factors include immigrants' human and financial capital, legal status, language ability, and differences in government treatment across migrant groups (Gleeson et al., 2006, 2007).

12. Given immigration policy, residential clustering and known socioeconomic correlates of voluntary organizing, it is very difficult to tease apart, in a statistical sense, the relative impact of contextual residential variables (e.g., an organization's location in a large or small city, the presence of local public funding, etc.) compared to immigrant community variables (such as average educational attainment, legal status, national origin, etc.) on organizational outcomes (e.g., formal 501(c)3 registration, budget, etc.). Small populations and collinearity, in particular, pose important challenges. For example, while we might want to distinguish the independent effects of modest education compared to undocumented status on nonprofit organizing, we are unlikely to find a significant population of highly educated undocumented immigrants to compare with less educated, undocumented migrant communities and highly educated, legally present communities. Furthermore, migrant communities are not randomly distributed across U.S. cities and towns, with clustering likely endogenous to the causal process of organizing.

13. While our research in Silicon Valley generated a consistent ranking pattern between official data and our broader tally of publicly present organizations, this may not be the same in all places, so scholars need to remain cognizant of undercount problems.

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