

Nonprofits Providing a Public Good to Immigrants in New York: A Qualitative Case Study

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## Abstract

Thousands of immigrants in New York, legal, or undocumented, rely on the services of nonprofit organizations for assistance in their daily lives. Immigrants often seek assistance from nonprofits due to the less restrictive barriers of eligibility for receiving government-provided social services. The purpose of this study was to ascertain in what ways nonprofit organizations in New York engaged in aiding and advocating for immigrants. Weisbrod's public good theory was used as the framework for this study. Using a qualitative case study design, interview data was collected from 26 people associated with nonprofits aiding the immigrant community at varying levels. The results of the data analysis revealed nine major themes about services and advocacy provided by these nonprofits. Nonprofits were found to provide referrals to undocumented immigrants who needed legal assistance; provided food and other personal items; provided language literacy and other types of classes; made immigration reform advocacy a priority; secured driving privileges for undocumented immigrants in New York; influenced lawmakers' stance on immigration reforms; collaborated with other nonprofits to increase services and create a larger presence in the fight for comprehensive immigration reforms; developed networks with other organizations, agencies, and individuals to augment certain services; and formed coalitions with other nonprofits that were targeting similar immigration policies. Providing services, advocacy, and collaboration advances nonprofit organizations' missions to create social change and to secure basic human rights for an extremely marginalized population in New York. The study's implications are that community and religious-based nonprofit organizations in New York provide public goods to improve the quality of life for immigrants, exemplifies the highest societal values, and align with Weisbrod's theory.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

Nonprofit organizations assist undocumented immigrants in coping with punitive anti-immigration laws, in addition to helping them with statewide benefits such as child health insurance, in-state tuition, state-based financial aid, and labor force protections (Enriquez, Vera, & Ramakrishnan, 2019). Other nonprofit organizations utilize the collective efforts of law students, law faculty, and community members in a cohesive attempt to ascertain enduring problems and serious concerns of the local immigrant, non-citizens, and refugee community (Trucious-Haynes, 2018). During the past decade, community-based nonprofit organizations have developed into a “nationwide social movement,” accumulating resources, and exerting influence on federal immigration policies (Nichols, Uitermark, & van Haperen, 2019, p. 2).

Filling gaps in services, helping the disadvantaged and marginalized, providing collective social and legal services, and advocating for people, are a public good provided by nonprofit organizations (Anheier, 2005; Hansman, 2000; Mendel & Brudney, 2014; Weisbrod, 1997). Voluntary institutions engaged in the public good have taken on the charge of procuring essential services to those who are in need and often exist in the most extreme margins of society (Holcombe, 1997; Anheier, 2005; Ilhan, 2013).

Organizations involved in providing public goods to marginalized communities are an emerging sector of the U.S. economy, and have especially gained dominance in education and healthcare (Hansmann, 2000). According to Mendel and Brundney (2014) the concept of public good and service to the community emerged through cooperation between policymakers, local leaders, industry captains, and nonprofit organizations. Crawford and Arnold (2016) contended that, to bring educational benefits to all immigrant children regardless of status, nonprofit organizations develop partnerships among other institutions to create lasting results.

Community-based religious organizations, sport clubs, and academic institutions have taken up the cause of immigration reforms and began to “address practical and cultural issues” as part of the immigration process itself (Babis, 2016, p. 355).

For undocumented and non-citizens in New York State, in addition to providing services, nonprofit organizations advocate for them through lobbying of state legislators and collaborating with other nonprofit organizations to influence policy changes (Chin, 2018). Roth, Gonzalez, and Lesniewski (2015) claimed that immigrants seek assistance from nonprofit organizations because barriers are often lower than those of government services providers. However, apprehension of using government-provided social services compels undocumented and non-citizen immigrants to seek assistance from nonprofit community-based organizations (Gast & Okamoto, 2016). Swerts (2017) concurred that due to their legal status limiting them in accessing services provided by the government, undocumented immigrants turn to nonprofit organizations for assistance.

Nonprofit local community organizations support social movements, immigration activism, and advocacy for socially marginalized undocumented immigrants and fill the gaps when government programs are not extended to them due to their legal status (de Graauw & Bloemraad, 2017). Gast and Okamoto (2016) observed that as an “alternative to mainstream institutions and politics,” nonprofit organizations provide advocacy for immigrants in community issues and in campaigning for basic human rights (p. 2013). Gnes (2016) asserted that as “collective actors,” immigrant organizations develop legitimacy and become increasingly recognized by their constituency in identifying and representing concerns of the community.

The expanding role of community-based nonprofit organizations, especially in services and advocacy in providing public good for non-citizen and undocumented immigrants warrants

additional study, and has the potential to provide new information to an existing body of knowledge (Buffardi, Pekkanen & Smith, 2017; Fyall, 2017). Nonprofit organizations face challenges in their relationships with governmental agencies and at times compete in providing social services and advocacy (Reichman, 2010). Due to the distinctiveness of services rendered, nonprofit organizations have many varying roles such as service providers, policy advocates, and a voice for marginalized people (Greenspan, 2014).

This study brought attention to all these areas through an exploratory examination of nonprofit organizations' role, influence, and collaboration in providing a public good to non-citizens and undocumented immigrants. The sections to follow in this chapter include the problem statement, purpose, theoretical framework, research questions, nature of the study, significance of the study, definitions of key terms, and summary. The sections will provide a brief preview for the rest of the dissertation and set the tone for the construction of the study.

A growing trend in the United States are national and community based nonprofit organizations that are providing public goods to individuals, communities, and marginalized populations (Roth et al., 2015). Nonprofits are one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy and are increasingly facilitating the delivery of services to millions of people (Mendel & Brudney, 2014; Mason, 2016). According to the Office of the New York State Comptroller (2019), New York had the second largest number of nonprofit establishments in the nation, over 33,700. Nonprofits augment the government's role in catering to the public's need for social services, medical care, and other collective programs that compensate for decreasing governmental provision (Weisbrod, 1997). Through fundraising, governmental, and private funding, and a cadre of volunteers, nonprofits make fundamental contributions to individuals and

communities in the spirit of altruism and public good (Witesman, 2016; Schwingel et al., 2017; Jensen, 2017).

One of the largest groups benefitting from the services of nonprofits are undocumented and noncitizen immigrants, many of whom exist on the extreme margins of American society (Rodriguez, 2018; Nguyen, 2019). Changes in the political environment, anti-immigrant stereotypes, and federal and state immigration laws have severely impacted the lives of millions of undocumented and noncitizen immigrants, often restricting them access to basic social services (Enriquez, 2019; Johnson, 2016; Kerwin, 2019; Valdez, 2016). Restricted access to medical care, housing, education, and other social services slows integration, negatively impacts families, and creates an uncertain future for children of undocumented immigrants, many of whom are American citizens (de Graauw, 2017; Enriquez, 2015; Gomez & Huber, 2019). However, nonprofits are taking up the task of mitigating the difficulties faced by undocumented immigrants by providing social services, legal assistance, and advocacy for immigration reforms. Through advocacy, lobbying, and other services, nonprofits in New York collaborate with politicians, community leaders, and governmental agencies in developing comprehensive “evidence-based” policies to assist immigrants (Twersky, 2019, p. 1).

### **Statement of Problem**

Fear of using government-provided social services compels undocumented and non-citizen immigrants to seek assistance from nonprofit community-based organizations (Babis, 2014). Gast and Okamoto (2016) observed that non-citizen immigrants perceive that the use of government services will negatively affect their ability to gain legal status or citizenship. Negi, Maskell, Goodman, Hooper, and Roberts (2018) noted that since recent immigrants have limited access to social programs, community-based nonprofit organizations assist them by providing

advocacy and other services. The limited access to social services has led many undocumented immigrants to utilize community-based nonprofit organizations as a safety net and a social welfare support system (Roth et al., 2015). Further examination is necessary to align the mission of nonprofit organizations that provide a public good that generates value for the community (Mendel & Brundney, 2014).

A gap in the literature exists regarding the services, the collaboration, and the level of advocacy provided by community-based nonprofit organizations to non-citizen and undocumented immigrants (Buffardi et al., 2017, p. 1244). To address the gap in the literature, this study analyzed the level of involvement, activism, advocacy, and collaboration of community-based nonprofit organizations in providing public good, and to promote and secure the rights of non-citizen and undocumented immigrants. Buffardi et al., (2017, p. 1244) suggested that additional research is warranted to comprehend nonprofit organizations' "efforts to block or modify policy." Chin (2018) advised that future studies should explore the collaboration between nonprofit organizations that seek policy changes in social and health services for immigrants. Enriquez, Vera, and Ramakrishnan (2019, p. 53) agreed that future research can yield additional information about "racialized illegality" and its impact on how nonprofit organizations provide advocacy for statewide benefits to undocumented immigrants. Studying the research problem is necessary because the growth of community-based nonprofit organizations and their involvement in providing services to non-citizen and undocumented immigrants has increased (Buffardi et al., 2017). The public goods provided to the community through lobbying efforts, influencing policymakers, collaboration, and advocating for human rights by nonprofit organizations need further examination to bring attention to the resources available to marginalized people (Levine, 2016). Helmig et al., (2014) calls for additional

research about systemizing the literature and applying a theoretical framework to nonprofits' success and failures in effecting social change.

### **Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to ascertain in what ways do nonprofit organizations engage in assisting and advocating for undocumented immigrants in the legal and other challenges of daily life. Additionally, the study examined in what ways do nonprofit organizations in New York State advocate for undocumented immigrants through the lobbying of state legislators regarding supporting or opposing proposed laws on comprehensive immigration reform, and how they conceive of their influence. The purpose was also to explore in what ways, do nonprofit organizations in New York State collaborate with other nonprofit organizations to influence policy changes regarding undocumented immigrants, and what difference do they think that makes.

The sample included members of nonprofit organizations such as directors, board members and employees or until theoretical saturation is met. The mix of participants provided a holistic view of the problem and give varying perspective to the research questions. The theoretical framework for this study is Weisbrod's public good theory. The strictest measures were employed to ensure the utmost level of confidentiality with any information which may be deemed sensitive. This researcher utilized several colored highlighters to manually code all data during the analysis of the responses.

### **Research Questions**

1. In what ways do nonprofit organizations in New York State assist undocumented immigrants in the challenges of daily life?



2. In what ways do nonprofit organizations in New York State advocate for undocumented immigrants through the lobbying of state legislators regarding supporting or opposing proposed laws on comprehensive immigration reform, and how do they conceive of their influence?
3. In what ways do nonprofit organizations in New York State collaborate with other nonprofit organizations to influence policy changes regarding undocumented immigrants, and what difference do they think that this makes?

### **Nature of Study**

Case study research has developed a respectable academic character as an applicable methodology used to examine and comprehend topics in actualization and substantiality (Harrison, Birks, Franklin, & Mills, 2017). Case study designs are used by researchers for most qualitative studies to generate thought provoking and appealing research, rather than studies that investigate and analyze numbers (Brown, 2010; Yazan, 2015). A researcher chooses a case study in order to comprehend the authenticity of the topic and the realization that such information will prospectively comprise of significant background specifications relative to the study (Yin, 2014).

Located in the discipline of Public Administration, this is a case study which investigates services, advocacy, collaboration, lobbying, and policy influence of community-based nonprofit organizations involved in public good. Over the past two decades, the rising anti-immigrant sentiment in the United States, and the increase in punitive immigration laws, has led to a greater dependency on community-based nonprofit organizations for non-citizen and undocumented immigrants (Chin, 2018; Gast & Okamoto, 2017; Roth et al., 2015). The qualitative case study is applicable to gather data and provide a holistic view of the inner workings of community-based nonprofit organizations and their functionality. The findings from the study provides an

opportunity for organizations, stakeholders, and policymakers to gain critical insights about the levels, need, influence, and importance of community-based nonprofit organizations.

Due to the exploratory nature of the study, a qualitative case study methodology was selected. Utilizing a qualitative case study method in an investigative research tends to provide more stimulating and absorbing information than quantitative analysis (Brown, 2010).

Quantitative methodology can be exploratory at times but is better suited for confirmatory and deductive studies (Trochim & Donnelly, 2015). Considering that numbers cannot fully elucidate certain information about a subject, a qualitative methodology can provide a broader scope of knowledge about the topic exploration (Allwood, 2012).

Qualitative research methodology allows candidness to the participants so they may appreciate the clear objectives of the study and its purposes (Heath, Williamson, Williams, & Harcourt, 2018). Utilizing a qualitative methodology for this study allows for the advancement of theories relating to the topic and research questions. The use of semi-structured interview questions allowed the participants to speak freely about the subject of inquiry and provide valuable insights to the researcher. The information provided from the personal semi-structured interviews of directors, department heads, and employees of the organizations provides a narrative which can be utilized to determine funding, policy issues, and support. The data collected was analyzed to find themes and patterns conducive to the alignment of the problem, purpose, and research questions.

A case study would be ideal for this study as this method allows the researcher to choose the case then develop analyses to support the theoretical framework (Maxwell, 2013). Due to the nascent character of case study research, a distinctive ethical consideration must be considered because of the trust placed on the association involving the researcher and subject (Brown,

2010). A case study research design is used to generate an in-depth, multi-faceted understanding of a composite issue in its real-life perspective (Crowe et al., 2011).

Information from nonprofit organizations' websites utilized in the study was also be used in the data analysis process. The ultimate result of the qualitative research method is to gain a greater comprehension from the data collected from the semi-structured personal interviews (Clarke & Veale, 2018) and websites. The themes gathered from the data and websites will facilitate future dialogue about the influence and viability of support provided by nonprofits.

### **Significance of Study**

The final study has the potential to bring attention to community-based nonprofit organizations engaged in public good and the type of activities which are provided to assist non-citizen and undocumented immigrants. Stakeholders for nonprofit organizations including those who fund such entities are inclined to benefit from the study because of the primary sourced information provided from those involved in assisting the public. Stakeholders include elected officials, special interest groups, policy administrators, and low-level public servants who have influence with immigration enforcement and reforms. This study provides information to the stakeholders about the parallel activities by private firms and governmental agencies, the efficiency of the organizations, and financial resources. The information ascertained from the study provides stakeholders with a comprehensive understanding of the organizations' ability to provide public good and meet stakeholders needs.

The study will add to the body of existing literature about the public good nonprofit organizations supply to meet the needs of receiving stakeholders by advocating, lobbying, and collaborating. Utilizing a qualitative case study methodology, the study will contribute to the body of knowledge of how these organizations impact, influence, advocate, and collaborate in

the role as a vehicle for social change. Researchers examining issues in nonprofit organizations have similar intent and capacity as those involved in researching public administration issues (McNabb, 2017). Evidence provided by the study yielded and presented factual rather than ex-ante information gathered endogenously. Researchers, policy makers, practitioners, and beneficiaries will benefit from the study and appreciate the cross-disciplinary approach utilized to extend the current literature.

This research relied on Yin's (2014) case study design approach to explore the scope of the services provided, the influence on policymakers, and the difference those efforts made in the lives of non-citizen and undocumented immigrants. The multidimensional approach examined the internal and external perspectives of the organizations and the outcome and efficiency of its performance. This study focused on organizations that are engaged in public good, assisting and advocating for non-citizen and undocumented immigrants, and included those that lobby state legislators opposing or supporting immigration reforms. This study brings valuable information to the stakeholders who benefit the most from the services of community-based nonprofit organizations.

This study has the potential to influence policymakers who allocate funds for nonprofits and philanthropic organizations that provides funding. Financial resources are essential for community-based nonprofit organizations to operate and a principal component of acquiring such resources is fundraising and grants (Hommerova & Severova, 2019). The market environment impacts the amount of money flowing into nonprofit organizations from government and private sources and contribute significantly to the \$1.4 trillion sector of the U. S. economy (Faulk, Willems, Johnson, & Stewart, 2016).

Additionally, information gathered from the research affords a broader comprehension of resource allocations, collaboration, long-term effects, and characteristics of community-based nonprofit organizations. The manner that organizations distribute resources is a direct testimony of their efficiency and effectiveness as there are no shareholders or profit incentives (Faulk et al., 2016). Lee and Nowell (2015, p. 313) purported that additional research is needed to ascertain the scope of how nonprofit organizations are embracing a “more holistic performance measurement.”

Adopting a more realistic perspective of community-based nonprofit organizations’ variations to meet local conditions and serve the community where services are most needed is an essential part of this study. The information gathered from this study can be utilized by stakeholders and policymakers to expand their knowledge about community organizations, nonprofits, and the impact of the services provided to undocumented immigrants.

### **Theoretical Framework**

For many non-citizen and undocumented immigrants in the United States, access to services and benefits are either strictly limited or non-existent and left unfilled by governmental provisions (Chin, 2018; Crawford & Arnold, 2016; Enriquez, Vera, & Ramakrishnan, 2019; Gates, 2017). Due to their legal status, many non-citizens and undocumented immigrants do not qualify for certain government provided services and benefits, compelling them to seek assistance from community-based nonprofit organizations (Broder, Moussavian, & Blazer, 2015). The task of providing services, advocacy, and benefits to the public has inspired several theories that endeavor to elucidate the fundamental characteristics of organizational function in nonprofit organizations (AL-Tabbaa, Leach, March, 2014; Brown, Anderson, & Jo, 2016; Helmig, Ingerfurth, & Pinz, 2014).

Based upon a framework of public good theory, nonprofit organizations exist to provide services to the public when government cannot due to legal constraints, limited access, and other factors (Van Puyvelde & Brown, 2016). Public good theory, by the economist Burton Weisbrod, in 1975, was an early attempt to provide an elucidation of the place for nonprofit organizations in capitalist societies (Anheier, 2014; Weisbrod, 1988). Weisbrod's theory declared that when demand for public goods are not met by the government, nonprofit organization respond and meet the needs of the public (Kingma, 2003; Weisbrod, 1998). Weisbrod asserted that nonprofit organizations are "gap-fillers," as they provide a public good when government and public sectors are unlikely to yield such services (Anheier, 2014, p. 121; Weisbrod, 1997). The public good theory applies to the activities conducted by nonprofit organizations in assisting non-citizen and undocumented immigrants outside the realm of governmental control and aligns with the research questions of the study.

For this study, and to ascertain in what ways do nonprofit organizations in New York State assist undocumented immigrants in the legal and other challenges of daily life, Weisbrod's public good theory played a crucial role in defining how the nonprofit sector collectively provides services to those in need. Weisbrod (1988) asserts that in democratic societies, governments must provide equal access to everyone and make services obtainable to all citizens who are eligible. However, in the United States, undocumented immigrants and some non-citizens are exempted by law to access certain services available to others (Rubio-Hernandez & Ayon, 2016; Brabeck, Sibley, & Lykes, 2016; Valdez, 2016).

According to Matsunaga and Yamaguchi (2004), when government is limited in the conveyance of services, stakeholders on the demand side will turn to nonprofit organizations to fill the vacuity of their needs. Nonprofit organizations engaged in providing public goods arise

out of an economic order to correct governmental failure to deliver collective services to the community (Van Puyvelde & Brown, 2016). Balestri (2014) noted that nonprofit organizations are economic micro-organizations that exist in a distinctive category by providing public good and arise as a solution to market and governmental failure.

The combined action of all nonprofit organizations involved in providing services to undocumented and non-citizen immigrants by combining their resources results in a public good which brings value to society (Balestri, 2014). The public good theory applies to the activities conducted by nonprofit organizations in assisting non-citizen and undocumented immigrants, outside the realm of governmental control, and aligns with the research questions of the study. The public good theory guided this study of how nonprofits are engaged in advocacy in supporting or opposing comprehensive immigration reforms.

### **Definitions of Key Terms**

**Community-based organization** – a local public or private nonprofit organization which represents the community or portions of people in the community (Levine, 2016).

**Non-citizen immigrant** – A person who is legally in the United States but is not a citizen (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2019).

**Nonprofit organization** – legal entities which can be local, national or international, provide a public good, are exempt from taxes as set forth by the government, and have to be formal, private, non-profit distributing, self-governing, and voluntary (Balestri, 2014; Witesman, 2016).

**Public good** – a benefit which reaches everyone without exclusion and can be consumed by a large number of people (Weisbrod, 1975).

**Stakeholders** – Stakeholders in the nonprofit organizations include beneficiaries, donors and funding sources, community, employees and volunteers, federal, state, and local governments (NPO Central, n.d.).

**Undocumented immigrant** – a person who enters the United States or its territories without proper authorization; a person who remains in the United States or its territories after valid visa has expired; and those who were ordered deported and continue to reside in the United States or its territories (Department of Homeland Security, 2019).

### Summary

This qualitative case study focused on what ways do nonprofit organizations in New York State assist undocumented immigrants in the legal and other challenges of daily life. Prior research utilizing case studies on nonprofit collaboration have shown the scope of successful advocacy in support of immigration reform and the public good provided to communities through strategic alliances (Anheier, 2014; Chen & Rhoads, 2016; Chin, 2018; Rodriguez, McDaniel, & Ahebee, 2018; Terrana, 2017). Studies have examined advocacy and lobbying by nonprofits, however, the quantity of research into the advocacy and lobbying in support of immigration reform is limited. Further studies are needed to inquire about the levels of collaboration to determine the success and failure rates of nonprofits' advocacy and lobbying efforts (AL-Tabba, Leach, & March 2014). Current literature is deficient in inquiry and assessment of the degree to which techniques, approaches, and schemes are utilized by diverse nonprofits based upon the purpose of the organization (Almog-Bar & Schmid, 2014).

This study sought to ascertain how nonprofits utilize advocacy through lobbying of state legislators regarding supporting or opposing proposed laws on comprehensive immigration reform, and how they conceive of their influence. Information gathered will produce evidence



about the methods nonprofits in New York State collaborate with each other to influence policy changes that affect undocumented and non-citizen immigrants. Changes in policy impact the lives of thousands of families and have an economic influence on immigrant communities, investigation into a broader strategy on lobbying and advocacy efforts will benefit all nonprofits engaged in such activities.

Research indicates that when collective effort between stakeholders, organizations, and policymakers occurs, benefits to the community proliferates (AL-Tabba, Leach, & March, 2014; Buffardi et al., 2017; Faulk, Willems, Johnson, & Stewart, 2016; Trucios-Haynes, 2018). The evidence gathered in this study brought attention to support such assertions and about the growing phenomenon of nonprofits delivering services to those who may be excluded or ineligible for social services due to legal status. Evidence obtained from personal interviews and organizational websites provided insights into the amount of collaboration and the public good provided to non-citizens and undocumented immigrants. A detailed analysis of the literature in chapter two will provide a strong axiomatic base for the study and answer the research and interview questions.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### Introduction

#### Background

For hundreds of years, migration has been a major social phenomenon in the United States, and all the dramas, hardships, and challenges which come from the mass movement of millions of people were assuaged with the assistance of charitable organizations (de Graauw, 2015; Synder & Omoto, 2008; Schwingel, 2016). Markowitz (2015, p. 915) contended that a large number of people residing in the United States without legal rights are an integral part of the economy but exist in a “semi-permanent underclass” and have no voice in the political process. The paradox of mass migrations to the United States has led to dramatic increases in marginalized communities, and historically, community-based nonprofit organizations have been at the forefront in the delivery of public goods and other services to immigrants (Flores, 2015; Martin-Rogers, 2016; Gnes, 2016).

Nonprofit organizations further assist immigrants by lobbying state legislators regarding supporting or opposing proposed laws on comprehensive immigration reforms, in addition to collaborating with each other to influence policy change. Nonprofit advocacy groups fight for human rights for immigrants, refugees, and other marginalized people and fill gaps in services prohibited by law (Trucios-Haynes, 2018). Due to legal immigration status, noncitizen and undocumented immigrants are not eligible for many social services and depend on nonprofits to assist them in their daily lives (Browne, Glass, & Holyoak, 2016).

The inconclusiveness and shortage of literature on the approach, practice, and stratagem utilized by different nonprofit organizations in assisting and advocating for undocumented and

non-citizen immigrants necessitates further examination (Almog-Bar & Schmid, 2014; Crawford & Arnold, 2016; Garrow, 2014; Gnes, 2016; Roth et al., 2015; Levine, 2016). Prentice & Brudney (2017) suggested that the different types of strategies used by nonprofits to lobby legislators should be researched further and used in future planning and practice. Browne et al., (2016) asserted that future studies can add to the body of knowledge by integrating the worldview of stakeholders and policymakers involved in determining the legal, funding, and delivery aspects of services of nonprofits. Garrow (2014) noted that researchers need a broader comprehension on the relationship between racial composition in communities located in high poverty areas and governmental apportionment to nonprofits which serve the residents.

A broader comprehension of indicators which are used by lawmakers may assist nonprofits in anticipating legislative reforms and its effect on immigrants (Petzelka & Jacobs, 2016). Salvidar (2015) noted that future research may attempt to answer the questions about harsh anti-immigrant laws and its capacity to deny justice to a certain group of people. Gates (2017) claimed that nonprofits advocacy and support for social integration of undocumented women in the United States is often overlooked by researchers and should be examined further. Mason (2016) suggested that a more in-depth study should include stakeholders of nonprofits, and not just leaders to gain a broader understanding of the organizations' mission and results.

This section provides a review of the literature on nonprofits' advocacy, lobbying, and services extended to non-citizens and undocumented immigrants in the State of New York. The literature review is divided into the following main sections: (a) nonprofit organizations (b) stakeholders (c) advocacy (d) collaboration. Subsection will include immigrant organizations, immigrants, DACA, and driver's licenses. The articles and research reviewed accentuate

literature that relates to community-based nonprofit organizations providing services and advocating for undocumented immigrants in New York.

Current research is narrow in detailing and depicting how nonprofits play a crucial role in assisting undocumented immigrants in New York. Knowledge expanded by the completion of this study provides information and add to the literature about an important issue in the current American socio-political landscape. The knowledge gained through interviews with nonprofit leaders, board members, executive, and other personnel about the services provided, advocacy, lobbying, and collaboration will assist policymakers, academics, and other stakeholders to develop a broader understanding of the issue.

This chapter provides a comprehensive review of the pertinent literature and research to support this case study on exploring in what ways do nonprofit organizations in New York State assist undocumented immigrants in the legal and other challenges of daily life. This chapter starts with an examination of the relevant literature about nonprofits and highlights some of the scholarly theories about the activities nonprofits are engaged in. The literature review will continue with a synthesis and analysis of key topics which are pertinent to the study of nonprofits and how the services provided impact many immigrants' lives in New York. I will discuss the literature on (a) theoretical framework (b) nonprofit organizations (c) immigrants (d) advocacy (e) stakeholders of nonprofit organizations (f) summary.

### **Sources**

The search for literature was conducted by utilizing Northcentral Library databases, in particular: Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost, Eric, ProQuest, ProQuest Arts & Humanities Database, and Sage. NCU's Interlibrary Loan was utilized whenever access to a full-

text article was not immediately available through the library database. Keywords and phrases used in the search were: (a) nonprofit advocacy in public policy (b) community-based organizations (c) advocacy for non-citizens and undocumented immigrants (d) nonprofit lobbying for immigration reform (e) nonprofit advocacy for undocumented immigrants (f) social movements for immigrants (g) political representation for marginalized people (h) punitive immigration laws (i) challenges facing immigrants (j) struggle for immigrant rights (k) social services for new immigrants (l) advocacy for undocumented students (m) collaboration between nonprofit organizations (n) public good theory (o) stakeholders of nonprofits (p) nonprofit coalitions (q) performance of nonprofits (r) empowering undocumented immigrants (s) American immigration policy (t) immigrant integration (u) theories about nonprofits. Google searches, peer-reviewed journals, articles, books, dissertations, Wiley Online Library, and other university libraries were utilized as sources for the literature review.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Theoretical Framework**

No single theory applies to nonprofits, however, through a thorough literature search, the public good theory distinctively alluded to organizations that facilitate services to those in need. Theories about nonprofit organization engaged in the public good were propounded by Weisbrod (1975), Arrow (1963), Hansman (1987) and Salmon (1987), however, Weisbrod's theory is considered the seminal theory about nonprofits providing public goods (Ihlan, 2013). The fundamental concept which governs the provision of a public good evolved out of the spirit of volunteerism and altruism; the desire to help others to better themselves (Schwingel et al., 2017). Lin (1999) emphasized that providing public good to people is part of the neo-liberal economic theory, which states that investing in the public increases human capital that in turn will facilitate

good citizens and producers who contribute to society. Aligning its vision with that concept, many organizations and individuals aid those in need without seeking any financial compensation in return (Salmon, 1987).

Public good theory of nonprofits applies to multiple variations of altruism and volunteerism (Andreoni, 1990; Weisbrod, 1997; Lin, 1999). Attorneys and law students provide pro bono assistance to undocumented immigrants who need representation with the Deferred Action for Childhood arrivals program (DACA) and other legal matters (Volpp, 2019). Immigrants migrate to the United States with varying levels of social capital, skills, and personal resources which they combine with other to form local community organizations to assist each other or link to a larger established nonprofit (de Graauw & Bloemraad, 2017). Undocumented students engaged in providing public good are organizing and assisting others who are seeking higher education and seeking protection under the DACA legislation (Crawford & Arnold, 2016; Volpp, 2019).

Nonprofits devote the majority of their primary efforts in advocacy or providing services, a form of public good, however, all are engaged in some form of political activities that supports their principal mission (Andreoni, 1990; Lin, 1999; Fyall & McGuire, 2015). Nonprofits devote a large amount of efforts in providing public good by changing public policy and achieving desired results to the benefit of their receiving stakeholders (Salamon, 1987; Weisbrod, 1997; Levine, 2016). Almog-Bar and Schmid (2014) suggested that most nonprofits engage in public good through a combination of advocacy and services for a geographical entity or specific groups of marginalized people.

Weisbrod (1997) who developed the most well-known theory of nonprofits declared that the expansion of nonprofits come at a cost to the government as revenues are lost due to the tax

exemption status of the organizations. A formative voice in the study of nonprofits, Salamon (1987) claimed that the nonprofit sector is an extension of the welfare state's social benefits programs developed from the New Deal. However, Weisbrod (1997) concluded that the nonprofit sector is in a constant state of growth and are providing services typically associated with the government, especially to a more diverse population.

### **Immigrants**

Immigrants come to the United States with varying levels of social capital and become part of mainstream society through hard work, resourcefulness, and the assistance of family, prior immigrants, and community organizations (de Graauw & Bloemraad, 2017). Historically, community-based nonprofit organizations have assisted marginalized communities, especially recent immigrants with employment related and other assistance (Bloemraad, Silva, & Voss, 2016; Gnes, 2016). However, declining membership in labor unions has led to a rise in nonprofits collaborating with the unions to promote labor rights for immigrants and other low-income workers (de Graauw, 2015).

Marginalized people, especially recent immigrants are dehumanized by negative media stereotypes and political rhetoric, which leads to further ostracizing from mainstream society (Flores, 2015; Gomez & Perez, 2019). The current anti-immigration sentiments within American society depicts immigrants as criminals and freeloaders who do not contribute to the common good (Garrow, 2014). Punitive laws and policies are making life increasingly difficult for those who are not legally entitled to live in the United States (Valdez, 2016). Undocumented immigrants exist on the margins of society and are the most vulnerable sector of the population (Johnson, 2016).

Undocumented immigrants are blamed for many social problems in the United States and are powerless to defend themselves against the rhetoric (Flores, 2015). The current presidential administration has branded immigrants as “criminals, security risks, and an economic burden” (Kerwin & Nicholson, 2019, p. 1). Nonprofit advocacy groups are challenging anti-immigrant policies which create negative perceptions about immigrant communities in the United States (Gates, 2017).

Anti-immigration policy is obscured under a “legal framework that justifies and masks racist ideologies under the guise of the law” (Garcia, 2017, p. 474). Local police cooperate with federal immigration authorities to detain those suspected of residing in the United States illegally although many legal scholars consider the practice as racial profiling (Nguyen & Gill, 2016). Undocumented immigrants are now criminalized, and certain ethnic immigrant groups are targeted and considered a threat to national security (Ramirez, 2018). Many states followed the federal government and enacted their own immigration laws with most of them anti-immigrant and having a “heavy racial overtone” (Johnson, 2016, p. 69).

Reflecting the anti-immigrant sentiment in the United States many recent policies inflict stringent boundaries on access to essential social services used by immigrants (Menjivar, 2014; Brown, Glass, & Holyoak, 2016). The U.S. Congress voted to block undocumented immigrants from receiving Food Stamps, Medicaid (except in emergencies), all types of welfare funding, job training, unemployment insurance, and federal student financial aid (Salvidar, 2015). Nonprofits responded to federal government and human rights abuses due to such policies and challenged anti-immigrant laws which has made life difficult for many (Gates, 2017).

Abrajano and Hajnal (2015) suggested that fear of the rapid growth of Asians and Hispanic populations have created a social paradigm shift in attitudes towards immigrants and



led to support for harsh anti-immigrant policies. Enriquez (2015, p. 950) pointed out that policymakers are promoting discrimination against undocumented immigrants with the enactment of harsh laws that lead to “structural and symbolic inequality.” The negative attitudes towards immigrants led to several punitive laws which restrict their movement, access to certain basic services, and treatment as excluded members of society (de Graauw, 2014).

Many policies are conceived and applied to marginalized targeted populations who are construed as anomalous and a threat to American society (Salvidar, 2015). However, the anti-immigrant attitudes and laws have given rise to number of immigrant organizations and other nonprofits whose sole mission is to advocate for human rights and to influence immigration policies (Petrzelka & Jacobs, 2016). The aggressive assertions of lawmakers led to nonprofit advocacy groups using the courts in interpreting the constitutionality of policies which target undocumented immigrants (Markowitz, 2015). Advocacy groups argue that the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment is meant to protect everyone in the United States and a specific provision states no one should be detained based solely on racial characteristics (Nguyen & Gill, 2016).

Community-based nonprofits perform an essential role in assisting people in high-poverty, high-minority neighborhoods, especially communities with a high percentage of undocumented and non-citizen immigrants (Terrana, 2017; Negi et al., 2018). However, ethnicity, race, and legal status play a large part in local governance and undocumented immigrants are at the lowest echelons of society with limited rights and voice (Gast & Okamoto, 2016; Martin-Rogers, Evans, & Mastessich, 2016; Nichols, Uitermark, & van Haperen, 2018).

A troubling paradox for nonprofits is that often, those who are in urgent need of services may not have adequate access or fear of utilizing assistance offered to alleviate their social

conditions (Terrana, 2017). Children of immigrants are “particularly vulnerable” and face multiple challenges including language barriers, legal status, and fear of losing family members (Lin, Chiang, Lux, & Lin, 2018, p. 103). Ineligibility for federally funded programs and a shortage of nonprofit organizations providing services to undocumented immigrants has led to a challenging set of circumstances for those depending on assistance (Negi et al., 2018). However, regardless of the mounting challenges, organizations are emerging and developing methods of delivering services to those existing on the extreme boundaries of marginalization (Babis, 2014; de Graauw & Bloemraad, 2017; Gnes, 2016). Community-based nonprofits, at times assume a receptive role in welcoming immigrants and fostering integration at the local level by collaborating with several organizations (Rodriguez, McDaniel, & Ahebee, 2018).

### **Nonprofit Organizations**

The spirit of volunteerism has been part of American society since the earliest times and providing aid to those in need is rooted in the aspect of altruism (Schwingel et al., 2017). Nonprofit organizations provide assorted services to individuals, families, and communities as a support mechanism and safety net for those who are disadvantaged, exempted or not qualified for governmental services (Roth et al., 2015). Nonprofits are engaged in effecting social change by providing a public good in line with the charitable traditions of a free society (Mendel & Brudney, 2014). Over the past fifty years, nonprofits represent one of the most expansive growth sectors of industrialized societies and economies (Pressgrove & McKeever, 2016).

Nonprofits endeavoring to fight massive social injustice and create sweeping social change connect with social movements to gain support and achieve their advocacy goals (Selanathan & Lickel, 2019). Millward & Takhar (2019) emphasized that those who experience, oppression, exclusion, and injustice will engage in mutual efforts to oppose policies which they

believe leads to inequality. The desire to have their voices heard may advance into mobilization which transforms into social movements with the aim of sweeping political and social change (Sisco, Valesano, & Collins).

People in need of political representation, legal assistance, financial provision, and social services often seek aid from nonprofit organizations that provide a variation of services (Levine, 2016). The intersectionality of those needing assistance and the categorical failure of federal, state, and local governments to provide adequate social services to marginalized people had expanded to collaboration between nonprofits and government controlled social service providers (Faulk, Willems, Johnson, & Stewart (2016). Organizations frequently model each other in the public good environment to further their mission and goals of providing social service programs (Browne, Glass, & Holyoak, 2016).

Nonprofit organizations in the United States are legal entities that must comply with regulations of the Internal Revenue Service and section 501 of the tax code (Witesman, 2016). Balestri (2014, p. 187) noted that a nonprofit organization must possess five basic features: “formal, private, non-profit distributing, self-governing, and voluntary.” The nonprofit sector is the totality of “private, voluntary, and nonprofit organizations and associations” which operates parallel to the institutional services of federal, state, and local governments (Anheier, 2005, p. 4). Mendel & Brudney (2014) asserted that the mission of nonprofits is to serve the public, provide services, and create value by direct and indirect benefits to the community served. A key feature of a nonprofit organization is the inability to return profits or dividends to stakeholders as they must reinvest all excess revenues into the organization (Helmig, Ingerfurth, & Pinz, 2014). Nonprofits that provided the most public goods are ones which are more professionally organized and tend to accumulate more resources (Nichols, Uitermark, & van Haperen, 2019).

Hansmann (2000) theorized that the growth of industries in a modern economic society perpetuates the need for the presence of nonprofits which fill gaps in the delivery of services.

Providing necessities to the public is considered a fundamental role of government, however in particular sectors, nonprofits are more efficient in distributing public goods than municipal suppliers (Holcombe, 1997; Witesman, 2016). During the latter part of the twentieth century, industrialized western nations have witnessed the growth of nonprofit organizations providing public goods to marginalized people (Negi, Maskell, Goodman, Hooper, & Roberts, 2017; Reichman, 2010; Salamon, 1987). Public value to the community in the form a public good produce outcome that are beneficial to individuals and families through social networks and ties to the community (Faulk et al., 2016). Al-Tabbaa, Leach, & March (2014) emphasized that nonprofits are a conveyance that collaborate with other institutions to employ programs which make a distinctive contribution to society. Balestri (2014) concluded that nonprofits are the collective and voluntary strengths of individuals who direct their efforts toward the attainment of a universal goal with the use of various leadership and motivational methods.

Nonprofits have become an essential part of communities, providing a broad assortment of social services, and creating vitality for those who exist on the margins of society (Mendel & Brudney, 2014). Nonprofits influence public decisions and policy, maintain an open line of communication with policymakers, and promote community interest in public affairs which impact their lives. Community-based nonprofits engaged in providing public goods to those in need also customize their services to reflect the purpose and mission of the organization (Witesman, 2016).

Nonprofit are becoming more professional in management techniques and acquiring resources to fund their operations (Faulk, Willems, Johnson, & Stewart, 2015; Levine, 2017).

Organizations are employing effective methods to raise money, hiring professional managers, and employing lobbyists to influence governmental policies (Nicholls et al., 2018). Strategic alliances are developed with other organizations engage in similar public good and policy advocacy to foster long-term growth and success of their mission (Crawford & Arnold, 2016).

Some organization may start at the community level and evolve or collaborate with larger well-known national nonprofits to make a greater contribution to the public good. A fundamental reason why some nonprofit form strategic alliance is economic viability, the need to consistently secure funding and other resources (AL-Tabba et al., 2014). Nonprofits collaborate to have a greater influence in policy issues and to attract financial support for governmental agencies and private donors (Levine, 2016). Community-based immigrant organizations collaborate with national nonprofits to form “nationwide social movements” and conduct national campaigns to influence immigration policy (Nicholls et al., 2016, p. 985).

Babis (2016, p. 356) noted that immigrant organizations are versatile and “hybrid” in the distinction of objectives and services provided. The services offered by nonprofits are important and necessary in the current hostile, anti-immigrant atmosphere in the United States with the threat of deportation a reality for every undocumented family (Vannini et al., 2019). Some nonprofits are taking preemptive action by focusing on creating new policies in place of providing tangible public goods to the community (Buffardi et al., 2017).

Religious affiliated organization offer spiritual assistance, shelter, clothing, health services, legal, and educational support (Kerwin & Nicholson, 2019). Churches and other religious establishments have a long history of providing public goods and essentials for the needy. Mutual aid societies, where individuals pay a small fee for an assortment of services such

as medical care, unemployment support, funeral expenses, and doubles as a center for interaction for people of similar backgrounds (Babis, 2016).

The following sections in this literature review covers cultural, faith-based, and community-based organizations that are providing public goods and advocating for immigrant communities. Some of the examples of public goods reviewed will be the successful advocacy of nonprofits in securing driving privileges in some states for undocumented immigrants, the passage of the DACA legislation, immigration reforms, collaboration, and lobbying. The literature review concludes with identifying internal and external stakeholders of nonprofits, volunteers, the theoretical framework, and the summary.

### **Immigrant Organizations**

Nonprofits, regardless of the type of organization, engage in a variety of advocacy, social causes, and services to provide public good to groups, communities, and other stakeholders. Immigrant-serving, cultural, faith-based, and community organizations advocate, lobby, and collaborate to challenge anti-immigration laws and fight for immigration reforms. Immigrant-serving nonprofits are more effective when they focus on their stakeholders needs in the community by organizing, mobilizing, and advocating on their behalf (de Graauw, 2016). A large percentage of immigrant-serving nonprofits are classified under the IRS 501(c)(3) category which limits the levels and types of advocacy they may engage in (Maier, Meyer, & Steinbereithner, 2016). Many immigrant-serving nonprofits such as churches, clubs, cultural organizations, and community centers are staffed by volunteers from the communities in where they reside or work (Babis, 2016).

Close contact with the immigrant communities develop trust and connections with those in need of services but are fearful of interacting with government agencies or officials (Perreira & Pedroza, 2019). Community-based immigrant organizations advance opportunities which are restricted due to governmental policies and design programs that provide education, English language classes, and legal assistance at the local level (Gates, 2017). Community-based nonprofits dedicated to serving immigrants are multiplying and emerging as an integral support structure for those seeking assistance, services, and engagement in local issues (Gast & Okamoto, 2016). Through collaboration with other organizations and governmental agencies, immigrant-serving nonprofits facilitate and deliver accessible and culturally appropriate services to immigrant communities (Smith & Philips, 2016).

Immigrant focused nonprofits identify issues and problems affecting marginalized people by legitimizing their concerns through policy influence and interaction with governmental agencies (Salvidar, 2015). Many of these volunteer organizations help immigrants settle, find employment, and provide other basic services to mitigate some of the daily challenges they encounter (Negi et al., 2018). Some organization have narrowly defined purposes and are unequivocally categorized into distinct purposes depending on the type of public goods provided (Gast & Okamoto, 2016). Using race and ethnicity as defined perimeters, nonprofits develop structures of organizational legitimacy in representing undocumented immigrants' rights and other interests (Gnes, 2016).

Immigrant organizations act as a primary welcoming mechanism where recent immigrants, legal or otherwise, can interact, seek assistance, and maintain some cultural heritage with members of their own background (Babis, 2016). Immigrant organizations aid with DACA, legal representation to fight deportation, assistance with immigration paperwork, and a variety of

support to access social services programs (Crawford & Arnold, 2016; Negi et al., 2018). Community-based immigrant organizations provide a social support network and facilitate employment opportunities and lessen the cultural shock of moving into an unacquainted and many times hostile environment (Ho & Cheung, 2016).

Some organizations target specific laws such as those which bar undocumented immigrant students from attending higher education or receiving financial aid. Others may focus on attacking policies that promotes a racist and xenophobic view of citizenship which people of color are excluded (Cervantes, Alvord, & Menjivar, 2018; Chen & Rhoads, 2016; Santamaria-Graff, 2017). Gomez & Perez-Huber (2019) claimed that the current immigration laws are cruel, increase marginalization, and continue to proliferate uncertainty and psychological damage within the immigrant communities in the United States. Strict enforcement of federal immigration policies led to the development of organizations which provide legal assistance to undocumented immigrants and assist them in fighting deportation (Rubio-Hernandez & Ayon, 2015; Trucios-Haynes, 2018).

Immigrant-serving nonprofits may concentrate on geographical locations or type of services provided to a targeted population. Over the past decade, the number of immigrants living in the suburbs has risen dramatically, with poverty rates increasing proportionality to the number of newcomers to the United States (Roth et al., (2015). The increase in the immigrant population in the suburbs has created a greater need for social services which led to further growth of community-based nonprofits providing support (Garrow, 2014). Immigrants in the suburbs are further away from the larger, well-known nonprofits which cater primarily to vulnerable populations (Negi et al., 2018). The evolution of nonprofits in distributing public goods intended to ameliorate many of the challenges facing immigrants in the suburbs led to



further growth of immigrant-serving nonprofits providing support (de Graauw & Bloemraad, 2017; Gast & Okamoto, 2016; Witesman, 2016). Roth and Allard (2015) emphasized that few studies have examined the types and quality of services available to the large number of low-income immigrants in the suburbs.

Many immigrant organizations are differentiated by the stakeholders targeted and are divided and classified as cultural, faith-based, and community organizations whose focus is advocating and providing public goods to those in need. *Cultural organizations* are usually composed of people who share common characteristics such as nationality, ethnicity, and religion (Garrow, 2014; Rodriguez, et al., 2018). *Faith-based organizations* are primarily involved in providing food, clothing, and shelter to members of their congregations and then to the larger community in need (Terrana, 2017; Kerwin & Nicholson, 2019). *Community organizations* provide public goods through collective actions for a specific geographical area, although some community organization may engage in nationwide movements and advocacy (Swingel, et al., 2017; MacIndoe & Beaton, 2019). The following sections of this literature review briefly describes some of the public goods and advocacy provided to noncitizens and undocumented immigrants.

**Cultural Organizations.** The immigrant population in the United States has grown significantly in recent years, totaling about 13.5 percent of the population (Roth, Park, & Grace, 2018). The changes in the demographics of many cities and towns throughout the United States has led to the growth of cultural organizations which effectively exist to provide support and foster social integration of immigrants (de Graauw, 2016). Residing in poor, disadvantaged communities limits the “quality of life and social mobility” of immigrants in addition to limiting government funding for immigrant-serving nonprofits (Garrow, 2014, p. 383).

Experiences with discrimination, fear of legal status, and trouble adapting to a new culture, lead immigrants to seek comfort among those with similar backgrounds and difficulties (Ho & Cheung, 2016). Cultural organizations provide an external environment that creates social links to the community and provide a network of information and benefits (Faulk et al., 2016). Immigrant-serving cultural nonprofits provide a social support network of people and resources to assist those who are unfamiliar with the “discriminatory-prone environment” they encounter (Ho & Cheung, 2016).

Cultural organizations may provide individual services, and coordinate assistance for everyday functions, employment, and various other resources to assist members of the community (Mellinger, 2017). Cultural organizations may also act as an advocacy forum for mobilizing immigrants to engage community leaders and policymakers about immigration reforms and unjust laws (Gast & Okamoto, 2016). Some cultural organizations may manage government funding in a coherent manner to leverage maximum benefits for their stakeholders (Van Puyvelde & Brown, 2016; de Graauw & Bloemraad, 2017).

**Faith-based Organizations.** A different type of community-based nonprofit, local religious organizations, besides providing food, clothing, and shelter, offer extensive legal assistance and support for undocumented immigrants (Kerwin & Nicholson, 2019). Regardless of the mission of the organization, collaboration and coalition are utilized frequently to achieve specific targeted goals (Gates, 2017). Faith-based community organizations have always provided support for immigrants and are an advocacy force for human rights (Kerwin & Nicholson, 2019). Along with other community-based and larger nonprofits, they waged an arduous campaign for immigrant rights in the past decade, challenging deportation for immigrants who came to the United States as children (Babis, 2014; Vannini et al., 2019).

Propelled by the harsh anti-immigrant and “inhumane immigration policies” of the past decade, faith-based organizations function as a support mechanism for undocumented students and other immigrants (Gomez & Perez, 2019, p. 2; Nguyen, 2019).

Collaborating and cooperating with other organizations to form stronger alliances, faith-based organizations consolidated undocumented students’ movements across the nation and assisted them in becoming highly visible advocates for access to higher education (Crawford & Arnold, 2016; Nicholls et al., 2019). Faith-based organizations utilized arguments taken from religious texts that support the premise that strangers must be welcomed, and efforts should be taken to assist them with social integration into the host society (Clapp, 2019).

**Community Organizations.** Community organizations act as “nonelected neighborhood representatives” for disadvantage communities in assisting them with employment, housing, medical care, and other social services (Levine, 2016). Apart from providing material assistance, community organizations also engage in advocacy for their stakeholders in a wider arena to influence policy changes with government agencies and policymakers (Mason, 2016). According to Mendel and Brudney (2014), such organizations are engaging in providing public good, rebuilding faith in the justice system, and facilitating equal opportunities for everyone.

Due to rising fears about harsh anti-immigrations laws, community organizations assuage immigrants and act as a reliable foundation for social support from psychological stress associated with the current negative stereotypes of immigrants (Greenberg, Feierstein, & Voltolini (2019). Community organizations may act as a foundation for larger nationwide movements by empowering stakeholders to organize and attract support from other organizations (Selvanathan & Lickel, 2019). The structural characteristics of community organizations may be

based on race, national origin, religion, and other phenotypes with the primary goal of providing opportunities for social mobility (Roth et al., 2018).

### **Advocacy**

Nonprofits are an integral part of the constantly changing political and economic environment of the United States, where policy advocacy is a necessary instrument utilized to develop associations with public officials to further their cause (MacIndoe & Beaton, 2019). Advocacy is frequently considered a nonprofit's fundamental public mission with the intent to change unjust legislative decisions by safeguarding that all stakeholders' wellbeing is reflected in the outcome (Newmayr, Schneider, & Meyer, 2015). Policy advocacy for nonprofits involves influencing social and political leaders to impact outcomes and reforms in governmental policies that affect their stakeholders (Greenspan, 2014; Van Puyvelde & Brown, 2016). Nonprofits rely on a multifaceted set of philosophies about structuring their methodology in the process of influencing opinions and worldviews about specific policies (Ripberger, Gupta, Silva, Jenkins-Smith, 2014).

Utilizing a top-down organizational structure, nonprofits' advocacy campaign for policy changes were successful in unifying community-based and regional organizations to develop strategy and effectively influence policies (Nicholls & Fiorito, 2015). Greenspan (2014) asserted that a nonprofit's capital, such as personnel, resources, and cultural composition defines and determines the level of the organization success in advocacy. The complex interactive effects of various nonprofits' strategies differ in methodology and implementation according to the issue or policy that the organizations are attempting to influence (Nicholls & Fiorito, 2015).

Over the past decade, as anti-immigration policies intensified, a strong advocacy movement evolved and mobilized among undocumented students. The advocacy movement attracted students from all over the United States who began protesting harsh immigration laws and calling for policy reforms (Ashar, 2017). Organizations, through collaborative efforts in advocating for undocumented immigrants merged with all types and sizes of advocacy groups to create larger movements and command a greater presence with policymakers (Cha, 2016). The joint efforts of organizations across the United States was an influential component of policy reforms aimed at assisting undocumented students and the passage of the DACA legislation (Nicolls et al., 2019).

Communities with large undocumented immigrant populations lead to the creation of advocacy groups concerned with aiding and influencing immigration policy reforms (Trucios-Haynes, 2018). Common demographic characteristics and undocumented legal status can foster advocacy through structural networks of residents and families leading to a formal community-based organization (Abrego, 2016). Social identities of a group can also be the source of collective actions which progresses into a social movement that strives for the development of political reforms (Jimenez-Moya, Miranda, & Drury, 2019).

Gottlieb (2015) asserted that although there has been an explosive growth in nonprofits, social changes were more likely caused by movements rather than organizations. Policy agendas set by organizations are defined by needs of a population who are excluded from the policy process and whose voices are not able to reach lawmakers (Gates, 2017). Representation, structure, and organization necessitate leadership which are most likely facilitated by nonprofits that are experienced in public advocacy (Jensen, 2017). However, Sisco, Valesano, and Collins

(2019) advised that nonprofits should exhibit a sincere concern about a social movement and not engage in activities purely for attention and additional resources.

Other nonprofit advocacy groups formed to counter the current anti-immigrant sentiments and policies aimed at members of their communities (Gates, 2017). MacIndoe and Beaton (2019) asserted that advocacy emerge from political opportunity and become a social movement due to the opportune time and circumstances. Community advocacy groups become a driver of social change by soliciting public goods for marginalized people and facilitating social well-being (Mendel & Brudney, 2014). Mason (2016) argued that nonprofit advocacy organizations have developed into a structural partnership with policymakers and the community in which they serve. Nonprofits advocacy for social benefits reflect the demographic composition of the communities and the stakeholders who are dependent upon them (Garrow & Hasenfeld, 2014). The reflection of the community justifies the attention given to certain issues and the effectiveness of public good distributed (Almog-Bar & Schmid, 2014).

Many nonprofits advocating for the rights of undocumented and noncitizens are citing the United States Constitution as a reliable source to support their argument that anti-immigration laws violate human rights and are unconstitutional (Wong et al., 2019). Saldivar (2015) contended that the Constitution is ambiguous about the question of citizenship and illegality, and who can be afforded equal protection under the law as specified by the *Fourteenth Amendment*. de Graauw (2014) argues that everyone on American territory including undocumented immigrants are protected by the *Fourteenth Amendment* and the *Civil Rights Act of 1964*.

Immigrant advocacy organizations are challenging federal laws meant for citizens and questioning the “racialized bio-political divide” between native-born Americans and immigrants (Valdez, 2016, p. 642). Markowitz (2015) argued that states can pass laws which discriminates

against immigrants and is contrary to the tenets of the constitution and can be challenged in federal courts. An effective collective action to create social change and confronting injustice is the public protest, a method which was used successfully in the fight for the passage of the DACA legislation (Crawford & Arnold, 2016; Buffardi et al., 2017; Selvanathan & Lickel, 2019; Gomez & Perez-Huber, 2019). However, Selvanathan and Lickel (2019) cautioned that protest can also create a negative impact on the organizations and causes due to public disruption and sometimes violence.

**Lobbying.** Lobbying is a form of advocacy which, for nonprofits, has specific IRS rules governing the practice and levels of activities which are permitted by organizations. According to the National Association of County and Health Officials (2016), although all forms of lobbying contains advocacy, “not all advocacy is lobbying.” Effective lobbying strategies by nonprofits to reform immigration laws have led to policy changes in some states where organizations exert influence on lawmakers (Prentice & Brudney, 2017). Historically, nonprofits played a “limited role” in policymaking due to constraints by law governing amounts and types of lobbying, lack of human and financial resources, and expertise (Buffardi et al., 2014).

Prentice and Brudney (2017) conducted a study which examined lobbying by nonprofits in an attempt to ascertain types of strategies, motivation, societal benefits, and policymakers targeted. According to the Internal Revenue Service (2019), a nonprofit can lose their section 501(c)(3) status if a large percentage of their advocacy involves attempts to influence legislation or lobbying. Minimal amounts of lobbying are allowed, if viewed by the IRS as excessive, the nonprofit is at risk of losing tax-exempt status. Nonprofits may engage in lobbying for the benefit of their stakeholders at various levels by registering their organization with the IRS (Prentice & Brudney, 2017). Nonprofits can affect public policy and not endanger tax-exempt

status by conducting information sessions, meeting, distributing literature in a manner which is not considered interfering or influencing legislation (IRS, 2018).

**Anti-immigrant Laws.** Over the past decade, the federal government and state legislators progressively passed harsh and punitive immigration laws to curb immigration, discourage others from entering and staying illegally, and punish those who remain undocumented (Rodriguez, 2013). Fear, negative stereotypes, political rhetoric, and media portrayals of immigrants as a threat to the nation, have led to the rise in anti-immigrant legislation on all levels of government (Sherman & Wilkes, 2015). Federal immigration authorities, local law enforcement agencies, and social services agencies are cooperating in some jurisdictions to identify undocumented immigrants and assist in efforts to deport them (Browne et al., 2016). States and municipalities implement policies that make life increasingly difficult of undocumented immigrants such as discontinuance of bi-lingual education, English only venues, and aggressive insertions of discriminatory policies allowable by law (Markowitz, 2015; Roth et al., 2018).

Claims of immigrants committing violent crimes, using social services without paying taxes, and taking jobs from Americans reinforce negative attitudes and foster policymakers' decisions in passing anti-immigrant legislation (Twersky, 2019). However, as Broder, Moussavian, and Blazer (2015) emphasized, undocumented immigrants are not eligible for driver's licenses in most states, Food Stamps, Medicaid, and several welfare programs. Although the researchers noted that in case of emergencies and when young children are involved, federal law bars withholding assistance to anyone regardless of legal status.

Challenging many anti-immigrant laws and advocating for the rights of immigrants, nonprofits exert their influence on several venues and levels of lawmakers through advocacy,



lobbying, and organizing opposition (Prentice & Brudney, 2017). Nonprofits also counter government policies that bar certain services to undocumented immigrants by providing financial support, housing, healthcare and employment referrals (Jensen, 2017). Programs providing legal assistance to those in need are often facilitated by nonprofits that are staffed by legal professionals or have an affiliation to law schools whose students volunteer to assist (Trucios-Haynes, 2018).

**Driver's Licenses.** Another notable victory for nonprofits advocating for immigrants' rights is the granting of driving privileges to undocumented immigrants in New York State (Wang, 2019). The fight to allow undocumented immigrants to legally drive has led to a series of collaboration among nonprofit advocacy groups nationwide as only twelve states and the District of Columbia previously allowed driving privileges without consideration for legal immigration status (Mosquera, 2014; Caceres & Jameson, 2015; Broder Cashin, Kohli, & Varsanyi, 2015). After an arduous advocacy campaign, community-based nonprofits and other immigrant advocacy groups challenged the state's ban on driver's licenses for undocumented immigrants and forced the state legislators to repeal the ban (Coronado, 2019).

According to the Fiscal Policy Institute, a nonprofit organization in New York, allowing undocumented immigrants access to driver's licenses will increase revenue for the state, make the roads safer, and improve the prospects for social integration (Kallick & Roldan, 2017). The Fiscal Policy Institute is one of many nonprofits striving to create awareness of state and local policies, and the impact certain legislation may have on the lives of citizens and noncitizens (Fiscal Policy Institute, 2019). Gonzalez and Marguiles (2016) reasoned that allowing undocumented immigrants access to driver's licenses will increase public safety on the roads and create a progressive commercial impact on local economies. Nonprofits using research and data

from prior studies, vigorously lobbied state lawmakers to pass legislation allowing undocumented immigrants to legally drive (Escobar, 2014; Petrzelka & Jacobs, 2016).

Valdez (2016) suggested that many recent anti-immigration laws are unjust and racist, a common theme which many other studies about nonprofits assisting undocumented immigrants have noted. Many localities are passing legislation which increases cooperation with federal immigration authorities and provide support in the apprehension of undocumented immigrants (Wong et al., 2019). Vasquez et al. (2019, p. 37) asserted that the federal government has “racialized illegality” in the targeting undocumented immigrants and developed particular policies which treats them as criminals. Steusse and Coleman (2014) asserted that the underlying reason why driving privileges are withheld from undocumented immigrants is to give police probable cause to detain them at traffic checkpoints and turn them over to immigration authorities. Nguyen and Gill (2016) asserted that the *Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment* applies to law enforcement personnel who must provide equitable protection for everyone in their communities regardless of legal status.

Using such premise as a rallying call, immigrant organizations in Utah challenged anti-immigrant policies and won a major victory when the state’s legislature passed a series of laws which are pro-immigrant (Petrzelka & Jacobs, 2016). Allowing undocumented immigrants access to driver’s licenses, barring police to inquire about immigrant status when someone is detained or arrested, and allowing them to work unhindered, Utah joined California in becoming an immigrant friendly state (Chavez, Barbery Montoya, Caguana Baquerizo, & Balas Leon, 2017). Cooperation, collaboration, and advocacy by several immigrant nonprofits led to the passage of such legislation which guarantees certain rights for every citizen (Browne et al., 2016).

**Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA).** The desire to acquire higher education regardless of legal immigration status emerged into a national movement for immigration rights and developed into an organized student advocacy backed by powerful community-based and nationwide organizations (Nicholls et al., 2019). The power dynamics of such movements garnered attention from nationwide advocacy organizations and forced debates which led to policymakers designing legislation to address the concerns of the nonprofits' supported organizations (Nguyen, 2019). Such collaboration, cooperation, and strong advocacy became the basis for the creation of federal legislation attempting to mitigate the situation and led to the passage of the DACA program (Babis, 2014; Levine, 2016; Mellinger, 2017; Prentice & Brudney, 2017; Volpp, 2019; Nguyen, 2019; Gomez & Perez-Huber, 2019). Considered one of the most successful social movements in the United States, undocumented youths positively influenced many state and local legislation, and were the largest factor in pressuring the Obama administration to pass the DACA legislation (Nicholls & Fiorito, 2015).

The passage for the DACA legislation demonstrated the power of collaboration by nonprofits collective actions used to attract public attention to a cause (Crawford & Arnold, 2016). Selvanathan and Lickel (2019) claimed that protests and other collective actions became social movements which drew national attention to the cause and fostered the conditions which led to passage of DACA. The DACA legislation was a victory for nonprofits in influencing comprehensive immigration reforms (Nicholls & Fiorito, 2015). Pressure, advocacy, and lobbying by community-based nonprofits led to passage of this legislation which created a path to citizenship for hundreds of thousands of undocumented students (Clapp, 2019). Under this program, those who entered the United State at an early age and are undocumented may apply for a temporary stay of deportation under the new laws, if certain conditions are met (Volpp,

2019). The protection afforded students from the new DACA legislation led to more students completing high school and attending higher educational institutional establishments, especially in regions where strong influence by nonprofits existed (Enriquez et al., 2019).

Nonprofits relish this victory because passage of the legislation resulted in the form of a public good, the ability of families to stay together (Flores, 2015). Gomez and Perez (2019) noted that many DACA recipients derived an assortment of benefits from the program, leading to the conclusion that many will make the transition into higher education and legal employment. However, Kuelzner and Houser (2019) cautioned that should the current president's strict immigration stance target DACA recipients, as many as 800,000 people are may be deported from the United States.

**Immigration Reforms.** Beginning in 1986, several major pieces of legislation were passed at the federal level which were intended to distinguish undocumented immigrants from citizens and exclude them from membership in society (Nguyen, 2019). Restrictions on employment, social services, driver's licenses, and education were put in place with the intent of discouraging illegal immigration (de Grauw, 2014). Workplace raids, traffic stops, and interaction with governmental agencies led to possible detention, arrest, and deportation (Abrego, 2016). The current presidential administration has invoked a "zero-tolerance" policy toward anyone who entered the United States illegally (Gomez & Perez-Huber, 2019, p. 2). Policies such as interior immigration enforcement are a potential barrier to assimilation, social integration, and hampers efforts in the path toward full citizenship (Markowitz, 2015).

However, nonprofits are fighting back with efforts at immigration reforms and have shown some success in states and municipalities. Organization, mobilization, and advocacy have led to the implementation of immigrant-friendly reforms in California, making the state one of

the most pro-immigrant states in the nation (Enriquez et al., 2019). Reforms in healthcare, driver's licenses, employment, and freedom of movement were secured by immigrant-serving nonprofits fighting for rights of undocumented immigrants (Ramakrishnan & Colbern, 2015).

Buffardi et al. (2017) suggested that nonprofits are actively engaged in proactive efforts to influence public policy, however little evidence exist that such exertion led to significant reforms. Mellinger (2014) noted that although nonprofits were successful in some areas, the lack of research suggests that organizations are not putting enough resources to advocate for policy reforms. Fyall and McGuire (2015) asserted that organizations that network or collaborate with other tend to have more success influencing policy reforms. De Graauw & Bloemraad (2017) argued that “public-private partnership” is the most successful format for influencing policy reforms nationwide by fostering the integration of immigrants into mainstream society. Garrow and Hasenfeld (2014) contended that nonprofits deliberately attempt to circumvent antagonistic positions on public policy and focus on social benefits and funding. Buffardi et al. (2017) examined the data of 400 nonprofits engaged in influencing public policy and concluded that the organizations have a high success rate when they target specific policies.

### **Collaboration**

Cooperation is the framework which all societies are founded upon, and the comprehension, elucidation, and promotion of the associated concepts are fundamental for scholarly understanding (Chen, 2016). Greenspan (2014), noted that problems for people in the upper echelons of society have more influence on nonprofits' agenda than those on the margins of society. However, Millward and Takhar (2010, p. 1) noted that unjust laws and discriminative policies are often the facilitator for involvement in cooperative movements that produce cognizant action towards “social, cultural and political change.” Efforts to enact immigration

reforms often necessitate cooperation and collaboration between nonprofits to influence policymakers personal contact (Browne et al., 2016; Levine, 2016; Mellinger, 2017).

Community-based nonprofits that provide social services also involve their resources in policy advocacy in fighting for human rights and fair treatment of immigrants (Chin, 2018). Nonprofits collaboration on specific issues generally result in a higher success rate in political involvement (Fyall & McGuire, 2015). Although the primary role is that of providing public goods, nonprofits engage in coalitions, collaborations, and policy advocacy. Nonprofit advocacy form strategic partnerships and collaborate with other human rights organizations to engage lawmakers in dialogue to identify violations of policy indifference to the struggles of undocumented and non-citizen immigrants (Trucios-Haynes, 2018).

An example of successful collaboration by nonprofit to influence policy is the passage of a law in California which has become the nation's leader in advancing rights of immigrants (Colbern & Ramakrishnan, 2018). California had the strictest anti-immigrant law in the United States for many years, however, through years of vigilant advocacy, nonprofits were able to influence policy to an extent which has led to the state becoming the most receptive place for immigrants (Cha, 2015, Wong, Shklyan, Silva, & Espino, 2019). Since the mid-1990s, undocumented immigrants in California can attend college, acquire a driver's licenses, access adequate health care, and have layers of protection against detention and deportation (Enriquez, Vera, & Ramakrishnan, 2019).

Starting in the 1960s, the federal government has partnered with community-based nonprofits in the management of social services such as affordable housing and other economic development projects (Levine, 2016). Al-Tabba et al. (2014) concurred that the collaboration between business and nonprofits develop in an environment which simultaneously strives to

implement social programs and create social policy changes in society. Many nonprofit organizations cooperate with government agencies, businesses, and influential members of the community to gain support for social change, find volunteers, or receiving stakeholders (Reichman, 2010). Faulk et al (2016) noted that nonprofits strategically develop networks through collaboration with other nonprofits in an external environment to create a stronger presence with stakeholders who contribute to resources.

Nonprofits must traverse the fragile equilibrium concerning their purpose and ideals in order to understand the development and effects of public policy on their stakeholders (Stewart & Jameson, 2012; Johansen & Nielsen, 2016; Costa & da Silva, 2018). Advocating for a large segment of stakeholders, nonprofits challenge policies deemed unjust toward immigrant families and children who are especially susceptible to many obstacles of social integration in the United States (Lin et al., 2018). Collaboration provide additional strength to nonprofits in the advocacy fight for immigration reforms and allows organizations to utilize resources which may be difficult to procure themselves (Fyall & McGuire, 2015).

A classic promulgation of the influence of nonprofits' collaboration, advocacy, and commitment to help marginalized people was a Supreme Court decision in 1982, *Plyler v. Doe* (Calabresi & Barsky, 2017). The high court ruled that based on the *Fourteenth Amendment* of the United States Constitution, guaranteeing equal protection under the law; no child from kindergarten through twelfth grade shall be denied an education in a public school regardless of legal immigration status (Nguyen, 2019). However, the guarantee of an education for undocumented students ends at the completion of high school and does not provide any considerations for higher education and beyond (Crawford & Arnold, 2016). Lacking legal status, undocumented students were prevented from acquiring higher education which obstructed

assimilation, social integration, employment opportunities, and led to long term economic and social marginalization (Nguyen, 2019).

### **Stakeholders of Nonprofit Organizations**

Nonprofits engaged in advocacy and the delivery of public goods maintain relationships with stakeholders on multiple echelons and categories. Stakeholders can include people and organization that fund nonprofits, individuals who are responsible for the operations and management of the nonprofit, and those who receive public goods provided by the organizations (Mason, 2016). Stakeholders who provide funding and are engaged in administration of nonprofits are considered internal stakeholders, while those who receive services are deemed external stakeholders. A large segment of stakeholders are volunteers, who can hold positions from board member to those delivering services on an individual basis and are considered both internal and external stakeholders. The following sections will discuss internal and external stakeholders, followed by a description of nonprofit volunteers.

**Internal Stakeholders.** Nonprofits have a responsibility to answer to many stakeholders and must utilize a broad range of accountability mechanisms which closely aligns with their mission and success (Costa & da Silva, 2018). Internal stakeholders are individuals who are dedicated to implementing the mission of a nonprofit. Various relationships exist between stakeholders and nonprofits in identifying interests, interaction, and the complexity of their inter-organizational assistance to the community (Johansen & Neilsen, 2016). Board members, staff members, volunteers, and donors are considered internal stakeholders (Van Puyvelde & Brown, 2016).



Nonprofits must constantly provide accountability to stakeholders to gain continued support and sustenance from financial and non-financial backers (Chen, Harrison, & Jiao, 2018). For a nonprofit to maintain and increase legitimacy, the organization must integrate stakeholders' perspective in the decision-making process and provide transparency to all parties involved (Leardini, Moggi, & Rossi, 2019). However, involvement in the community, participation, and representation of stakeholders augments the legitimacy of a nonprofit in its commitment to provide public goods to those in need (Cho & Auger, 2017).

A common theme found in the literature about stakeholders and nonprofits are accountability and legitimacy. The growth of nonprofits has brought attention and concern to their governance and responsibilities to stakeholders (Leardini et al., 2019). Nonprofits must consistently provide transparency and accountability to their stakeholders by amalgamating a close working relationship to develop stronger legitimacy. The perceived relationship between the nonprofits and the prominence of stakeholders are a key component of funding and the public's acceptance of the organizations' legitimacy (Cho & Auger, 2017).

Reaction to wide-ranging changes in public awareness influences nonprofits' advocacy in shaping policy agenda and the development of strategies to maximize positive relationship outcomes (Guo & Saxton, 2017). Failure to consider stakeholders' perception to the organization may lead to substantial negative notoriety and economic loss (Chen et al., 2018). The strategic methods which nonprofits choose to utilize in communicating with stakeholders, impact exposure, name recognition, and funding (Carboni & Maxwell, 2015).

**External Stakeholders.** External stakeholders are individuals or groups who are served by a nonprofit with eligibility and implementation established by the mission of the organization (Van Puyvelde & Brown, 2016). The relationship between nonprofits and external stakeholders

is based on a model of trust which dictates the organizations act as a custodian of their resources because they are “entrusted with those resources to benefit the public good” (Buffardi et al., 2017; Mellinger, 2014; Pressgrove & McKeever, 2016, p. 194;).

External stakeholders are considered beneficiaries of nonprofits because their needs drive the demand for services provided in place of government deficiency (Valeau, Eynaud, Chatelain-Ponroy, & Sponem, 2019). Wellens and Jegers (2014) noted that when nonprofits are pressured to cater to the needs of a stakeholder group, the result often creates a negative impact on the organization. Tremblay-Boire and Prakash (2015) emphasized that accountability and transparency develop into positive outcomes and strengthens the relationship between external stakeholders and organizations.

Nonprofits’ constant search for new revenue and the government’s declining support led to a progressively multifaceted affiliation with the rest of the economy (Weisbrod, 1997). The growth of nonprofits in recent years has led to stakeholders showing increase concerns about the financial and social importance of the organization they have a vested interest within (France & Regmi, 2019). Fyall (2017) asserted that external stakeholders can also be the government that provides funding yet depend on the nonprofit to distribute resources and services to stakeholders in need. The government, by providing funding becomes a providing stakeholder, and by allocating funds for individuals to utilize nonprofits’ services is also a receiving stakeholder. The interaction of governmental agencies with nonprofits in providing services to individuals is a cycle of economic movement with all parties having the role of stakeholder.

Nonprofits support programs which promote the rights of stakeholders at the local level by engaging directly with lawmakers (Trucios-Haynes, 2018). Attracting attention from the public is essential for social change as nonprofits’ message must be received by current and

potential stakeholders as a precondition for setting agenda and policies of the organization (Guo & Saxton, 2017). Community-based organizations, lawyers, and immigrant advocates utilize media and other strategies to influence social policy changes that corresponds with their mission and agenda (Campbell, Lambright, & Wells, 2014). Undocumented immigrants and noncitizens groups consists of the largest portion of stakeholders for nonprofits at the local level (Rodriguez, McDaniel, & Ahebee, 2018). Catering to stakeholders' needs, community-based nonprofits challenge many immigration policies at the state level and encourage the resistance to federal anti-immigrant laws (Colbern & Ramakrishnan, 2018).

**Volunteers.** The voluntary sector plays an important role in the American economy with the full support of all levels of government creating an intricate system of collaboration (Mendel & Brudney, 2014; Salamon, 1987). Many community-based and immigrant-serving organizations consists of volunteers whose main methods are protest marches, rallies, and other types of organizing and large gatherings (de Graauw, 2016; Neumayr et al., 2015). The inclusive efforts of volunteers lead to influencing many progressive policies enacted in populated immigrant communities and cities (Gast & Okamoto, 2016). Volunteers in nonprofits represent a large portion of the human capital aspect in organizations, and their efforts are effective and many times, autonomous (Henderson & Sowa, 2019).

Volunteers may comprise of immigrants with common cultural and racial characteristics who strengthen the relationships between and nonprofits and communities (Garrow, 2014). Christensen, Paarlberg and Perry (2017) observed that volunteers who have community, family, ethnic, and other commonalities with stakeholders they serve, tend to have a higher level of motivation and effectiveness in providing service. Volunteers are also an essential component of coalition building between nonprofits, communities, and governmental agencies in the delivery

of services (Buffardi et al., 2015; Cha, 2016; Fyall & McGuire, 2015; Mellinger, 2014).

Although volunteers are a vital component of nonprofits, a large percentage of organizations do not use or totally abstain from utilizing volunteers and rely on professionals for operational functions (Nesbit, Christensen & Brudney, 2018).

Pressgrove and McKeever (2016) noted that perception of nonprofits' leadership and administrators often are a key factor in determining the quantity of donations. Mellinger (2017) noted that organizations with administrators who were knowledgeable about lobbying engaged in more advocacy, had a greater impact on the community, and were able to secure more funding. Many nonprofits are staffed by volunteer administrators and managers who serve for the mere satisfaction of providing a public good to the community (Miller-Stevens & Ward, 2019). However, scarce literature exists from prior scholarly works about what motivates individuals to volunteer and serve on nonprofit boards (Brown, 2014).

## **Summary**

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to ascertain in what ways nonprofit organizations assist undocumented immigrants in the legal and other challenges of daily life. Additionally, the study sought to ascertain in what ways do nonprofit organizations in New York State advocate for undocumented immigrants through the lobbying of state legislators regarding supporting or opposing proposed laws on comprehensive immigration reform, and how do they conceive of their influence. Conclusively, this study attempted to explain in what ways do nonprofit organizations in New York State collaborate with other nonprofit organizations to influence policy changes regarding undocumented immigrants and what difference do they think that this makes.

Most nonprofit organizations in New York engage in a form of public good. Some organizations focus on a specific group, while others provide services to those who are exempted by law, especially people who exist on the extreme margins of society. Issues such as DACA, driver's licenses for undocumented immigrants, and comprehensive immigration reforms have become national movements through cooperation and collaboration of nonprofits. This literature review focused on nonprofits that mainly assist undocumented and non-citizen immigrants with social and legal issues affecting their lives.

The literature reviewed began by examining prior studies that focused on nonprofits' advocacy and lobbying for undocumented immigrants, in addition to successes in influencing legislation on immigration reforms. Studies on nonprofits lobbying, advocacy, and collaboration movements that challenge laws, policies, and restrictions aimed at targeted groups were reviewed to find similarities in operational approach. The literature demonstrated that social movements begin with grassroots organizing which gains support from nonprofits to move forward and become national movements attempting to create massive changes in public policy.

The conventional model used to deliver social services has become outdated in recent years with the government increasingly collaborating with nonprofits to provide public goods to individuals and communities. Nonprofits are becoming key actors in the process of advocating for immigrant rights and play a significant role in influencing lawmakers. This study is intended to provide information to policymakers and community leaders about the importance of nonprofits. The evidence collected will support the research questions and shed new light on the importance of nonprofits in delivering services and advocating for noncitizen and undocumented immigrants.

The following chapter presents a composite depiction of the research method and design that will be used in the study. Sections such as population, sample, study procedures, material/instrumentation, data collection methods, coding, assumptions, limitations, delimitations, and ethical assurances affords the reader a chance to develop an impression for the study. This section also imparts information on the justification for a qualitative methodology and a case study design.

## Chapter 3: Research Method

### Introduction

This case study research examines in what ways do nonprofit organizations in New York State assist undocumented immigrants in the legal and other challenges of daily life. This chapter describes the research plan and methods that is utilized in this study and provides details on how the data was collected and analyzed, as well as the context and setting of the study. Following is a reaffirmation of the problem, purpose, and research questions of this study, which provides a novel approach on the specific problem examined. Chapter three continues with an explanation of the research methodology and design, followed by sections on population, sample, materials/instrumentation, study procedure, data collection, coding, assumptions, limitations, delimitations, and summary.

### Statement of Problem

Fear of using government-provided social services compels undocumented and non-citizen immigrants to seek assistance from nonprofit community-based organizations (Babis, 2014). Gast and Okamoto (2016) observed that non-citizen immigrants perceive that the use of government services will negatively affect their ability to gain legal status or citizenship. Negi, Maskell, Goodman, Hooper and Roberts (2018) noted that since recent immigrants have limited access to social programs, community-based nonprofit organizations assist by providing advocacy and other services. The limited access to social services has led many undocumented immigrants to utilize community-based nonprofit organizations as a safety net and a social welfare support system (Roth et al., 2015). Further examination is necessary to align the mission

of nonprofit organizations that provide a public good that generates value for the community (Mendel & Brundney, 2014).

A gap in the literature exists regarding the services, the collaboration, and the level of advocacy provided by community-based nonprofit organizations to non-citizen and undocumented immigrants (Buffardi et al., 2017, p. 1244). To address the gap in the literature, this study analyzed the level of involvement, activism, advocacy, and collaboration of community-based nonprofit organizations in providing public good and promoting and securing the rights of non-citizen and undocumented immigrants. Buffardi et al. (2017, p. 1244) suggested that additional research is warranted to comprehend nonprofit organizations' "efforts to block or modify policy." Chin (2018) advised that future studies should explore the collaboration between nonprofit organizations that seek policy changes in social and health services for immigrants. Enriquez, Vera, and Ramakrishnan (2019, p. 53) agreed that future research can yield additional information about "racialized illegality" and its impact on how nonprofit organizations provide advocacy for statewide benefits to undocumented immigrants.

Studying the research problem was necessary because the growth of community-based nonprofit organizations and their involvement in providing services to non-citizen and undocumented immigrants has increased (Buffardi et al., 2017). The public goods provided to the community through lobbying efforts, influencing policymakers, collaboration, and advocating for human rights by nonprofit organizations need further examination to bring attention to the resources available to marginalized people (Levine, 2016). Helmig et al. (2014)



calls for additional research about systemizing the literature and applying a theoretical framework to nonprofits' success and failures in effecting social change.

### **Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to ascertain in what ways do nonprofit organizations engaged in providing public good in New York State to assist undocumented immigrants in the legal and other challenges of daily life. Additionally, the study examines in what ways do nonprofit organizations in New York State advocate for undocumented immigrants through the lobbying of state legislators regarding supporting or opposing proposed laws on comprehensive immigration reform, and how they conceive of their influence. The purpose was also to explore in what ways do nonprofit organizations in New York State collaborate with other nonprofit organizations to influence policy changes regarding undocumented immigrants, and what difference do they think that makes.

The sample included 26 members of nonprofit organizations such as directors, board members and employees or until theoretical saturation is met. The mix of participants provided a holistic view of the problem and give varying perspective to the research questions. The theoretical framework for this study was Weisbrod's public good theory. I hand-coded the data using different colored highlighters to note the various words and phrases of the respondents that answered the research questions. The strictest measures will be employed to ensure the utmost level of confidentiality with any information which may be deemed sensitive.

### Research Questions

1. In what ways do nonprofit organizations in New York State assist undocumented immigrants in the challenges of daily life?
2. In what ways do nonprofit organizations in New York State advocate for undocumented immigrants through the lobbying of state legislators regarding supporting or opposing proposed laws on comprehensive immigration reform, and how do they conceive of their influence?
3. In what ways do nonprofit organizations in New York State collaborate with other nonprofit organizations to influence policy changes regarding undocumented immigrants, and what difference do they think that this makes?

This chapter focuses on the research structure, methodologies, and purpose for investigating the level of nonprofits' influence in assisting undocumented immigrants in New York State. Topics include research methodology and design, participants, materials, instrumentation, data collection, processing, analysis, methodological assumptions, limitations, delimitations, and ethical assurances. The chapter concludes with a summary of the contents of chapter three.

### Research Methods and Design

**Qualitative Methodology.** Qualitative research methodology is used to assist researchers in understanding perceptions about activities, events, and actions. Qualitative research allows the researcher to gather data in an unstructured method, with many pieces of information collected in a variety of techniques showing at times, slight uniformity. Qualitative research is better suited in dealing with phenomena which are challenging or difficult to quantify

mathematically with unstructured information gathered from a variety of sources (Joubish, Khurram, Ahmed, Fatima, & Haider, 2011).

Qualitative research usually emphasizes the nature of the research problem instead of the amount of people observed and does not utilize statistical processes or attempt to quantify the problem (Baskarada, 2014). Interpreting participants' responses, beliefs, and practices; research using qualitative methodology operate on the premise that human beings construct their own reality and thereby attempts to explore the significance of their responses (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Relying on interpreting observations and responses, qualitative methodology allows the researcher to produce evidence that quantifiable and statistical methods cannot. (Corbin & Strauss, 2007).

Qualitative research seeks to answer the 'why' questions and tends to delve deeper into the issue through the utilization of probing strategies (Barnham, 2015). Qualitative research design has no set methodology and instead relies on multiple research designs to reinforce the research inquiries with appropriate information collected from subjects through purposeful sampling (Marshall & Grossman, 2015). Qualitative research questions are open-ended responses, interviews, participant observations, field notes and reflections of the researcher to explore, discover, and construct (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). An important aspect for utilizing a qualitative methodology for this study is the natural setting in which the interviews were conducted with those who have a hands-on relationship with the research problem.

A qualitative research methodology was chosen for this study to interpret issues systematically from the perspective of the participants and to generate new concepts and theories. Nonprofit organizations and the people involved in management and distribution of services are an essential element of the research, and a qualitative methodology provided an

interpretive, naturalistic approach to the study. A qualitative study facilitated a broad comprehension of the perceptions and worldview of nonprofit personnel, contributing valuable insights for the researcher to consider when answering the research questions. Considering that numbers cannot fully elucidate the phenomena, a qualitative case study will provide a greater holistic comprehension of the services provided by nonprofits in assisting immigrants. However, when conducting research on the perceptions of individuals, researchers cannot understand human actions without comprehending their thoughts, feelings, beliefs, values, and assumptive worldview (Marshall & Grossman, 2015).

For this study, the researcher considered using other research methodologies such as a quantitative and mixed methods. Quantitative research can be exploratory at times; however, it is better suited for confirmatory and deductive studies (Trochim & Donnelly, 2015). A mixed methods studies are overly complex and requires two distinctive types of collection activities, a process which this study was not designed to process. Also under consideration for this study was a phenomenological design, however, the intent of the researcher was to ascertain in what ways do nonprofit organizations in New York State assist undocumented immigrants in the legal and other challenges of daily life, not to examine a phenomenon.

**Case Study.** This qualitative research study will utilize a case study design and employ semi-structure interviews as a primary source of data. The use of a case study design in this research will support the distinctive nature of social science research and establish additional value and uniqueness to the discipline. Yazan (2015) emphasized that a case study design is mainly utilized in qualitative research methodologies and a single case is defined by having noticeably identifiable margins that distinguish the case from any other. A case study design is

considered most applicable to enable a qualitative empirical research to answer the why and how questions to describe the involvements and insights of the targeted population (Yin, 2014).

The choice of a case study design will allow for a comprehensive discovery of the scope to which nonprofits assist undocumented immigrants. The case study will examine the commitment characteristics and organizational dynamics that influence organizations to dedicate themselves in serving others. De Massis and Kotlar (2014) advised that a case study methodology is recognized as having the most rigor and originality for conducting qualitative research on organizations. For this case study, as discussed in chapter 1, Weisbrod's public good theory will be implemented as a theoretical lens in exploring how nonprofits provide services and advocate for undocumented immigrants in New York.

## **Population**

This study was conducted in the New York counties of Nassau and Suffolk, areas with large immigrant populations and many organizations that assist undocumented and noncitizen immigrants. Nassau County has a population of 1.34 million people and Suffolk County has a population of 1.49 million people. According to the Migration Policy Institute (2019), New York State has a total of 850,000 undocumented immigrants, 48,000 reside in Nassau County, and 51,000 reside in Suffolk County.

For this study, I interviewed stakeholders ranging from managing directors, directors, mid-level managers, and volunteers who staff immigrant-serving nonprofits. A total of 26 participants were utilized for the study and theoretical saturation was met. The composition and size of the sample was suitable for this study because of the assumed quality and dependability of the individuals and their assurance to present honest and reliable answers. A larger sample

would have created inquiries into the validity as samples in qualitative studies tend to be smaller to support the authentication and complexity of case study analysis.

Interviewing individuals in leadership positions provide this researcher with insights about the level of nonprofits' assistance and advocacy for undocumented immigrants. The participants were asked questions about their different perspectives on important issues regarding the provision of public goods and services to immigrants. Lowe, Norris, Farris, & Babbage (2018) advised that once the data has enough information necessary to answer the research questions, such information can be used as a measurement tool for saturation.

### **Sample**

This study utilized a convenience sample of nonprofits involved in providing public goods and engaged in advocacy for noncitizen and undocumented immigrants. A convenience sample is the "least rigorous," low-cost, and involves the most accessible participants for the researcher (Marshall, 1996, p. 523). Maxwell (2013) noted that using a sample allows the researcher to ask a common question about a general population, and subsequently choose a specific number of participants from that group to answer the question. Convenience sampling was selected because in a non-probability sampling technique, organizations are selected due to their accessibility and geographical proximity to the researcher.

This researcher utilized snowball sampling by asking participants to provide contact information to other potential participants for the study. Noy (2007) advised that in snowball sampling is an accumulative process where participants refer others who may want to take part in the study, who then refers others who may want to partake in the study and the process

continues, hence the metaphor. This process is widely used due to its effectiveness and is considered a fundamental aspect of qualitative research (Suri, 2011).

### **Materials/Instrumentation**

The first step in the data collection process was seeking approval from Northcentral University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). IRB guidelines were strictly followed in the interview protocol and data collection process. Approval is granted and the evidence of the IRB's permission and the research questions are in the appendix section of the completed dissertation. The questions were review by the committee chair and other at the university to ensure the questions are aligned with the intent of the study. The research questions incorporated certain words and phrases that provided information to support the theoretical framework of the study.

### **Study Procedures**

The participants from nonprofits in Nassau and Suffolk County, New York who are in positions that facilitate services to immigrants were selected for use in the study. The Health and Welfare Council of Long Island and Long Island Wins (2018) has a list of all nonprofits that assist immigrants. This list which includes names, addresses, and phone numbers of the organizations were used in the study for initial contact. Once permission was acquired from the IRB, emails were sent to directors of nonprofits asking them to participate in the research about their organization's assistant to immigrants.

The researcher requested appointments with directors and after initial contact, permission to contact other personnel in the organization. The interview questions were open-ended to allow the participants to expound their perspectives on any component of the organization's

commitment to provide services to undocumented immigrants. The interview questions were designed in a manner as not to have any bias or leading words and must be approved by the university prior to utilization. The interview questions were designed to elicit in-depth answers about a comprehensive issue that encompasses people and organizations that work with governmental agencies and policymakers. Due to the semi-structure format of the interview, the researcher, if needed, enquired to gain a clearer comprehension of the answers provided.

The study asked questions about nonprofits' effectiveness in bringing about social change through advocacy, collaboration, cooperation, and provision of public goods to marginalized people. Questions did not lead participant or sway any answers to align with the researcher's inherent biases and solely rely on the interviewee's words and perspectives. The ability to enquire further with the participants provided the researcher with additional efficiency in the analysis process of the study. Participants tend to express their feelings without reservations, thereby providing the researcher with a more subjective and trustworthy interview for the study (Vogl et al., 2018).

The process of data collection began with personal visits by this researcher to the organizations that agreed to participate in the study. Data was collected by utilizing an interview guide in a semi-structured interview format. This researcher took copious notes and as permitted by the interviewees; voice recording was used in the data collection process. The participants were asked 12 open-ended questions in face-to-face semi-structure interviews, that were conducted, audio recorded, and transcribed by this researcher, who also hand coded the data for analysis.

Participation by any of the interviewees was totally voluntary, with no obligations or coercion used in any manner by the researcher or management of nonprofits. Nothing of value



was used as an offering for participation in the study except the personal satisfaction of bringing attention to a major social issue in American society. This researcher will share the study with the nonprofits if they make a request. Necessary ethical release forms and other documents granting permission are included in the appendix sections of the dissertation.

### **Data Collection**

Data collected from the semi-interviews were processed, analyzed, and interpreted prior to consideration for use in this study. All data came from primary sources which includes leaders, employees, and volunteers of nonprofits and collected from synchronous communication. Triangulation as part of the data collection process were implemented with the use of the organization's website and other documents which the nonprofits may have made public in recent years.

Answers to research questions were categorized, sorted, and coded based upon themes, terms, phrases, and key words, a process which McNabb (2012) refers to as conceptualizing. Conceptualizing is a method of decreasing the amount of raw data into an orderly manner which eased the process of managing the information collected. The data was then grouped into theoretical themes related to the research problem and framework described in chapter one. The answers will then be cross analyzed for similarities and differences in the perceptions and interpretations.

### **Coding**

Based on an interpretive paradigm, a heuristic analysis was applied to the study in order to characterize the worldview of the target population or participants (Chan, Fung, & Chien, 2013). Coding in qualitative research are words, phrases, and sentences that represents ideas in

the study by giving the researcher patterns to work with in the analysis phase (Clarke & Veale, 2018). Coding is the preliminary step in the data interpretation process toward the more arduous and “evocative analysis and interpretation” of a study (Saldana, 2012, p. 8). Based on prior research and the exploratory nature of this study, concepts and themes defined a relationship between the research questions and theoretical framework.

Saldana (2012) identified 32 coding methods, among them axial coding seems to be a good fit for this study because it allows the researcher to group, sort, and reduce the number of codes generate in the primary stages of data coding. Axial coding interconnected and linked the categories of codes in the data collected. After data collection was completed, manual coding was utilized in the data analysis process.

### **Assumptions**

Several distinctive assumptions guided this study but are necessary to consider in the process of conducting social science research.

1. The researcher assumes that the participants are honest in their answers and feel no pressure in any manner.
2. The researcher assumes that the participants will not collaborate with other participants and plan generic answers to interview questions.
3. The researcher assumes that the participants will be comfortable with the process and not have any hesitation in providing meaningful answers.
4. The researcher assumes that the participants were not coerced to take part in the study by management or any other entity.

This researcher took all necessary steps to mitigate the assumptions above by following the informed consent protocol, assuring the participants that their responses would be kept confidential and making them feel comfortable during the interview.

### **Limitations**

Due to the number of nonprofits in New York State, the task of interviewing individuals for each these organizations were not feasible due to time constraints and other logistical factors. This research is not a longitudinal study and will not continue for years, but instead focused on a small percentage of nonprofits and approximately 26 participants. For this study, the researcher narrowed the focus on nonprofits in two counties in New York and contacted approximately 68 organizations whose primary stakeholders are undocumented immigrants.

### **Delimitations**

The study was narrowed to nonprofit organization in New York that provide services and advocate for noncitizen and undocumented immigrants. The only pre-study requirement was the organization's activities must reflect that a large part of their resources is committed to assisting immigrants. Restrictions such as years in operation, position, and time in service of participant in organization are not considerations for the study, as such pre-qualifying conditions are irrelevant. The face-to-face communication with participants allowed for the researcher to develop a greater conception of the issues discussed by the participants (Halcomb, 2015). Open-ended questions to the participants allowed the researcher to probe additionally if necessary, for the elaboration of some answers.

## **Ethical Assurances**

The researcher complied with Northcentral University's strict policies and practices and took into consideration the utmost caution in securing the professional and correct approach to the participants. Prior to moving forward with the study, stringent ethical rules were established and put in place to ensure the results from the research were useable and the reliability of the methods utilized were authentic. Participants will be assured in writing that confidentiality of the information provided will be taken in all steps of the study.

All necessary forms, collection instruments, and additional information were provided to the university's IRB for approval. Paperwork such as consent letters, permission, format of interview questions, method used for ensuring confidentiality, and any unseen factors, including the right of the participants to refuse answering or continuing at any point were in place before the study begins. Additionally, the researcher completed the CITI training as required by the university for conducting research with human subjects.

## **Summary**

This chapter provided the rationale and methodological details for the study and focused on providing details about how the study was conducted. The research methodology is presented for this qualitative case study about nonprofit organizations in New York States assisting and advocating for noncitizen and undocumented immigrants. This chapter presents the research design and methodology for the study on the scope nonprofits assist, advocate, lobby, and collaborate to help immigrants and push for comprehensive immigration reforms. Chapter three began with an introduction to the research problem, then described qualitative methodology and case study design, which were implemented in the study. Next, the chapter discussed population,

material/instrumentation, study procedure, data collection, coding, assumptions, limitations, delimitations, and ethical assurances.

## Chapter 4: Findings

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to ascertain, from an organizational perspective, how nonprofits in New York assist immigrants with the struggles of daily life. Presently, no studies exist that applied this theory to examining nonprofits and how they help immigrants. The problem was chosen because of the lack of research about community-based nonprofit organizations along with religious-based and immigrant organizations that assists non-citizens and undocumented immigrants in New York (Buffardi et al., 2017). The specific research problem that was addressed in this study was that fear of using government-provided social services compels undocumented and non-citizen immigrants to seek assistance from nonprofit community-based organizations.

According to this study, nonprofits engaged in facilitating public goods to immigrants due to the altruistic nature of their organizations' mission. The theoretical framework for this study is based on Weisbrod's public good theory. This study utilized a face-to-face synchronous interview process with participants who are employed by or volunteer with nonprofits that are engaged in providing services to undocumented and noncitizen immigrants. The analysis of the data utilized a qualitative case study approach. A choice was made to use this design because ascertaining the perspectives of individuals from nonprofits providing public goods was the principal focus of this study.

This chapter will provide an in-depth analysis of the responses from 26 interviewees about the ways nonprofits assist undocumented immigrants in the legal and other challenges of daily life. Additionally, sections include data collected from interviewees about the ways nonprofits lobby, advocate, and collaborate for immigration reforms and the differences they perceive. Charts, graphs, and tables also contribute information from the data analysis process.

The following sections discuss the results of the interview questions. Evidence of patterns will emerge as the interviewees' responses are further analyzed. This portion of the chapter provides an introduction, a review of the data collection method, research questions, statement on the trustworthiness of the data, interviewee demographics, major and minor themes and phrases, and tables depicting the number of interviewees' similar use of such. Responses were analyzed to find similar themes and direct quotations were used as evidence to support the research question. A discussion of the research questions will be followed by tables and charts of the major and minor themes, and phrases.

### **Data Collection**

Before any contact was initiated with prospective interviewees, IRB approval was received by this researcher to begin canvassing nonprofit organizations for those interested in taking part in the study. This researcher targeted individuals who are associated with nonprofit organizations that provide public goods to the immigrant community. The prerequisites were small community-based, immigrant-based, and religious-based organizations which provided services to undocumented and noncitizen immigrants. Sixty-eight nonprofit organizations were contacted in three counties of New York that have a large immigrant population.

Participants ranged from executive directors, directors, founders, coordinators, volunteers, or those who held other positions within the organizations. Extra effort was made to include various nonprofits that served different ethnic immigrant groups. The participants were recruited through email, word of mouth, and referrals from those who participated in the study. Participants who were willing to take part in the study contacted the researcher through email, text, and phone calls to set up a time, venue, and date for the meetings and interviews.

Utilizing open-ended questions, the interviews were conducted through synchronous communication at the participants' office or a private room at their location. Participation was voluntary and each prospective interviewee had the option to refuse answering any question or the entire interview. All prospective interviewees could read the inform consent form before signing and giving permission for the interview to be recorded. All participants had the choice of opting out of the interview process, however none chose to do so after meeting this researcher.

A qualitative case study methodology was chosen because this researcher wanted to ascertain the perceptions of individuals associated with nonprofits. Meeting with the interviewees at their offices afforded this researcher a chance to meet other members of the nonprofit and gain some insights into the inner workings of the organization. The relaxed, informal atmosphere of the interview process allowed interviewees to speak openly about their organizations and provide unstructured answers. Interviews were recorded using an *Apple iPhone XR* with recording capabilities in addition to field notes taken by this researcher. The process began with introductions, signing the informed consent, and a brief overview of the purpose of the research and interview.

Many interviewees provided this researcher with documents describing their organization and the services available to immigrants. Twenty interviewees provided some form of organizational documents describing their services to the community. The documents given to this researcher, included brochures describing the organizations and the services which are offered to immigrants. One organization provided an annual report highlighting the important accomplishments of the nonprofit along with other information. Another nonprofit presented a magazine that contained information about services, advocacy, and people who benefitted from the actions of the organization. The documents contained essential information such as who were



the people receiving services, what geographical locations were served, and classification of personnel as paid or volunteer in the organization.

The brochures, annual report, and magazine were thoroughly reviewed for pertinent information that enhanced information for this study. This researcher read the documents provided, used a highlighter on important pieces of information, made notes, compared the notes to the interviewees' responses and researcher's notes from the interviews. Information surmised from the documents were coded into themes and corroborated with the interview transcripts to form a triangulation of evidence that added credibility to this study. Data obtained from the interviews and organizational documents will support the theoretical framework developed from the literature review. The data gathered from the documents were analyzed to assure validity of the study and to encapsulate a different component of the research problem. The results, along with responses from the interviewees will be presented throughout this chapter.

### **Trustworthiness of Data**

Trustworthiness of the data was established by utilizing a case study research for data collection through semi-structured interviews. Aiding in the triangulation process, credibility was further enhanced by observations and organizational documents obtained from interviewees and websites. At some organizations, this researcher observed immigrants receiving assistance from the nonprofit where the interview was being conducted. Although at no time did the researcher approach or speak to the people receiving assistance, the interviewees at times pointed out that such occurrence is a daily routine for the organization.

The 26 people interviewed presented a description of their organization and his or her part in aiding immigrants. The interviews lasted approximately one hour, however many

fluctuated from forty-five minutes to over an hour. The participants were asked 12 open-ended questions in a face-to-face semi-structured interview format, which were conducted by this researcher. During interview process, everyone had the option of answering the question, refuse to answer, or ask for additional clarification. The interview questions afforded the participants the option to expand upon their responses as they deemed necessary to further explain their perceptions of the public goods they were facilitating to the community. The information collected from the interviews included perspectives from founders, directors, employees, and volunteers. The raw data accumulated and interpreted from the semi-structured interviews divulged an assortment of parallels between the organizations and the public good provided.

During the data collection process, this researcher began to recognize patterns in the responses that were provided by the interviewees. Interviewees provided a variety of responses and information to the researcher which matched the intent of the research problem and questions. After interviewing at least 15 participants, this researcher noticed that many responses were similar in detailing the mission of the non-profit in facilitating services to immigrants. Word, phrases, and patterns in the responses led this researcher to conclude that saturation had been met.

Participants were coded by the pseudonym 'interviewee' followed by a number to ensure confidentiality. Data is stored in a password protected desktop computer and on a flash drive stored in a safe. Recordings on the *Apple iPhone XR* were deleted once transfer was made to the desktop and flash drive.

The interviewees' responses were transcribed from audio recording into *Otter.ai* and uploaded into Microsoft Word for coding. Manual coding was used to analyze the data utilizing thematic content analysis to code and typify developing themes for the study, employing

constructs such as keywords, concepts, and various responses. For the coding process, the transcribed data was saved in documented format using *Microsoft Word 2016*. All the transcribed data was printed and labeled with numbers 1 through 26. Using the phrases provided by *Otter.ai*, multiple colored highlighters was used in coding key words and phrases throughout the printed interviews.

Content analysis was used to examine the organizational documents provided to this researcher. First, all content was reviewed for relevant information to this study and then selectively applied to the research topic. Manual coding was used to find words and phrases to formulate themes about the nonprofits' services and advocacy. Aiding in the manual coding, multi-colored highlighters were used to underline portions of the documents which supported answers for the research questions.

### **Research Questions**

Three research questions guided this study:

**RQ1.** In what ways do non-profit organizations in New York State assist undocumented immigrants in the legal and other challenges of daily life?

**RQ2.** In what ways do non-profit organizations in New York State advocate for undocumented immigrants through the lobbying of state legislators regarding supporting or opposing proposed laws on comprehensive immigration reform, and how do they conceive of their influence?

**RQ3.** In what ways do non-profit organizations in New York State collaborate with other non-profit organizations to influence policy changes regarding undocumented immigrants?

## Interviewee Demographics

The nonprofits in this study cater to ethnic group clusters, while some provide services to cultural clusters in heavily populated immigrant communities. Interviewees for this study represented a cross section of many immigrant groups living in New York. The interviewees represented a diverse group of nonprofits that served immigrants as well as citizens from different ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds. Many of the interviewees who were also immigrants, added a diverse worldview about the contribution they and their organization made in the lives of the people they serve. Such diversity provided the study with a broader perspective of the nonprofits, interviewees, and those receiving services.

The interviewees comprised of males and females, some were bilingual, some were born outside the United States, and all represented community-based, religious-based, and immigrant-based nonprofits providing public goods to marginalized people. The community-based organizations in this study are small nonprofits, predominately staffed with volunteers, and operated within a local geographical area. The religious-based organizations in this study are Christian churches, Islamic Mosques, and two individuals who operated out of their own home and who classified themselves as Quakers, stressing their distinction from mainstream Christianity to this researcher. The immigrant-based organizations in this study are small nonprofits that cater to the immigrant community and are led and staffed by immigrants.

Interviews were conducted from December 2019 through February 2020 in the New York counties of Nassau, Queens, and Suffolk; areas with large immigrant populations. The demographic make-up of the interviewees constituted of:

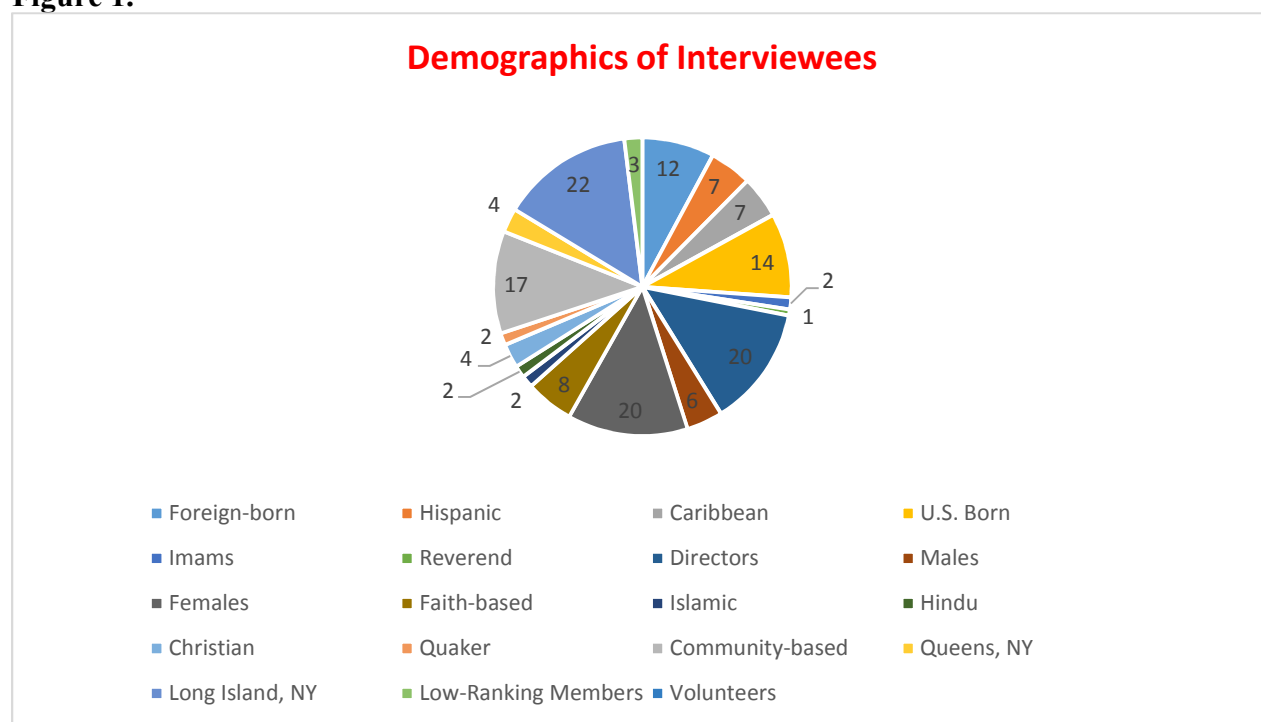
1. 12 people who were foreign-born – Interviewees 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 12, 13, 15, 16, 19, 21, and 24
2. 7 people were self-classified as Hispanic – Interviewees 1, 2, 12, 15, 17, 20, 24
3. 7 people were from the Caribbean – Interviewees 3, 6, 8, 13, 15, 19, and 24
4. 14 people were born the United States – Interviewees 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 14, 17, 18, 20, 22, 23, 25 and 26
5. 2 people were Imams at a local Mosque – Interviewees 16 and 21
6. 1 person was a pastor at a local church – Reverend – Interviewee 26
7. 20 people headed a nonprofit organization – Executive Director or Director – Interviewees 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, and 26
8. 6 were males, 20 were females – Males: Interviewee 2, 3, 5, 16, 21, and 24, Females: Interviewees 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, and 26
9. 8 people were from religious-based organizations – 8, 16, 21, 22, 23, 25, and 26
10. 2 people were from Islamic organizations – Interviewees 16 and 21
11. 2 people were from Hindu organizations – Interviewees 6 and 8
12. 4 people were from Christian organizations – Interviewees 5, 9, 25, and 26
13. 2 people were from Quaker organizations apart from those identified as Christian, Interviewees 22 and 23
14. 17 organizations were community-based – Interviewees 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 24
15. 4 organizations were in Queens, New York – Interviewees 3, 6, 7, and 8
16. 22 organizations were located in Long Island, New York – Interviewees 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, and 26

17. 3 interviewees were low-ranking members of the organization – Interviewees 6, 7, and 11

18. 13 interviewees received no compensation – Interviewees 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 14, 18, 20, 22, 23, and 25

The following chart illustrates demographic information about the interviewees and breaks them down by sex, religion, U.S. born or foreign born, geographical location, type of organization, and position.

**Figure 1.**



## Results

The following sections of this chapter provides results of the interviews for the three research questions and include all themes from the responses. For the three research questions, the responses formed three major and minor themes each. A table listing the themes is followed by data analysis and a chart of the number of respondents.

### **Results for research question one.**

The following section contains the results for research question one and will include major and minor themes, a table, and a chart.

**Research Question 1:** In what ways do non-profit organizations in New York State assist undocumented immigrants in the legal and other challenges of daily life?

The major themes for research question one related to nonprofits referring undocumented immigrants who need legal assistance, providing food and personal items to immigrants who need help, and conducting language classes for non-English speakers. The minor themes for research question one related to attracting donors, providing sanctuary, and space where immigrants can turn to for assistance. The responses to research question one were consistent among many of the interviewees; nonprofits supplied various forms of public goods to an extremely marginalized population in New York. The themes derived from the interviewees' responses elucidates that nonprofits are involved in the coordination of appropriate services and are a source of support to assist immigrants with the challenges of daily life.

Many interviewees claimed they are small community-based organization committed to fighting for immigration reforms by utilizing advocacy and coalition building. Some provide sanctuary to undocumented immigrants who are pending deportation or have other legal issues. The organizations that provide sanctuary are religious based, usually a house of worship, and according to federal law, cannot be entered to arrest someone without the permission of its leaders. All the interviewees who took part in the study claimed that their nonprofit organization was a community resource center, where immigrants can come to for all types of assistance and comfort if necessary.

**Table 1**  
*Major Themes for RQ 1*

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Referrals of undocumented immigrants who need legal assistance to attorneys
Providing food and personal items
Providing language literacy and other classes

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**Table 2**  
*Responses*

**Number of Interviewees Discussing the Three Major Themes for RQ 1**

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Referrals	26
Food and Personal Items	17
Classes	13

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**Major Theme 1: Referrals of undocumented immigrants who need legal assistance to attorneys.** Some organizations had a professional relationship with immigration attorneys who specialized in cases of deportation and legal residency and would contact them when someone needed assistance. Interviewee 25 from a religious-based organization which provides sanctuary for undocumented immigrants exclaimed “we create a network or cluster of people who assist immigrants which consists of attorneys, social workers, churches, day care centers, and even other immigrants themselves who can report on ICE activities.” Interviewee 28 confirmed that her organization “will fight a deportation order if the undocumented immigrant has no criminal record, has a family, and is a law-abiding member of the community.” She reasoned that “every person in the United States is entitled to due process under the law” and stressed the fact that they have several lawyers in their network who will review cases.

Others would accompany undocumented immigrants to court, find them an attorney to handle their case, or at times provide bond money if someone were detained by immigration



authorities. Six interviewees emphasized that their organization accompany undocumented immigrants to court, ascertain that translator services are available, and that due process is adhered to in any court procedures. Additionally, members of nonprofits or attorneys monitor that the civil and human rights of the immigrants are not disregarded. Interviewee 5 representing a religious-based organization stated that “we accompany them to court in order to ensure their rights are not being violated and that proper translation services are available so that the immigrant knows what is happening to them.” Interviewee 9 from a religious-based organization which also provides sanctuary for undocumented immigrants declared that “when an undocumented immigrant appeared in front of a judge, they were treated better if accompanied by white people” when fighting improper deportation orders.

Interviewee 11 stated that her organization “raised \$10,000 to pay for a bond for someone who was detained by immigration authorities and assisted them with funds for an attorney.” According to her organization’s document, this nonprofit utilizes a partnership model to provide state and local advocacy with strategic guidance, hands-on support, and funding to effect social change. The organization is well funded, operates nationwide, and has a mission of improving the lives of people in communities that have a clear urgency by utilizing innovative initiatives.

Interviewee 9, stated that she or members of her organization “will go to court with an undocumented immigrant and ask for their case to be reopened while they are in a pending deportation status.” According to the organization’s document, they have a rich history dating back to more than 350 years and a legacy of helping the needy (Building Bridges in Brookhaven, n.d.). Preparing and serving meals, collecting clothing and furniture, and providing sanctuary are some of the services they provide to the immigrant community. Additionally, adult education classes are offered weekly, food and shelter for families are offered daily, and sanctuary is

provided on a needs and urgency basis. Interviewee 9 who represented a religious-based nonprofit noted that “sometimes it’s someone who recently came across the border and are not sure where they can get any kind of legal or financial assistance,” in that situation, her organization will provide help.

Interviewee 12 from a larger organization admitted that her organization provided social workers and legal assistance to immigrants with small children who were ordered deported. She disclosed that her organization will, “if funds are available, assist with rent, food, clothing and other expenses for immigrant families facing hardships,” but she cautioned that “we only will do that twice for any one family.” According to the organization’s document, they have been supporting immigrant women since 1993, and bringing community members and advocates together to speak out against social injustice (Latina Women, 2019). Interviewee 5 from a religious-based organization claimed that his organization fights unfair deportation orders, while interviewee 17, from a larger community-based organization fights illegal detention of undocumented immigrants by local police, provide bail money to free them, and attorney referrals. Interviewee 25 declared that people from her organization attend court, provide legal assistance, and other support for undocumented women who were victims of domestic violence.

Interviewee 12, an executive director of a community-based organization that operates with governmental grants and private donations pointed out that:

Undocumented women suffer from all types of abuses, domestic violence, unfair wages, human trafficking, sexual assaults and are afraid to notify authorities due to legal status. We assist these women, educate them about their rights, and if possible, petition

the courts to grant them temporary legal status as they apply for permanent residency.

According to her organization's document, they passionately believe that certain policy issues can be mitigated and addressed with specific policymakers and those whom they are influenced by (Latina Women, 2019).

Interviewee 26 stressed that her organization heavily relied on social media and podcasts to interact with immigrants to educate them about their rights and caution them about ICE raids. She emphasized that “this is the best way to communicate with immigrants, as many of them work multiple jobs at various locations and may not have a permanent address or telephone number.” However, the religious-based organizations rely on word of mouth communication to keep information about certain venues and services from reaching immigration authorities. Interviewee 25 noted that “members of our congregation are our best source of getting the word out when something important needs to be conveyed or if there is an emergency need for assistance.” According to the organization's document their congregation is part of the larger community it serves and is the best source of communication (All Christian Church, n.d.).

**Major Theme 2: Providing food and personal items.** Many interviewees reported that their organizations provide food to undocumented and noncitizen immigrants on a regular basis. Ten interviewees confirmed that their organizations collect food, and other personal hygiene products for distribution, in addition to running a daily food pantry where meals are served. Six interviewees specifically mentioned their organizations engaged in collecting food and other personal items and deliver to homes of undocumented immigrants who may not want to leave home due to fear of apprehension by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents.

Some interviewees from religious-based organizations set up donation boxes where community and congregation members may come by and drop off food and other personal items for immigrants. Interviewee 26, noted that her religious-based organization “collects furniture through networking with other community organizations and deliver them directly to immigrants in need.” According to the organization’s document, they gain their source of strength by refining their sense of purpose in the engagement of assisting individuals and families from diverse backgrounds (People’s Church, n.d.).

Interviewee 22 from a religious-based organization elaborated that they “cook homemade meals for immigrant families who are struggling financially or may have a detained member” pending deportation. Interviewee 4 from a community-based nonprofit stated that her organization “provides daily meals for immigrants and also noted that they have an arrangement with a bus company to provide transportation to and from their location.” The executive director of this organization, interviewee 3 acknowledged that “health insurance is a top priority for new legal immigrants and building relationships with local doctors who can provide health care for undocumented immigrants are of utmost importance.” The executive director continued that “partnerships with immigration attorneys, housing officials, childcare agencies, and food donors” assist them in providing services to alleviate some of the challenges immigrants face in their daily lives.

Interviewee 25, affiliated with a religious-based nonprofit pointed out that her organization “does collections for food, diapers, personal hygiene products, and other items for up to 300 families.” The organization’s document noted that they show compassion and cater to people of all faiths and all walks of life regardless of legal status in the United States (All Christian Church, n.d.). Immigrants and anyone in need are welcome to prayer groups, food

pantry, and meals in addition to wellness classes and other forms of assistance. Interviewee 3 pointed out that his organization provides breakfast and lunch daily for those who stop by their facility, while interviewee 26 personally collects food for specific families in need.

Interviewee 3 purported that his organization is constantly advocating and pleading with lawmakers “to provide more food assistance for undocumented immigrants in forms of food stamps for their American citizen children, or emergency aid for those in desperate need.” According to the organization’s document, a social transformation is needed where people can seek common solutions, build bridges, and show that a different and better way is possible in dealing with those in need. The organization firmly holds to the belief that everyone is entitled to social justice and has the capacity for joy and fulfilment, but many needs help in realizing that future (Neighborhood Empowerment, n.d.).

Two interviewees from a community-based organization emphasized that they provide daily meals to those in need. Interviewee 7 from a community-based organization claimed that “they cater food daily to feed immigrants with funds from their governmental and private grants.” According to the organization’s document, they are engaged in the relentless pursuit of social justice, helping the needy, and advocating for the human rights of everyone (Medi-Help, n.d.).

Two interviewees claimed that their community-based organization do not provide food assistance directly but refers individuals to other nonprofits. Interviewee number 6 advised that “we don’t provide food to immigrants, but we refer them to the appropriate people or organizations which can assist them.” However, two interviewees with a religious-based organization pointed out that they provide a fully operational soup kitchen which serves meals 24 hours daily regardless of legal status or other criteria. According to one religious-based

organization's document their aim is to feed the hungry, open up more food pantries in high-need areas, and to fully support immigrant communities that share similar socio-cultural-religious backgrounds with them (St. Thomas Church, n.d.).

Two interviewees emphasized that they do not provide food assistance but advocate for all children to receive meals at school regardless of legal status of the child or parent. Four interviewees acknowledged that their organizations complete all paperwork for new legal immigrants for them to get food assistance from the government, while providing food for those who are undocumented. An executive director, interviewee 3 of a community-based nonprofit, noted that "our primary function is to get all new legal immigrants qualified for food assistance from the government in addition to other programs such as health insurance and rental subsidies." According to the organization's document, they have a network of professionals and associations that can assist undocumented immigrants to access social services which they are legally barred from due to state and federal laws (Neighborhood Empowerment, n.d.).

**Major Theme 3: Providing language literacy and other classes.** Six interviewees affirm that their organizations provide literacy classes for undocumented and recent immigrants at their locations, while two interviewees assert that their organization hold classes at another location due to the large number of individuals attending. Interviewee 21 from a religious-based organization stated that "we have over 500 youths in our educational program and our facility is not large enough to accommodate such numbers" due to their ethnic population's growth in this area of New York. Classroom space is leased from a local school near the organization's headquarters for accommodating the larger number of students.

Some smaller nonprofits hold classes at their location, often in the evening and weekends as noted by three interviewees. Immigrants are taught basic English, reading, and writing, in

addition to citizenship classes for those who are legal immigrants and are applying for citizenship. However, an interviewee from a religious-based nonprofit, interviewee 9 disclosed that “some don’t know Spanish, but speak a native language and must be taught Spanish first in order to communicate with them in the process of assisting them.”

Five interviewees indicated that their organizations hold classes on such subjects as healthcare, history, politics, religion, and financial management. A director of a community-based organization, interviewee 17, noted that “we collect books and provide them to children, while classes are held for the adult in a variety of subjects such as English language skills, healthcare, and cultural history.” According to the organization’s document, independent supported housing program; life skill, vocational, and drop-in programs; Medicaid services; youth leadership program; family and youth services; computer and ESL training; nutrition programs for the elderly are some of the classes and programs available (Fuente, 2019).

A regional coordinator for a larger nonprofit, interviewee 11, pointed out that her organization “conducts classes on reproductive health, immigration advocacy, and especially targets immigrants who came to the United States at a young age.” According to documents provided by the organization, they are engaged in advocacy on the state and federal levels to fight for laws and propagate policies that improve the lives of people (PIRT, 2019). However, she emphasized that most of their advocacy efforts focuses upon state legislators and policies that impacts local communities.

Interviewee 7 confirmed that her organization targets elderly immigrants and provide classes on health management, diet, and exercise. She emphasized that “we don’t want elderly immigrants to feel neglected and do our best to assist them in many types of challenges they may have” in adjusting to life in a new country. Interviewee 3 stated that “we hold morning classes

Monday to Friday for our elderly immigrants,” while interviewee 12 noted that her organization “holds classes and seminars on women’s health issues.” Interviewee 2 acknowledged that his organization only targets men, especially married fathers, and conduct courses on helping them become better spouses and positive role models for their children. “We want to provide services to immigrant men who are embracing a new alien culture, often not knowing the language, and introduce them to American life” asserted the executive director of this community-based organization.

Proclaiming that her organization desires to assist immigrants with assimilation, interviewee 17, emphasized that her organization “provides courses on job skills, interviewing techniques, dressing for success, and employment referrals.” Interviewee 4 conveyed that her community-based organization focuses on early childhood education and curriculum “by advocating for bi-lingual education in day care and providing backpacks filled with school supplies for children of legal and undocumented immigrants.”

Nonprofits that target families and school-age children expressed concerns about their ability to get an education, freedom from fear of family separation, and the trauma associate with such measures. Interviewee 17, a coordinator with a community-based nonprofit located in a predominately Hispanic immigrant area asserted:

There are a lot of immigrant student dropouts. One reason for the high dropouts is that many students do not know what their educational options are after high school because they are undocumented or have parents who are undocumented. However, one of the most notable concerns are some young immigrants are



forced by their parents to find employment and supplement the family income.

Another challenge faced by nonprofits assisting immigrants are motivating them to stay in school. Interviewee 24, a director in a community-based nonprofit purported:

I think that the language and literacy barriers are big ones. At parent-teacher meetings, if the teacher does not speak Spanish or another language and the parent does not speak English, then it is very difficult to have a meaningful conversation about the child's progress and needs. I know in some schools that I have been involved with my own children; they do their best to have someone there to translate. But that is not always possible, and that is just one issue.

The interviewees associated with nonprofits that assist immigrants, engaged in such issues as language and cultural barriers, legal status, mental health, and assimilation. Interviewee 17 voiced concerns about immigrant children bullied in school or forced to join gangs for protection. She posited "I am concerned about gang presence in the schools, immigrant children being bullied because of their clothes and accents, and many times their race." Her organization and several others call for schools to develop appropriate curriculum and hire more social workers who are trained to work with a diverse student body, an issue that many interviewees felt strongly about.

**Minor themes for research question one.** For research question one, three minor themes emerged. The minor themes were concomitant with the major themes in providing

information about nonprofits' services provided to immigrants. The responses offered insights into the assortment of assistance nonprofits offer in fulfilling the needs of those who seek support.

**Table 3**  
*Minor themes for RQ 1*

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Attracting donors
Providing sanctuary for undocumented immigrants
Providing space where immigrants can turn to for many types of assistance

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**Table 4**  
*Responses*

**Number of Interviewees Discussing the Three minor Themes for RQ 1**

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Attracting Donors	17
Sanctuary	6
Providing space	24

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**Minor Theme 1: Attracting donors.** The organizations in this study were primarily concerned with attracting financial assistance, increasing their size by attracting volunteers, raising awareness about the difficult situation undocumented immigrants are confronted with, and soliciting the attention of policymakers. A consistent theme in many of the responses was the top priority of attracting donors to fund their organizations and agenda. A similar response given by the eighteen interviewees indicated that their source of revenue was solely dependent on donations from the public, and private grants from wealthy individuals or philanthropic organizations.

For most of the nonprofits in this study, their operating budget comes from private and governmental grants, and donations. Religious-based organizations relied mainly on their

congregation and private donations. Community-based nonprofits received financial resources from government programs created to assist the poor, private grants from wealthy individuals or organizations, and donations in the form of cash. Operating with limited resources, the organizations in this study supported programs and policies that address fear and promote community integration.

Many agreed that social change is possible through advocacy and influence on legislators to pass immigration reforms. However, financial constraints and lack of resources limit the level of assistance some nonprofits can offer. Eighteen of the interviewees considered their organizations grassroots movements, expounding that they were small, community-based, and are involved in effecting social change through advocacy and providing public goods. Two of the interviewees use their home offices as their primary location for providing services and referrals to immigrants.

Interviewee 2, an executive director professed that “at this point we are like babies,” referring to the small size of his community-based organization. The interviewee continued that “we need larger office space to meet the growing needs of the immigrant community we cater to.” Interviewee 1, claimed that her organization “is so small and understaffed that the only assistance they can provide are referrals to other organization which can help immigrants.”

Three interviewees rely only on referring immigrants to the appropriate agencies or organizations for assistance depending on their specific need. According to the document provided by interviewee 14, associated with a community-based organization, they conduct workshops about immigrants’ rights regardless of legal status, in venues conducive and accessible to the members of the community (We The People, n.d.).

**Minor Theme 2: Providing sanctuary for undocumented immigrants.** Some organizations in this study provided sanctuary for undocumented immigrants and their families, if needed. Immigrants can stay at certain locations, given food and a safe place to stay to avoid apprehension by ICE or deportation. All the nonprofits providing sanctuary were religious-based organizations that were well funded and had the facilities to accommodate the housing of individuals or families. However, staying in a religious-based sanctuary does not exempt them from being arrested, but ICE usually do not enter because they are considered sensitive locations (Walker, 2018).

Most of the sanctuary cases were those immigrants who were ordered deported and are fighting a legal battle to remain in the United States. At times, they may have family members who have no place to stay due to no income or other resources during deportation hearings or detention. Under such circumstances, which includes the threat of deportation for undocumented family members, the nonprofits may afford them housing.

Six interviewees in this study belonged to religious-based organizations which provides sanctuary for undocumented immigrants hiding from ICE or avoiding deportation. Two interviewees emphasized that their organizations would provide shelter and food at their location for families of undocumented immigrants while they wait for their loved one's case to be heard or are deported. Four Interviewees pointed out that their facilities are not capable of providing sanctuary to anyone but will often refer them to another nonprofit which does.

A director for a community-based nonprofit, interviewee 5, pointed out that, "although his organization offers sanctuary, many times they will ask religious-based organizations" to assist those in need of such services as "they are not capable of handling more than one or two individuals at a time." A volunteer at a religious-based nonprofit that provides sanctuary to

immigrants, interviewee 25, noted that “we use houses of worship as sanctuaries and seek help from the congregation in assisting financially or otherwise.” An executive director of a community-based nonprofit, interviewee 12, states her organization will assist undocumented and noncitizen women, “finding them shelter from abusive partners or shield them from ICE raids” should those situations arise. According to the organization’s document, they provide a 24-hour hotline for immigrant women who may be suffering abuse, case management services, a support group for sexual assault survivors, and legal immigration assistance for those who are victims of crime (Latina Women, 2019).

**Minor Theme 3: Providing space where immigrants can turn to for many types of assistance.** All the interviewees referred to their organizations as a resource center where immigrants can seek assistance with the challenges of daily life. The interviewees claimed their organization is a place where immigrants are welcome and could seek assistance through direct help or referrals. Most of these organizations cater largely to the immigrant communities that share similar characteristics with them. The organizations offer immigrants a place where they can acquire language and vocational skill, legal and other types of assistance. Many of the services provided may not be available to immigrants due to legal status or other barriers.

Interviewee 1 noted that her organization “provides education about mortgages and homeownership.” Interviewee 2 pointed out that his organization teaches men to be “better fathers and husbands” by providing them with knowledge and a place where they can locate resources in assisting them. Interviewee 11 admitted that her organization operates as a resource center for women in educating them about family planning and women’s care issues. She emphasized that “when individual’s basic necessities are met and they feel comfortable in their daily lives, they tend to become more involved in the community.”

A director of a community-based nonprofit, interviewee 1, declared that “we are a resource for empowerment, civic engagement, education, and immigrant rights in our community.” Another director of a community-based organization catering to predominately Hispanic immigrant men, interviewee 2, emphasized that his organization “has an open-door policy for anyone to come and find resources they may need” to assist them with the challenges of daily life, regardless of their legal status. According to the organization’s document, they are dedicated to transforming families and communities by equipping men to be better individuals, husbands, fathers, and active members of their communities (Community Fathers, n.d.).

Four interviewees, two religious-based and two community based, were part of larger, well-organized nonprofits with multiple layers of staff, employees, and volunteers involved in providing public goods. Interviewee 26, from a religious-based organization that provided various resources noted that “our organization can provide financial assistance, food, furniture, and sanctuary to immigrants in need due to large number of donors giving to our cause.” Interviewee 25 claimed that “their religion specifies that they contribute to those in need and their congregation provides the funds” allowing them to provide resources to marginalized people regardless of legal status.

**Summary of Research Question One.** The first section of this chapter listed the major and minor themes. Each respondent imparted their perspective about their organization’s services and advocacy for immigrants. Themes emerged from the responses of interviewees in answering research question one and the document provided to this researcher.

Major Themes:

- Referrals of undocumented immigrants who need legal assistance to attorneys
- Providing food and personal items

- Providing language literacy and other classes

Minor Themes:

- Attracting donors
- Providing sanctuary for undocumented immigrants
- Providing space where immigrants can turn to for many types of assistance

All the interviewees responded that their organizations provide legal referral services to immigrants because this is one of the most sought-after support needed by undocumented immigrants. Most of those who pursue such support are undocumented or have family who are. They often contact these organizations when they or someone in their family are either detained or have a deportation order pending. Immigrants also seek support from these nonprofits in the form of food assistance because due to legal status, many are barred from receiving most social services including participating in the Food Stamp program. Immigrants wanting to learn English or participate in skill building classes seek out the help from nonprofits that provide such services. Nonprofits conduct English language classes for non-English speakers as a form of cultural assimilation, in addition to vocational training on the premise that new skills will lead to higher paying employment.

Charts, graphs, and tables were added to provide additional information for the reader.

This researcher analyzed the responses from the interviewees and searched for patterns and themes. The researcher used the information to answer research question one and presented the findings about how nonprofits assist immigrants with the challenges of daily life.

## Results for Research Question 2

The following section contains the results for research question two and will include major and minor themes, a table, and a chart.

**Research Question 2:** In what ways do non-profit organizations in New York State advocate for undocumented immigrants through the lobbying of state legislators regarding supporting or opposing proposed laws on comprehensive immigration reform, and how do they conceive of their influence?

The responses to research question two developed into themes about the ways nonprofits advocated for undocumented immigrants in New York. Although the nonprofits in the study were involved in providing a variety of services and assistance, advocacy for immigration reforms, driving privileges, and influencing policymakers was one of the most frequently cited as the main issues the organizations focused on. Many of the interviewees stated that their organizations' primary focus was on such causes. Thus, the main themes for research question two related to prioritizing advocacy for immigration reform, securing driving privileges, and influencing policymakers. The minor themes for research question two related to nonprofit's advocacy on immigration reforms, influence of reforms for immigrant children, and successful advocacy efforts.

**Table 5**  
*Major themes for RQ 2*

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Prioritizing advocacy for immigration reforms
Securing driving privileges
Influencing policymakers

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**Table 6**



## Responses

### Number of Interviewees Discussing the Three Major Themes for RQ 2

Advocacy	26
Driver's license	9
Influencing policymakers	26

**Major Theme 1:** Prioritizing advocacy for immigration reforms. All the interviewees confirmed that due to their Internal Revenue Service status as a 501(c)(3) exempted organization, their lobbying efforts were severely restricted by federal law. However, the organizations in this study did conduct a form of lobbying of lawmakers; they contacted them directly or through intermediaries. Publicity campaigns, demonstrations, letter-writing, and public meetings were methods used by nonprofits to gain the attention of lawmakers without the use of paid lobbyists which is restricted by federal law.

All the organizations in this study prioritize advocacy for immigration reforms as the focus of their efforts to assist immigrants. Most interviewees purported that their organization is involved in immigration reform advocacy at the local and state level, while only one was active nationally. Many agreed that policy issues can be advanced through targeted work with policymakers and key influencers. The theme which developed into the largest pattern in the responses to research question two was nonprofits engage in immigration reform advocacy to secure basic human rights and services for undocumented immigrants.

Although several organizations did not involve in immigration advocacy on a large scale due to lack of resources, according to seven interviewees, they participated in rallies, protest marches, and letter writing campaigns for immigration reforms. A director of a community-based nonprofit, interviewee 1, admitted that “we are a small grassroots organization with very little

staff, yet we do try to meet with local lawmakers in order to influence immigration reforms.”

Interviewee 12 stated that:

We invite lawmakers who are considerate to our causes to speak at our gatherings and to listen to firsthand stories from immigrants. Our group invites different speakers every month who speak with members about various needed services and resources such as immigration attorneys, guidance counselors, and first-time home-buyers’ presentations. These sessions help immigrants get acquainted with necessary systems.

Interviewee 3 supports and campaigns for politicians who he considers “sympathetic to immigrants’ needs,” often inviting them to speak at his organization. Five interviewees travel to the state capitol to meet with legislators from both major political parties to gain their support for immigration reforms. An executive director of a community-based organization, interviewee 1, exclaimed “I traveled to the state capitol many times to advocate for immigration reforms and attended local rallies several times in the past year to push for immigration reforms and rights.” Some of the success she noted in her organization’s advocacy efforts for immigration reforms are:

Social workers in school who can assist immigrant parents and offer reassurance that their children are safe in school. English as a Second Language classes that offer to bridge information and services. Bilingual teachers and signs in Spanish to create a more welcoming environment. Engaging people from the immigrant community that deliver essential information and foster trust

among each other. Partnering with organizations that deliver services and programs to places immigrants frequent, including laundromats, churches, and salons, which build strong relationships with the community.

Two interviewees utilized their religious-based organization and large congregation to attract the attention of policymakers whom they invite to speak at their gatherings. A leader of a religious-based organization, interviewee 16 pointed out that “we try to have a local or state politician come to our weekly services and speak to our congregation and listen to our concerns.” This researcher observed one such incident where a state senator spoke about immigration reforms at a gathering of members at a religious institution. Interviewee 21, from a religious-based organization purported that “increased dialogue between immigrant and nonimmigrant communities may decrease misconceptions of the immigrant community as dangerous.” According to the organization’s document, continued advocacy and culturally informed communication will alleviate fear and foster trust between divisions in the community (Islamic Mosque, n.d.).

Interviewee 1 confirmed that her organization works alongside legislators to design immigration policies on the local level. She noted such successful advocacy as the local police can no longer ask legal status and cannot hold anyone to be picked up by ICE. Interviewee 1 pointed out that “the *Farm Workers Bill*, guaranteeing minimum wage to everyone regardless of legal status was a great success for us as well for other grassroots organization in the area that represent undocumented immigrants.” Additionally, she emphasized, the county police department was compelled to hire bilingual officers to cope with the large influx of Spanish speaking immigrants. The organization’s document identified a lack of resources and

infrastructure needed to meet the demands of a growing immigrant community, as well as citing resources, animosity, division, and fear as major concerns (Hispanic United, n.d.).

Interviewee 25 from a religious-based nonprofit that provides sanctuary for undocumented immigrants noted that her organization assisted in securing the right of due process for any undocumented immigrant arrested in the county through a bill passed by the local legislature. The interviewee purported that “we examine the case to ascertain if an improper deportation order was issued, verify all circumstances, and make sure due process was followed.” She disclosed that “a group of us travel to the state capitol and set up several appointments with lawmakers in order to maximize our time and meet the most people.”

Interviewee 12 claimed that her organization advocate for immigrant women’s rights, while two interviewees, numbers 5 and 9, focus more on immigrant children’s rights when they visited the state’s capitol to meet with lawmakers. Interviewee 1 traveled to the state capitol with personnel from other nonprofits to demand affordable housing for the influx of new immigrant families in the county. According to her organization’s document, housing issues often overlap with legal concerns as there are many instances where immigrants are evicted from their homes illegally and are afraid to turn to authorities for assistance (Hispanic United, n.d.).

Many interviewees confirmed that communication with the local police departments and their organizations has led to a much-improved relationship with immigrants. Interviewee 1 reported that her organization “lobbied profusely with the local police department to have signs and other notifications in multiple languages due to the variety of languages spoken by immigrants in the county.” Interviewee 12, an executive director of a community-based organization confirmed that “we act as liaison between the police and the immigrant community.”

**Major Theme 2: Securing driving privileges.** Many organizations in this study prioritized the passage of the *Green Light* bill, which allows driving privileges for undocumented immigrants, as a main concern. Prior to 2019, New York was one of 38 states that prohibited undocumented immigrants from legally obtaining a driver's license. Relentless advocacy for reforming this law in addition to a state legislator that is pro-immigrants, New York signed the *Green Light* bill into law which allows undocumented immigrants to apply for driver's licenses. Possession of a valid driver's license allows immigrants increased freedom of movement, the ability to seek employment further away, and to drive their family members to school or to seek medical care. However, what is considered a greater benefit of the new driver's licenses law is the possession of a valid state identification card. Now undocumented immigrants can use this form of identification to open bank accounts, sign leases, purchase vehicles, and conduct other legal transactions.

Eleven interviewees considered a great victory for immigrant reform advocacy with the New York State legislature passing the *Green Light* bill, allowing undocumented immigrants to legally obtain driver's licenses. Three interviewees made this issue one of the most important of their advocacy for immigration reforms and made several trips to meet lawmakers at the state capitol. A director from a community-based nonprofit, interviewee 9, stated that "the passage of the *Green Light* legislation was a huge success and to accomplish that, we had to meet with many state senators, write letters, and make a great presence on social media." According to the organization's document, undocumented immigrants, up until the passage of the *Green Light* bill, did not have access to driver's licenses, which further limited their options (Bridging the Community, n.d.).

Interviewee 14 claimed that “we used volunteers to travel to the state capitol to advocate for the passage of the *Green Light* legislation allowing undocumented immigrants to apply for driver’s licenses and this was one of our big successes.” Nine interviewees declared that the passage of the *Green Light* legislation made a life a bit easier for undocumented immigrants and assisted them with some of the challenges of daily life. The nonprofits that supported and campaigned for the passage of the *Green Light* legislation agreed that thousands of undocumented immigrants will have greater freedom of movement and not fear arrest for driving without a valid driver’s license.

A leader of a religious-based organization, interviewee 26 said, that undocumented immigrants “will have greater opportunities to find employment in various location rather than depending on day labor close to home.” A director of a community-based organization, interviewee 24, indicated that undocumented immigrants “can travel freely from home to their place of employment.” A coordinator for a community-based nonprofit, interviewee 17 stated that:

As a necessity for health care or employment, many undocumented immigrants drive without licenses, putting their lives and those of other drivers at risk. One associate recounted how one of her clients who was undocumented got pulled over on the way from driving his mother from a lawyer’s office and was arrested for driving without a license, which placed her at risk for deportation. The passage of the *Green Light* legislation will likely result in safer roads for the entire community and provide one level of protection against deportation.

Interviewee 9 was happy about the passage of the *Green Light* bill and indicated that children will benefit much from their parents' ability to drive them to and from all types of activities including school." Several interviewees expressed satisfaction that undocumented immigrants were able to legally obtain driver's licenses and consider it a major victory for immigration reform in New York. Interviewee 14 responded that "finally, undocumented immigrants are recognized as people, they now have an identification which will open many doors for them."

**Major Theme 3: Influencing policymakers.** A priority was placed upon influencing how lawmakers voted on immigration reforms at the state and local level. Immigration laws are created and enforced by the federal government; however, states may develop and pass their own laws that impact the lives of immigrants. Health insurance, food assistance, driving privileges, labor laws, and designated sanctuary municipalities are issues which state and local lawmakers have influence to alter. Many of these issues oppressively impact the lives of undocumented immigrants which is why many nonprofits dedicate a large portion of their efforts influencing policymakers. All the interviewees in this study responded that a significant amount of efforts and resources of their organization was used for influencing immigration reforms.

Developing relationships and allowing candidates to speak at rallies or at their organizations' gathering were some methods which nonprofits use to influence policymakers. Use of influence on policymakers led to the passage of a major legislation granting equal pay to all farmworkers, most of whom were immigrants, many of them undocumented. The *Farm Workers Bill*, a measure that ensures that farm workers in the state receive a fair wage for their labor and were allowed certain rights as employees under the existing labor laws regardless of legal status.

Nine interviewees participated in rallies, protest marches, and meeting with lawmakers locally and at the state’s capitol to influence them to pass this piece of legislation. Interviewee 1, a director from a community-based nonprofit disclosed that “farmworkers in the state weren’t even making minimum wage and working 10 – 12 hours daily.” Interviewee 24 claimed that “our sheer numbers of supporters forced the state’s legislators to listen to our demands” and pressured them to pass the *Farm Workers Bill*.

Three interviewees advocated for fair treatment of immigrants by the local police by meeting with local lawmakers and setting up programs which educate the police and community about the way each group should conduct themselves with each other. Interviewee 19 stated that the local police now have “community liaisons who interact with immigrants” on a regular basis. Interviewee 9 claimed that her organization set up meetings with the police commissioner to convey the needs of the immigrant community to her and request fairer treatment of the immigrant community.” She continued “we make sure due process is followed and a judicial warrant is issued rather than an administrative warrant for an arrest of an undocumented immigrant” a process which allows many people to avoid detainment.

Several interviewees confirmed that numbers made a difference in gaining influence with lawmakers. Attracting large numbers of volunteers were a focus of three interviewees, who use their numbers as a leverage for lawmakers to consider during election time. Interviewee 24 pointed out that his organization constantly recruits volunteers to attend rallies and protest marches to attract media and the attention of lawmakers. Interviewee 14 purported that her organization “holds large demonstration in front of offices of lawmakers and even some of their homes” to influence legislation. An executive director from a community-based organization purported that “we believe large numbers of people showing interest are a result of



empowerment and concerns about basic human necessities. Interviewee 25 from a religious-based nonprofit emphasized that “we focus on the local police and their treatment of immigrants and use federal laws to guarantee the rights of everyone they come in contact with are not violated.”

**Minor Themes for Research Question 2.** The minor themes that emerged from research question two were the nonprofits’ impact on immigration reforms, their influence on reforms for immigrant children, and their successful advocacy efforts. Many recurring themes related to the interviewees’ perception about how much their advocacy efforts were successful in influencing immigration reforms. Most of the responses were positive in the postulation that a difference is being made with the collective determination of nonprofits.

**Table 7**  
**Minor themes for RQ 2**

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Impact on immigration reforms
Influence on reforms for immigrant children
Successful advocacy efforts

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**Table 8**  
**Responses**

**Number of Interviewees Discussing the Three Minor Themes for RQ 2**

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Impact	26
Influence reforms for children	12
Successful advocacy efforts	15

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**Minor Theme 1: Impact on immigration reforms.** Nonprofits that serve the immigrant communities in New York feel confident that their collective efforts have a major impact on immigration reforms. The most often cited successes are the *Green Light* bill, allowing

undocumented immigrants driving privileges and the *Farm Bill*, which make mandatory for employers to pay everyone at least the minimum wage. However, nonprofits have other smaller successes in impacting immigration reforms. Bilingual education at all school districts, multi-language signs at jails and detention centers, translators for anyone who goes to court, and bilingual police officers are some of the other success nonprofits in New York claim victory for.

All the interviewees strongly believed that their grassroots organizations and efforts made an impact in the passage of immigration reforms or at a minimum brought debate to the state legislature's agenda. Interviewee 1 pointed out that "we are very successful in bring attention to the issues when we have a large amount of people either protesting, rallying, and visiting the state capitol." Interviewee 16 purported that "we meet on a regular basis with lawmakers and voice our concerns to them" in an effort effect change or passage of laws. Interviewee 25 from a religious-based nonprofit stated that "we write letters to lawmakers, many letters, and flood their phone lines with calls from our area and this seems to work at least to get them to meet with us," a technique which is commonly used by many nonprofits seeking social change.

Eight interviewees maintained that their organization made a greater impact on the local level in immigration reform advocacy, while five interviewees mainly concentrated on state level legislation. Interviewee 1 stated that "most state lawmakers from our area are anti-immigrant, therefore it is difficult to have them on our side" but claimed to have better results with local lawmakers who support immigration reforms. Interviewee 12 from a community-based organization declared that "we vigorously campaign for social justice and immigrant causes" and through sheer numbers gain the attention of lawmakers on the local and state level.

The interviewees who claimed their organization made a greater impact locally cited such examples as bilingual police officers, community meetings with immigrants and police

commanders, soccer games between youths and police, appropriate language signage at immigration detention jails, and child care for children when parents are detained by ICE.

Interviewee 1 posited that in an effort to foster positive relationships with the local police “we were very successful with the soccer program where neighborhood immigrant youth play soccer with local police officers during the summer months.” Interviewee 13, from a community-based nonprofit noted that “education is number one for us, we believe that through education our community will have empowerment to demand certain rights and laws.”

Many of the interviewees who focused on state level advocacy suggested that their efforts are a work in progress and their fight is an uphill battle in an anti-immigrant atmosphere. Interviewees who pointed out that their organization made a greater impact on state level advocacy mentioned examples such as funding for bilingual education programs, childcare, and allowing undocumented students to apply for state financial aid to attend college. Interviewee 26 from a religious-based organization which devotes a large portion of their efforts on undocumented youth stated that “we met with several state senators, which eventually led them to pass legislation which allowed undocumented students apply for state financial aid for college.” Interviewee 25 noted that her organization’s focus on state lawmakers has attracted lots of attention because “New York is seen as a test case for the rest of the nation due to the state being one of the largest receiving immigrant region of the United States.”

**Minor Theme 2: Influence on reforms for immigrant children.** Respondents representing nonprofits in this study claim many successes in their efforts to affect reforms for immigrant children. Nonprofits were successful in advocating for bilingual education in local school districts with a large non-English speaking immigrant community. Childcare and nutrition programs were also extended to undocumented immigrants’ children due to efforts of nonprofits’

advocacy on the local and state levels. Many interviewees in this study agreed that their organization maintained a strong passion for reforms which affected children.

Some of the interviewees emphasized that their organizations made an impact on policies pertaining to minor children of immigrants. Interviewee 13 confirmed that her organization advocated and influenced policies which makes the process of enrolling an immigrant child in public school a simpler procedure for undocumented parents. She expressed that “we pressured the lawmakers to have translators at schools for enrollment, and parent-teacher meeting” a measure which was implemented locally in heavily populated immigrant areas.

Five interviewees advocated for and influenced legislation which funded programs that paid for health insurance, childcare, and food assistance regardless of legal status. Insurance, childcare, and food assistance for children of undocumented immigrant is a federal law, but parents are exempted from any federal or state social services. Interviewee 3 whose organization campaigned vigorously at the state level for immigration reform stated that “we forced the passage of an extension of Medicaid for undocumented children, and ensure they were given free lunch when they attended school.” Interviewee pointed 7 out that “food was the most important aspect of her organization’s concerns, especially for children and the elderly” while noting that both were vulnerable groups of an already marginalized population.

Additionally, four interviewees declared that their organization provided temporary childcare for detained parents and for those who had to appear in court. All four were religious-based organizations that used their facilities to provide sanctuary or shelter to undocumented immigrants and families. Interviewee 25 purported that “we provide shelter for families and care for children due to individual circumstances.” Interviewee 26 from a religious-based nonprofit that aids on a temporary basis purported that:

We not only provide sanctuary, but we will accommodate families and children during times of crisis should an undocumented immigrant become detained or deported. We will take in someone and their family who has been ordered deported and provide childcare while parents try to resolve immigration issues.

Children were a main concern for all interviewees in this study, however, due to budget constraints, appropriate facilities, and the nonprofits' mission, many did not provide any services for children of immigrants. Religious-based nonprofits were the ones most likely to provide childcare and shelter due to space and personnel. However, other nonprofits in this study advocated financial resources from governmental and private sources to assist children of immigrants.

**Minor Theme 3: Successful advocacy efforts.** Interviewees who stated that their organization advocated for and influenced policy at the state and local levels passionately believed that most of their efforts were successful. Citing successful passage of the *Green Light* bill, the labor law, and other programs on the state and local level which they felt made life somewhat easier for immigrants. Many small and lesser known laws and regulations are created and approved by local and state lawmakers upon the backing of nonprofits who advocate for immigrants. The nonprofits in this study were confident that their advocacy efforts are effective in influencing immigration reforms but cautioned that it is a long process.

An executive director of a community-based nonprofit, interviewee 15, “we were successful in establishing programs in the community which has grown to accommodate 300 immigrant youths.” Interviewee 3 pointed out that his organization “successfully gain passage of housing regulations in a heavily populated immigrant community which allowed a change in the

building codes.” He further elaborated that “for the community to absorb a large number of immigrants, the building codes were changed to allow builders to construct multi-family rental properties.”

Many interviewees responded with similar answers about voter registration for immigrants who are citizens and organizing fundraisers to assist lawmakers who are sympathetic to their causes. Interviewee 25, from a religious-based organization pointed out that “we target state legislators who are friendly to immigrant causes and support them in their reelection campaigns, hoping the word will spread about our numbers and growing influence.” Interviewee 14 from a community-based organization pointed out that “her organization’s main concern is voter registration,” an effective method she felt needed to gain the attention of lawmakers in her area.

**Summary of Research Question Two.** The second section of this chapter listed the major and minor themes; advocacy for immigration reforms, advocacy for driving privileges for undocumented immigrants, influence on policymakers, impact on immigration reforms, impact on reforms affecting undocumented children, and impact on lawmakers. Graphs and tables were added to provide additional information for the reader.

Major Themes:

- Prioritizing advocacy for immigration reform
- Securing driving privileges
- Influencing policymakers

Minor Themes:

- Impact on immigration reforms

- Influence on reforms for immigrant children
- Successful advocacy efforts

This researcher analyzed the responses from the interviewees and searched for patterns and themes. The information was used to answer research question two and presented the findings about nonprofits advocating and lobbying to influence immigration reforms.

### **Results for Research Question 3.**

The following section contains the results for research question 3 and will include major and minor themes, a table, and a chart.

**Research Question 3:** In what ways do nonprofit organizations in New York State collaborate with other nonprofit organizations to influence policy change regarding undocumented immigrants?

The major themes that emerged from the responses to research question three related to collaboration between nonprofits, the benefits of networking with other organizations, agencies, and individuals who can aid immigrants, and forming coalitions. The minor themes were transitioning to a new society, socialization with others from similar background, and dealing with racism. The interviewees' responses to research question three, formed patterns which this researcher analyzed as major and minor themes. The responses indicated that many nonprofits in this study collaborate with other organizations to influence policy that impact undocumented immigrants.

**Table 9**  
*Major themes for RQ 3*

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Collaborating with other nonprofits
Networking with organizations, agencies, and individuals
Forming coalitions

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**Table 10**  
*Responses*

**Number of Interviewees Discussing the Three Major Themes for RQ 3**

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Collaboration	8
Networking	20
Forming coalitions	17

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**Major Theme 1: Collaborating with other nonprofits.** Many nonprofits in this study were small community-based organizations that assist immigrants in their local area. Small staff, budget constraints, and other lacking resources does not allow them to mount large or nationwide campaigns for immigration reforms. Additionally, their insufficient resources and small size limited the amount and type of services they can provide. Collaborating with other nonprofits allowed organizations advocating for immigration reforms to accomplish certain goals on the local, states, and at times the national level. Most of the collaborating was done at the local level, with organizations supporting each other for the same cause or as a supplement to their advocacy efforts. Many interviewees considered that their nonprofit's collaboration efforts allowed them to have a greater number of people and organizations advocating for immigration reforms.

Some interviewees purported that their organizations collaborated with other nonprofits to influence policy changes in New York, with two emphasizing that they maintain relationships outside the state as well. Interviewee 9, from a community-based nonprofit divulged that her



organization “collaborates with social workers for governmental agencies who can provide direct serviced to immigrants, especially young children.” Interviewee 25, from a religious-based organization emphasized that her nonprofit is part of a network of groups that assist immigrants, elaborating that “we work with a number of advocacy groups who have a common cause as ours.” Interviewee 22 commented that her religious-based nonprofit acquired “financial assistance from another organization for use in assisting immigrants in need of support” in addition to soliciting food donations from a network of regular donors. Interviewee 21, also from a religious-based organization purported that “we collaborate with other nonprofits when we need a sanctuary for someone, and we can’t provide help at the time.”

A director of a small community-based nonprofit, interviewee 6, posited that “we will try to fill needs of those we help by contacting members of our collaborative network of organizations, depending on the type of need.” She further explained the collaboration between her organization and others:

With the growing amount of fear among immigrants, there is a need for more mental health services for immigrants. Moreover, many immigrants have experienced trauma in their home countries or from migrating to the U.S. that also require professional medical attention. Part of our collaborative efforts is having mental health professionals who speak the languages of immigrants and provide an invaluable asset to our organization.

Interviewee 18, a member of a larger nonprofit maintained that her organization “has a spreadsheet of nonprofits within their network which they regularly collaborate with to assist immigrants.” An executive director of a community-based nonprofit, interviewee 12, pointed out

that her organization “regularly collaborates with the police department in helping abused women,” and work closely with the district attorney’s office in convincing undocumented women to testify.

Some interviewees collaborate with local school boards and individual schools in aiding immigrant students and services to their parents. Interviewee 19, from a community-based organization stated that, “we hold regular meetings with school officials in districts with large immigrant populations in order to emphasize the specific needs of the community.” Another interviewee, number 19, claimed that “collaborating with the schools is an essential part of bringing services to the immigrant population.” A coordinator from a community-based organization, interviewee 17 responded that:

We collaborate with the local school boards, as they are charged with setting curriculum in Nassau and Suffolk County, New York. We were successful in obtaining English programs in the grade school which cater to immigrant children. English language classes provide an important skill and serve as a bridge to other services. Funding for lower-level ESL is important to retain and to ensure the healthy integration of immigrants in New York and decrease discrimination.

Interviewee 13 claimed that her organization collaborates with several health care organizations “to educate her immigrant community about diabetes,” which she elaborated was rampant within that specific ethnic group.

## **Major Theme 2: Networking with organizations, agencies, and individuals**

Nonprofits in this study cannot provide every service that is needed by members of the immigrant community and must network with other nonprofits, government agencies, and other types of organizations. Nonprofit collaboration and inter-organizational cooperation are a common practice in the delivery of services to immigrants. A large part of the activities of a nonprofit is networking with government officials, lawmakers, social service agencies, philanthropic organizations, and other nonprofits.

The nonprofits in this study are largely small, community-based organizations within a local geographical area, with most of their staff consisting of volunteers. Developing an informal association with other nonprofits extends their reach and ability to offer additional support to immigrants. Collaboration between nonprofits are usually formal agreements with the understanding that services will be provided when the need cannot be met by an organization and to increase numbers in their advocacy efforts. However, networking is an informal association of organizations which may refer individuals for services as needed.

The benefits of networking allow nonprofits to offer a broader spectrum of services to meet the needs of the community. Governmental agencies partner with nonprofits to deliver some essential services to those in need, while organizations may seek assistance from agencies in assisting immigrants. Some of the networking activities include nonprofits referring immigrants who need help with legal issues to attorneys in their network or directing them to the appropriate agencies which can assist them with their needs.

Interviewee 5, from a religious-based nonprofit purported, that many people in his congregation are “committed to assisting them financially and will donate money when asked for

specific and individual cases.” Through a vast network of donors and other organizations, the nonprofit can call upon one or more for assistance during time of need. Interviewee 16, from a religious-based organization asserted that:

We maintain a partnership with the Suffolk County Police Department aimed at decreasing fear and mistrust of local law enforcement. We encourage immigrants to join other community organizations to foster trust and gain relevant information which may help them. We network with other organizations and businesses that deliver services to immigrants, such as churches, laundromats, salons, and stores to build stronger relationships with the immigrant community.

Nonprofits network with social services agencies such as Child Protective Services and the police department. According to an executive director of a community-based nonprofit which focuses most of their resources on women, interviewee 12 stated that “human trafficking is a major concern in the communities with large immigrant populations.” She continued “we have a network of people and organizations where we can turn to for assistance and also refer women who are in need of help.”

A coordinator for a community-based organization, interviewee 17, has an extensive network of local lawmakers such as councilmembers, county legislators, state assembly representatives, state senators, and congressional representatives, whom she regularly communicates. Explaining that “politicians need votes and tend to listen to us when we have a need, knowing that many immigrants who are citizens may also have relatives who are undocumented.” A volunteer, interviewee 14 with a community-based organization mentioned

that her network “consisted of many bilingual organizations to whom she refers immigrants who are in need of assistance.”

A leader of a religious-based organization, interviewee 26, pointed out that his congregation has many professionals in various fields of expertise. “We call upon one of our members who has the best qualification to assist someone in need,” insisted the interviewee when describing the level of assistance provided from their network. A director of an immigrant-led community-based nonprofit, interviewee 1, claimed that “our greatest victory, the passage of the ‘Dream Act’ was made possible through a series of networking with other organizations, especially those whose prime concerns are to assist immigrants.”

**Major Theme 3: Forming Coalitions.** Most of the interviewees were part of small community-based organization which were immigrant led, while some were religious-based. Due to their size and minimal operating budgets, many relied on forming strategic partnerships with other organizations to maximize their effectiveness in influencing immigration policy reforms. Forming partnerships through coalitions also affords nonprofits to expand the range of services they can offer to the community. Coalitions are informal agreements between nonprofits that allow for greater numbers in advocacy efforts by indicating that many organizations are involved in the struggle for immigration policy reforms.

An executive director for a small community-based nonprofit, interviewee 2, disclosed that “we are all volunteers, we have a next-to-nothing budget, undersized facilities, and lack of resources to influence policies.” However, he added “we network with other organizations to gain a larger presence in the struggle of fair treatment of immigrants.” Another interviewee, number 1, purported that “we are only five years old as an organization and heavily rely on others who are concerned about the same issues” by forming strategic partnerships.

An executive director, interviewee 3, whose organization concentrates mainly on food assistance and health insurance for immigrants proclaimed that “we partner with other organizations and agencies for the sole purpose of accomplishing our goals and gaining support for our causes.” A member of a religious-based nonprofit, interviewee 5, conveyed that “we network with five or six different organizations who deal with immigrant issues, we give support to them, and they in turn assist us in reaching a larger public base.” Interviewee 13 responded that her organization “focuses on providing a system of referrals for legal, housing, and food assistance” in the process of assisting immigrants.

A leader of a religious-based nonprofit, interviewee 26, mentioned that her organization has a large coalition of volunteers “who specialized in various areas and are willing to assist whenever called upon” whether it is food, a safe haven, or legal help. She further elaborated that:

Attorneys are offering to support nonprofits and provide pro bono support and represent immigrants in specific categories ranging from application for permanent residency, change of lawful status, deportation orders, domestic violence, human trafficking, and citizenship. Due to the large and increasing number of cases, capacity is limited, and more funding is required to support services from nonprofits. Collaborating with attorneys, law firms, and law schools is a valuable resource in helping us assist immigrants in the struggles of daily life.

Interviewee 21, a leader of a community-based nonprofit noted, “we network with a bunch of people, whether it’s housing needs, food assistance or education programs, we find

someone who can help.” Interviewee 12, from a larger community-based organization pointed out that:

We have a group of volunteers that are involved in resource generation, a process where we aid various people with different sets of circumstances, especially new immigrants who may feel left out of the mainstream.

The interviewee, an executive director, pointed out that their funding comes from private donors and government grants.

**Minor Themes for Research Question Three.** The minor themes for research question three related to helping new immigrants in transitioning to a new society, facilitating socialization, and dealing with racism. Many nonprofits, in addition to providing services to immigrants also act as a conduit for assimilation by teaching and supporting them in their new environment. Many of the negative aspects of immigrating to a new country are mitigated by the social support offered by nonprofits, especially those staffed with immigrants who share various cultural commonalities.

**Table 11**  
*Minor themes for RQ 3*

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Collaborating with other nonprofits
Networking with organizations, agencies, and individuals
Forming coalitions

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**Table 12**  
**Responses**

<b>Number of Interviewees Discussing the Three Minor Themes for RQ 3</b>	
Transitioning	4
Facilitating socialization	8
Dealing with racism	6

**Minor Theme 1: Transitioning to a new society.** The community-based organizations in this study are staffed with people of similar backgrounds, language, and socio-cultural history. The religious-based organizations' congregations are primarily composed of a homogenous group of immigrants. Due to such commonalities, immigrants feel comfortable dealing with such people and organizations. Besides providing services, many nonprofits help immigrants ease into their new life in a different country by assisting them in finding employment, housing, and schools for their children. Nonprofits identify American values, a sense of belonging, and assimilation as necessary components needed to bridge the cultural gap between immigrants and native-born people. Becoming civic minded and participating in community affairs is seen as a means of social integration, a process that nonprofits in this study encourage. Many interviewees emphasized that transitional processes work best with younger immigrants as they are more susceptible to learning and assimilating into a new culture.

Some nonprofits informally assist in employment referrals for immigrants through word of mouth or by providing introductions to other who may need someone with a specific skill. Local employers sometimes frequent nonprofits' location to recruit day laborers or may notify them of their labor or specialty skills needs. Many immigrants, especially unskilled



undocumented immigrants come to the nonprofits' location daily and wait to be picked up for employment.

Several interviewees responded that their organization actively assist immigrants in the transitioning process and remain available for them long after the initial phases have been completed. Interviewee 1 stated that “many of the recent immigrants we work with come from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, they speak little or no English, and approximately half are undocumented.” She stressed that “it is important they have organizations to turn to for assistance and direction of how to deal with the culture shock of migration.” According to interviewee 24, many of these recent immigrants face severe hardships and lack the necessities of daily life.” Interviewee 20 pointed out that her organization focuses on the youth and “do our best with the youth to steer them away from drugs and gangs, venues that make them have a sense of belonging.” Interviewee 12 purported that “we arrange language classes as soon as possible to help them with the language and to aid them in communicating with their children’s teachers and others.” Interviewee 9 stated that “most immigrants come to the United States with nothing and barely have enough to eat, we step in and provide any assistance we can to make their transition a bit easier.”

**Minor Theme 2: Facilitating socialization.** Nonprofits provide a venue for immigrants to meet others who share similar cultural characteristics and afford them a chance of fellowship with member of their community. Community support for new immigrants are one of the methods nonprofits utilize to facilitate services and assistance to new immigrants. Religious-based organizations play a significant role in fostering fellowship for immigrants who share similar backgrounds as many congregations are culturally homogenous. The nonprofits along with the existing immigrant community facilitated assimilation, provided a sense of social

connection, and networking. Associating with other immigrants develop into a deep sense of belonging and human attachment.

Nonprofits that assist immigrants create an atmosphere where they can socialize and share experiences. Interviewee 2, an executive director of a Hispanic-run community-based nonprofit emphasized that “when people of similar backgrounds associate with each other, it gives them a sense of belonging and may help alleviate the fear and anxiety of migration to a new and strange culture.” Interviewee 14 stated that “lots of fear exists within the immigrant community due to unjust immigration laws and a negative impression about immigrants.” She continued “we try to calm their fears and have them share their stories with others in an attempt to find some comfort in their precarious situation.” Interviewee 5 stated that “there is a lot of misinformation about immigration and immigrants, when they come to us and share their problems with other, we can collectively find some solutions.”

Two interviewees use art as a form of socialization for recent immigrants, especially targeting children. A founder and executive director of a community-based organization, interviewee 15, conveyed that her organization “use acting and painting to encourage unity within immigrant youths and to do something productive with their lives.” According to their document, the primary mission of the organization is to use the arts as a tool for social change and promote civic dialogue among diverse community leaders (Theatro, n.d.).

Interviewee 8, asserted that “we use chanting, dance, and singing as a way for immigrants to come together in harmony and get away from the daily struggles they endure.” She added, we focus on people from “different Caribbean countries and primarily serve immigrants from the Hindu community” in New York.” According to the organization’s document, they are opened to people of all ethnic backgrounds who want to share in an intercultural format, stories about their

struggles as immigrants (Hindu Arts Center, 2019). An executive director of a community-based organization that targets mainly Hispanic immigrants, interviewee 1, emphasized that “we are volunteers, yet we advocate at the town, municipal, and state level for immigrants in our area and are very successful in building bridges with local officials and the community.” The organization’s document noted that they promote a deeper understanding and respect for cultural differences through advocacy for social justice (Hispanics United, n.d.).

**Minor Theme 3: Dealing with racism.** The changing demographics in New York has led to a severe backlash against immigrants, especially those from Latin America. The current climate of immigration-linked fear has led many immigrants to avoid public gatherings, traveling far from home, and elude strangers. Many immigrants who live in fear of apprehension by immigration authorities also live in fear of violence. Immigrants are stopped more often by the police for minor traffic infractions than the general population of the counties in this study and are often most cited for such infractions. Cases have been reported to nonprofits of individuals attacked solely because of their appearance, and in one incident an undocumented immigrant was murdered in Suffolk County. According to one organization’s document, nonimmigrants fear the immigrant community due to the media portrayal and the president’s inflammatory rhetoric of them as criminals (Association of Community Helpers, n.d.).

Many immigrants reported incidents of racism and discrimination to individuals associated with nonprofits. Interviewee 24 noted that “racism is a barrier, an invisible line which keeps people separated and segregated by residency.” Interviewee 25 advises people she assists through her organization “not to say you are from El Salvador if you are stopped by the police or ICE, they will automatically think you are associated with a gang.” Interviewee 26 purported that “many communities resent the sudden influx of Hispanic immigrants and make them feel

unwelcomed regardless if they are legal or undocumented.” Interviewee 14 stated that “many immigrants carry large sums of cash because they cannot open bank accounts and are often targets of robbery, yet they fear to report to the police.”

**Summary of Research Question Three.** The third section of this chapter listed the major and minor themes; nonprofit financial resources, nonprofits that form coalitions, and nonprofits that new work. Minor themes were transitioning to a new society, socialization with others from similar background, and dealing with racism. Graphs and table were added to provide additional information for the reader. This researcher analyzed the responses from the interviewees and searched for patterns and themes. The information gathered answered research question three and presented the findings about nonprofits that collaborate with other organization to influence immigration reforms and make a difference in the lives of immigrants.

Themes for research question three:

Major Themes:

- Collaborating with other nonprofits
- Networking with organizations, agencies, and individuals
- Forming coalitions

Minor Themes:

- Transitioning to a new society
- Facilitating socialization
- Dealing with racism

## Evaluation of the Findings

The results obtained from the interviews and organizations' documents supported the theoretical framework of the study; Wiesbrod's 1975 public good theory. Language used by the respondents were consistent with the public good theory and provided a certain degree of legitimacy for this study. The public good theory posits that nonprofits provide goods and services to those in needs when free markets and governments fail to do so. Economist Burton Weisbrod (b. 1931) asserted that nonprofit organizations are an essential component of the public-private partnership found in capitalist societies (Weisbrod, 1997). Such partnerships are "gap-fillers" because they deliver public goods when the government and public sectors lack resources or are limited by other barriers (Anheier, 2014, p. 121; Weisbrod, 1997). The public good theory applies to this study because the goods and services provided by nonprofits in assisting immigrants are outside the domain of governmental intervention and aligns with the research questions.

Responses to research question one elucidated how nonprofits in New York assisting undocumented and noncitizen immigrants in the challenges of daily life provided referrals for legal assistance, food, and language literacy. The responses were supported by information obtained in the organizational documents provided to this researcher. The responses supported assertions from prior research and provided validation for assumptions of this researcher's inquiries. Many of the nonprofits defined themselves as small, community-based grassroots organizations, and ones that uses human capital as their base for social change. Terrana, (2017) and Negi et al., (2018) declared that community-based nonprofits play an indispensable part is aiding high-poverty, high-minority, and high-immigrant neighborhoods. Gast and Okamoto (2016); Martin-Rogers et al. (2016); Nichols et al. (2018) emphasized that ethnicity, race, and

legal status has an impact on public policy and undocumented and noncitizen immigrants have no rights or a voice in policy decisions.

Many of these organizations referred immigrants to the appropriate attorneys who may specialize in their unique case which are often immigration related, but at times criminal. Supplying food to immigrants or securing food assistance contributed to a large component of the public goods that nonprofits provided. Question one responses also provided information about the organization's providing referrals, sanctuary, and providing a place for undocumented immigrants to access resources.

Responses to research question two expounded the manners which nonprofits advocated for immigration reforms, how they fought for driving privileges for undocumented immigrants, and their organizations of influence on policymakers. Additionally, the responses for question two provided information on the impact nonprofits make on immigration reforms and lawmakers. Selanathan and Lickel (2019) pointed out that nonprofits fight social injustice and impact policy reforms by connecting with social movements to gain support and achieve their advocacy goals. Much of the advocacy is aimed at lawmakers to pass immigration reform policies to make life less challenging for undocumented and noncitizen immigrants.

For research question three, the responses provided information about the nonprofits' financial resources, the coalitions they form with other organizations, and the people in their network that help to assist immigrants. Nonprofits use coalitions to supplement services they may not provide or to gain strength and numerical voices in their struggle for immigration reforms. Faulk et al. (2016) noted nonprofits were forced to collaborate with other organizations due to the categorical failure of the federal, state, and local governments to provide adequate social services to marginalized people. Part of forming coalitions with other organizations

consists of nonprofits assisting immigrants in transiting to a new culture and society, form bonds with members of their ethnicity or nationality through socialization and help them deal with anti-immigrant racism.

### **Summary**

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to address, from an organizational perspective, how nonprofits in New York assist immigrants with the struggles of daily life. The study included 26 interviewees from nonprofit organizations in New York. Some were religious-based or community-based, with a few considered immigrant-led. Additionally, organizational documents were analyzed as part of the research process and to triangulate the data from the interviewees. The case study utilized an open-ended semi-structured interview format during face-to-face meeting by this researchers and interviewees. The results of the data produced evidence of the levels and types of assistance which nonprofits provide to undocumented and noncitizen immigrants in New York.

Chapter four affords future researchers information that can guide additional research of the impact of nonprofits in assisting immigrants with the challenges of daily life. The findings elucidated that nonprofits provide public goods to immigrants in the form of advocacy and services to assist them in the struggles of daily life. Based on the perceptions of the interviewees and organizational documents, nonprofits are the only source of assistance for some immigrants and make a difference in their lives.

## Chapter 5: Implications, Recommendations, and Conclusions

### Introduction

The final chapter of this study will recapitulate the research problem, the purpose of the study, and the methodology used. Sections of this chapter that follows contains implications of the study, recommendation for practice, recommendation for future research, and the conclusion. Presently, no studies exist that applied this theory to examining nonprofits and how they help immigrants. According to this study, nonprofits engaged in facilitating public goods to immigrants due to the altruistic nature of their organizations' missions. This chapter will further provide information about the findings from the research questions that aligns with the theoretical framework and literature in chapter two.

The purpose of this study was to explore the services provided by nonprofits that assist undocumented and noncitizen immigrants in New York. The study was designed to explore in what ways do nonprofits assist, advocate, and collaborate to provide services for immigrants. This study explored community and religious-based organizations that delivered public goods to an extremely marginalized section of the population. Contributions to the existing body of knowledge was presented by the evidence gathered about nonprofits helping immigrants with their daily struggles by providing them various types of assistance.

In the previous chapter, analysis of the responses to the research questions extracted evidence about the ways nonprofits in New York facilitated public goods for immigrants. This study followed a qualitative case study approach to ascertain how nonprofits assisted immigrants in legal and other challenges of daily life, advocated for immigration reforms, and how much they collaborated to make a difference. Yin (2014) implied that for a qualitative empirical



research to ascertain answers that elucidate the contributions and perceptions of a targeted population, a case study design is most appropriate. De Massis and Kotlar (2014) emphasized that a case study will provide the most objectivity and distinctiveness for a researcher conducting a qualitative study.

The objective of the study was to ascertain the methods used by nonprofits in New York to help immigrants with the daily challenges of life through assistance, advocacy, and collaboration. This researcher conducted 26 semi-structured interviews with executive directors, directors, coordinators, employees, and volunteers of nonprofit organizations that assist immigrants. The semi-structured interviews provided responses which were analyzed for words and phrases and incorporated into themes that this researcher repetitively reexamined with the interview transcripts to compare preliminary findings.

During the semi-structured interviews, the researcher, in addition to voice recordings, made copious notes, and received organizational documents from some of the interviewees. Responses from the interviewees and organizational literature led to theoretical saturation. Theoretical saturation was met after twenty respondents were interviewed and their answers began to display similar patterns of words and phrases. This researcher set apart any personal biases and remained objective and neutral during the data collection process. According to Given (2008), neutrality entails that a researcher displays no biases based upon his or her worldview, experiences, and discernment. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews and organizational literature that was adequate to answer the research questions. The data collected from the study were structured and coded based on parallel themes, while the data analysis was done manually, as further discussed in chapters 3 and 4.

Limitations to this study were a vast geographical location, time, resources, and logistics. The number of nonprofits assisting immigrants in New York is too large for a single qualitative study. This researcher chose to narrow the study to three counties in New York that have large immigrant populations, and community and religious-based organizations that provide services for them. A target of 35 organizations was originally planned as a feasible number of respondents needed for theoretical saturation. In the end, a total of 26 interviews were conducted with 21 organizations. All respondents spoke fluent English; therefore, language was not a barrier for this researcher.

This researcher contacted 68 nonprofit organizations in three counties of New York. The three counties chosen fairly represented a diverse group of immigrants and organizations that aided them. From this number, 26 people representing a cross-section of organizations that assist immigrants, agreed to participate in the study. All efforts were made to maximize the variance in the number of organizations and respondents. Every location and respondent met the criteria and intent of this study.

The timeframe for completion limits the amount of people who can participate, resources were limited to this researcher for a lengthier study, and logistics made it difficult to interview everyone involved with nonprofits. The small number of respondents does not fully represent all immigrant groups in New York and only provided the perspective from the nonprofits' side. This topic can be examined from multiple perspectives by interviewing those receiving assistance or providing funding.

The sections of this chapter to follow are research questions, an analysis of the implications of the findings organized by the major and minor themes, recommendations for practice and future studies, and a conclusion. Considerations will be given to the theoretical

framework and literature reviewed in previous chapters. Patterns and themes were identified to successfully collaborate responses and organizational documents to answer the research questions.

## **Implications**

The data collected allowed this researcher to develop implications for this study. The implications are suggestions based on the conclusion from the perspective of the research participants. Following the research questions are implications based from findings from the study. The research questions will be stated, followed by a discussion of these implications of the research from responses and contents of relevant organizational documents.

### **RQ1. In what ways do non-profit organizations in New York State assist undocumented immigrants in the legal and other challenges of daily life?**

The first research question is related to the ways nonprofits aided undocumented immigrants with legal issues and the challenges they face in their daily lives. Many immigrants turn to nonprofits for assistance because they are legally barred from receiving social services from the government. Some of the ubiquitous means of assisting immigrants were providing referrals to attorneys, food, classes, in addition to lesser activities such as attracting funding, providing sanctuary, and a space where they can turn to for many types of assistance.

The implications of these findings are that nonprofits provide many types of public goods to immigrants in various aspects of their lives. Providing public goods to the community is an investment, resulting in human capital that will generate productive citizens who contribute to society (Lin, 1999). Many immigrants who seek legal referrals do so with the intent of having someone to accompany them to court, represent them in front of an immigration judge in a

deportation hearing, or completing paperwork to adjust their legal status. Nonprofits maintain relationships with immigration attorneys and other immigrant advocates who can provide additional support to the person needing assistance. Community and religious-based organizations play an important role in acting as a formidable support system for immigrants by facilitating social integration and fellowship with those who share common cultural characteristics.

Another implication of these findings on the way nonprofits assist immigrants aligns with the theoretical framework of this study. Weisbrod's public good theory was evident throughout this study as evidence by the interviewee's responses about how they assist immigrants. The desire to assist others to better themselves, the spirit of volunteerism, and altruism, is the fundamental concept that evolves from providing a public good (Schwingel et al, 2017). Nonprofits in this study engage in providing public goods to those in need with the knowledge that they will receive nothing in return but the satisfaction of helping others.

Federal law prohibits undocumented immigrants from receiving nutritional and other forms of financial assistance from the government. Nonprofits intercede to fill the gap and provide daily meals, food, and other personal items directly to those immigrants in need. Such findings align with Terrana (2017) and Negi et al. (2018) postulations that nonprofits provide essential services and assistance to communities with a high percentage of undocumented immigrants. Many nonprofits will collect specific articles designated for certain families such as furniture, clothes, books, and other necessities. Provision of such public goods consists of a large portion of nonprofits' activities and mission to assist immigrants.

Nonprofits conduct language and other skill-building classes for immigrants to assist them in developing language proficiency and an employable skill. English-speaking classes

provide immigrants with a stronger chance of employment in certain occupations where language skills are an absolute prerequisite. Some nonprofits conduct classes on basic skills, career choices, financial management, and college preparation that specifically target the youths in the immigrant communities. Many respondents firmly held that such classes foster social integration and keep youths away from negative elements within their communities.

Personnel, space, and other resources that contributes in providing services to immigrants are limited. Many nonprofits operate with an all-volunteer staff, with some conducting operations out of their own homes. Many community-based nonprofits are small organizations with limited resources and are constantly in the process of soliciting funding. Sources of funding for nonprofits derived primarily from private donors, grants, and government allocations.

Organizations also provide sanctuary to those evading capture by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) due to warrants, raids on their place of employment, and homes. Nonprofits possessing space and resources, may grant sanctuary for immigrants and provide shelter, room, and board for those facing imminent deportation or families of those held in detention and are awaiting a hearing (Kerwin & Nicholson, 2019). Nonprofits that provide sanctuary usually assist immigrants with legal referrals in fighting deportation. Most nonprofits that offer sanctuary do so on a short-term basis while exploring other options and solutions. Members of the nonprofits may also accompany children to-and-from school, should parents fear apprehension from venturing out in public.

Based on the perceptions of those interviewed, immigrants that socialize with those who are in comparable situations result in the perception of belonging and minimizes the trauma of sudden massive change. Immigrants who share similar backgrounds and circumstances congregate with each other and share experiences about transitioning to a new life and culture.

Nonprofits provide immigrants access to resources which prepare for full participation in society and civic affairs affecting their communities. Nonprofits foster social integration through offering themselves as a place where immigrants can socialize with people who share similar socio-cultural commonalities.

**RQ2. In what ways do non-profit organizations in New York State advocate for undocumented immigrants through the lobbying of state legislators regarding supporting or opposing proposed laws on comprehensive immigration reform, and how do they conceive of their influence?**

The second research question is related to the ways nonprofits advocate for immigration reforms. Nonprofit organizations devote a larger portion of resources to prioritizing immigration reform advocacy through publicity campaigns, demonstrations, letter-writing, and public meetings to attract the attention of policymakers. Policy advocacy is an integral part of the efforts made by nonprofits in their fight for comprehensive immigration reforms (MacIndoe & Beaton, 2019). The first implication of these findings is that nonprofits are most successful in immigration reform advocacy when they organize and mobilize large amounts of people. Such conclusion is consistent with Enriquez, et al (2019) claim that lawmakers are more likely to respond to numbers. Specific legislators are often targeted because they may advance a policy sympathetic to immigrants or show support for comprehensive reforms. Leaders of nonprofits may develop relationships with legislators and other local officials as part of a group that proposes policies which are conducive to the needs of the immigrant community. Nonprofits engaged in immigration advocacy reforms maintain open lines of communication with lawmakers to create a broader understanding of issues facing immigrants.

Although immigration policies are legislated by the federal government, many programs and issues are decided at the state and local level. The second implication of these findings is that influencing policymakers on the local level was a priority for nonprofits advocating for immigration reforms. Methods of influencing policymakers included personal meetings, invitation to speak at their organization's events, and building strong relationships with local leaders. Religious-based organizations, which tend to have larger memberships, attract increase attention from local lawmakers.

A major victory in immigration reform advocacy was the passage of the *Green Light* law, which allows undocumented immigrants to legally drive in New York. Many immigrants that were stopped for a minor traffic infraction were detained and deported for operating a motor vehicle without a valid driver's license. Nonprofits inexorably campaigned for this law which benefits undocumented immigrants by providing them the freedom to drive for employment, school, and healthcare. Possession of a valid driver's license created new opportunities such as the ability to open a bank account, sign leases, purchase vehicles, and automobile insurance.

Many respondents from nonprofits organizations were confident that their collective efforts strongly impacted immigration reforms. Driving privileges, bilingual classes in public schools, and multi-language signage in public places are some of the success of nonprofits impacting local policies. Another considerable impact by the efforts of nonprofits is the *Farm Bill*, a state law which makes it mandatory for employers to compensate farm laborers at least the minimum wage for labor regardless of legal status. Members of nonprofits also act as a liaison between policymakers and immigrants in promoting specific causes and showing support for lawmakers who may be contesting office.

Influencing immigration reforms that impact children, is an issue that nonprofits devote a large portion of their time advocating for and maintain a strong commitment to achieve. School lunches, bilingual education, day care, and health insurance were some of the reforms successfully passed due to the efforts of nonprofits. Immigrant children are divided into three groups; undocumented, noncitizen, and citizens, therefore, each group needed a specifically tailored policy to meet their needs. Nonprofits consider this factor when advocating for reforms and target each policy issue to those lawmakers and local officials who possess the authority to create changes.

Many successful advocacy efforts by nonprofits, to some extent, reduced the struggle in the daily lives of immigrants through immigration reforms. Lesser known local laws and regulations that create hardships were amended in heavily populated immigrant communities because of nonprofits' advocacy achievements. Community organizing, changing building codes, voter registrations for citizens, and support for immigrants' rights through advocacy on the local level were all made possible by sheer number of people and organizations attracting attention to such causes.

**RQ3. In what ways do non-profit organizations in New York State collaborate with other non-profit organizations to influence policy changes regarding undocumented immigrants?**

The third research question is related to the ways nonprofits collaborate with other nonprofits to influence policy changes. Chen (2014) emphasized that society is built upon a framework of collective efforts, and the understanding, interpretation, and advancement of the associated concepts that are fundamental for scholarly consideration. The first implication of these finding is that collaborating with other nonprofits allows organizations to broaden their ability to advocate and is consistent with Fyall & McGuire's (2015) claim that collaboration led



to greater influence on policy reforms. The struggle for immigration policy reforms often oblige the cooperation and collaboration of nonprofits to influence lawmakers (Browne et al, 2016; Levine, 2016; Mellinger, 2017). Many nonprofits lack personnel, resources, and the range to influence comprehensive immigration reforms. Nonprofits, to reach many levels of policymakers, augment their numbers through collaboration with other organizations.

Collectively, collaboration is done primarily at the local level with organizations supporting each other's efforts in policy advocacy for immigrants. The second implication of these findings from data related to research question three is that nonprofits form coalitions when they are involved in the same type of policy advocacy efforts. This is consistent with Nicholls et al. (2019) claim that organizations collaborate to influence comprehensive immigration reforms. Collaboration strengthens organization's advocacy efforts and allows them to have a greater influence in policy reform issues (Levine, 2016). Nonprofits that collaborate on a specific issue are more likely to have positive results in their policy reform efforts (Fyall & McGuire, 2015). Many local laws have more of an impact on the lives of undocumented immigrants than federal immigration policies. Therefore, the collaboration efforts usually target local and state lawmakers that vote on policies affecting the daily lives of immigrants. Collaboration also provides the nonprofits with an increased presence in advocating for immigration reforms by adding personnel in public demonstrations, rallies, and in meetings with lawmakers.

The findings and implications of this study are consistent with existing research and theory. Weibrod's theory of public goods and the existing literature was supported by the responses to the research questions. The responses added a unique contribution to the existing body of knowledge about organizations engaged in providing public goods to immigrants. The

implications in this section forms the structure for recommendations for practice and future studies.

### **Recommendations for Practice**

The focus of this qualitative case study was to gain insights about how nonprofits in New York assist immigrants in the struggles of daily life. This study's findings would be relevant to those seeking to comprehend how nonprofits advocate for and assist a specific group of marginalized people. Therefore, this study would be constructive for nonprofits, donors, and stakeholders by adding to the body of knowledge about the ways organizations provide services and advocate for immigrants.

The data collected supports the need for additional funding and exposure for nonprofits so that immigrants can become aware of the services and other support available. Many directors of nonprofits in this study discussed the importance of funding, resources, and policy advocacy. Hiring competent financial managers and developing effective fundraising methods will enhance the ability of nonprofits to expand their strategy to influence public policy (Nicholls, 2018). Recommendations that were emphasized by the respondents included solicitation of funding and other resources through donations, grants, and collections for a specific cause. Directors highly stressed that nonprofits need to develop programs that will increase their revenues and create a steady positive cash flow into their organizations. Additionally, recruiting personnel to support their work and assist in the distribution of services are essential components of operations for nonprofits and more attention is needed to this effort.

Directors and other personnel emphasized the need to build stronger relationships with policymakers and others that have influence over immigration reforms. Nonprofits should work

closely with local officials and legislators who support policies conducive to their purpose. Elected officials respond more to organizations with large numbers of members, and nonprofits can utilize this as an advantage in registering those eligible to vote and showing support for candidates sympathetic to their immigrant issues.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Nonprofits in New York are engaged in providing a variety of public goods to immigrants in alignment with Weisbrod's theory. The study postulated that nonprofit assist immigrants through providing public goods in many forms such as legal assistance, food, sanctuary, and advocacy. The study had limitations such as sample size and methodology, in addition to the geographical area targeted. Additional research can utilize different methodologies, target a larger geographical area, or focus on a larger sample size for gathering data.

Utilizing the framework, finding, and implications of this study, more research is needed to discover additional knowledge about nonprofits that assist immigrants. Recommendations for future studies will expand the body of knowledge about problems facing immigrants and how nonprofits are mitigating some of the struggles in their daily lives. Future research could determine the socio-cultural background of the immigrants seeking assistance from nonprofits to verify if certain groups tend to utilize services more than others. Additionally, researchers should examine nonprofits on a larger scale, such as statewide or nationally to establish their influence on immigration policy on the federal level. Future researchers could explore the ways nonprofits assist undocumented immigrants in acquiring higher education, what type of tuition programs are available to them, and how they avoid apprehension by ICE while attending university. Future studies could gather information on a larger scale by interviewing directors of nonprofits that

have a national presence to identify collaboration efforts and the type of advocacy they are engaged in order to determine the effectiveness of their work.

In the future, researchers can improve upon the study by collecting data from a larger sample population to gain additional information, lessen biases, and improve the accuracy of the data. Future studies can target directors only, donors from philanthropic organizations that fund nonprofits, or legislators who were influenced by the advocacy efforts of nonprofits to gather a different perspective about nonprofits. Sample population for future studies can include only volunteers, immigrants who receive services, or attorneys who provide legal assistance; people not responsible for setting the organization's agenda. Future research can also include longitudinal studies of immigrants who received services from nonprofits and the resulting assimilation level, economic mobilization, language proficiency and the academic achievements of their children. A longitudinal study will allow researchers to identify developments in the characteristics of the target population at both the group and individual levels over a longer period (Wang et al, 2017).

## **Conclusion**

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to ascertain in what ways do nonprofit organizations in New York engage in assisting, and advocating for, undocumented immigrants in the legal and other challenges of daily life. This study contributes to the body of knowledge by identifying the types of services and advocacy provided by a sample of these nonprofits in New York. A qualitative case study design allowed the researcher to explore different viewpoints and facts about events in an authentic context (Simon, 2009).

This study demonstrated how Weisbrod's public good theory applied to the work of nonprofits assisting immigrants. Presently, no studies exist that applied this theory to examining nonprofits and how they help immigrants. According to the present study, nonprofits engaged in facilitating public goods to immigrants due to the altruistic nature of their organizations' missions. A signature feature of this study was that nonprofits that provide public goods were found to share a sense of moral and social responsibility in helping marginalized people. The theoretical framework of this study supports and highlights Weisbrod's public good theory as it applies to the ways nonprofits assist immigrants in New York.

This study was unique because the respondents utilized language consistent with the public good theory when discussing how their organizations assisted immigrants. The results from this study expand the body of knowledge about the types of public goods nonprofits provide to an extremely marginalized section of the population. The findings provide insight about small, community, and religious-based organizations that help millions of people with a variety of struggles in their daily lives. The data from this study presented a distinct perspective about those who provide public goods to others. Although undocumented and noncitizen immigrants may be relegated to the lower echelons of society, this study showed that compassion and care does exist for them.

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## Appendixes

### Appendix A: Informed Consent Form

#### **Introduction:**

My name is Roger Singh. I am a Ph.D. student at Northcentral University. I am doing a research study how nonprofit organizations are involved in bringing services to. The study will also look at how nonprofits fight for immigration reforms. I am completing this research as part of my Ph.D. degree in Public Administration. Your involvement is voluntary. I am seeking your permission to use your information in this study. Reasons you might not want to participate in the study include you may not want to get involved, schedule, or doubt about the use of the information. Some reasons to become involve are a sense of community involvement and support of for immigrants. You may choose not to participate or stop at any time. I am here to answer your questions or concerns during the process.

#### **PRIVATE INFORMATION**

Certain private information may be collected about you in this study. I will make the following effort to protect your private information. No personal information will be asked by me at any time. Any information provided will be checked for correctness. All information will be used according the strict rules of the university. Even with this effort, there is a chance that your private information may be accidentally released. The chance is small but does exist. You should consider this when deciding whether to participate.

#### **Activities:**

If you take part in this research, you will be asked to:

1. Answer about a dozen questions (about 60 minutes).
2. Provide name of organization, location, your title, and time with organization

**Eligibility:**

You are eligible to participate in this research if you:

1. Work for a nonprofit organization that assists immigrants
2. Volunteer with a nonprofit organization that assists immigrants

You are not eligible to participate in this research if you:

1. Receiving assistance from a nonprofit
2. Are undocumented

I hope to include 35 individuals in this research study.

**Risks:**

There are slight risks in this study. Some possible risks include participant providing too much information other than what is asked. To decrease the impact of these risks, you can: Not answer any question, stop at any time, and ask to delete any statements you may feel is inappropriate.

**Benefits:**

If you decide to take part, there are no direct benefits to you, except the feeling that your assisted someone in bringing attention to immigrants' struggles. The benefits to others are knowledge about immigrants and the people and organizations that help them.

**Confidentiality:**

The information you provide will be kept confidential. Some steps I will take to keep your identity confidential include assigning a random name to you and your answers. The people who will have access to your information are: Myself, my Chair, and my dissertation committee. The Institutional Review Board may also review my research and view your information. I will secure your information with these steps: Keeping all written answers in a locked cabinet. Locking my personal computer with a password. Using encryption on my computer. At no time will any written answer leave my premise. I will send data to my chair and committee for review. I will keep your data for 7 years, then I will delete data.

**Contact Information:**

If you have questions for me, you can contact me at: R.Singh1033@o365.ncu.edu. My dissertation chair is Dr. John Frame. He works at Northcentral University and is supervising me on the research. You can contact him at jframe@ncu.edu, telephone at (866) 776-0331 x1724. If you contact us, you will be giving us information like your phone number or email address. This information will not be linked to your responses if the study is anonymous. If you have questions about your rights in the research. If a problem has occurred. If you are injured during your participation, please contact the Institutional Review Board at: irb@ncu.edu or 1-888-327-2877 ext 8014.

**Voluntary Participation:**

Your participation is voluntary. If you decide not to participate, or if you stop participation after you start, there will be no penalty to you. You will not lose any benefit to which you are otherwise entitled.



### **Future Research**

Any information or specimens collected from you during this research may not be used for other research in the future, even if identifying information is removed.

### **Audiotaping:**

I would like to use a voice recorder to record your responses. You can still participate if you do not wish to be recorded.

Please sign here if I can record you: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Signature:**

A signature indicates your understanding of this consent form. You will be given a copy of the form for your information.

**Participant Signature**

**Printed Name**

**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Researcher Signature**

**Printed Name**

**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix B: Interview Questions**

### **In what ways do nonprofit organizations in New York State assist undocumented immigrants in the legal and other challenges of daily life?**

1. Can you tell me, and describe, the ways your organization facilitates services to noncitizen and undocumented immigrants to help them with challenges of daily life?
2. Does your organization provide any social services such as health insurance, food assistance, educational programs to immigrants and how much does this help with the daily challenges they face?
3. Does your organization provide referral services such as legal assistance, childcare, and housing referrals?

### **In what ways do nonprofit organizations in New York State advocate for undocumented immigrants through lobbying of state legislators regarding supporting or opposing proposed laws on comprehensive immigration reform, and how do they conceive of their influence?**

1. What type of pro-immigrant lobbying, and advocacy does your organization conduct?
2. What are some examples of the types of lobbying and advocacy efforts aimed at legislators to influence immigration reforms?
3. How successful do you think your organization has been in influencing immigration reforms?
4. How receptive are state legislators to your organization's lobbying and advocacy efforts for immigration reform?

5. Can you describe some success and failures about lobbying and advocacy for immigration reforms which involved your organization?

**In what ways do nonprofit organizations in New York State collaborate with other nonprofit organizations to influence policy changes regarding undocumented immigrants, and what difference do they think this makes?**

1. Does your organization join national movements and build coalitions or alliances to gain a larger base for influencing immigration reforms?
2. Describe some of the differences your organization perceives as a result of successful collaboration with other nonprofits in assisting immigrants?

### Appendix C: Participant Letter

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

My name is Roger Singh. I am a Ph.D. student at Northcentral University's Public Administration Program. I am conducting interviews as part of a research study to increase our understanding of the ways nonprofits help immigrants. I am seeking people who are involved with assisting immigrants. I think you are in an ideal position to provide information for my study. The study involves providing information about the nonprofit and the services provided. Your participation will be highly appreciated. If you are willing to participate, please suggest a day and time that suits you. You will be required to participate in an interview which should be approximately one hour. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask.

Thank you.

Roger Singh, B.Sc., M.A. Ph.D. Candidate – Northcentral University

### **Appendix D: Verbal Recruitment Script**

My name is Roger Singh. I am a Ph.D. student at Northcentral University's Public Administration Program. I am conducting interviews as part of a research study to increase our understanding of the ways nonprofits help immigrants. I am seeking people who are involved with assisting immigrants. I think you are in an ideal position to provide information for my study. The study involves providing information about the nonprofit and the services provided. Your participation will be highly appreciated. You will be required to participate in an interview which should last one hour. If you are willing to participate, please suggest a day and time that suits you. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask.

Thank you.

## Appendix E: IRB Approval Letter

December 13, 2019

NCU Approved Date Stamp



# Northcentral University

2488 Historic Decatur Road, Suite 100, San Diego, CA 92106 | [www.ncu.edu](http://www.ncu.edu)

**Date:** December 13, 2019

**PI Name:** Roger Singh

**Chair Name (if applicable):** John Frame

**Application Type:** Initial Submission

**Review Level:** Exempt - Category 2

**Study Title:** Nonprofit organizations in New York State assisting immigrants

**Approval Date** December 13, 2019

**Expiration Date** December 12, 2020

Dear Roger:

Congratulations! The purpose of this letter is to inform you that your IRB application has been approved. Your responsibilities include the following:

1. Follow the protocol as approved. If you need to make changes, please submit a modification form requesting approval of any proposed changes before you make them.
2. If there is a consent process in your research, you must use the consent form approved with your final application. Please make sure all participants receive a copy of the consent form.
3. Continuing review is required as long as you are in data collection or if data have not been deidentified. Failure to receive approval of the continuing review before the expiration date means the research must stop immediately.
4. If there are any injuries, problems, or complaints from participants, you must notify the IRB at [IRB@ncu.edu](mailto:IRB@ncu.edu) within 24 hours.
5. IRB audit of procedures may occur. The IRB will notify you if your study will be audited.
6. When data are collected and de-identified, please submit a study closure form to the IRB.
7. You must maintain current CITI certification until you have submitted a study closure form.

8. If you are a student, please be aware that you must be enrolled in an active dissertation course with NCU in order to collect data.

Congratulations from the NCU IRB. Best wishes as you conduct your research!

Respectfully,

Northcentral University Institutional Review Board

Email: [irb@ncu.edu](mailto:irb@ncu.edu)

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