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Title

The growing role of ethnic, cultural, and folk nonprofit organizations serving Asian immigrants in the United States: A case of demand heterogeneity and government failure theory

Abstract

The size of the U.S. immigrant (foreign-born) population grew by 57 percent from 19.8 million to 31.1 million between 1990 and 2000 (Malone et al. 2003), and by 2060 nearly one in five people living in the United States will be foreign-born. As one the fastest growing racial/ethnic groups in the United States, Asians will make up 24% of the total U.S. population in 50 years (Pew Research Center, 2015). These projected changes in the U.S. population will create new social and cultural demands to accommodate growing ethnic and racial diversity in local communities. Along with large waves of immigration, the number of ethnic, cultural, and folk nonprofit organizations have nearly tripled in the past two decades. Such organizations preserve an ethnic group’s cultural roots and help reduce linguistic and cultural barriers, ultimately serving as a mechanism to promote a sense of ethnic solidarity (Rosenstein and Brimer 2005; Lee and DeVita 2008). Nonprofit ethnic, cultural, and folk organizations also help mitigate anti-immigrant sentiment by serving as a bridge across racial and ethnic groups. Though not all communities have seen such an increase, the timing of the growth mirrors that of immigrant populations and begs the question of whether ethnic, cultural, and folk organizations are responding to the ethnic and cultural needs of these diversified populations.

Using the government failure theory, this study examines the factors that are linked to the growth of ethnic, cultural, and folk nonprofit organizations that serve largely Asian immigrant populations, with a special focus on the source of financial supports. As such, our study also contributes to the growing yet limited literature on immigrant-serving nonprofit organizations. In addition to paying particular attention to the influence of the Asian population, this study further breaks the analysis into various national origin groups- Chinese, Filipino, Asian Indian, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese,
and other Asian group.
This study examines county-level variations in the prevalence of ethnic, cultural, and folk nonprofit organizations, and explores associated community factors across the country by drawing data from the National Center for Charitable Statistics and the U.S. Census Bureau. The county-level nonprofit and community socioeconomic data focus the period from 1995 to 2015, which observed the unprecedented growth Asian immigrant population.
Preliminary results suggest that community demographic makeup matters in shaping the availability of the nonprofits that help each ethnic groups to preserve their own cultural identities in the United States. The findings also highlight potential issues of disparities among different Asian national origins in terms of the availability of and support for the nonprofit organizations that promote cultural awareness. The results have implications for the role of nonprofits as perceived by different Asian immigrant groups, probably due to different shape of government-nonprofit sector relations in their own country of origins

Keyword