

**U.S. Local Governments' Human Resource and Facility Engagement  
with Their Immigrants**

by

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## **Abstract**

Immigrants are an indispensable component of communities in the United States. Regarding the roles government of all levels play in immigration laws or/and services, the federal government plays a significant role in national immigration policies and state legislatures also retain their powers in passing their own laws or policies on immigration. Local governments also pass local laws, provide services and conduct inclusive programs for their immigrant populations. Over the past two decades, more scholars have begun to study local governments' policies and decisions, with some scholarship focusing on local governments' services for immigrants. Some studies regard the effect of immigrants on local employment and on local governments' services for immigrants. However, what factors determine local governments' staffing and facility engagement with their immigrant populations is an intriguing and unanswered question. To date, no scholarship has addressed the question: Why do localities differ in their facility and working staff engagement with their immigrants? This project aims to address that gap using both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

Utilizing 2018 Local Government & Immigrant Communities Survey (ICMA 2019), American Community Surveys (ACS) 2013-2017 (U.S. Census Bureau 2020) and data from three other sources, this project conducts a quantitative analysis of more than 1000 local governments across the United States to test, among several given theories, which factors influence local governments' decisions concerning facility and staff engagement with their immigrants. This research also uses interviews and four case studies to explore how these factors influence local governments' engagement with their immigrants. The findings show that in addition to the local needs factor and the political factor, some other unexpected factors such as immigrant organizations, the higher governments' influence, and the network with other local governments all influence this engagement. The insights gleaned from this project will allow local governments to include the new factors and perspectives into their policymaking process regarding their immigrant populations.

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## Table of Contents

|                                                                              |            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Abstract.....</b>                                                         | <b>ii</b>  |
| <b>Acknowledgements .....</b>                                                | <b>iii</b> |
| <b>List of Tables .....</b>                                                  | <b>ix</b>  |
| <b>List of Figures.....</b>                                                  | <b>xi</b>  |
| <b>Chapter 1: Introduction .....</b>                                         | <b>1</b>   |
| <i>Immigration in the United States.....</i>                                 | <i>1</i>   |
| <i>Immigration Policies at Different Levels of Governments .....</i>         | <i>2</i>   |
| <i>Immigration at the Level of the Federal Government .....</i>              | <i>2</i>   |
| <i>Immigration at the State Level.....</i>                                   | <i>4</i>   |
| <i>Immigration at the Local Government Level.....</i>                        | <i>6</i>   |
| <i>Significance of Immigration Issue at the Local Government Level .....</i> | <i>6</i>   |
| <i>Research Questions .....</i>                                              | <i>9</i>   |
| <i>Dissertation Structure Overview .....</i>                                 | <i>10</i>  |
| <b>Chapter 2: Literature Review.....</b>                                     | <b>12</b>  |
| <i>The Debate over the Five Factors' Effects on Local Policies .....</i>     | <i>12</i>  |
| <i>Local Needs Factor .....</i>                                              | <i>12</i>  |
| <i>Economic Imperative Factor .....</i>                                      | <i>18</i>  |
| <i>Political Factor.....</i>                                                 | <i>23</i>  |
| <i>Institutional Structure/Capacity Factor .....</i>                         | <i>30</i>  |
| <i>Geographical Factor .....</i>                                             | <i>34</i>  |
| <i>Summary of Hypotheses.....</i>                                            | <i>36</i>  |
| <i>Gaps .....</i>                                                            | <i>38</i>  |
| <i>Benefits of This Study .....</i>                                          | <i>39</i>  |
| <b>Chapter 3: Data, Methods, Operationalization and Measurements .....</b>   | <b>41</b>  |
| <i>Data and Unit of Analysis .....</i>                                       | <i>41</i>  |
| <i>Mixed Methods Approach .....</i>                                          | <i>41</i>  |
| <i>Dependent Variable .....</i>                                              | <i>43</i>  |
| <i>Independent Variables .....</i>                                           | <i>46</i>  |
| <i>Immigrant Population .....</i>                                            | <i>48</i>  |

|                                                                                           |    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| <i>Non-white Percentage</i> .....                                                         | 48 |
| <i>Education</i> .....                                                                    | 49 |
| <i>Unemployment</i> .....                                                                 | 49 |
| <i>Per-capita Income</i> .....                                                            | 49 |
| <i>Gini-index</i> .....                                                                   | 50 |
| <i>Local Politics</i> .....                                                               | 50 |
| <i>Political Culture</i> .....                                                            | 50 |
| <i>Professionalism of Local Government</i> .....                                          | 51 |
| <i>Distance from Closest Port of Entry</i> .....                                          | 52 |
| <b><i>Hypotheses Revisit</i></b> .....                                                    | 52 |
| <b><i>Sampling Process</i></b> .....                                                      | 53 |
| <b><i>Statistical Processes</i></b> .....                                                 | 54 |
| <b><i>Case Study Selection Method and Justification</i></b> .....                         | 55 |
| <b><i>Data Collection from Interviews and Other Sources for Case Studies</i></b> .....    | 57 |
| <b><i>Conclusion</i></b> .....                                                            | 59 |
| <b>Chapter 4: Quantitative Analysis</b> .....                                             | 60 |
| <b><i>Analysis on Each Aspect of Local Governments' Engagement</i></b> .....              | 62 |
| <b><i>Analysis of the General Local Governments' Engagement with Immigrants</i></b> ..... | 69 |
| <b><i>Predictive Margins of the Statistically Significant Variables</i></b> .....         | 77 |
| <b><i>Conclusions</i></b> .....                                                           | 80 |
| <b>Chapter 5: City of Cambridge, Massachusetts and City of Tulsa, Oklahoma</b> .....      | 84 |
| <b><i>Why Cambridge and Tulsa as Study Subjects</i></b> .....                             | 84 |
| <b><i>The City of Cambridge, Massachusetts</i></b> .....                                  | 85 |
| <i>Basic Information on the City of Cambridge</i> .....                                   | 85 |
| <i>Cambridge City Government's Engagement with Immigrants</i> .....                       | 86 |
| <i>Local Needs Factor in Cambridge City</i> .....                                         | 89 |
| <i>Economic Factor</i> .....                                                              | 90 |
| <i>Political Factor</i> .....                                                             | 90 |
| <i>Professional Institutional Structure and Institutional Capacity</i> .....              | 93 |
| <i>Geographical Location of Cambridge City, Massachusetts</i> .....                       | 94 |
| <i>Summary on Cambridge City</i> .....                                                    | 95 |
| <b><i>The City of Tulsa, Oklahoma</i></b> .....                                           | 95 |

|                                                                                                   |     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <i>Basic Information on City of Tulsa, Oklahoma .....</i>                                         | 95  |
| <i>Tulsa’s Engagement with Its Immigrants .....</i>                                               | 96  |
| <i>Local Needs Influence on Local Engagement .....</i>                                            | 98  |
| <i>Economic Factor .....</i>                                                                      | 99  |
| <i>Political Factor.....</i>                                                                      | 100 |
| <i>Institutional Professionalism and Capacity .....</i>                                           | 103 |
| <i>Geographical Proximity to Port of Entry .....</i>                                              | 104 |
| <i>Summary of City of Tulsa .....</i>                                                             | 104 |
| <b><i>Further Comparison of the Factors Influencing Cambridge and Tulsa’s Engagement ....</i></b> | 104 |
| <i>The Common Factors .....</i>                                                                   | 104 |
| <i>The Uniqueness of the Two Cities .....</i>                                                     | 106 |
| <i>Unexpected Findings .....</i>                                                                  | 108 |
| <b><i>Summary of Comparison of the Two Cities .....</i></b>                                       | 110 |
| <b>Chapter 6: Los Angeles County and San Mateo County, California.....</b>                        | 112 |
| <b><i>Why I Selected These Two Counties.....</i></b>                                              | 113 |
| <b><i>Los Angeles County, California.....</i></b>                                                 | 113 |
| <i>Basic Information on Los Angeles County .....</i>                                              | 113 |
| <i>Los Angeles County’s Engagement with Immigrants .....</i>                                      | 114 |
| <i>Local Needs’ Influence on Local Engagement with Immigrants.....</i>                            | 117 |
| <i>Intergovernmental Drive/Factor .....</i>                                                       | 120 |
| <i>Economic Factor .....</i>                                                                      | 122 |
| <i>Political Factor.....</i>                                                                      | 123 |
| <i>Institutional Professionalism/ Capacity .....</i>                                              | 127 |
| <i>Geographic Proximity to Airports.....</i>                                                      | 127 |
| <b><i>San Mateo County, California .....</i></b>                                                  | 128 |
| <i>Basic County Information.....</i>                                                              | 128 |
| <i>San Mateo County’s Engagement with Immigrants .....</i>                                        | 129 |
| <i>Local Needs’ Influence on Local Engagement with Immigrants.....</i>                            | 131 |
| <i>Economic Influence on County Government’s Engagement .....</i>                                 | 133 |
| <i>Political Factor’s Influence.....</i>                                                          | 134 |
| <i>Institutional Structure/Capacity .....</i>                                                     | 137 |
| <i>Geographical Proximity to Closest Port of Entry .....</i>                                      | 137 |

|                                                                                            |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <i>Further Comparison of the Influencing Factors on the Two Counties' Engagement</i> ..... | 138 |
| <i>The Common Factors</i> .....                                                            | 138 |
| <i>Unexpected Findings</i> .....                                                           | 141 |
| <i>Summary of the Two Counties</i> .....                                                   | 144 |
| <b>Chapter 7: Conclusions</b> .....                                                        | 146 |
| <i>Findings</i> .....                                                                      | 146 |
| <i>Findings from Quantitative Data Analysis</i> .....                                      | 147 |
| <i>Findings from Qualitative Data Analysis</i> .....                                       | 148 |
| <i>Comparison of Findings from Quantitative and Qualitative Results</i> .....              | 151 |
| <i>Unexpected Findings from the Qualitative Analysis</i> .....                             | 153 |
| <i>Contributions to Theory</i> .....                                                       | 155 |
| <i>Implications for Practitioners</i> .....                                                | 157 |
| <i>Limitations and Future Directions</i> .....                                             | 159 |
| <b>References</b> .....                                                                    | 161 |
| <b>Appendices</b> .....                                                                    | 181 |
| <i>Appendix A</i> .....                                                                    | 181 |
| <i>Appendix B</i> .....                                                                    | 183 |
| <i>Appendix C</i> .....                                                                    | 184 |
| <i>Appendix D</i> .....                                                                    | 186 |
| <i>Appendix E</i> .....                                                                    | 187 |

## List of Tables

|                                                                                                                                             |     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Table 1.1: Numbers and Places of Origin of Immigrants in the U.S. ....                                                                      | 1   |
| Table 2.1: Summary of Hypotheses.....                                                                                                       | 37  |
| Table 3.1: Coding of the Dependent Variable (Question 5 on the Survey: Q5) .....                                                            | 45  |
| Table 3.2: The Descriptive Statistics of the Dependent Variable .....                                                                       | 46  |
| Table 3.3: Independent Variables, Operationalization and Data Sources .....                                                                 | 47  |
| Table 3.4: The Variables and the Hypotheses .....                                                                                           | 52  |
| Table 3.5: Two-step Process in Statistical Analysis .....                                                                                   | 54  |
| Table 3.6: Variables Utilized for Case Selection Strategy .....                                                                             | 56  |
| Table 4.1: Correlation between Variables .....                                                                                              | 60  |
| Table 4.2: Dependent Variable Table .....                                                                                                   | 61  |
| Table 4.3: Model A (SQa): Maintaining a Formal Office Solely for Immigrant Affairs .....                                                    | 62  |
| Table 4.4: Model B (SQb): Direct outreach about local government services to immigrant<br>populations.....                                  | 63  |
| Table 4.5: Model C (SQc): Designing a Community Engagement Coordinator.....                                                                 | 65  |
| Table 4.6: Model D (SQd): Creating or Participating a Local Task Force Devoted to Immigrant<br>Populations.....                             | 66  |
| Table 4.7: A Comparison of the Impact of the Variables on Different Aspects of Local<br>Governments' Engagement with Their Immigrants ..... | 68  |
| Table 4.8: Model 1-Local Needs Factor to Explain Local Governments' Engagement with<br>Immigrants .....                                     | 69  |
| Table 4.9: Model 2- Economic Factor to Explain Local Governments' Engagement with<br>Immigrants .....                                       | 70  |
| Table 4.10: Model 3- Political Factor to Explain Local Governments' Engagement with<br>Immigrants .....                                     | 71  |
| Table 4.11: Model 4- Institutional Professionalism/Capacity Factor to Explain Local<br>Governments' Engagement with Immigrants .....        | 72  |
| Table 4.12: Model 5- Geographical Proximity Factor to Explain Local Governments'<br>Engagement with Immigrants .....                        | 73  |
| Table 4.13: Model 6- Comprehensive Model (including Geographical Factor) to Explain Local<br>Governments' Engagement with Immigrants .....  | 74  |
| Table 4.14: A Comparison of Inclusion of Different Variables to Account for the General D.V.....                                            | 76  |
| Table 4.15: Predictive Margins of the Statistically Significant Variables.....                                                              | 77  |
| Table 4.16: Statistical Significance of Variables in Quantitative Results .....                                                             | 80  |
| Table 5.1: Relevant Census Information on Cambridge City .....                                                                              | 85  |
| Table 6.1: Comparison of San Mateo County and the State of California on Economic Predictors<br>.....                                       | 134 |
| Table 6.2: Comparison of LA County and San Mateo County on Demographics .....                                                               | 138 |

|                                                                                             |     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Table 7.1: Quantitative Results When Four Aspects of Engagement Viewed Separately as D.V.   | 147 |
| Table 7.2: Comparison of Hypotheses Testing Results of Quantitative and Qualitative Studies | 151 |

## **List of Figures**

|                                                                                              |     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Figure 4.1: Predictive Margins of Statistically Significant Variables .....                  | 79  |
| Figure 5.1: Vote Share in Presidential Elections (1996-2020) (Cambridge, Massachusetts)..... | 92  |
| Figure 5.2: Vote Share in Presidential Elections 1996-2020 (Tulsa County).....               | 101 |
| Figure 6.1: Presidential Vote Share in LA County (1996-2020).....                            | 124 |
| Figure 6.2: Party Affiliation by Voter Registration in LA County (1998-2020).....            | 125 |
| Figure 6.3: Vote Share in Presidential Elections in San Mateo County (1996-2020) .....       | 136 |

## Chapter 1: Introduction

### *Immigration in the United States*

The U.S., in the past century, has seen a rapid increase in its immigrant population (Budiman 2020), which is defined as a person who lives in a country not of his/her birth (Bolter 2019). Foreign-born residents' comprised 13% of the U.S.'s total population in 2015 (Takeuchi 2016; U.S. Census Bureau 2014 a, 2014b), almost triple the percentage in 1970 (4.8%) (Marrow 2009), and this figure is projected to increase to 19% of the total U.S. population by 2060 (Takeuchi 2016; U.S. Census Bureau 2014 a, 2014b). There are 44.8 million foreign-born residents in the U.S. in 2018, who range widely in country of origin (Budiman 2020).

Immigrants in the U.S. can represent almost every country in the world (Budiman 2020). By country of origin, a quarter of all U.S. immigrants were from Mexico in 2018, and the countries representing the next two largest immigrant populations are China and India (each accounting for 6% of all U.S. immigrants), followed by the Philippines (4%) (Budiman 2020). By region of birth, Asia is the largest region of origin, accounting for 28% of all immigrants, then Mexico (25%), and next Europe, North America including Canada (13%), and finally other regions such as Caribbean, Central America, South America, the Middle East, North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa (34%) (Budiman 2020). The table below shows the numbers and places of origin of immigrants in the U.S.

***Table 1.1: Numbers and Places of Origin of Immigrants in the U.S.***

| Year      | 1970 | 2015 | 2018                 | 2060 |
|-----------|------|------|----------------------|------|
| % /number | 4.8% | 13%  | 13.6% (44.8 million) | 19%  |

|                          |        |        |                       |               |
|--------------------------|--------|--------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Country of Origin        | Mexico | China  | India                 | Philippines   |
| % of all U.S. Immigrants | 25%    | 6%     | 6%                    | 4%            |
| Region of Birth          | Asia   | Mexico | Europe and N. America | Other Regions |
| % of all U.S. Immigrants | 28%    | 25%    | 13%                   | 34%           |

Note: Data from the citations of the two paragraphs above

While most immigrants are legal (77%), about one fourth of all immigrants remain unauthorized (Marrow 2009). The term “authorized immigrants” refers to “all foreign-born non-citizens who are legal residents” (Homeland Security 2021). The number of undocumented immigrants has reached to about 12 million, especially over the last two to three decades (Marrow 2009).

Immigrants settle in different cities, towns, counties and communities and receive services from local governments. They are more likely to live in the northeast and the west than in the south, and they are more likely to live in metropolitan areas and in central cities as compared to natives (Marrow 2005). In the past four decades, many more undocumented immigrants and authorized immigrants dispersed into destination communities which did not have much prior experience with immigrants (Marrow 2009; Massey 2008; Zuniga and Hernandez-Leon 2005).

### ***Immigration Policies at Different Levels of Governments***

#### ***Immigration at the Level of the Federal Government***

Federal government is charged with the responsibility of passing immigration policies regarding “who and how many foreign-born people can enter the U.S., and for establishing conditions for their work and residence” (U.S. Immigration 2018). States and local governments

engage more with immigrant integration or occasional enforcement actions, but the federal government is the one which asserted the responsibility to make general immigrant laws (Lewis et al 2012).

Federal immigration laws, politics and policies are dynamic, changing over time. In the U.S., the immigration boom periods include 1880-1920- a forty-year range due to industrialization and urbanization, the Reagan Administration year 1986 when three million illegal immigrants were allowed to enter, and Obama's protection of Dreamers in 2012. The country's immigration restriction periods include the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, the Immigration Act of 1891 which further barred entry, the literacy requirement of the Immigration Act of 1917, nationality quotas in the Immigration Act of 1924, and Trump's executive orders to bar the entry of people from 6 major Muslim countries and North Korea and Venezuela (Barbour and Wright 2017).

In the past two or three decades, immigration policies have more been related to political ideologies and parties. National immigration laws or policies finally are heavily influenced by which political party dominates the national rhetoric. By and large, the Democratic Party in this time span seems to welcome immigrants, and the Republican Party seems to have negative views on immigrants. Therefore, the immigration laws and policies reflect not only the migrant flow and sizes of these decades, but also their politics (Cohn 2015). For example, Hopkins (2010) states that anti-immigrant sentiments exist when there is a sudden increase in immigrants and a national perception that they pose a threat. This climate seems to be occurring at present and seemed especially prevalent during the Trump administration, though Biden administration may change the rhetoric gradually.

### Immigration at the State Level

General immigration enforcement power rests with the federal government. States and municipalities do, however, assist in immigration enforcement (Hudak and Stenglein 2019), which aims to prevent or stop illegal entry into the United States. This enforcement includes apprehending, arresting, detaining or repatriating foreigners who do not comply with U.S. immigration laws (Homeland Security 2020).

State governments also play an important role in immigration- where “State legislatures consider more than 1,200 bills each year related to immigrants” (U.S. Immigration 2018) and enact about 200 laws on immigration each year covering every aspect of immigrants’ lives such as education, driver’s licenses, employment, budget, health and so on (U.S. Immigration 2018; National Conference of State Legislatures 2020). States may, for example, view immigrants as valuable contributors to society- and construct innovative and pragmatic solutions to address immigration issues. These policies may then be scaled up to the federal level (U.S. Immigration 2018).

Some states may go so far beyond providing accommodation and integration services for legal immigrants. They defy the federal government’s tough restrictive measures on illegal immigrants, driven by moral and humanitarian concerns. During Trump Administration, some states and cities had opted to be uncooperative with the federal government by welcoming immigrants (Hudak and Stenglein 2019). Several states such as California, Connecticut and Colorado decided to refuse or limit their cooperation with the federal government’s requests to hold people for possible deportation (Henderson 2014). State governments were also called to investigate the death or torture of immigrants detained in private facilities or in county or municipal owned facilities, since 85% of the immigration detainees who entered into the U.S.

without authority permission are detained in non-federal owned facilities (Hudak and Stenglein 2019). Out of moral and ethical concerns, state legislatures are working to pass laws that oppose immigration detention statewide (Hudak and Stenglein 2019). In terms of receiving immigrants, in recent years, some state governments have established offices to assist immigrant integration (Brenner 2009) through programs such as English language instruction and providing other services to immigrants who do not speak English well.

Though states are assisting legal immigrants in their integration, at the same time, some states also have increased their immigration enforcement approaches. States have passed laws to conduct workplace immigration status checks and enhance “local law enforcement officers’ ability to enforce federal immigration law” (Gelatt et al 2018: 3). The Secure Communities Program began in 2008 to check arrestees’ fingerprints against the databases of Department of Homeland Security to identify if an arrested immigrant is eligible for deportation. This program was named “Secure Communities” to protect the security of communities in the U.S. Under this program, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) share information with each other. After local jurisdictions shared arrested people’s fingerprints with the FBI to check for any criminal record, and the FBI will further share the fingerprints with DHS to check the immigration status of the arrested to determine whether the individual should be deported (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement 2021). U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) will enforce deportation if they have entered the U.S. illegally and if they have criminal records (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement 2021). By 2010, 35 states signed an agreement to participate in this program participation agreement. Though it ended in 2015, it was restarted during Trump administration in 2017. It was eliminated once again by President Biden in January 2021.

### *Immigration at the Local Government Level*

Federalism in the U.S. divides powers between federal and state governments, with local governments deriving powers from state governments (Abernathy 2018). Though the federal government retains the power over immigration issues regarding granting entry or visa types, and while state policymakers also have considerable powers on to which degree they will cooperate with the federal government and on offering inclusive programs for immigrants in their states, local governments also make significant decisions regarding immigrant services and programs. In the past two decades, with more people's awareness of the significance of functions of local governments, an increasing number of scholars have turned their attention to local government and immigrants (Brenner 2009; Hopkins 2010; Steil and Vasi 2014). Local governments also develop policies that affect immigrants after they have entered the U.S., often by providing assistance for them to become integrated into the social, political and economic life of the United States (U.S. Immigration 2018). With regard to illegal immigrants, many localities cooperate with the federal government and their state governments to take restrictive measures and conduct immigration status checks for potential deportation. However, like some states, some local governments also show sympathy to undocumented/unlawful immigrants. Regardless of the federal government's stringent immigration laws, almost 300 counties and cities have begun to limit or reject their cooperation with the federal government's request to hold undocumented immigrants for possible deportation (Henderson 2014).

### ***Significance of Immigration Issue at the Local Government Level***

Local governments can also indirectly influence the number and characteristics of the immigrants who reside in their jurisdictions through their inclusive programs or restrictive policies or ordinances (Norris-Tirrell 2002; Muller and Espenshade 1984; Simon 1984). Local

governments not only pass ordinances, policies and regulations, they also directly provide all kinds of daily-life related services such as police, sanitation and fire protection for their residents, including their immigrant residents (Norris-Tirrell 2002). In addition to providing services, local governments can also take inclusive measures such as providing language courses instruction and civic integration (Ersanilli and Koopmans 2011) to embrace and accommodate their immigrant populations. Finally, local governments may adopt strategic engagements such as by developing leadership that includes underrepresented members such as immigrants, and by building relationships with immigrant-serving organizations and networks to facilitate immigrant integration and participation, and by recognizing immigrants' contributions (The Institute for Local Government, 2017).

Cities have also enacted more symbolic measures vis-à-vis immigrants. Known as the Welcoming Cities Initiative, these cities realize the value of the immigrants and officially 'welcome them' in order to reinvigorate their communities in response to the economic decline they experienced in the last decade in 2008 (Huang and Liu 2018). They adopted a series of initiatives which combined economic development, immigrant welcoming and integration together to leverage human resources of immigrants for local economic development (Huang and Liu 2018). Fifty cities out of 31 states have already "formally committed to promoting immigrant welcoming values and practices through participation in Welcoming America's Welcoming Cities network, which is a platform created by this national organization to share resource and encourage policy learning among member cities" (Huang and Liu 2018: 4).

Variation exists in whether or not local governments provide facility and staffing engagement for their immigrant populations, resulting in a situation in which "efforts by local governments across the country to address this issue have been at best uneven" (Brenner 2009:

31). Considering the significant role local governments play in immigrants' lives, the degree to which local governments engage with their immigrants and what causes these differences is an intriguing question.

This study addresses the determinants of local governments' engagement with their immigrants. By identifying the factors which influence this engagement, this study offers some perspectives new to academia. These new findings provide fresh and deeper insights into the study of local governments' decisions and behaviors. Though Williamson (2018)'s study also aimed to answer why local governments differ in how they accommodate their immigrants, she emphasizes the legal and economic incentives for local governments to welcome and accommodate immigrants. No study yet offers a wide range of perspectives to address questions related to local governments' facility and staffing engagement with immigrants, especially a study using a combination of both quantitative survey data, qualitative interviews and case studies. This study shoulders this task and provides several perspectives including local needs, economic factor, political factor, institutional structure/capacity and geographical proximity in order to explore how and why these factors influence local engagement with their immigrants. At the theoretical level, this will have significant informative value to academia, especially where it provides new perspectives or factors to pursue. At a practical level, this project provides guidance for local government officials and employees for how they may adjust their policies to attract or limit immigrants to their area. Finally, it provides guidance for citizens and immigrants so they may choose a suitable community to work and live in. Therefore, this study examines and tests those factors impacting the local governments' level of engagement with their immigrants through the facilities and staff they provide for those populations.

## ***Research Questions***

The overarching research question asked here is: Why do U.S. local governments differ in their staffing and facility engagement levels relative to their immigrant residents? In other words, what factors influence local governments' decisions to adopt staffing and facility engagement aimed at their immigrants' communities, and how do those factors influence the decisions.

The questions can be broken into the two following separate research questions.

RQ1. What factors influence local governments' staffing and facility engagement with their immigrant populations?

RQ2: Why and how do the factors influence local governments' staffing and facility engagement with their immigrants' populations?

In order to answer the research questions above, I will adopt a mixed methodology, using both quantitative survey data analysis (by using logistic regressions and negative binomial regression models) and qualitative telephone interviews and case studies. The kinds of regressions adopted in the quantitative part will be discussed and justified in Chapter 3. I will first employ quantitative statistical methods to identify what factors influence the local governments' engagement in their immigrant populations. Then, by adopting qualitative interviews and case studies, through detailed information on selected cases, and through the rich information gathered from interviews of selected local governments, I identify the major trends and describe why and how these factors influence local governments' engagement. The engagement of local governments with their immigrant populations is the dependent variable (DV) of the study. The independent variables (IVs) of the study are immigrant population, non-

white population (local needs factor), per-capita income and unemployment rate (economic factor), political culture (political factor), professionalism/forms of government, total population (institutional structure/capacity factor) and distance to closest port of entry (geographical proximity factor). I will use 2018 Local Government & Immigrant Communities Survey (ICMA 2019), American Community Surveys (ACS) 2013-2017 (U.S. Census Bureau 2020) and data from three other sources, which are County Presidential Election Returns 2016, Elazar's 3-category political culture and U.S. Customs and Border Protection 2019.

### ***Dissertation Structure Overview***

This dissertation begins with Chapter 1, which introduces the immigration policies at different levels of U.S. government and presents the significance of U.S. local governments' engagement with their immigrants. The purpose of this dissertation is that it fills in the gap in the literature to identify the influencing factors, and to study how and why local governments differ in their engagement with immigrants. Beyond merely raising this question, it introduces the ways in which the research question will be answered. Chapter 2 discusses the literature review, the literature relating the theories and factors which will be tested and specifies the gap in the literature that this dissertation addresses. Based on the background, significance and purpose analysis, the research question, and literature and the academic gap, I also present the conceptual framework of the theories and factors which may influence local governments' engagement with immigrants, construct the variables, and hypothesize and discuss the concepts and their measures in great detail in Chapter 2. After the discussion of concept and their measurement, Chapter 2 also presents the hypothesis. Chapter 3 introduces data and expounds my methodology in detail, and it explains the mixed methods approach I took: I used both quantitative and qualitative methods, and in this section, I provide a justification for why I used the two methods, and my

case selection strategy. At the end of Chapter 3, I also discuss data collection for the qualitative approach.

After explaining how I employ statistical techniques and running regressions, in Chapter 4 I presents tables and graphs, and conduct my quantitative analysis. By employing these techniques and strategies, in Chapter 4 I also identify the possible factors which may determine the dependent variable- local governments' staffing and facility engagement with their immigrant populations. Chapter 5 uses case studies of two cities- Cambridge, Massachusetts and Tulsa, Oklahoma) to further test the influencing factors and explore why and how the identified factors influence the two cities' engagement with their immigrants. In Chapter 6, I conduct case studies through two counties – Los Angeles County and San Mateo County, California. I further test the variables identified in the quantitative study and explore why and how the factors influence the two counties' engagement with their immigrants. In Chapter 5 and 6, using rich information about immigration policies and local governments' engagement with their immigrant populations, I reveal a general trend that will greatly facilitate our understanding of why and how the factors influence the dependent variable. My findings gained from the qualitative studies are presented and discussed in Chapter 5 and 6. Chapter 7 provides a conclusion for the dissertation. It first presents a summary of the quantitative and qualitative findings and compare the findings, and then discusses the theoretical contributions and the irreplaceable merits of this study, the implications for practitioners, and then discusses the limitations of this study and possible future research directions. While acknowledging its limitations, I hope these limitations encourage future research to improve and advance the policy and administration field.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### *The Debate over the Five Factors' Effects on Local Policies*

In the past decade, more scholars have turned to immigrants' destination cities to investigate how these locations respond to immigrants, who are generally economically disadvantaged compared with natives (Graauw et al 2013). Local decisions or policies regarding immigrants not only influence foreign-born residents' satisfaction with those governments, but if unsatisfactory, they also may lead to protests, social movements, or lawsuits. Some scholars (Norris-Tirrell 2002; Muller and Espenshade 1984; Simon 1984; Ersanilli and Koopmans 2011; Brenner 2009; Williamson 2018) have investigated how local governments responded to a large body of foreign-born residents, a summary of which was provided in the introduction. These responses include inclusive programs, integration assistance (such as English language instruction), restrictive policies, and provision of accommodations and so on.

This project identifies five factors to explain how municipalities make local decisions concerning immigrants. The five factors will be employed and tested in this dissertation for their impact on local governments' human resource and facility engagement with immigrants after immigrants move in. The five factors are local needs factor, economic factor, political factor, institutional professionalism/ capacity factor and geographical factor. The following section discusses the literature of these five perspectives separately.

#### Local Needs Factor

Local needs theory literature holds that local government decision making can be a response to the needs of stakeholders living in the community. Under these circumstances, the stakeholders most influenced by the local governments' immigrants' policies or decisions will be

immigrants. If local governments engage more in human staffing and facilities with immigrants, they will facilitate and support immigrants so that immigrants can conveniently obtain their information and services; if local governments engage less with their immigrants, there will be less support for immigrants, especially for those who are more disadvantaged with regard to their familiarity with English, local and overall American culture, and procedures for getting information to facilitate their decision-making. Immigrants in these communities with less local engagement also feel less supported in their efforts to integrate into their new homes.

The local needs approach explains local governments' decisions or policies as a response to the needs of the local residents or the target group (immigrants in this research) in their communities. As Feiock and West (1993: 400-401) stated that "in its simplest form, this explanation simply asserts that cities will adopt new policies or programs as a response to an objective need for the policy. Of course what any city needs is often subject to some dispute, but at some level objective conditions may "force" local governments to respond". Blomquist (1990) also briefly discussed the "simple responsive policymaking model" (1990:104), but his responsive policymaking model is to respond to the emerging problems or (potential or existing) threats to ground water quality. His measure of the potential threats is the number of types (EPA categories) of groundwater contamination, and measure of existing threats is the number of identified types of contaminants in groundwater. The number of Superfund sites provided by EPA is an indirect measure of the severity of the threats. His findings showed that the states that adopted groundwater protection policies (adopting states) are the ones with significantly more daily groundwater withdrawal and more groundwater percentage of total water withdrawal, which shows the significance of the influence of the objective need (to satisfy the needs and address the contaminant threat) (Blomquist 1990). Feiock and West (1993)'s research adopted

the local needs model to explain municipal governments' adoption of solid waste recycling policies. Different from Blomquist (1990)'s needs to address the problem or threat, Feiock and West (1993)'s local needs mean the direct needs from local residents for the solid waste recycling. They used a survey of directors in charge of municipal public works in U.S. cities with a population of or more than 5,000. They tested the seven categories (need/responsive policymaking model, diffusion-of-innovation model, political institutions model, federalism model, economic model, interest group influence model, and administrative capacity model) with Probit in seven separate models and one combined model. Their findings determined that population/local needs, together with landfill areas, and landfill capacity all significantly influence local governments' adoption of solid waste recycling policies (Feiock and West 1993). Another study using local needs account to explain local policies is Pare et al (2004)'s work. Among Montreal metropolitan area in Canada, Pare et al (2004) examined 110 municipalities with a population of more than 3000 and with a good demographic diversity (in terms of races, household structure and immigration status and others), and conducted telephone surveys with representatives of all the municipalities, and conducted field interviews with 31 city managers or major department heads. With the data collected, Pare et al (2004) described the challenging situation municipalities face with increasing diversified groups, and found that compared with the presence of low-income families and single-income families, "there seems to be a stronger link between the presence of immigrants and visible minorities and the development of appropriate responses" by the municipalities such as programs and practices (Pare et al 2004: 113). However, due to the lack of attention on increasing immigrants, not much have been done on the planning and strategies conducted by most practices (Pare et al 2004). Through the qualitative interviews, they also noted that in addition to the (local) needs from the vulnerable

groups, other factors such as local governments' legal obligations, restraint of resources, community groups and stakeholder interest also seem to influence local governments' provision of services to these marginal groups.

Local population needs also shape localities' diversity management decisions. Hur and Strickland (2012) studied the relationship of the needs of the population (both in size and diversity) and local governments' diversity management. They focused on how local governments addressed diversity, such as practices related to recruiting workforce employees from a wider demographic in terms of "race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, disability, and sexual orientation" (Hur and Strickland 2012: 381). Their findings showed that local governments' adoption of recruitment based on a diversity principle and retaining the employees are positively influenced by the needs from increasing minority population, and also by local governments' concerns and attention to diversity (Hur and Strickland 2012). Likewise, Huang and Liu (2018), in examining which factors influence immigrant welcoming policies adopted by cities, using logistic maximum likelihood and the data from American Community Survey (ACS) 2008-2012 Survey and the Decennial Census 2000, found that whether cities join Welcoming Cities Initiative or not is a complex decision depending on local needs, economic needs, urban politics, network and institutional capacities. The local needs are measured by foreign- born percentage, foreign born growth, black percentage, college graduate percentage, labor force participation, change in labor force participation, unemployment, change in unemployment rate, and others.

Williamson (2018) contended that immigration visibility (measured by foreign-born population and popular conception of immigrants) shapes local policy response to immigrants. In other words, immigration visibility depends not only on the population of the foreign born, but

also on whether they are viewed as immigrants. Low-skilled immigrants are usually seen as immigrants, but high-skilled immigrants with good English and knowledge of American culture are often not seen as immigrants. At this time, in relative to communities with a certain percentage of high-skilled foreign-born residents, communities with the same percentage of low-skilled foreign-born people are more likely to be considered to have more immigrants. These low-skilled foreign residents are in higher need of local governments' accommodation because of their poor English and poor knowledge of American culture (Williamson 2018).

While the literature above shows the local governments' positive response to immigrants based on local immigrant needs, some literature (Walker and Leitner 2011; Steil and Vasi 2014) also presents the opposite scenario: the rapid increase in immigration population is considered to be a threat to the native or local interests; therefore, the increase in immigrants in a community may negatively influence local immigration policy and facilitate the formation of local anti-immigration policy (Walker and Leitner 2011; Steil and Vasi 2014). Walker and Leitner (2011: 166) used regression analysis and the "textual analysis of ordinance documents data from communities in the Baltimore-Washington urban region" together with "data on local ordinances from their (our) own collection of national and local media documents" and the 2005-2007 sociodemographic information from the US Census Bureau (data available only for municipalities with a population over 20,000) to gain insights on how national and individual understandings/attitudes towards immigrants shape local ordinances on immigrants. They used three categories of pro, anti, and no ordinances for dependent variable, and compared the differences of immigrants' salience and people's attitudes towards immigrants in urban, suburbs and rural areas for the independent variable. Their findings show that immigrants' concentration influence local immigrant ordinances, but immigrants' increase growth matters more for local

ordinances in a reverse relationship. This means that localities which see more rapid immigrant growth feel more the threat of this growth, and they are more likely to push the formation of their restrictive or exclusionary ordinances (Walker and Leitner 2011). Steil and Vasi (2014) collected data on American cities with a population over 25,000, and information on pro-immigrant ordinance from the National Immigration Law Center in 2008 and information on anti-immigrant ordinance compiled by some immigrant organizations such as Fair Immigration Reform Movement, the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund and others. They also collected Latino growth data from the U.S. Census Bureau, and they “identified 96 cities that adopted anti-immigrant policies and 97 cities that adopted pro-immigrant policies” (Steil and Vasi 2014: 1118). Through employing Cox proportional hazards models, Steil and Vasi (2014) found that pro-immigrant associations and political structures (such as political coalition or resource configuration) can significantly influence pro-immigrant policies. Local “demographic changes that local residents or political leaders have framed as threats in ways that mirror the framing by national anti-immigrant organizations” are significant in shaping local anti-immigrant policies (Steil and Vasi 2014:1143). Thus, no matter pro-immigrant policies or anti-immigrant policies are influenced by local needs, the differences lie in that the passage of pro-immigrant policies are influenced by the advocate of immigrant organizations or associations which represent the needs and rights of disadvantaged immigrants, and the passage of anti-immigrants policies are influenced by local residents (or political leaders) who perceive the sudden increase of immigrants (for example Latinos) as a threat.

Though overall local governments seemed to have increased their immigrant population despite indifference or opposition from the public during some specific periods in history (such as from 1975 to 1995) (Freeman 1995), it was uncertain about what local governments would do

in response to the increasing national anti-immigration rhetoric since Trump Administration in 2016 (Williamson 2018). However, the new Biden Administration may be leading to change the anti-immigrant rhetoric gradually.

Based on this literature, though the literature (Walker and Leitner 2011; Steil and Vasi (2014) exist which found local needs (from the anti-immigrants residents) may facilitate the anti-immigrant ordinances, there are more research (Feiock and West 1993; Pare et al 2004; Hur and Strickland 2012; Huang and Liu 2018) on using the needs from local residents or from the target groups such as immigrants to explain local policy adoption. I am more inclined with the latter and believe the simple version of needs of the most direct stakeholder (in my dissertation is immigrants) can influence the response from local governments- policymaking or decision-making on immigrants. Therefore, my hypotheses on local needs factor are:

H1a: If a community has a larger immigrant population, its local government tends to engage more in staffing and facilities for its immigrants (testing local needs approach);

H1b: If a community has a higher non-white percentage, its local government tends to offer more staffing and facilities for its immigrants (testing local needs approach);

H1c: If a community has a higher average education, its local government tends to offer more staffing and facilities for its immigrants; (testing local needs approach).

### *Economic Imperative Factor*

The local economic imperative approach argues that economic constraints largely influence local policy choices, and that local governments need to compete with nearby localities for mobile capital or lure new development (Peterson 1981; Choi et al 2010; Huang and Liu 2018). Local economic adversity is an important factor or condition for local governments to consider when deciding to compete with other localities to attract investments and business to their communities to boost their economy (Peterson 1981).

Some scholars (Peterson 1981; Huang and Liu 2016) examined how local and state governments compete with their neighboring localities to attract foreign businesses and investment immigrants to their communities. Peterson (1981) analyzed the limits in the services cities can provide based on their tax revenues. Therefore, city planners, officials and administrators make all efforts to attract business and residents to expand their tax base to guarantee the regular operations of their local governments. Peterson is absolutely correct in holding this economic lens in analyzing city policymaking on services and programs. In doing this, however, he may also overlook or downplay the political factor at the local level. Parilla and Liu (2018) utilized data provided by “the economic development departments at the city of Cincinnati, City of San Diego, Indy Chamber, and Salt Lake County” (2018:12), and data of Subsidy Tracker 2 from Good Jobs First that collected “from 836 state and local jurisdictions” (2018:12) and analyzed the incentives provided by the state and local governments for businesses. They took a step further than Peterson (1981) and stated the benefits of the incentives offered by local governments. They pointed out that incentives from localities can increase employment across the community, receive more taxes and boost local economy (Parilla and Liu 2018) when these business offer jobs through hiring local people to work in their companies or firms. Their findings show that the state and local governments’ incentives go more to the businesses that are both technology and export-intensive, the two features “that drive productivity and wage growth” (2018: 38). However, the incentives are not directed to be racial inclusive because many minorities are denied into the fore-mentioned industries due to the high requirement of skills (Parilla and Liu 2018).

Brenner (2009) also touched the benefits of economic development. Through a survey and interviews conducted in 37 cities that account for 72.5% of destinations of new Latinos and

using data of U.S. Bureau of Census, Brenner (2009) studied immigration integration strategies local governments use in new Latino destinations throughout U.S. cities, and he constructed a holistic model which includes “economic development, public safety, community building, employment diversity, non-profit, public school, and private sector partnership, and the use of immigrant advisory councils” (Brenner 2009: 31). Brenner (2009) argued that economic development is an important part of the whole series of immigration integration strategies. Therefore, different from Peterson (1981) and Parilla and Liu (2018) who considered economic development as the goal and end, Brenner (2009) viewed it as an immigration integration strategy. He stated that local governments adopt some strategies, among which, two major ones are opposite: the economic development strategy and the public safety strategy. The former means considering immigrants as valuable assets to assist economy and the later means viewing immigrants as criminals or victims and so on (Brenner 2009).

Huang and Liu (2018), whose work were discussed in the section of local needs factor, also found that in addition to local demographic needs and urban politics, economic needs have a negative relationship with cities’ joining Welcoming Cities Initiatives or not. Their work, viewing whether cities’ joining Welcoming Cities Initiative program as the dependent variable, used the economic imperative model as one of the factors to explain their dependent variable that is different from Parilla and Liu (2018)’s work. The latter used local governments’ economic development as the dependent variable. It means that cities in more adverse economic conditions or “with lower median household incomes are more likely to become welcoming cities. Lending support to the hypothesis that economic adversity necessitates new immigrant integration policy as a demand-side economic development strategy” (Huang and Liu 2018: 26).

Williamson (2018) also discussed the policy-makers' lens of viewing immigrants as valuable assets. She discussed local governments' consideration of this economic imperative factor in providing accommodating assistance and services for their immigrants. She conducted four case studies and tested the case study findings through a national survey she had conducted called Municipal Responses to Immigrants Survey (MRIS) which includes "a random sample of 503 small to midsize immigrant destinations" (Williamson 2014: 21). The four cities for case studies are: Lewiston (Maine), Wausau (Wisconsin), Elgin (Illinois) and Yakima (Washington). She examined local governments' general immigrants' incorporation and used the economic development factor as an important variable to explain the different municipal responses to immigrants. The economic development factor also means viewing immigrants as "a boon to their economy, whether by providing a desirable workforce, enhancing local entrepreneurship, or increasing their city's cultural vibrancy" (Williamson 2018: 126). Williamson (2018) continued to explain the local governments' accommodations from the economic imperative perspective: "Across the four cases, both bureaucrats and elected officials report that their immigrant workforce not only contributes to existing industries but also might attract new businesses" "...local officials across the four cases discussed how growing culture diversity enhanced local economic competitiveness" (Williamson 2018: 132-133). If immigrants are economic investors who arrived through an EB5 investment immigration visa, then they belong to the category of economic investment assets who will establish a company or a plant in the community they will live in and hire local people to work in their companies. If they come to the United States through other technical experts' visas such as H1B or other types, they will make contributions as a desirable workforce since many organizations need these workforce members to provide services for their diverse customers.

On the other hand, different from local governments' using economic adversity as an incentive to attract immigrants' capital and business or human skills to boost economy, Hajnal and Trounstein (2010) used economic (fiscal) constraints to explain local spending (three kinds of spending: redistributive, allocative, and developmental spending). The data they utilized include ICMA surveys in the years of "1986, 1991, 1996 and 2001... Democratic presidential vote share at the county level (1984,1988, 1992, 1996, 2000) ... the total per capita intergovernmental revenue from state and federal government...Demographic data are from the decennial Census with exception of crime figures which are acquired from the City and County Data Book" (Hajnal and Trounstein (2010: 1141-1142). According to Hajnal and Trounstein (2010), economic prosperity -- such as when a local community's economy is better or it has an economic surplus, or when cities face limited competition from other close localities -- may provide localities with more resources and capability to provide redistributive spending to disadvantaged groups including immigrants; However, Hajnal and Trounstein (2010) contended that local governments' fiscal constraints such as a tight budget are a critical factor in negatively influencing its spending, though they also argued that to emphasize any one factor is incomplete, and all of the four accounts (local needs, economic, political and institutional structure), which they tested, strongly influence local spending. Likewise, Choi et al (2010) examined the factors influencing local expenditures through using Florida counties, and stated that there is a positive relationship between economic resources and local government expenditures in general. In explaining county government expenditures, Choi et al (2010) collected their data from annual financial report to Florida Department of Financial Services and employed "OLS regression with a lagged dependent variable and panel-corrected standard errors" to correct the problem of the violations of error terms independence and homoscedasticity. Their findings revealed that

economic conditions, together with population density and political ideology all significantly influence county government expenditures (Choi et al 2010).

Though there is literature on the economic adversity's boosting incentives to attract immigrants, I still expect that economic prosperity can encourage local governments to engage more with their immigrants, because my dependent variable: local governments' engagement with immigrants is different: the goal is not to boost economy through attract immigrants, but to study why and how localities engage with their immigrants after the latter arrive and settle down in their destination cities. Therefore, I tend to expect that economic prosperity or community's wealth are positively related to local engagement with immigrants. Considering the importance of economic imperative discussed by the researchers aforementioned and discussed, I hypothesize that economic factor may significantly influence local governments' engagement with their immigrant populations:

H2a: If a community has a higher per-capita income, its local government tends to offer more staffing and facilities in reaching their immigrants (test economic imperative);

H2b: If a community has a lower unemployment rate, its local government tends to offer more staffing and facilities to reach their immigrants (test economic imperative approach).

### Political Factor

A political approach assumes that local government officials take their community majority's preferences into consideration in policymaking in the interests of their reelection, which is also the argument of the public choice theory (Dahl 1961; Butler 2012; Hang and Liu 2018). Political factor, in this dissertation, is indicated by political culture, residents/voters' party affiliation and immigrant organizations.

**Political Culture.** Political culture is “the particular pattern of orientation to political action in which each political system is embedded” (Elazar 1984: 112). It is measured at the state level, which is not the best to explain local governments’ policies because it can not fully reflect the variation of political cultures at the city or county level. However, no comparable local-level measure exists, so I employ it as the best available substitute. The limitations of the political culture will be more fully discussed in the part of limitations in Chapter 7. The historical root of political culture is based in the cumulative shared experiences and values among a particular group of people (Elazar 1984).

In discussing political culture, American federalism is a topic that must be touched. Anti-federalists and federalists are always two different camps. Shays’ rebellion, though finally put down, showed the deterioration of the crisis of a weak national government, and pushed for the Constitution convention in 1789 (Barbour and Wright 2020). The establishment of federalism in 1789 did not mark the end of the controversy and debate between the federalists and anti-federalists, with the former advocating a strong federal government in the economy, while the latter cautious of a strong central government and advocating stronger state governments in the economy and other aspects of life. Even within the federalism era, from 1789 to Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal, it was dual federalism in which the federal government and state governments had not cooperated much and they each performed their own functions (Barbour and Wright 2020). Generally, it was not until after the New Deal that the federal government expanded its power. However, states still have variations on their perceptions about the roles the federal government and state governments should take. Political culture in different states or regions may shape the perceptions.

Political culture is also a determinant of government activities, programs, and decisions (Johnson 1976). It was set forth by Elazar (1984) and classified into individualistic, moralistic, and traditional, or a combination of two of them. The individualistic culture, according to Elazar (1984), is using government solely for utilitarian reasons only to carry on the tasks originally demanded by its residents when it was created. Under this political culture, politics is viewed as a kind of business and a little amount of corruption is expected and tolerated (Elazar 1984). The moralistic political culture “emphasizes the commonwealth conception as the basis for democratic government” (Elazar 1984: 117). Politics is viewed as a way for the betterment of public interest or the whole society. Government can intervene, if necessary, private activities when they have no other choice to safeguard the public interest of the whole community (Elazar 1984). The traditionalistic political culture views the marketplace with an ambivalent attitude as a business arena mixed with a commonwealth and paternalistic conception. It emphasizes order and hierarchy and expects the elites who are at the social and economic top to lead the government. It is based on informal interpersonal relationships; therefore, it tends to be inherently anti-bureaucratic (Elazar 1984). Political culture, especially the moralistic political culture, seems to grow out of the concept of public regardingness discussed by Banfield and Wilson (1963), who argued that the foundation of city politics is the “fundamental cleavage between the public-regarding Anglo-Saxon Protestant, middle-class ethos and the private-regarding lower-class immigrant ethos” (Banfield and Wilson (1963: 329). The public-regarding ones seek to promote the public good for the whole community, while the private-regarding ones seek to gain benefits for themselves or their own group(s) (Banfield and Wilson 1963). This is highly related to the topic of my dissertation, which intends to study local immigrant decisions and reveal the interaction between the immigrant groups and the provision of services by local

governments. Civic culture (Almond and Verba 1963) also contributed to the roots of Elazar's political culture. In studying what variables influence a political system, through the study of the five cases of the U.S., Mexico, Britain, Germany, and Italy, Almond and Verba (1963) distinguished three types of political culture: parochial (with citizens aware of the central government's existence), subject (with people seeing themselves as subjects rather than participants) and participant (with people believing that they both contribute to the political system and affected by it, and therefore viewing themselves as citizens), and they stated that civic culture is an ideal mixture of the three with parochial and subject as the ballast for participant, which is the essential for democracy. Almond and Verba (1963)'s political culture was discussed at national levels, while Elazar's political culture is at sub-national level, which is at the level of states.

Shankansky (1969) worked further on Elazar's political culture by assigning each of the 48 mainland states a score based on the predominant political culture among the three types: individualistic, moralistic and traditionalistic. Shankansky (1969) used the political culture scale to explain state voter turnout, the generosity of regulations on state suffrage, government employees' numbers and perquisites, and public service output in the fields of highway, publication and public welfare. His scale of political culture was criticized by researchers such as Clynch (1972) who argued that political culture (scale) has correlations with regions, and even within the same state, political cultures are different based on the urbanism and personal income. It shows that this political culture has inseparable correlations with regions, sub-regions, and personal incomes (Clynch 1972).

Using census data on residents' religious affiliation, Johnson (1976) examined Elazar (1970)'s work on American political culture and found that state political culture had significant

influence on “government activities, local emphasis and administration of programs, innovative activity by the government, encouragement of popular participation in elections, popular participation in elections, and party competition.” (Johnson 1976: 491). He also found that political culture did not significantly influence political parties’ importance and centralized government decision-making, not supporting his hypothesis on these two dependent variables (Johnson 1976).

Over the last three decades, more researchers have used political culture to explain state policy in different areas such as Boeckelman (1991)’s work in state economic development policies, Blomquist (1991) in groundwater policy adoptions, Miller (1991) in spending patterns, Breaux et al (2000) in welfare and Morris et al (2002) in environmental spending, and others. Their work is discussed further in the following paragraph.

Boeckelman (1991) argued that political culture is significant in shaping the approach a state uses in its economic development: a moralistic state tends to prefer the creation strategy, and a traditionalistic state tends to prefer the maintenance/attraction one. In explaining state groundwater policy changes, Blomquist (1991) found that the states that adopted groundwater supply-management policy changes have significantly higher amount of groundwater and total water withdrawal than the non-adopting states; the states that have quality-protection policy changes have significantly more types of groundwater contaminants. The adopting states are more likely to be moralistic states (Blomquist 1991). Miller (1991) utilized the *1982 Census of Governments: Finance Summary Statistics* to study the relationship between political culture and state and local government expenditures. Twenty-eight items of expenditure were grouped into ten programs: health, social services, culture, environment, housing/community development, public safety, highways, development, interest on debt and general. In traditionalistic states, the

combined expenditure of the state and the local governments are relatively low, and in moralistic and individual states, expenditure patterns seem similar only with the difference that “in moralistic states, expenditures are relatively lower for local governments and higher for the state government” and “in the individualistic states, expenditures are higher for local governments and lower for the state government” (Miller 1991: 100). Using political culture data and cash assistance data collected from the Office of Family Assistance, Breaux et al (2000) explored the role of political culture in shaping states’ variation in their cash benefit across all the states within the U.S. and the variation in their cash assistance across the states in the South. Under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (TANF), when state governments are given more power or discretion in constructing their TANF benefits within the general federal guidelines, Breaux et al (2000) found that both economic status and political culture of states are significantly related to the cash assistance they provide. Wealthier states tend to provide more cash assistance to their recipients than poorer states, and traditionalistic states provide a lower level of cash assistance to their recipients than moralistic and individualistic states (Breaux et al 2000). Morris et al (2002) tested the role of political culture in states’ leveraging nature under the Clean Water State Revolving fund (CWSRF) program that provide significant discretion for states to design and administer it to tailor to their own circumstances. They found that as they expected, traditionalistic states are less likely to leverage than moralistic and individualistic states because they are less willing to spend money and not willing to risk the possible higher long-term interest rate (Morris et al 2002). This finding goes in line with Miller (1991)’s findings that traditionalistic states tend to have less expenditure.

***Party Affiliation and Immigration Organization.*** This literature includes how individuals’ attitudes or views influence immigration policies. Using a three-year individual level survey and

an ordered logit to study individuals' immigration policy preferences, Scheve and Slaughter (2001)'s findings showed that less-skilled workers tend to prefer immigrant restriction policies, but in communities where there are high-immigration communities or labor markets, the relationship between the skill and immigration policy preference is not strong. These findings show that lower-skilled workers are more concerned of the competition from immigrants at the labor market. Choi et al (2010) that was discussed in the economic factor also found that partisan preferences of citizens are an important determinant of government expenditures at the local level, especially among county governments. This finding is also supported by Hajnal and Trounstein's (2010) analysis that local governments' expenditure decisions are influenced by voters' partisan preferences. Cities with more liberal or Democratic leaning populations are more likely to choose redistributive programs to spend their money on. Local governments in Republican-dominated states are more likely to spend on allocative programs (Hajnal and Trounstein 2010). As such, partisan affiliation of voters in local communities may have an impact on local governments' decisions. Huang and Liu (2018) that are discussed in local needs and economic factor sections also found in their study that political context, exactly speaking, cities with more liberal voters are more likely to participate the Welcoming Cities Initiative program.

A political approach also includes immigration organizations' or interest groups' roles in policy making. In other words, community preferences are also reflected through associations' or interest groups' mobilizations such as protests or advocates. Steil and Vasi (2014) confirmed the effect of the political factor in determining policy. They pointed out that the pro-immigrant organizations and groups' mobilization such as pro-immigrant protests also contribute to the local governments' adoption of pro-immigrant ordinances. This kind of mobilization may not

only influence the pro-immigrant policy of their local governments, but also contribute to the prevention of neighboring cities' adoption of anti-immigrant ordinances due to the diffusion effect (Steil and Vasi 2014). Interest groups such as community-based ethnic organizations whose missions are to assist minority immigrants in their equal rights and integration through fiscal support from government sources are key to strengthening and facilitating services for rapidly growing immigrant populations, though their allocated governmental funding is influenced by immigration policies, political power shifts, party politics and political crisis (Tseng 2005).

Following Miller (1991) and Morris et al (2002), it is reasonable to develop my hypothesis on the relationship between political culture and local governments' engagement with their immigrant populations, and between voters' partisan affiliation and this engagement. Considering there is no quantitative data on interest groups, I did not devise a hypothesis on interest groups.

H3a: If a community has a moralistic political culture, its local government tends to engage more in staffing and facilities to reach their immigrants; (Test political approach)

H3b: If a community has more Democratic voters or supporters, its local government tends to engage more in staffing and facilities in reaching out their immigrants; (Test political approach)

#### *Institutional Structure/Capacity Factor*

In terms of local governments, institutional structure means the form of government it takes, such as Mayor-Council, Council-Manager, Commission, Town Meeting, Representative Town Meeting, County Commission, County Council-Manager/Administrator, or County Council-Elected Executive. The institutional structure factor holds that local government structure or form of local government influences governments' decisions when local

governments are viewed as institutions. Institutional structure may also shape local governments' policies, and findings from the following studies are mixed.

Feiock and Clingermayer (1986)'s research purpose is to study if municipal reformism influences local governments' economic development policies. Through using data "from a national mail survey of public officials responsible for economic development activities" (1986: 216) in 397 municipalities with a population of over 50,000 in 1980, and there were 226 cities that responded. After Chi square analysis, they discovered that particular political institutions do affect the economic development policies local governments enact, which means that municipal reformism do not tend to lead to the adoption of economic development policies, but traditional unreformed institutions such as mayor-council structure are more likely to adopt economic development policies (Feiock and Clingermayer 1986).

Clingermayer and Feiock (2001) explained how governing institutions influence policymaking, and how institutions work to make policies. Though institutions have their costs, they are more valuable for governments' operations and policymaking. Sharp et al (2011), in examining what factors influence local governments' adoption of climate change/mitigation programs, argued that both interest groups and political institutions significantly impact the adoption and implementation of cities' climate change programs. Interest groups influence are also exerted through the institutions. Mayor-city council forms of government is more responsive to the pressure of interest groups, while the city manager structure of government is more insulated to the lobbying work of interest groups (Sharp et al 2011). Jeong (2007) studied the revenue policy, specifically, impact fees adoption in the four categories: transportation, public safety, parks, and pooled fees. He employed event history analysis and concluded that local political structure measured by professional management and centralized leadership in reformed

counties only have “a modest effect on new revenue options” of local governments, and that the latter is also influenced by other factors such as administrative capacity (Jeong 2007, 92).

Morgan and Pelissero (1980)’s study, a quasi-experimental one, did not show any effects of institutional structure on local government policies. This study compared 11 cities experiencing significant political structure reforms against 11 control cities that did not experience any political institutional reforms from 1948 to 1973. Their work did not show any effects of political structure on local governments’ decisions on local governments’ tax and spending behavior (Morgan and Pelissero 1980). This result was reflected in a similar, combined-model study. Huang and Liu’s study (2016) tested all the four theories’ -local needs, economic imperatives, politics, and institutional structure effects on local governments’ decisions on joining Welcoming Cities for immigrants. As discussed in the local needs and economic factor sections, Huang and Liu (2016)’ used logit regression to examine the determinants of Cities’ joining Welcoming Cities initiative program. Through testing structurally reformed and unreformed governments, they did not find that institutional structure had any effect on local governments’ decisions about whether to join the Welcoming Cities Initiative. However, their study did reveal the positive effect of institutional capacity as measured by total population (Huang and Liu 2016).

Some scholars use administrative capacity rather than institutional structure to explain local policies or decisions. Jeong (2007)’s study show that administrative capacity measured by the professional skills of public officials and local planning expertise have an impact on (revenue) policy options’ availability. Using a nation-wide data and OLS regression, Krause (2012) found that human resource capacity measured by both the staff numbers and their skill possession influence municipal governments’ decisions as to their level of commitment to green-house gas reduction activities. Fleischmann et al (1992) examined what influence local

governments' economic development policies, using OLS regression and the data of a mail survey by the International City Management Association (ICMA) in 1984 to "all U.S. cities with a population between 10,000 and 250,000" (2012: 680), and 1,126 cities returned the survey. They found that bureaucratic capacity, using a formal development plan and the local government's role to lead economic development all significantly positively influence local governments' economic development policies (Fleischmann et al 1992).

Existing literature have shown mixed results: though some research (Feiock and Clingermayer 1986; Clingermayer and Feiock 2001)'s findings showed that mayor-council structure is more likely to lead to local policy adoption; but some other research (Fleischmann et al 1992; Jeong 2007; Krause 2012) showed that professional skill and/or bureaucratic capacity are more likely to influence policy adoption. As Jeong (2007) argued that "Because administrative capacity reduces uncertainty in reciprocal transactions, it must therefore be accounted for in explaining policy choices, especially those concerning financial policies that are technically complex and controversial among stakeholders" (92). Fleischmann et al (1992) also found that local governments which lack professional expertise may meet with barriers in their program developments. They may need assistance from professional agencies or the state government. I am more inclined to the latter. Therefore, in terms of this institutional structure/capacity factor, I hypothesized the following:

H4a: If a community has more professional managers to operate its local government, its government tends to engage more staffing and facilities in reaching out to their immigrants; (Test institutional capacity/structure approach);

H4b: If a community has a larger total population, its local government tends to engage more in staffing and facilities in outreach to their immigrants (Test institutional capacity/structure approach).

### Geographical Factor

Spatial politics means using geographical or spatial terms such as location or proximity to explain political actions or behaviors, and it is well debated and discussed by scholars in recent years. For example, in explaining county governments' economic development activities, Dewees et al (2003), using logistic regressions and drawing on a six-state area survey of local governmental officials of 222 counties (belonging to Ohio River Valley Region) with 148 county official responses, found that though most rural counties (in Ohio River Valley Region) have traditional economic development activities, the high competition among counties cause localities compete with each other to attract firms to their jurisdictions. This study showed that rural counties, compared with urban counties, are less likely to conduct economic development activities due to their wealth and education disadvantage (Dewees et al 2003). Baldwin and Krugman (2004), in discussing the relationship of industry agglomeration/location, economic integration and tax harmonization, found that industry location matters, and that the industry and business agglomeration make international tax competition or discord unavoidable. International tax harmonization in which the differences is split between the two involved nations actually harm both nations, which explains why international tax harmonization in reality is very rare. The difficulty of achieving tax harmonization lies in the unavoidability of industry concentration or agglomeration due to the consideration of reducing costs, which makes concentrating/core region charge a higher tax but still not losing clients of industries nor the capital behind it. Baldwin and Krugman (2004)'s work mainly analyzed the negative relationship between industry agglomeration, integration and tax harmonization, which focused on economy and business field. Likewise, Fleischmann et al (1992) suggested the importance of regions or geographical locations' significant effect on economic development. Fleischmann et al (1992)'

work, which was discussed in the section of institutional structure literature, just like Dewees et al (2003), also treated local governments' economic development policies as the dependent variable. They used a mail survey by the ICMA in 1984 to "all U.S. cities with a population between 10,000 and 250,000" (2012: 680). The findings on the significant influence of bureaucratic capacity and local government's leadership on economic development indicated that region matters, and regional competition matters to local governments' policy making (Fleischmann et al 1992).

Like Dewees et al (2003), Betz et al (2012) also studied county government's economic development activities as the dependent variable. They used a national county government survey and techniques of Probit and Poisson and found that a county's geographic proximity to metropolitan areas influences a county government's economic development activities. The study determined that counties' distance to a metropolitan area with a population of more than 250,000 is negatively and statistically significant, which suggested that counties with closer proximity to metropolitan areas with more than 250,000 people tend to have more economic development activities (Betz et al 2012). Walker and Leitner (2011) also found that municipalities' location within or beyond a metropolitan boundary is an independent factor to explain local immigrant policies. They found that location has an impact on whether the municipalities would be pro- or anti-immigrant. Anti-immigration ordinances and policies are more likely to be adopted in municipalities located in the south (in reference to the cities of the west); and, compared with central cities, suburban municipalities seem much more likely to pass exclusionary policies rather than inclusionary ones (Walker and Leitner 2011) Further, Walker (2015) who collected various rich data about two Chicago-area suburban cities, Evanston and Carpentersville found that, instead of one kind of spatiality, multiple spatialities such as politics

of scale, politics of place and politics of network interact to influence U.S. local policies, enabling or constraining local responses to immigrants.

Almost all of the research (Deweese et al 2003; Baldwin and Krugman 2004; Betz et al 2012; Walker and Leitner 2011) discussed above in this geographical factor section regard geography/location of communities or industries as significantly related to local governments' policies, most of which are economic development policies. Little research has been done on local governments' engagement with immigrants, using geographical factor as one of the explanators. Ports of entry are places immigrants must go through before they reside in their destination city/county/township, therefore, I expect communities' distance to their closest ports of entry has a negative relationship with their local governments' engagement with their immigrants. Below is my hypothesis regarding the geographic factor.

H5: If a community is further to the nearest port of entry in its state, its local government tends to engage less with the staffing and facilities in reaching out to its immigrant communities. (Test geographical location approach)

### ***Summary of Hypotheses***

Based on the background of this topic, my research question, and the concepts and the dependent and explanatory variables, I test the following five hypotheses in this dissertation:

H1a: If a community has a larger immigrant population, its local government tends to engage more in staffing and facilities for its immigrants; (Test local needs approach)

H1b: If a community has a higher non-white percentage, its local government tends to offer more staffing and facilities for its immigrants (testing local needs approach)

H1c: If a community has a higher average education, its local government tends to offer more staffing and facilities for its immigrants; (testing local needs approach)

H2a: If a community has a higher per-capita income, its local government tends to offer more staffing and facilities to reach their immigrants; (test economic imperative)

H2b: If a community has a lower unemployment rate, its local government tends to offer more staffing and facilities to reach their immigrants; (test economic imperative approach)

H3a: If a community has a moralistic political culture, its local government tends to engage more in staffing and facilities to reach their immigrants; (Test political approach)

H3b: If a community has more Democratic voters, its local government tends to engage more in staffing and facilities in reaching out to their immigrants; (Test political approach)

H4a: If a community has more professional managers to operate its local government, its government is more likely to engage more in staffing and facilities in reaching out to their immigrants; (Test institutional capacity/structure approach)

H4b: If a community has a larger total population, its local government tends to engage more in staffing and facilities in outreach to their immigrants; (Test institutional capacity/structure approach)

H5: If a community is further to the nearest port of entry in its state, its local government tends to engage less in staffing and facilities in reaching their immigrant communities. (Test geographical location approach)

The following table provides a direct visual presentation of my hypotheses.

**Table 2.1: Summary of Hypotheses**

|     |                        |                              |                    |
|-----|------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|
| H1a | ↑ Immigrant population | ↑ Engagement with immigrants | Local Needs Factor |
| H1b | ↑ Non-white population | ↑ Engagement with immigrants |                    |

|     |                                     |                              |                                         |
|-----|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| H1c | ↑ Education                         | ↑ Engagement with immigrants |                                         |
| H2a | ↑ Per-capita income                 | ↑ Engagement with immigrants | Economic Factor                         |
| H2b | ↓ Unemployment rate                 | ↑ Engagement with immigrants |                                         |
| H3a | ↑ Moralistic political culture      | ↑ Engagement with immigrants | Political Factor                        |
| H3b | ↑ Democratic voters                 | ↑ Engagement with immigrants |                                         |
| H4a | ↑ Professional managers             | ↑ Engagement with immigrants | Institutional Structure/Capacity Factor |
| H4b | ↑ Total population                  | ↑ Engagement with immigrants |                                         |
| H5  | ↑ Distance to nearest port of entry | ↓ Engagement with immigrants | Geographical Factor                     |

## Gaps

Local governments are vital to managing and providing services for their communities and constituents. They directly interact with the public and know keenly the needs and demands of their communities. This research investigates a new area: local governments' human resource and facility engagement in reaching their immigrants. In short, many researchers have undertaken studies of federal government and immigration policies, or residents' attitudes toward immigrants, or in local governments' decisions about county spending, solid waste recycling, diversity management, and so on and so forth, and some limited research has been conducted on local governments' immigration policies and services provision, but not much scholarship has been done on localities' human resource and facility engagement with their immigrants.

Some research exists on local government policy outcomes or decisions such as expenditures (Morgan and Pelissero 1980; Choi et al 2010; Hajnal and Trounstein 2010), revenue options (Jeong 2007), administrator's turnover (Feiock et al 2001) and local economic

development incentive policies (Feiock and Clingermayer 1986; Bets et al 2012), and some research exists that focuses on immigrant issues such as immigrants' influences on the local labor market or employment (Liu 2013; Card 2001; Borjas 2003; LaLonde and Topel 1991; Camarota 1997), which factors influence individuals' attitudes toward immigration (Hopkins 2009; Mayda 2006; Scheve and Slaughter 2001) or about local immigrant policies (Brenner 2009; Graauw et al 2013; Steil and Vasi 2014; Williamson 2018). However, I am unaware of any studies that examine local governments' staffing and human resource engagement in reaching out to their immigrant populations. To fill in this gap, this dissertation uses a national survey and other combined data sources to examine which factors explain local governments' staffing and facilities engagement with their immigrants, especially after immigrants have settled in their communities.

### ***Benefits of This Study***

This exploration will identify which factors govern local governments' decisions regarding staffing and facilities engagement with their immigrants by using quantitative approaches. It then examines how and why local governments do so through qualitative methods such as interviews and case studies. This combined approach will provide practical information for local governments, their chief executive officials, and the officials in charge of immigration affairs. It will also inform other members of this academic discipline of the theoretical supplements which I contribute, as I apply not only the four theories, but also include the new factor of geographical proximity, and find that political culture, and other unexpected and important factors (immigrant organizations, higher level governments, network with other local governments, and administrative and policy-making leadership teams) influence local decisions, especially with respect to degrees of immigration engagement. These new findings offer new

insights on factors influencing this engagement and shed light on the directions of future efforts for practitioners in local governments.

## **Chapter 3: Data, Methods, Operationalization and Measurements**

### ***Data and Unit of Analysis***

To answer my stated research questions, this study relies on a mixed methods approach. In addition to multiple case studies, it utilizes data from seven primary sources. The quantitative portion of my study utilized ICMA<sup>1</sup> 2018 Local Government & Immigrant Communities Survey (ICMA 2019), American Community Surveys (ACS) 2013-2017 (U.S. Census Bureau 2020), County Presidential Election Returns 2000-2016 (MIT Election Data and Science Lab 2018), Locate a Port of Entry (U.S. Customs and Border Protection 2019), and the dominant political culture by state (Elazar 1984). The qualitative portion of my study employs the selected governments' official websites, google search, and data from my telephone interviews.

The unit of analysis for this dissertation is the local government: counties, cities, and townships. The larger sample (# of observations: 1046, including all three kinds of local governments) will be used to investigate the relationship between the dependent variable (DV) and independent variables (IV); then the smaller sample (# of observations: 361, only county governments), which includes the variable of Democratic percentage, will be used to investigate the relationship between the DV and all the IVs including the Democratic percentage in presidential voting in 2016, since this IV data is only available at the county level.

### ***Mixed Methods Approach***

To answer the afore-mentioned research questions, I will employ a mixed methods design. The usage of more appropriate methods can enhance the validity of the research (Brown & Hale, 2014). This mixed-methods approach allows me to not only identify key variables which

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<sup>1</sup> ICMA: International City/County Management Association

show statistical significance in quantitative analysis, but also find patterns in collected information in case studies and interviews to explore how the identified independent variables influence the dependent variable.

A quantitative study presents possible relationships of the independent variables and the dependent variable. Using a large sample in quantitative methods allows researchers to enhance the external generalizability to a larger population. Relying solely on a quantitative method, however, may only show the correlation of variables rather than the causal process or how influence is exerted. Qualitative methods are also very powerful and often used together with quantitative analysis to establish a mix-methods design of research (Brown & Hale, 2014). Qualitative methodology presents a detailed description exploring the causal mechanism of how and/or why one or several identified independent variables influence the dependent variable across one or several cases; but using case studies alone may prevent them from reaching external generalizability (Queirós, Faria, and Almeida 2017) due to the lack of statistical evidence a larger sample provides. Therefore, a mixed methods approach seems the most appropriate when both quantitative data and qualitative approaches such as case studies or interviews are within reach.

Regarding the quantitative method, I use ICMA 2018 Local Government & Immigrant Communities Survey and American Community Surveys (ACS) 2013-2017 and the data from the three other sources identified at the outset of this chapter. I run logistic regressions and negative binomial regressions (NBR) to test the associations between the variables that approximate the five factors and local governments' decisions of staffing and facility engagement with their immigrants. I ran logistic regressions because the four aspects of engagement separately as the dependent variables are binary dependent variables whose coding

are “0” or “1”. For the index/aggregate dependent variable which is the sum of the coding of the four aspects, the scores of this index variable range from 0 to 4. I ran negative binomial regressions for this aggregate dependent variable, because the descriptive statistics of the index dependent variable show that the mean is smaller than the variance. It shows the existence of over-dispersion, in which situation NBR models should be employed. Then later I used NBR models, and the likelihood ratio test results and the p-values of the models further confirmed that using Poisson regressions are rejected and using NBR models are appropriate. I also illustrated the appropriateness of employing NBR models rather than Poisson regression models through the comparison of the conditional means and their variances for the models using the aggregate. The conditional means and the variances are attached in Appendix E.

Then After that, I identify four local governments based on the “similar cases” and “extreme cases” selection method discussed by Seawright and Gerring (2008) and conduct telephone interviews and case studies. I then match the four cases into pairs based on the reported significance of the dependent variable and independent variables. In so doing, I further explore how those independent variables showing statistical significance influence local governments’ immigrant decisions. I also describe and justify my case selection strategy.

### ***Dependent Variable***

The dependent variable is local governments’ staffing and facility engagement in their immigrant outreach, and it is drawn from the ICMA survey. The survey was distributed by ICMA to Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) of all counties of all populations and all cities with more than 10,000 residents across the U.S., and 1,201 local governments finished the

survey. The overall response rate was 17%. The DV is approximated by Question 5 (parts a, b, c, d) on the ICMA survey instrument. The series of survey questions are:

5. Has your local government engaged in any of the following activities?

- a. Maintaining a formal local government office devoted solely to immigrant affairs.

Yes 1 ( ) No 0 ( ).

- b. Direct outreach about local government services to immigrant populations.

Yes 1 ( ) No 0 ( ).

- c. Designating a “community engagement coordinator” or other staff focused on engaging with immigrant populations.

Yes 1 ( ) No 0 ( ).

- d. Creating or participating in a local task force or commission devoted entirely or in part to immigrant affairs.

Yes 1 ( ) No 0 ( ).

I first treat each sub-question (a, b, c and d) of Question 5 respectively as the dependent variable to see how localities engage with their immigrants on each aspect, then I sum the coded score of the four sub-questions and created an index and treated the sum of them as the dependent variable to determine which factors shape local governments’ general engagement with their immigrants. Regarding the sum of each aspect, the dependent variable is calculated by adding the scores (0 for no, 1 for yes) of all the four questions for each local government. The total score of each government is the coded value of the local government in their staffing and facility engagement with their immigrants. A “No” answer for each question is scored as a ‘0,’ and a “Yes” answer is scored as a ‘1.’ The value of the index/aggregate dependent variable ranges from 0 to 4. The original survey offered an answer option of “do not know”. The numbers

of “do not know” answers are 51 (4.42%) for the first aspect of engagement: having a formal office solely for immigrants; 94 (8.14%) for the second aspect of engagement: direct outreach to immigrants; 70 (6.08%) for the third aspect of engagement: having a full-time coordinator for immigrants; 88 (7.64%) for the fourth aspect of engagement: having a task force devoted totally or partially to immigrants. I dropped the “do not know” answer since “do not know” may mean the respondents either had no knowledge of the subject or they were not willing to answer. I added the scores of all four sub-questions as the value of the dependent variable, --that is, each local government’s human resource and facility engagement with their immigrant populations. Therefore, the values of the index (of the dependent variable) range from 0 (=0+0+0+0) to 4 (=1+1+1+1).

How I coded each dependent variables are articulated in the following table:

**Table 3.1: Coding of the Dependent Variable (Question 5 on the Survey: Q5)**

| Q5.a                                                                 | Q5.b                          | Q5.c                                             | Q5.d                                                                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Maintain a formal office solely to immigrant affairs                 | Direct outreach to immigrants | Designating a coordinator focusing on immigrants | Creating/participating in local task force entirely or partly for immigrant affairs |
| Yes (1); No (0)                                                      | Yes (1); No (0)               | Yes (1); No (0)                                  | Yes (1); No (0)                                                                     |
| Total value of the aggregate dependent variable may vary from 0 to 4 |                               |                                                  |                                                                                     |

First, I present the descriptive statistics of each sub-question of Question 5 on the original survey and treat each sub-question as the DV to study which factors influence each sub-question. Logistic regressions are used for the analysis of each aspect of Question 5, because their answers are binary ones which only include 0 (no) and 1 (yes). I then use an index by summing the four sub-questions and treat the total as the DV. I employ the negative binomial regression of dependent variable to examine which independent variables influence local governments’

general human resource and facility engagement with their immigrant populations. For the index dependent variable, negative binomial regression is the appropriate one to use because my dependent variables values are over-dispersed with the mean (0.4) smaller than the variance (0.77). The dependent variable's descriptive statistics are shown in the following table:

**Table 3.2: The Descriptive Statistics of the Dependent Variable**

| Descriptive Statistics |   | Q5.a                                                  | Q5.b                          | Q5.c                                             | Q5.d                                                                                | Sum Q5.a-d                                                  |
|------------------------|---|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
|                        |   | Maintain a formal office solely for immigrant affairs | Direct outreach to immigrants | Designating a coordinator focusing on immigrants | Creating/participating in local task force entirely or partly for immigrant affairs | The aggregate DV (Sum of Question of Q5a, Q5b, Q5c and Q5d) |
| Frequency/percent      | 0 | 1,088/98.55                                           | 838/78.98                     | 975/90.11                                        | 942/88.53                                                                           | 774/75.88                                                   |
|                        | 1 | 16/1.45                                               | 223/21.02                     | 107/9.89                                         | 122/11.47                                                                           | 113/11.08                                                   |
|                        | 2 |                                                       |                               |                                                  |                                                                                     | 78/7.65                                                     |
|                        | 3 |                                                       |                               |                                                  |                                                                                     | 47/4.61                                                     |
|                        | 4 |                                                       |                               |                                                  |                                                                                     | 8/0.78                                                      |
| # of observations      |   | 1,104                                                 | 1,061                         | 1,082                                            | 1,064                                                                               | 1,020                                                       |
| Minimum-Maximum value  |   | 0-1                                                   | 0-1                           | 0-1                                              | 0-1                                                                                 | 0-4                                                         |
| Mean                   |   | 0.01                                                  | 0.21                          | 0.10                                             | 0.11                                                                                | 0.4                                                         |
| Standard Deviation     |   | 0.12                                                  | 0.41                          | 0.30                                             | 0.32                                                                                | 0.88                                                        |

### ***Independent Variables***

This study will test the five factors' influences on local governments' staffing and facility engagement with their immigrant communities. These include variables drawn from local needs factor, economic factor, political factor, institutional structure/capacity factor and the geographical factor which are presented in Table 3.3 below. The following table shows the

independent variables, the factor or perspective they belong to, their operationalization, and the data sources.

**Table 3.3: Independent Variables, Operationalization and Data Sources**

| <b>Five Concepts and Their Variables as Proxies (IVs of Interest)</b> | <b>Operationalization and Coding</b>                                                                                                         | <b>Data Sources</b>                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <b><i>Local needs factor</i></b>                                      |                                                                                                                                              |                                             |
| Immigrants' population                                                | ▪ % of immigrants: % of residents born in foreign countries                                                                                  | ▪ American Community Survey (ACS) 2013-2017 |
| Non-white population                                                  | ▪ % of non-white of the community                                                                                                            | ▪ ACS 2013-2017                             |
| Education                                                             | ▪ average education of the community                                                                                                         | ▪ ACS 2013-2017                             |
| <b><i>Economic factor</i></b>                                         |                                                                                                                                              |                                             |
| Unemployment                                                          | ▪ Community unemployment rate                                                                                                                | ▪ ACS 2013-2017                             |
| Per-capita income                                                     | ▪ Per-capita income of the community                                                                                                         | ▪ ACS 2013-2017                             |
| Gini-index                                                            | ▪ Gini-index of the community                                                                                                                | ▪ ACS 2013-2017                             |
| <b><i>Political factor</i></b>                                        |                                                                                                                                              |                                             |
| Local politics                                                        | ▪ 2016 presidential election by counties give community partisan attachment                                                                  | ▪ County Presidential Election Returns 2016 |
| Political culture                                                     | ▪ traditionalistic (coded as 1), individualistic (coded as 2) and moralistic (coded as 3)                                                    | ▪ Elazar (1984)                             |
| <b><i>Institutional factor (professionalism/capacity)</i></b>         |                                                                                                                                              |                                             |
| Professionalism of local government                                   | ▪ Coded as 1:<br>City Council-Manager<br>County Council-Manager/Administrator<br>▪ Coded as 0: all other forms of government; see Appendix D | ▪ ICMA 2018 Survey                          |
| Total population                                                      | ▪ total population of the community                                                                                                          | ▪ ACS 2013-2017                             |
| <b><i>Geographical factor</i></b>                                     |                                                                                                                                              |                                             |
| Distance from Closest Port of Entry                                   | Mileage from the community to its closet port of entry (self-collected data)                                                                 | ▪ U.S. Customs and Border Protection        |

|  |  |       |
|--|--|-------|
|  |  | ▪ GIS |
|--|--|-------|

**Note:** Five variables- immigrant population, non-white population, education, unemployment rate and local politics/democratic voters' percentage- are multiplied by 100 to change them from the percentage form/ a number with two digits after decimal point to a two-digit integer number so that the intercept looks more appropriate and interpretable in table display.

### *Immigrant Population*

The needs of an immigrant population may affect local immigrant decisions. This factor is measured by the percent of the people who were born in foreign countries out of the total population. Based on the research findings relevant to the local needs approach in the literature review, it is logical to hypothesize that immigrant needs impact local decisions regarding immigrants, specifically, regarding how they impact local governments' human staffing and facility engagement with their immigrants.

### *Non-white Percentage*

A non-white percentage shows the percentage of non-white people out of the total population, which is important because this demographic may be immigrants or may also be the second, third, fourth or more generations of immigrants. It reflects, in general, race composition between white and non-white people in communities. It is an important aspect of the local needs factor. Since the percentage of non-white people is increasing and will make up 50% of the U.S.'s total population by 2050 (Oliver and Wong 2003: 567; Frey 1999), this demographic is heavily related to the composition of immigrants, and therefore I hypothesize that it has an influence on local governments' engagement with their immigrant populations.

### Education

Education is measured by the average education of the community, which is the percentage of residents who have obtained a bachelor's degree or higher out of the total population. This information is also from ACS 2013-2017.

### Unemployment

The unemployment rate is an important economic indicator of a region. This variable uses a community's unemployment rate based on ACS 2013-2017 figures. As I have done to the immigrant percentage, non-white percentage, and education variables, I have recoded this variable by multiplying the values by 100 to change the two digits after the decimal point to a two-digit value so that the intercept in the regression models look appropriate and easier to interpret.

The hypothesis related to this variable assumes that if a community has a lower unemployment rate, its local government tends to engage more with immigrants via public policy.

### Per-capita Income

Per-capita income is also a significant local economy indicator. It may be correlated with the unemployment rate or the college graduate percentage. My hypothesis is that a higher per-capita income in a community means a greater likelihood that its local government will engage more with its immigrant populations. It is logical to expect that when an area or community is wealthier and has a higher per-capita income, it will be more willing to allocate or invest more in immigrant affairs.

### Gini-index

The Gini-index is an indicator that reflects a region or country's wealth inequality. The Gini index ranges from zero to one. A Gini-index factor that is closer to zero means better equality; A Gini-index factor closer to one means greater inequality. I examine the correlation between an area's Gini-index and per-capita income before I include it into any regression models. The Gini-index is also from ACS 2013-2017 survey.

### Local Politics

This variable aims to explore how the local constituents' partisan affiliation impacts local policymaking. It uses 2016 presidential election data by counties to identify voters' partisan affiliation, and this variable is measured by the Democratic percentage in a county. This data is from county presidential election returns for 2016, so it does not include Democratic percentage values in cities and townships. When I include this variable, the sample at county level is 361, smaller than the overall number of observations of 1,046. I also recoded this variable by multiplying it by 100 to change it to an integer of two digits so that the intercept in regression models look more appropriate and easier to interpret. Based on Democrats' idea of supporting and embracing immigrants, I hypothesize that if there is a higher Democratic percentage in a county, then its local government tends to engage more with immigrants. This comports with Hypothesis 3b, which was articulated in Chapter 2.

### Political Culture

Political culture is discussed by Elazar (1984), who classified political culture into three types: individualistic, traditionalistic and moralistic. In terms of attitudes towards immigrants and multi-cultures, the moralistic category seems to be the most tolerant and supportive in that it

emphasizes the concept of the commonwealth's betterment, including disadvantaged groups such as immigrants; the traditional culture category is more inclined to maintain the hierarchical social structure with the people at the top having greater authority and power in decision-making; therefore, this culture seems to be more cautious and reserved towards immigrants. Finally, in the middle of this continuum is the individualistic category, and states or people living in this political culture tend to be driven by the free market or by economic free-market style individualistic views (Elazar 1984). This is a categorical variable, and I coded traditional political culture as 1, individualistic as 2, and moralistic one as 3, based on the political culture of the state it is located in. In the logistic regressions and negative binomial regression models in Chapter 4, Stata uses the traditionalistic culture as the reference one, so only the individualistic and moralistic ones are shown in the table, both compared with the traditionalistic one.

#### *Professionalism of Local Government*

This variable belongs to the factor/concept of institutional professionalism/capacity, and is designed to test if and how the professionalism (of career managers) affects local immigrant policies. This data is from ICMA 2018 survey.

The original coding on the survey ranged from 1 to 8 (Appendix D), showing 8 different kinds of local government structures.

Based on the distribution of the variable, I recoded them as the following:

1=professional management by trained managers (including the original 2- Council-Manager and the original 7- County Council-Manager);

0=all other types of structures

According to other research on this topic, if professional managers run the government, then the local government tends to engage more human staffing and facilities for their immigrant populations. This variable correlates to Hypothesis 4a, as articulated in Chapter 2.

### Total Population

An area's total population is an important indicator of local government institutional capacity. With a bigger population, the community also needs a larger body of government officials to provide public management, agency operations, decision-making bodies and all other relevant services. I draw this variable from the ACS 2013-2017 survey. It is measured by the population of the community (whether city, county, town, or township).

### Distance from Closest Port of Entry

In accordance with the literature, I also include the concept of the geographical factor. A local area's distance from its closest port of entry is the main independent variable for this category. The data is from U.S. Customs and Border Protection. The map from the U.S. Customs and Border Protection and GIS provides the mileage from any community to its closest port of entry. It is measured by the mileage from the center of that community to its closest port of entry.

### ***Hypotheses Revisit***

After the introduction of the independent variables, the following table revisits the variables and the hypotheses.

***Table 3.4: The Variables and the Hypotheses***

| <b>Factors</b>     | <b>Hypotheses</b> | <b>IVs</b>             | <b>The DV</b>                |
|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>Local Needs</i> | H1a               | ↑ Immigrant population | ↑ Engagement with immigrants |
|                    | H1b               | ↑ Non-white population | ↑ Engagement with immigrants |
|                    | H1c               | ↑ Education            | ↑ Engagement with immigrants |

|                                         |     |                                     |                              |
|-----------------------------------------|-----|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>Economic Factor</i>                  | H2a | ↑ Per-capita income                 | ↑ Engagement with immigrants |
|                                         | H2b | ↓ Unemployment rate                 | ↑ Engagement with immigrants |
| <i>Political Factor</i>                 | H3a | ↑ Moralistic political culture      | ↑ Engagement with immigrants |
|                                         | H3b | ↑ Democratic voters                 | ↑ Engagement with immigrants |
| <i>Institutional Structure/Capacity</i> | H4a | ↑ Professional managers             | ↑ Engagement with immigrants |
|                                         | H4b | ↑ Total population                  | ↑ Engagement with immigrants |
| <i>Geographical Factor</i>              | H5  | ↑ Distance to nearest port of entry | ↓ Engagement with immigrants |

### ***Sampling Process***

The quantitative samples I used in this study come from ICMA. ICMA partnered with Cornell University to administer the survey. In the spring of 2018, they distributed it to the chief administrators of all cities with 10,000 people or more and all counties regardless of population size. Ultimately, 1,201 local governments completed the survey, representing a response rate of 17%. The response rates reflect differing community characteristics; generally, cities or counties with smaller populations have higher return rate, cities or counties from the north and south-Atlantic have a higher return rate than other regions, and municipalities have a higher rate than counties.

Other data such as the ACS survey, political cultures, the 2016 Presidential election Democratic percentage data, and distance to its closest port of entry data are all combined into the ICMA data, based on the sampling of the ICMA data. The sampling of the Demographic percentage of the 2016 presidential election data is smaller than ICMA data because those figures are only available at the county level.

## ***Statistical Processes***

I adopt a two-step process to unpack local government staffing and engagement decision-making vis-à-vis immigrant populations, as shown in Table 3.5.

***Table 3.5: Two-step Process in Statistical Analysis***

| Research Question                                                                                                          | Method                       | Variables                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Which factors influence local governments' in individual staffing and facility engagement with their immigrant population? | Logistic regression          | SQa: Has your local government engaged in maintaining a formal local government office devoted solely to immigrant affairs? DV 0 or 1.<br><br>SQb: Has your local government engaged in direct outreach about local government services to immigrant populations? DV 0 or 1.<br><br>SQc: Has your local government engaged in designating a "community engagement coordinator" or other staff focused on engaging with immigrant populations? DV 0 or 1.<br><br>SQd: Has your local government engaged in creating or participating in a local task force or commission devoted entirely or in part to immigrant affairs? DV 0 or 1. |
| Which factors influence local governments' overall staffing and facility engagement with their immigrants' populations?    | Negative binomial regression | The dependent variable is local governments' staffing and facility engagement with their immigrants and is represented by the addition/sum of four sub-questions, i.e., 0-4.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

In step 1, the response to each sub-question is either yes (coded as 1) or no (coded as 0); therefore, logistic regression should be adopted for this dichotomous dependent variable. I then construct an additive index and utilize negative binomial regression models to examine why most local governments choose "no" when answering all sub-questions.

### ***Case Study Selection Method and Justification***

I selected the cases for this study based on several dimensions: similarity of the values of the dependent variable, extreme values on the dependent variable, and the salience of some key independent variables.

My first thought was to show the significant impact of the independent variables on the dependent variable basically through the same variation on the DV as on the IVs. Later efforts show that I have to consider the value of the DV in the selection of the cases, because the cities, counties, or townships with lower engagement levels have very little data available to be collected. Thus, I adopted “most similar cases” strategy (Seawright and Gerring 2008: 304) in that all of my four cases are from the similar high values/scores of engagements with immigrants. The selection strategy I adopted also contains an element of “the extreme cases method” (Seawright and Gerring 2008: 301) in that all of my four cases have the highest engagement score. This method allows a researcher to choose extreme high or low values preferably on the independent variable of interests, in my case, on the dependent variable. This extreme method uses cases are “lying many different standard deviations from the mean” (Seawright and Gerring 2008: 297). The four cases which I finally selected are all from the cities/counties with the highest engagement score/value (value of 4), because they have richer data that allow me to conduct analysis and explore why and how the factors affect the DV. In this selection of cases, I also considered the salience of some IVs such as total population and dropped two communities with small total populations (Reading City, Pennsylvania and County of Gunnison, Colorado) due to the constraint of data availability. During the comparative analysis, I look for a standard feature or pattern to identify the commonalities impacting the DV and describe why and how they influence it.

The number of observations with the highest engagement values/scores (values of 4) on the dependent variable is very limited. Only eight cities/counties have a value of four. Among the eight cases, I selected four of them based on the salience of some key independent variables: non-white percentage, total population, and distance to their closest ports of entry; some of them also have different values such as on political culture.

As the table (3.6) below shows, I have chosen four cities/counties, and I match them in pairs: two cities and two counties. They are the City of Cambridge in Massachusetts, the City of Tulsa in Oklahoma, Los Angeles County and San Mateo County in California.

***Table 3.6: Variables Utilized for Case Selection Strategy***

| City/County and State (DV Value)     | Non-white % | <u>Immigrant Population %</u> | Education (College & higher %) | <u>Per-capita income</u> | Unemployment % | Total population | <u>Distance to closest port of entry (miles)</u> |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| City of Cambridge, Massachusetts (4) | 33          | 28                            | 76                             | 52552                    | 5              | 118977           | 2.14                                             |
| City of Tulsa (4)                    | 36          | 11                            | 31                             | 28823                    | 7              | 394574           | 7.02                                             |
| Los Angeles County                   | 48.7        | 34                            | 31                             | 30798                    | 8              | 10105518         | 17.91                                            |
| San Mateo County, California (4)     | 48          | 35                            | 49                             | 53516                    | 5              | 769545           | 11.8                                             |

Of the four cities, Cambridge City, Massachusetts and the City of Tulsa, Oklahoma are selected from the four cities with the highest engagement values. I dropped Reading City, Pennsylvania which also has the highest engagement value due to its small total population (88,495), because the small population limits its richness of data. I selected Cambridge City, Massachusetts because it not only has a high non-white percentage and a good immigration population percentage, but because it also has a high per-capita income and low employment rate. The City of Tulsa, which has a high non-white percentage- though a lower per-capita income and smaller immigration percentage, was willing to accept a research interview with me.

Their doing so added more value to my selection process because of their data availability and its richness. Therefore, I selected Cambridge City, Massachusetts and City of Tulsa, Oklahoma for case studies.

I also selected Los Angeles County and San Mateo County, California, because among the four counties that have the highest engagement level (County of Gunnison, Colorado; Hawaii County, Hawaii; San Mateo County, California; and Los Angeles County, California), they both have the highest degree of county government engagement with their immigrants. Gunnison County has a small population of 17,246 (U.S. Census Bureau 2020), which limits its government capacity and therefore the richness of its data. I then eliminated it from the selection for case study. I also originally chose Hawaii County, Hawaii as a case, but upon further research I found that data on Hawaii County regarding immigrants was insufficient to make a case for analysis. Thus, San Mateo and Los Angeles Counties remain as the only two relevant choices for my study, even though they are both located in California, which limits the geographical representation for the county study. However, this is the best I can do given the constraint of data availability.

### ***Data Collection from Interviews and Other Sources for Case Studies***

I collected the data for the case studies from the two cities' and two counties' official websites. Besides the official websites, I analyzed local news and journal articles about these communities, annual reports, council meeting minutes, or immigration policy documents to determine how the independent variables influence the dependent variable. As part of my research practices, I used the key words of "immigrant" "immigration" "inclusiveness" "immigration policy" and similar terms. I included the names of their government when I searched other databases such as the Auburn University library for relevant journal articles.

I conducted semi-structured interviews of executive officials or employees of local governments who oversee immigrant affairs; these are employees of the aforementioned city and county governments. I also used the snowball interviewing strategy after I identified the first person in a local government. With the snowball strategy, it does not matter if the first contact person is able to accept my interview. He or she can always refer me to another colleague who can provide additional perspectives on these issues. My interview recruitment and confirmation emails, protocol and guiding questions were approved by Auburn University IRB and are attached in Appendices A, B, and C. I intentionally designed my interview questions to solicit information related to my dependent variable, independent variables, and the process link between them; in other words, I sought information about how the variables (that show statistical significance) influence the local governments' levels of engagement in reaching out to their immigrants.

I sorted and analyzed the data I collected from websites and interviews to compare them and search for general patterns (and uniqueness). Following Scott's (2009) approach, I employed both inductive and deductive approaches for collecting and sorting data. Initially, as much as possible I employed an inductive approach to collect immigrant-related services or policies information from official websites or other sources about the selected cities and counties. Then I collected information from the interviews following the semi-structured guiding questions I prepared. Later I employed a deductive approach to sort and analyze all this data. Through constant comparison and analysis, I discovered general patterns or themes about how these independent variables influence the local governments' human resource and facility engagement with their immigrant populations; I elucidate and describe them in Chapter 5 and 6.

## ***Conclusion***

To achieve this project's purpose and answer my research question thoroughly and completely, I adopted a mixed-methods approach by combining both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative methods I used include logistic regression for each sub-question of local governments' staffing and facility engagement to examine which variables influence local governments' engagement in each item/aspect regarding local engagement with their immigrants. Thereafter, I used negative binomial regressions to study which variables influence local governments' overall/general staffing and facilities engagement with their immigrants.

I also adopted qualitative research, including semi-structured interviews and case studies, to explain why and determine any pattern in how the statistically significant variables affect local governments' decisions on their staffing and facility engagement with their immigrants. I selected and paired four cases for comparison during qualitative case analysis based on Seawright and Gerring (2008)'s similar-method principle, which requires researchers to choose cases based on similar values on the independent variables/the dependent variable and their extreme method selection principle, which allows researchers to select cases with extreme values with greater standard deviations from the mean. The four paired cases selected are two cities (Cambridge City, Massachusetts and City of Tulsa, Oklahoma) and two counties (Los Angeles County and San Mateo County, California). Protocols of conducting interviews were strictly followed.

## Chapter 4: Quantitative Analysis

This chapter aims to provide a possible answer to my first research question- which factors influence local governments' human staffing and facility engagements with their immigrants- through using quantitative statistics and analysis. The statistical results I discovered show the correlations between independent variables and the dependent variable, and my analysis provides logical explanations for these findings. Similarly, the results of my qualitative study, shared in Chapters 5 and 6, allow me to explain more fully through case studies the factors influencing local governments' decision-making rationales. Again, the information backing the qualitative aspects of my research comes from official websites, telephone interviews and other sources.

Prior to testing the significance of independent variables on the dependent variable, I conducted tests of the correlated relationships between independent variables. All the independent variables discussed in Chapter 3 are included in the correlation tests, and the tests find that the correlated pairs are: an area's unemployment rate and non-white percentage, its unemployment rate and per-capita income, its Democratic percentage and non-white percentage, and its college (and higher) graduate percentage and per-capita income. The following table (table 4.1) displays the correlations between these four pairs of variables.

**Table 4.1: Correlation between Variables**

|                               | Non-white % | Per-capita-income |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Unemployment %                | 0.5113      | -0.5403           |
| College and higher graduate % | -0.0304     | 0.7541            |
| Democratic %                  | 0.6791      | 0.0311            |

For statistical-reliability purposes, regression running requires that independent variables are basically independent of each other without much correlation. Each of the two pairs' (Democratic percentage and non-white percentage, and college graduate percentage and per-capita income) correlation value exceeded the threshold of 0.5, so Democratic percentage and college (and higher) graduate percentage have to be excluded when running regressions. After these two variables are dropped, another round of correlation test shows that there is no other correlation that exceeds the threshold between the variables. Therefore, the non-white percentage, per-capita income and unemployment rate can be included in the models.

It is necessary to review the dependent variable before discussing the statistical results. The dependent variables comprise the four sub-questions/aspects and the index/aggregate dependent variable. Participants' responses to each aspect are either "yes" (coded as 1) or "no" (coded as 0). The four sub-questions (SQ), their coding and the index dependent variable are in the following table:

***Table 4.2: Dependent Variable Table***

| Has your local government engaged in any of the following?                                                              | Yes                | No |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|----|
| SQa. Maintaining a formal local government office devoted solely to immigrant affairs                                   | 1                  | 0  |
| SQb. Direct outreach about local government services to immigrant populations                                           | 1                  | 0  |
| SQc. Designing a "community engagement coordinator" or other staff focused on engaging with immigrant populations       | 1                  | 0  |
| SQd. Creating or participating in a local task force or commission devoted entirely or in part to immigrant populations | 1                  | 0  |
| <b>Aggregate DV:</b> local governments' staffing and facility engagement with their immigrants                          | Ranges from 0 to 4 |    |

## Analysis on Each Aspect of Local Governments' Engagement

Before running a regression of the aggregate dependent variable, it is necessary and appropriate to run a logistic regression on each sub-question or aspect of local governments' engagement with immigrants to see the differences in the driving factors of each aspect in order to display a more macro and comprehensive picture about local engagement with immigrants. I used logistic regressions for this because the responses to each aspect are either "yes" or "no", or the value to the responses is dichotomous (either 1 or 0).

Chapter three has exhibited the huge difference between the "one" counts ("yes" answer) and "zero" counts ("no" answer) to the first sub-question -which is, has your government maintained a formal local government office devoted solely to immigrant affairs? The responses indicated 1,088 frequency and 98.55 percent of "0" ("no" answers). A logistic regression of sub-question one (SQa) reveals the following statistical finding:

**Table 4.3: Model A (SQa): Maintaining a Formal Office Solely for Immigrant Affairs**

| Variables                     |                 | Coefficient | Std Error | Significance |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| Immigrant%                    |                 | 0.010       | 0.0257    | 0.696        |
| Non-white%                    |                 | 0.031       | 0.016     | 0.051        |
| Per-capita income             |                 | -1.51e-07   | 0.000     | 0.995        |
| Unemployment rate             |                 | -0.083      | 0.120     | 0.489        |
| Gini-index                    |                 | 0.707       | 0.729     | 0.332        |
| Political culture             | individualistic | 0.455       | 0.692     | 0.512        |
|                               | moralistic      | -0.199      | 0.761     |              |
| Professionalism of local gov. |                 | -0.435      | 0.585     | 0.457        |

|                  |            |          |        |
|------------------|------------|----------|--------|
| Total population | 1.55e-06   | 5.29e-07 | 0.003* |
| N                | 1,104      |          |        |
| Log Likelihood   | -71.746652 |          |        |

Note: Estimates are from the logistic regression model with a dependent variable of local governments' maintaining a formal office solely for immigrant affairs. The dependent variable is dichotomous with the value of 0 or 1. Coefficients are present in the first column, standard errors in the second.

\*= $p \leq 0.05$

Model A above shows that when Sub-question One (SQa) is the dependent variable, the total population displays its statistically significant (at 0.003) impact on local governments' decision regarding whether to maintain a formal local government office solely for immigrant affairs. It passes the  $p \leq 0.05$  significance threshold. The total population is the measure of institutional capacity/professionalism of the government in that a bigger population requires a bigger body of local government structure to provide services for its residents. It makes sense that if a community has a bigger population, it may include more immigrants, and it also requires corresponding services. The other possible explanation is that a bigger total population means more tax revenue and a bigger body of government accordingly, which may mean more resources or more capability to provide services for immigrants.

In Model B (SQb), the second sub-question (SQb) is the next dependent variable, and the table below shows the variables' effects.

**Table 4.4: Model B (SQb): Direct outreach about local government services to immigrant populations**

| Variables         | Coefficient | Std Error | Significance |
|-------------------|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| Immigrant%        | 0.064       | 0.009     | 0.000*       |
| Non-white%        | 0.019       | 0.006     | 0.002*       |
| Per-capita income | -0.000      | 8.82e-06  | 0.012*       |

|                               |                 |            |          |        |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|------------|----------|--------|
| Unemployment rate             |                 | -0.100     | 0.039    | 0.011* |
| Gini-index                    |                 | 0.625      | 0.269    | 0.020* |
| Political culture             | individualistic | 0.711      | 0.239    | 0.003* |
|                               | moralistic      | 0.755      | 0.222    | 0.001* |
| Professionalism of local gov. |                 | 0.767      | 0.202    | 0.000* |
| Total population              |                 | 3.11e-06   | 7.34e-07 | 0.000* |
| N                             |                 | 1,061      |          |        |
| Log Likelihood                |                 | -438.83158 |          |        |

Note: Estimates are from a logistic regression model with a dependent variable of local governments' direct outreach about local government services to immigrant populations. The dependent variable is dichotomous with the value of 0 or 1. Coefficients are present in the first column, standard errors in the second.

\*= $p \leq 0.05$

Model B, above, introduces the same variables into the model with sub-question 2 (SQb) as the dependent variable. This sub-question is: Has your local government conducted direct outreach about local government services to immigrant populations? Interestingly, a logistic regression shows that all the variables included have statistical significant influence on local governments' direct outreach to their immigrants. Local needs (with immigrant population and non-white percentage as the measures), economic needs (with per-capita, unemployment, and Gini-index as measures), political perspective (with political culture as the measure and individualistic culture as the reference category) and institutional capacity/professionalism (with total population and professionalism of local governments as the measures) all have statistical significance on local governments' direct outreach to their immigrants. However, per-capita income and the unemployment rate show negative significant effects on local governments' direct service outreach to immigrants. This means that when a community has a higher income, its local government tends to engage less direct service outreach to its immigrants, which is not

expected. This unusual result occur maybe because when people are wealthier, they are generally more conservative and believe that immigrants are the socioeconomically disadvantaged. These wealthy individuals may not be inclined to favor decisions or policies that may spend government's or tax payers' money on immigrants. When a community's unemployment rate is higher, its local government tends to engage less in the direct service outreach to its immigrants. It makes sense that when an economy is adverse and the unemployment rate is higher, the local government will not prioritize immigrant services- or has little resources or motivation to do so.

Model C (SQc) below uses the third sub-question (SQc), which concerns designing a community engagement coordinator or other staff focused on engaging with immigrant populations-as the next dependent variable, and Table 4.5 below shows the same independent variables in this model.

***Table 4.5: Model C (SQc): Designing a Community Engagement Coordinator Focusing on Immigrants***

| Variables                     |                 | Coefficient | Std Error | Significance |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| Immigrant%                    |                 | 0.034       | 0.010     | 0.001*       |
| Non-white%                    |                 | 0.030       | 0.007     | 0.000*       |
| Per-capita income             |                 | -9.40e-06   | 0.000     | 0.381        |
| Unemployment rate             |                 | -0.053      | 0.049     | 0.280        |
| Gini-index                    |                 | 1.011       | 0.316     | 0.001*       |
| Political culture             | individualistic | 1.065       | 0.322     | 0.001*       |
|                               | moralistic      | 0.952       | 0.307     | 0.002*       |
| Professionalism of local gov. |                 | 0.648       | 0.272     | 0.017*       |
| Total population              |                 | 2.49e-06    | 6.70e-07  | 0.000*       |

|                |            |  |  |
|----------------|------------|--|--|
| N              | 1,082      |  |  |
| Log Likelihood | -283.94359 |  |  |

Note: Estimates are from a logistic regression model with a dependent variable of local governments' designing a community engagement coordinator focusing on immigrants. The dependent variable is dichotomous with the value of 0 or 1. Coefficient are present in the first column, standard errors in the second.

\*= $p \leq 0.05$

The logistic regression results show that, except for the two economic variables- per-capita income and the unemployment rate, all other variables have statistically significant impacts on whether local governments assign a full-time coordinator on immigrant affairs or not. Local needs, Gini-index, political culture and capacity and professionalism of local governments all positively influence whether these entities assign a full-time coordinator on immigrant affairs.

Model D (SQd) uses the last sub-question, and it asks if local governments create or participate in a local task force completely or partially devoted to immigrant populations. This logistic regression model also includes the same variables as the other three models, and the regression results are reported in the following table (Table 4.6).

**Table 4.6: Model D (SQd): Creating or Participating a Local Task Force Devoted to Immigrant Populations**

| Variables         |                 | Coefficient | Std Error | Significance |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| Immigrant%        |                 | 0.018       | 0.010     | 0.072        |
| Non-white%        |                 | 0.023       | 0.007     | 0.001*       |
| Per-capita income |                 | -6.88e-07   | 9.60e-06  | 0.943        |
| Unemployment rate |                 | -0.064      | 0.047     | 0.176        |
| Gini-index        |                 | 0.935       | 0.301     | 0.002*       |
| Political culture | individualistic | 1.125       | 0.297     | 0.000*       |
|                   | moralistic      | 1.000       | 0.288     | 0.001*       |

|                               |            |          |        |
|-------------------------------|------------|----------|--------|
| Professionalism of local gov. | 0.750      | 0.244    | 0.002* |
| Total population              | 1.77e-06   | 5.81e-07 | 0.002* |
| N                             | 1,064      |          |        |
| Log Likelihood                | -331.69423 |          |        |

Note: Estimates are from a logistic regression model with a dependent variable of local governments' creating or participating a local task force devoted to immigrant populations. The dependent variable is dichotomous with the value of 0 or 1. Coefficients are present in the first column, standard errors in the second.

\*= $p \leq 0.05$

The table above shows that except for the variables of immigrant percentage, per-capita income and unemployment rate, all of the other variables included in the model show statistical significance. These variables are non-white percentage, Gini-index, political culture, professionalism of government, and total population. This is similar to the statistical significance of variables on SQc- if local government assign a full-time on immigrant affairs- except the immigrant percentage has no significance on the local assignment of a task force engaged in immigrants in the last model. The commonality across both models regarding an assignment coordinator or a task force is the loss of the significance of economic variables. This suggests that for these two aspects, economic factors (except Gini-index) do not have much effect on them. Instead, other factors such as local needs (immigrant percentage and non-white percentage), political culture, and professionalism/capacity of local governments all have significant positive effects on these decisions.

To further compare the four models to account for each aspect of the overall dependent variable, I created a table to show the statistically significant impact of the variables above on each aspect of local governments' engagement with immigrants. Table 4.7 below presents the comparison:

**Table 4.7: A Comparison of the Impact of the Variables on Different Aspects of Local Governments' Engagement with Their Immigrants**

| <b>Models</b><br><br><b>Variables</b> |                 | <b>Model A</b><br>(A formal Office Solely for Immigrants) | <b>Model B</b><br>(Service Outreach to Immigrants) | <b>Model C</b><br>(Full-time Coordinator for Immigrants) | <b>Model D</b><br>(A Task Force Partly or Fully for Immigrants) |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Immigrant %                           |                 |                                                           | +                                                  | +                                                        |                                                                 |
| Non-white %                           |                 |                                                           | +                                                  | +                                                        | +                                                               |
| Per-capita Income                     |                 |                                                           | -                                                  |                                                          |                                                                 |
| Unemployment Rate                     |                 |                                                           | -                                                  |                                                          |                                                                 |
| Gini-index                            |                 |                                                           | +                                                  | +                                                        | +                                                               |
| Political                             | Individualistic |                                                           | +                                                  | +                                                        | +                                                               |
| Culture                               | Moralistic      |                                                           | +                                                  | +                                                        | +                                                               |
| Institutional Professionalism         |                 |                                                           | +                                                  | +                                                        | +                                                               |
| Total Population                      |                 | +                                                         | +                                                  | +                                                        | +                                                               |

Note: Estimates are from Logistic Regression models with four different dependent variables: local governments' assignment a formal office solely for immigrant affairs, local service outreach to immigrants, designing a community engagement coordinator focusing on immigrants, and creating or participating a local task force for immigrants. The dependent variable is dichotomous with the value of 0 or 1.

+ Positive relationship; - negative relationship

\*= $p \leq .05$

Table 4.7 above compares the differences of the effects of the same independent variables on the four aspects of local engagement with immigrants in order to present a fuller or more comprehensive picture of the engagement. In Model A with the first aspect (SQa)- devoting a formal office solely for immigrants- as the dependent variable, the variable of total population mainly drives this decision. A city/county/township with a large total population is more likely to have an office solely providing services for immigrants. For the third and fourth aspects of

assigning a full-time coordinator for immigrants and a task force partly or fully for immigrants, all variables except the per-capita income and unemployment rate (and the variable of immigrant % for Model C) have shown significance, and have positive relationships with the local assignment of a coordinator or task force for immigrants. Comparatively, the most noticeable model is Model B, where all factors and their variables have significant effects on local service outreach to immigrants, though per-capita income and the unemployment rate have negative relationships with this outreach.

### **Analysis of the General Local Governments' Engagement with Immigrants**

After I analyzed each aspect of the dependent variable, I used an index of the sum of the four aspects as the dependent variable, functioning as the measure of local governments' general staffing and facility engagement with their immigrants. The values of the dependent variable range from 0 to 4, the negative binomial regression models aim to identify the driving forces of local governments' staffing and facility engagement with their immigrant populations. Models with the same dependent variable but different variables (classified into different factors/concepts) are analyzed below:

Model 1 below focuses on the local needs factor/approach.

***Table 4.8: Model 1-Local Needs Factor to Explain Local Governments' Engagement with Immigrants***

| <b>Variables</b>   | <b>Coefficient</b> | <b>Std Error</b> | <b>Significance</b> |
|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Immigrant %        | 0.043              | 0.007            | 0.000*              |
| Non-white%         | 0.019              | 0.004            | 0.000*              |
| College Graduate % | 0.0143             | 0.004            | 0.000*              |
| N                  | 1,020              |                  |                     |

|                |            |  |  |
|----------------|------------|--|--|
| Log Likelihood | -807.36624 |  |  |
|----------------|------------|--|--|

Note: Estimates are from a negative binomial regression model with a dependent variable of local governments' human resource and facility engagement with their immigrants. The dependent variable ranges from 0 to a maximum of 4. Coefficients are present in the first column, standard errors in the second.

\*= $p \leq .05$

Model 1 only utilizes the local needs factor to explain local engagement with immigrants, and displays the statistically significant impact of the variables for the local needs approach: immigrant percentage, non-white percentage and college (and higher) graduate percentage. This means that as there are more immigrants in a community, local governments tend to invest more on immigrant affairs, which coincides with the local government approach argument that local policies or decisions are a response to local demographic needs. The non-white variable is a measure for racial composition, which also impacts local decisions on immigrants. This model informs us that community residents' education level is also a factor that drives local decision-making. When the residents' education level is higher, local governments obtain more understanding and support to engage with immigrants who are socioeconomically more disadvantaged. Next, I will look at the impact of other factors on local general engagement with immigrants and compare them. Model 2 below focuses on the economic approach which is measured by per-capita income, unemployment rate percentage and Gini index.

***Table 4.9: Model 2- Economic Factor to Explain Local Governments' Engagement with Immigrants***

| Variables         | Coefficient | Std Error | Significance |
|-------------------|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| Unemployment %    | 0.035       | 0.0298    | 0.246        |
| Per-capita income | 0.000       | 6.93e-06  | 0.058        |
| Gini-index        | 0.605       | 0.214     | 0.005*       |
| N                 | 1,020       |           |              |

|                |            |  |  |
|----------------|------------|--|--|
| Log Likelihood | -866.89339 |  |  |
|----------------|------------|--|--|

Note: Estimates are from a negative binomial regression model with a dependent variable of local governments' human resource and facility engagement with their immigrants. The dependent variable ranges from 0 to a maximum of 4. Coefficients are present in the first column, standard errors in the second.

\*= $p \leq .05$

The Gini-index in Model 2 is the only variable which demonstrates statistical significance in its influence on local governments' engagement with immigrants. The coefficient of Gini-index is 0.605, which means that when Gini-index increases by 1%, all the other variables in the model held constant, the expected value of local governments' engagement with their immigrants increases statistically significantly by 0.605. The main predictors of this economic factor- variables of per-capita income and unemployment rate- did not show any significance in this economic model. This indicates that Model 2, the economic model, does not evidence a strong influence on local governments or does not demonstrate that it is an influential factor.

Model 3 (see Table 4.10 below) only includes the political culture factor. As what is stated in Chapter 3, political culture is a factor/categorical variable, and it includes three types of cultures: traditional, individualistic and moralistic. The Stata software I used for my research uses traditional culture as the reference one, so as a result, individual and moralistic political cultures necessarily are compared to the traditional one.

**Table 4.10: Model 3- Political Factor to Explain Local Governments' Engagement with Immigrants**

| Variables         |                 | Coefficient | Std Error | Significance |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| Political culture | Individualistic | 0.291       | 0.180     | 0.106        |
|                   | Moralistic      | 0.524       | 0.171     | 0.002*       |
| N                 | 1,020           |             |           |              |
| Log Likelihood    | -869.95738      |             |           |              |

Note: Estimates are from a negative binomial regression model with a dependent variable of local governments' human resource and facility engagement with their immigrants. The dependent variable ranges from 0 to a maximum of 4. Coefficients are present in the first column, standard errors in the second.

\*= $p \leq .05$

Model 3, above, shows that compared with traditional culture, moralistic political culture showed statistical significance (a p-value of 0.002, with a coefficient of 0.524) in its effects on local engagement with their immigrants. These figures indicate that when political culture changes from traditionalistic to moralistic, local government's general engagement with their immigrants increases by 0.524. This suggests that when only political culture is considered in the model to explain local governments' engagement, the moralistic political culture statistically significantly influence local governments' general engagement with their immigrants.

The effects of the variables of institutional professionalism and total population as predictors to measure institutional professionalism/capacity are presented in Model 4 (see table 4.11 below). Both variables show statistically significant impacts on local engagement with immigrants with a p-value of 0.000. These results indicate that, only analyzing from the perspective of institutional professionalism and capacity, both variables (professionalism and total population) are significant in influencing local engagement with their immigrants.

***Table 4.11: Model 4- Institutional Professionalism/Capacity Factor to Explain Local Governments' Engagement with Immigrants***

| Variables                            | Coefficient | Std Error | Significance |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| Professionalism of Local Governments | 0.861       | 0.154     | 0.000*       |
| Total Population                     | 2.02e-06    | 5.12e-07  | 0.000*       |
| N                                    | 1,020       |           |              |
| Log Likelihood                       | -844.99015  |           |              |

Note: Estimates are from a negative binomial regression model with a dependent variable of local governments' human resource and facility engagement with their immigrants. The dependent variable ranges from 0 to a maximum of 4. Coefficients are present in the first column, standard errors in the second.

\*= $p \leq .05$

Model 5 (Table 4.12) below explains local governments' engagement with their immigrants from the perspective of their geographical proximity to closest port of entry. This model solely includes the variable of distance to the city/county/township's closest port of entry. It is significant at the p-value of 0.000, with a negative coefficient of -0.011. It indicates that when the distance of a city/county/township to its closest port of entry increases by 1 mile, its local government's engagement with their immigrants decreases by 0.011.

**Table 4.12: Model 5- Geographical Proximity Factor to Explain Local Governments' Engagement with Immigrants**

| Variables                | Coefficient | Std Error | Significance |
|--------------------------|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| Distance to Closest Port | -0.011      | 0.002     | 0.000*       |
| N                        | 1,020       |           |              |
| Log Likelihood           | -860.90504  |           |              |

Note: Estimates are from a negative binomial regression model with a dependent variable of local governments' human resource and facility engagement with their immigrants. The dependent variable ranges from 0 to a maximum of 4. Coefficients are present in the first column, standard errors in the second.

\*= $p \leq .05$

Model 6 (Table 4.13 below) is the comprehensive model which includes all the variables. Interestingly, in this comprehensive model, most variables that showed an earlier statistically significant effect on local engagement with immigrants still maintain their significance. Moreover, even the unemployment rate and individualistic political culture, which in Model 2 (the economic model) and model 3 (political culture) did not show any significant effect, now are statistically significant. The two non-statistically significant variables are per-capita income and total population.

In terms of directions of relationship, the unemployment rate, per-capita income, and a community's distance to the closest port of entry, all show a negative relationship with local governments' engagement with immigrants. The variable of the distance to closest port's significance means when a city/county/township is farther from its closest port of entry, its local government tends to engage less with its immigrants. One reason for this correlation may be that, when a city is closer to its closest port of entry, transportation tends to be more developed and convenient. People and the cities/counties/townships tend to be more tolerant, inclusive and diverse in the composition of races or ethnicities. This seems to support Hypothesis 5.

It is apparent that compared with each of the five models which includes only one factor, the comprehensive model (Model 6) seems to explain local governments' engagement with their immigrants the best. It has the biggest log-likelihood compared with the previous separate one-factor models.

**Table 4.13: Model 6- Comprehensive Model (including Geographical Factor) to Explain Local Governments' Engagement with Immigrants**

| Variables                            |                 | Coefficient | Std Error | Significance |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| Immigrant %                          |                 | 0.031       | 0.007     | 0.000*       |
| Non-white%                           |                 | 0.022       | 0.005     | 0.000*       |
| Unemployment rate                    |                 | -0.067      | 0.030     | 0.027*       |
| Per-capita income                    |                 | -0.000      | 6.82e-06  | 0.084        |
| Gini-index                           |                 | 0.621       | 0.199     | 0.002*       |
| Political culture                    | Individualistic | 0.603       | 0.181     | 0.001*       |
|                                      | Moralistic      | 0.688       | 0.173     | 0.000*       |
| Professionalism of Local Governments |                 | 0.710       | 0.156     | 0.000*       |

|                          |            |          |        |
|--------------------------|------------|----------|--------|
| Total Population         | 6.76e-07   | 3.72e-07 | 0.069  |
| Distance to Closest Port | -0.005     | 0.002    | 0.021* |
| N                        | 1,020      |          |        |
| Log Likelihood           | -784.43524 |          |        |

Note: Estimates are from a negative binomial regression model with a dependent variable of local governments' human resource and facility engagement with their immigrants. The dependent variable ranges from 0 to a maximum of 4. Coefficients are present in the first column, standard errors in the second.

\*= $p \leq .05$

The following table (Table 4.14) compares all six models in one table, which clearly shows the differences in the variables' effects in all of the models. Model 6 seems better at illustrating the factors and explaining the DV than the previous ones, with the biggest log likelihood. All variables except per-capita income and total population have shown their statistical significance in Model 6. These statistically significant variables include local needs variables (immigrant percentage and non-white percentage), unemployment rate, Gini-index, political culture (individualistic and moralistic ones), institutional professionalism and distance to closest ports of entry. Each show statistically significant impacts on local engagement passing the  $p \leq 0.05$  threshold. Among these significant variables, the unemployment rate and distance to closest port of entry have a negative relationship with local governments' engagement with immigrants. The results indicate that most variables included in the comprehensive model account for the local governments' staffing and facility engagement with their immigrants. It is reasonable that local governments' policies or decisions are driven by five major forces/factors rather than only one. In sum, then, Model 6 demonstrates that the degree to which local governments engage human resources and facilities for their immigrants is determined by five factors, namely local demographic needs, local economic imperatives, political cultures, the

institutional professionalism of their local governments, and their geographical proximity to ports.

**Table 4.14: A Comparison of Inclusion of Different Variables to Account for the General D.V.**

Dependent Variable: Local Governments' Staffing and Facility Engagements with Their Immigrants

|                                                      | Model 1                 | 2                | 3             | 4                   | 5                  | 6                |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Variables                                            | Coefficient (Std Error) |                  |               |                     |                    |                  |
| <i><u>Local Needs Factor</u></i>                     |                         |                  |               |                     |                    |                  |
| Immigrant %                                          | 0.043 (0.007)*          |                  |               |                     |                    | 0.031(0.007)*    |
| Non-white %                                          | 0.019 (0.004)*          |                  |               |                     |                    | 0.022(0.005)*    |
| <i><u>Economic Factor</u></i>                        |                         |                  |               |                     |                    |                  |
| Unemployment%                                        |                         | 0.035(0.0298)    |               |                     |                    | -0.067 (0.030)*  |
| Per-capita Income                                    |                         | 0.000 (6.93e-06) |               |                     |                    | -0.000(6.82e-06) |
| Gini-index                                           |                         | 0.605(0.214)*    |               |                     |                    | 0.621(0.199)*    |
| <i><u>Political Factor</u></i>                       |                         |                  |               |                     |                    |                  |
| Political Culture I.                                 |                         |                  | 0.291(0.180)  |                     |                    | 0.603(0.181)*    |
| M.                                                   |                         |                  | 0.524(0.171)* |                     |                    | 0.688 (0.173)*   |
| <i><u>Institutional Professionalism/Capacity</u></i> |                         |                  |               |                     |                    |                  |
| Professionalism                                      |                         |                  |               | 0.861(0.154)*       |                    | 0.710(0.156)*    |
| Total Population                                     |                         |                  |               | 2.02e-06(5.12e-07)* | 6.76e-07(3.72e-07) |                  |
| <i><u>Geographical Factor</u></i>                    |                         |                  |               |                     |                    |                  |
| Distance to Closest Port                             |                         |                  |               |                     | -0.011(0.002)*     | -0.005(0.002)*   |
| <hr/>                                                |                         |                  |               |                     |                    |                  |
| N                                                    | 1,020                   | 1,020            | 1,020         | 1,020               | 1,020,             | 1,020            |
| Log Likelihood                                       | -807.36624              | -866.89339       | -869.95738    | -844.99015          | -860.90504         | -784.43524       |

Note: Estimates are from a negative binomial regression model with a dependent variable of local governments' human resource and facility engagement with their immigrants. The dependent variable ranges from 0 to a maximum of 4. Coefficients are present first, standard errors in parenthesis.

\*= $p \leq .05$

I: Individualistic (in Political Culture Category)

M. Moralistic (in Political Culture Category)

## Predictive Margins of the Statistically Significant Variables

To show the effects of the statistically significant variables more clearly, I have compiled the predictive margins of these variables. The following table (Table 4.15) shows the margins:

**Table 4.15: Predictive Margins of the Statistically Significant Variables**

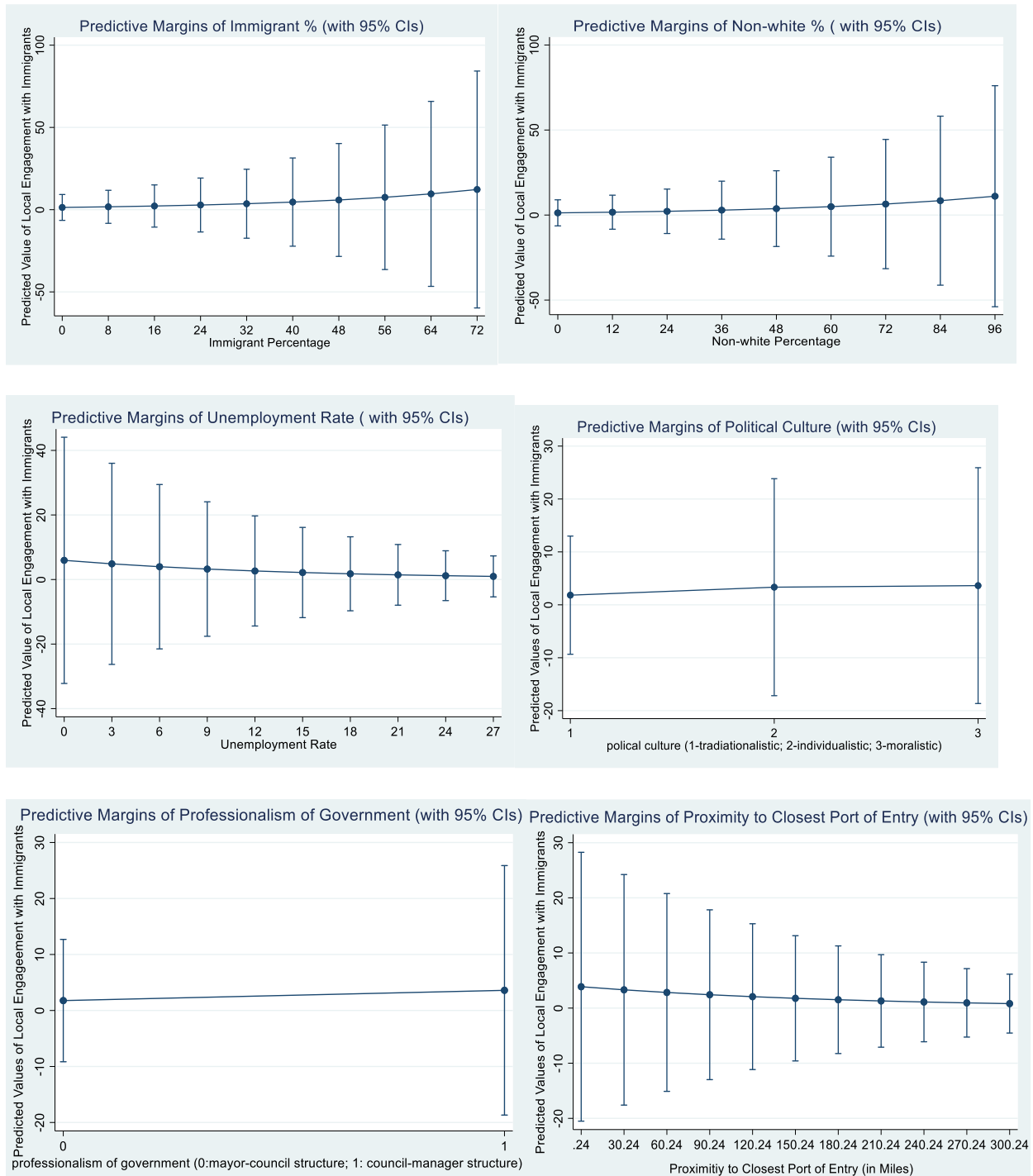
| Nonwhite % |        | Immigrant % |        | Unemployment % |        | Political Culture |        | Professionalism of Government |        | Proximity to Closest Port |        |        |      |
|------------|--------|-------------|--------|----------------|--------|-------------------|--------|-------------------------------|--------|---------------------------|--------|--------|------|
| at         | Margin | at          | Margin | at             | Margin | at                | Margin | at                            | Margin | at                        | Margin |        |      |
|            |        |             |        |                |        |                   |        |                               |        | (miles)                   |        |        |      |
| 0          | 1.28   | 0           | 1.36   | 0              | 5.94   | traditionalistic  | 1.82   | Mayor-council                 | 1.77   | 0.24                      | 3.87   |        |      |
| 12         | 1.68   | 8           | 1.73   | 3              | 4.86   |                   |        |                               |        | 30.24                     | 3.31   |        |      |
| 24         | 2.20   | 16          | 2.21   | 6              | 3.97   |                   |        |                               |        | 60.24                     | 2.83   |        |      |
| 36         | 2.88   | 24          | 2.83   | 9              | 3.25   | individualistic   | 3.33   | Council-Manager               | 3.60   | 90.24                     | 2.42   |        |      |
| 48         | 3.77   | 32          | 3.61   | 12             | 2.65   |                   |        |                               |        | 120.24                    | 2.07   |        |      |
| 60         | 4.93   | 40          | 4.61   | 15             | 2.17   |                   |        |                               |        | 150.24                    | 1.77   |        |      |
| 72         | 6.46   | 48          | 5.89   | 18             | 1.77   | moralistic        | 3.63   |                               |        | 180.24                    | 1.52   |        |      |
| 84         | 8.45   | 56          | 7.52   | 21             | 1.45   |                   |        |                               |        | 210.24                    | 1.30   |        |      |
| 96         | 11.06  | 64          | 9.60   | 24             | 1.18   |                   |        |                               |        | 240.24                    | 1.11   |        |      |
|            |        | 72          | 12.26  | 27             | 0.97   |                   |        |                               |        | 270.24                    | 0.95   |        |      |
|            |        |             |        |                |        |                   |        |                               |        |                           |        | 300.24 | 0.81 |

Table 4.15 shows that when nonwhite population percentage increases from 0% to 12%, the expected count/value of local governments' engagement with their immigrants increase from 1.28 to 1.68; when it increases to 24%, the expected engagement has an acceleration and

increases from 1.68 to 2.20; finally when this percentage increases to 96, the expected engagement increases to 11.06. Regarding the variable of immigrant percentage, when the percentage increases from 0% to 8%, the expected count/value of local engagements with their immigrants increases from 1.36 to 1.73; when immigrant percentage increases to 72%, the expected count of local governments' engagement increase to 12.26. Next variables is unemployment rate. Table 4.15 shows that when unemployment rate increase from 0 to 3%, the expected local governments' engagement with their immigrants decreases from 5.94 to 4.86. The expected engagement value decreases all the way as unemployment rate increases, until the engagement value decreases to 0.97 when unemployment rate increases to 27%. Next variable is political culture. When political culture changes from traditionalistic to individualistic, the expected engagement value increases from 1.82 to 3.33; when it changes from individualistic to moralistic, the expected engagement value increases to 3.63. The next variable is professional structure of the government. When the structure changes from mayor- council to council-manager, the expected local governments' engagement value (with their immigrants) increases from 1.77 to 3.60. The last statistically significant variable is proximity to closest port: when the proximity from (the center of) the city/county/township increases from 0.24 to 30.24 miles, the expected engagement values decrease from 3.87 to 3.31; when the distance increases to the fullest range of 300.24 miles, the expected local governments' engagement value decreases to 0.81.

To better visually present the variables' predictive margins, I created the following graphs to show the statistical significance of the variables from the comprehensive model.

**Figure 4.1: Predictive Margins of Statistically Significant Variables**



The rising or falling lines in Figure 4.1 above are not steep due to the constrained scope of the dependent variable's value. Based on the table and the graphs, we see the unemployment rate and proximity to closest ports of entry have a negative relationship with local governments' engagement with their immigrants. Except for these two variables, increases in all other variables (of immigrant %, non-white %, political culture, and government professionalism) bring steady increases in their local governments' engagement with their immigrants.

## Conclusions

The quantitative results have been displayed in Table 4.16 below.

**Table 4.16: Statistical Significance of Variables in Quantitative Results**

| Factors            | Hypotheses          | Separate Aspect as DVs |         |         |         | Aggregate DV          |
|--------------------|---------------------|------------------------|---------|---------|---------|-----------------------|
|                    |                     | Model A                | Model B | Model C | Model D | Model 6 Comprehensive |
| Local Needs        | H1a (immi.%)        |                        | yes ↑   | yes ↑   |         | yes ↑                 |
|                    | H1b (non-white%)    |                        | yes ↑   | yes ↑   | yes ↑   | yes ↑                 |
| Economic           | H2a (per-capita)    |                        | yes ↑   |         |         |                       |
|                    | H2b (unemploy)      |                        | yes ↓   |         |         | yes ↓                 |
| Political          | H3a (poli. culture) |                        | yes ↑   | yes ↑   | yes ↑   | yes ↑                 |
|                    | H3b (demo. voters)  |                        |         |         |         |                       |
| Structure/Capacity | H4a (professional)  |                        | yes ↑   | yes ↑   | yes ↑   | yes ↑                 |
|                    | H4b (total pop.)    | Yes ↑                  | yes ↑   | yes ↑   | yes ↑   |                       |
| Geographical       | H5 (geographical)   |                        |         |         |         | yes ↓                 |

Note: 1. yes: statistically significant      2. arrows: relationship directions

Based on the quantitative analysis only, regarding the four different aspects of engagement as the dependent variables, the results are different for different models or aspects. In Model A which uses ‘whether having a formal office solely for immigrants’ as the DV, only total population shows significance, so H4b is supported. The communities with bigger populations tend to have bigger capacity due to larger tax base. This explains the formal office engagement which seems to have higher costs than having one staff or coordinator only. In the model which uses ‘having direct outreach to immigrants’ as the DV (Model B), all the included variables show their statistical significance, which support H1a, H1b, H2a, H2b, H3a, H4a and H4b. For the model which adopts a coordinator as its DV (Model C), all the included variables except the economic ones show their significance, so these support H1a, H1b, H3a, H4a and H4b. The economic variables do not have significant impacts on this coordinator assignment for immigrant affairs. The possible explanation may be that per-capita income have little to do with local government revenues, and unemployment rate, as an indicator of economy does not have much influence on this small investment/cost of one staff engagement. In the model which uses ‘having a local task force totally or partially devoted to immigrants’ as the DV (Model D), except the two variables in the economic factor and the immigrant percentage variable (in the local needs) factor, all the other included variables show their statistical significance. Therefore, H1b, H3a, H4a and H4b are supported in this model. Immigrant population does not impact the task force engagement significantly may because it devotes more to racial or minority issues rather than immigrants solely, which accounts for why non-white percentage is significant to account for this DV.

For the index/aggregate dependent variable, these results support H1a, H1b, H2b, H3a, H4a and H5. H2a states that if a community has a bigger per-capita income, its local government

tends to engage more with its immigrants. The results show that per-capita income is not statistically significant, and it does not support H2a. Per-capita income has little to do with local governments revenue, which may explain why it is not a significant explanator of local general engagement with their immigrants. H4b states that if a community has a bigger population, its local government tends to have more engagement with their immigrants. Total population in the index/aggregate model did not show statistical significance either. Therefore, the aggregate comprehensive model does not support H4b either. It shows that when total population is viewed independently, it is not significant to account for local governments' general engagement with their immigrants. However, in reality, it is closely related to immigrant population and non-white people population, because when a city has a bigger population, it is more likely to have more immigrants and non-white people living in it. I dropped the variable of H3, Democratic voter percentage, in the regression model due to its high correlation with non-white percentage. Therefore, H3a could not be supported by the dataset.

This project has revealed some interesting new findings regarding local governments' decisions with respect to immigrants, which has profound implications for other local governments and political scientists. I tested the local needs, economic imperatives, and institutional structure factors which have been explored and discussed by the existing literature to explain local immigrant decisions. This is a new exploration, and the most novel and notable contributions lie in the inclusion of the variables of political culture and geographical proximity, and the discovery of the impact of the two variables on local decisions, in addition to the discovery of the impacts of other factors.

My unique findings from this quantitative analysis are extremely important, but they are not sufficient yet because they fail to explain why and how they matter. They need further and

richer supplements through qualitative measures. Therefore, I used case studies based on the data from official websites plus interviews to further confirm their significance and explore why and how these driving forces impact local governments' engagement with their immigrants. The following two chapters, through conducting case studies, address my second research question, which is why and how these factors influence local governments' engagement with their immigrants.

## **Chapter 5: City of Cambridge, Massachusetts and City of Tulsa, Oklahoma**

This chapter intends to answer my second research question and explores why and how the governments of the City of Cambridge and the City of Tulsa engage greatly with their immigrants, tested through case studies. I also examine which factors, among the ones I identified in the quantitative section, are significant in influencing local immigrant engagement in the qualitative study section, and how they influence this engagement. After the discussion of my selection process and its justification, providing basic information on the two cities, I then address why and how the two local governments have the highest engagement with their immigrants by analyzing the relationship from the factors of local needs, economics, political culture, institutional structure /capacity and geographical proximity to ports. First, I analyzed their engagement driven by local needs measured by their immigrant population and non-white population. Then, the economic situation of the two cities is analyzed to investigate the relationship between the variables of the economy and the governments' engagement. I also discuss institutional structure, political culture and geographical proximity to closest ports of entry, showing through my analysis how these factors influence the governments' engagement with their immigrants. After discussing the two cities separately, I further compare the two cities and analyze the common and unique factors influencing their engagement with their immigrants.

### ***Why Cambridge and Tulsa as Study Subjects***

The City of Cambridge, Massachusetts and the City of Tulsa, Oklahoma both have the highest levels of engagement with their immigrants based on their reports in the ICMA survey. In general, it could be a better selection to use a wider variety of local governments who engage at different levels with their immigrant populations. However, local governments with middle,

lower or no engagement with immigrants have very little data available upon which to conduct the case studies. Therefore, I selected this pair of cases because they indicated the highest level of engagement. This chapter discusses the first pair of cases. Among the eight local governments with the highest level of engagement, four of them are cities- Cambridge, Massachusetts, Dallas, Texas, Reading, Pennsylvania and Tulsa, Oklahoma; the rest are counties. Among these four cities, a city from a northeastern state and a city from the south would better represent both the relatively open eastern area and more traditional southern area. As discussed in Chapter 3, my case selection is based on the diverse method and extreme method (Seawright and Gerring 2008). The two cities are diverse in the independent variables (except in non-white percentage and in geographical proximity to their closest ports of entry), and they have the same extreme, highest engagement value in the dependent variable. Cambridge has more available data than Reading, and Tulsa has more information available on immigrants than Dallas, Texas. For these reasons, the City of Cambridge, Massachusetts and the City of Tulsa, Oklahoma are selected.

### ***The City of Cambridge, Massachusetts***

#### **Basic Information on the City of Cambridge**

Located in Middlesex County, Cambridge is the home of Harvard University in Massachusetts. The following table shows some basic demographics about the city.

***Table 5.1: Relevant Census Information on Cambridge City***

| Total Population | Per-capita Income | Immigrant% | Non-white % | Unemployment Rate |
|------------------|-------------------|------------|-------------|-------------------|
| 118,977          | \$52,552          | 28%        | 33%         | 5%                |

Note: The information is from U.S. Census Bureau, 2020.

As the table shows, with a total number of 118,977 residents, Cambridge, Massachusetts has an immigrant percentage of 28% and a non-white population percentage of 33% (U.S.

Census Bureau 2020). The city government has a city manager-city council governmental structure. Based on ACS 2013-2017, Cambridge has a per-capita income of \$52,552, which is much higher than the median of \$26,997 among all of the 1,201 cases in the dataset (U.S. Census Bureau 2020). Cambridge's main industries include biotechnology, clean energy and high-tech companies (Cambridge CDD 2021). The development of biotechnology may be mainly driven by the highly educated and skilled labor force and new technology proliferation from well-known universities such as Harvard and MIT (Mitchell 2000). The unemployment rate of Cambridge City, Massachusetts is 5% (U.S. Census Bureau 2020). With famous universities like Harvard and MIT around, Cambridge residents tend to have liberal political ideologies (Niche 2021).

#### *Cambridge City Government's Engagement with Immigrants*

Having reported the highest level of engagement with their immigrants in the ICMA survey (2018), Cambridge has engaged a great deal with their immigrant populations. The breadth and depth of service Cambridge provides is not only reflected in its services for all its residents, but also in its inclusion of, and its support for, all vulnerable population groups such as persons with disabilities, immigrants, LGBTQ, veterans, and women, and the overall efforts at equity and inclusion for every resident. Cambridge's government has commissions or offices for all the afore-mentioned groups to provide them with support and assistance (City of Cambridge 2021). For example, its Commission for Persons with Disabilities "works to reduce and eliminate the barriers that people with disabilities experience in our community" with an intentional purpose of eliminating discrimination and providing equal opportunities (The Department of Human Service Programs 2021); the Commission on Immigrant Rights and Citizenship works to

protect immigrant rights and provide naturalization information and ceremonies (Commission on Immigrant Rights & Citizenship 2017). Its LGBTQ Commission protects the equal rights of the people with gender identities different from their assigned one at birth and sexual orientations different from heterosexuality (City of Cambridge 2021); the Department of Veterans' Services offers benefits and financial assistance to veterans and their dependents (City of Cambridge 2021). Finally, its Commission on the Status of Women advances the equal rights and opportunities of all girls and women in its environs (Cambridge Commission on the Status of Women 2021).

With regard to immigrant services and engagement, which is the focus of this research, Cambridge established its Commission on Immigrant Rights & Citizens (CIRC) in 2016. The increasing anti-immigrant rhetoric during the U.S.'s 2016 presidential campaign caused Cambridge government officials' concern about its immigrants' rights, personal safety and legal options within the immigration system. The City "recruited, interviewed and appointed Commissions" and formed the Commission on Immigrant Rights and Citizenships (CIRC), in response to the increasingly negative national tone towards immigrants (Commission on Immigrant Rights and Citizenship 2017: 4). CIRC's mission is "to understand the needs of Cambridge immigrants as they navigate the challenge of making a safe and secure life for themselves in Cambridge and America" so that it can do immigrant work and formulate policies more effectively (Commission on Immigrant Rights & Citizenship 2017: 2). It has an executive director in charge of immigrant services and programs. The immigrants' needs encompass legal services, health care, housing, mental counseling, language services/learning, and more. CIRC provides outreach resources through websites and physical city locations, "Know Your Rights" (KYR) trainings, and other outreach services. In fact, the city reports that "KYR trainings are

provided by experienced Immigration Attorneys, in conjunction with the American Immigration Lawyers Association – New England (AILA-NE) and the Political Asylum and Immigration/Representation (PAIR) Project” (City of Cambridge 2021).

CIRC works with faith-based organizations and community organizations which serve immigrants to provide assistance and services on all aspects of immigrants’ life such as benefits, housing, legal services, ESOL classes, counselling, and citizenship classes (City of Cambridge 2021). As the City government states, “Cambridge welcomes immigrants and wants to encourage their success and access to opportunity and advancement in this country. It is a goal of this Commission to get the message of welcome out, through collaboration with organizations that already provide services and outreach to our immigrant communities” (City of Cambridge 2020).

The city has also provided full accessibility for immigrants to official assistance, programs and services to protect their equal rights and opportunities. While delivering the services, the city considers language accommodations for their immigrants whose English may not be proficient. For example, the flyer for the 2012 virtual clinic includes nine versions in different languages such as English, Amharic, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Haitian Kreyol, Somali, Spanish and Portuguese. Currently, forty-four languages are provided on Cambridge’s official website. Cambridge also provides information on what is known as the “public charge (test)”- which is used to determine if a person can obtain a permanent resident card based on a review of his or her all-round circumstances such as employment, income, health, education, and similar factors (City of Cambridge 2021).

Cambridge’s government also conducts focus groups and interviews. The questions it asks in focus groups include determining if the immigrants are aware of the resources that they can use to know their rights, how well they know their legal U.S. rights, any resources they need

that have not been provided yet, their familiarity with the citizenship process, how the city government can make them more welcome, and more. Regarding interview questions, Cambridge city government groups them into several categories based on the questions' similarities. For example, how aware people are of the existing resources they can utilize, the resources they wish to have but which are not available yet, and what the Cambridge city government can do to make immigrants feel more welcome.

### Local Needs Factor in Cambridge City

One-third of Cambridge's population is non-white and more than one fourth of its populations are immigrants, which is a considerable proportion. A large proportion of immigrants are non-white, though there is also a large proportion of non-whites that are not immigrants (Frey 2021). Since the immigrant percentage is a high 28%, (U.S. Census Bureau 2020), the range and scope of their needs is large, too, and has to be known in order to be met. This includes services such as employment, schools, benefits, housing, English classes, legal consultation, houses of worship, and the like. To understand and prioritize immigrants' needs and make policies or decisions based on them, the City of Cambridge conducted needs assessments based on immigrant focus groups and interviews (Commission on Immigrant Rights & Citizenship 2017). The needs-assessment project's purpose includes the following outcomes: "Identify the priorities of needs expressed by members of the immigrant communities in Cambridge; Focus the efforts of the CIRC Commissioners and staff on the matters of most urgent need; Help the Commission on Immigrant Rights & Citizenship make informed decisions about future projects" (Commission on Immigrant Rights & Citizenship 2017: 4).

As discussed in the previous paragraph, immigrants' needs for services such as employment, schools, benefits, housing, English learning, legal consultation, seeking worship

places like churches and so on are expressed by immigrant respondents in focus groups and interviews conducted by CIRC and Cambridge city (Commission on Immigrant Rights & Citizenship 2017). Thus, CIRC's purpose is to welcome immigrants through working with existing immigrant organizations (City of Cambridge 2020). To do so, the Cambridge city government works with non-government organizations to better understand their immigrants' needs. They reach out to their immigrants through the channels of faith-based organizations, and community organizations. For example, some focus group respondents stated it was easiest to obtain information through faith-based organizations due to their trust in their church pastors (Commission on Immigrant Rights & Citizenship 2017). Government's outreach to their immigrants can also be conducted through requests made to the city government by residents. No matter through which channels Cambridge city government collects these needs, the government then responds to these needs in various forms through the services discussed in the engagement section. Based on the analysis above, the local needs factor is a significant one influencing the City of Cambridge's government's engagement with their immigrants, supporting my hypotheses H1a and H1b.

### *Economic Factor*

Cambridge's economic situation was explained earlier. I did not find direct evidence for significant relationships between the local economy and the city government's immigrant decisions.

### *Political Factor*

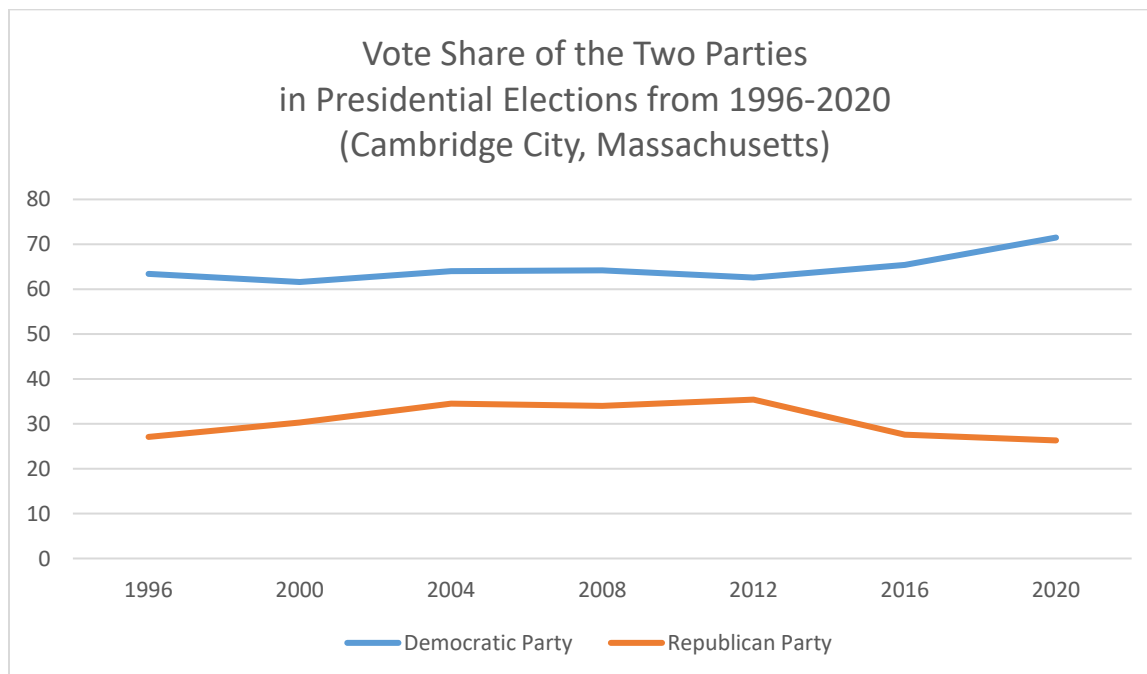
*Political Culture.* Massachusetts' political culture, based on Elazar (1984)'s threefold political culture category, is individualistic. According to Elazar, under individualistic political

culture, people hold free economy views which do not want too much government intervention in the economy. The political culture of the City of Cambridge is IM, which means either there is a mixture of the two subcultures of individualistic and moralistic (in the city), or the two subcultures separately coexist (Elazar 1984). When the two coexist or mix in a synthesis, the city government is more likely to shoulder the moralistic part, which means seeking public interests or the betterment of the whole community, due to the inherent nature of the government to serve all its residents and improve the quality of life for all the people living in its jurisdiction. When the city government aims to serve all, which means that they need to consider more of the disadvantaged groups such as immigrants, minorities, women, veterans, LGBT groups and others. All the disadvantaged groups have their vulnerabilities and challenges. For example, immigrants meet with the challenge of not familiar with English language, American culture, laws, and their rights. In the parts of local government's engagement and local needs factor driving the engagement, I discussed and analyzed in great detail how the City of Cambridge engage with their immigrants. This supports my hypothesis H3a: If a community is located in a state that has a moralistic political culture, its local government tends to engage more in its immigrants.

Voters' Partisan Preferences. Over the last three decades, in Massachusetts, many people have changed their partisan affiliation. Currently Cambridge is also an obviously liberal city (Niche 2021). The modern Democratic Party's liberal ideas are more aligned with the moralistic political culture discussed by Elazar (1984)- that is, striving for the betterment of the whole society, including the equal opportunities for the disadvantaged groups such as minorities, immigrants, women, LGBT groups etc.

Political factor influences governments' policies in that political officials' views are also influenced by their constituency. In Massachusetts, from the 1988 presidential election to the past 2020 election, more than the simple majority of the voters are associated with the Democratic Party or support the Democratic Party candidate (270 to Win, 2021). By extension, Cambridge does, too (Niche 2021). The following graph shows the vote share of the two primary parties in presidential elections from 1996-2020.

**Figure 5.1: Vote Share in Presidential Elections (1996-2020) (Cambridge, Massachusetts)**



The graph above is self-drawn based on the information from city-data.com (2021).

As Williamson (2018) stated, in a community with a greater Republican populace, the local government is more likely to restrict their immigrants; in a community with a greater Democratic populace, the local government is more likely to accommodate their immigrants. This is because partisan politics also shape local responses to their immigrants, who sometimes are viewed as “illegal aliens” rather than “a group worthy of protection from discrimination”

(Williamson 2018: 272). The Republican Party in recent years has increasingly promoted hostility to some types of immigration, especially to unauthorized immigrants (Williamson 2018). This explains why, in a Republican- leaning community, localities are more likely to embrace restrictive policies rather than accommodating policies (Williamson 2018). Regarding Cambridge, the general culture of both the state and the city encourage and promote equity and inclusion for all races, and all residents, including disadvantaged or vulnerable groups. This explains the influence of voters' partisan preferences on local governments' decisions, in this case, on their engagement with their immigrant populations, supporting H3b.

#### *Professional Institutional Structure and Institutional Capacity*

The Cambridge government institutional structure is city manager-city council. Cambridge has a city manager whose main role is to provide leadership to all city departments and to administer services and programs provided by its various departments. The city manager's office recommends programs and policies to Cambridge City Council, implements City Council legislation, responds to requests and inquiries from residents, coordinates with all the city departments to resolve community concerns, and works with the Cambridge City Council closely to enhance the life quality of all community residents (City of Cambridge 2021). Therefore, all the commissions serving the disadvantaged groups, including immigrants, are under the administration of the City Manager office. In this way, the City Manager office is involved in programs such as equal employment opportunity, and diverse and competent workforce recruitment (City of Cambridge 2021).

Cambridge, Massachusetts has a population of 118,977, which makes it a middle-sized city. The larger a city's population, the more services must be provided by the City government.

These services include housing, business, a community garden, construction projects, certificates, electrical and plumbing permits, trash removal, immigrant concerns, water, and fire control, to name a few (City of Cambridge 2021). These various needs require many city employees to serve the large population, which may enhance the capacity of city government. With residents diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, health condition, income, gender and other classifications, Cambridge established relevant departments and provided various programs and services their residents needed. Despite the profile about Cambridge, I can not claim with certainty that, in general, institutional structure impacts a local government's engagement with its immigrant populations.

#### *Geographical Location of Cambridge City, Massachusetts*

Cambridge is located “on the north bank of the Charles River, partly opposite Boston” (Britannica 2021). In 1636, it became a town named New Towne when Harvard College was situated in it, and now Harvard College has become “an undergraduate school of Harvard University” (Britannica 2021). Boston Logan International Airport is the closest port of entry to Cambridge city, which is 4.6 miles away from Cambridge city (rome2rio 2012). The city's proximity to Boston Airport, convenient public transportation, world famous universities such as Harvard and MIT, and charming neighborhoods such as Harvard Square may attract immigrants to consider it to be a settlement or tourist destination where they can experience a colorful and vibrant area combining restaurants, music, innovation, technology, and shopping (Cambridge USA 2018). As I noted in an earlier chapter, quantitative data analysis based on a dataset of 1,201 cases shows the statistical significance of the geographical distance from the city to its closest port of entry. However, there is still no direct evidence to show how geographical

proximity to ports' significantly influences a local government's engagement with its immigrant population.

### Summary on Cambridge City

Based on the analysis above, the City of Cambridge provides its immigrants services and programs based on the information it collects through focus groups, interviews, surveys, and contact with community organizations and faith-based organizations that serve immigrants. As my results indicate, of the five factors analyzed, local needs and political factors matter, and we can see how and why they influence the City's general engagement with its immigrants.

### ***The City of Tulsa, Oklahoma***

#### Basic Information on City of Tulsa, Oklahoma

The City of Tulsa, Oklahoma is on the Arkansas River. Downtown Tulsa is a business, cultural and entertainment center for the state of Oklahoma and even some of the surrounding states. More investment plans into Tulsa are reinforcing its image as a world-class city (City of Tulsa 2021).

Unfortunately, Tulsa has a sordid history of race conflict and massacre, namely the Tulsa Race Massacre a hundred years ago on May 31 and June 1, 1921. Thirty-six to three hundred people were killed in the riot and more than a thousand of them lost their homes, and much of the Greenwood neighborhood where African Americans lived was burnt down (History 2021).

Aside from its racial history, Tulsa's unemployment rate in 2020 was 6.9%, which was higher than the state's 5.8% unemployment rate (City-Data.com 2021). Tulsa's per-capita income is \$28,823, which is lower than Cambridge, Massachusetts. Tulsa's downtown economic

development is a focus for the City's economic plan. As part of this focus, an 8-month study called for the establishment of a consolidated and independent authority to be in charge of economic development. This new entity will merge four current offices or commissions to provide leadership for Tulsa's economic development. These four offices and commissions are: "the Mayor's Office of Economic Development, Tulsa Industrial Authority, Tulsa Parking Authority, and Economic Development Commission" (City of Tulsa 2021). Additionally, five million dollar loans with zero interest will be available for applicants to develop projects or build business in Downtown Tulsa (City of Tulsa 2021). The city government obviously attaches much significance to its business development in an effort to provide more employment and improve the quality of life for all its residents.

Tulsa city government has a mayor-council institutional structure; the city government, under the leadership of the Mayor, closely collaborates with the city council, while striving to enhance the quality of life and economic prosperity for its citizens, also supporting disadvantaged groups such as immigrants, minorities, women and others.

#### *Tulsa's Engagement with Its Immigrants*

The 2018 ICMA survey reports that the city of Tulsa has all four aspects of engagement with immigrants, meaning it has reached the highest level of immigrant engagement. The four aspects of engagements are establishing a formal local government office solely for immigrants, directly reaching out about local government services to immigrant populations, designating a coordinator for immigrant populations, and creating a task force or a commission partly or entirely devoted to immigrant affairs.

The city government works hard for its citizens' life quality, health and economic prosperity, and racial equity. The Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity (MORE) was established in 2018 "to better serve Tulsans' needs in a more equitable and resilient manner" (2018 Office of the Mayor Annual Report 2018) in a national anti-immigrant environment at that time. Realizing racial equity was a core underlying challenge facing the city, MORE shoulders the responsibility to "achieve equality for all Tulsans through partnership building, education, cultural awareness, and advocacy" (City of Tulsa, 2021). MORE aims to promote equity in a wide range of city life including human rights, housing, employment, health, economic development, and mental health. MORE also oversees complaints and investigations concerning discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations. It has established five commissions to protect human rights, women, American Indians, African Americans, and Hispanics (City of Tulsa, 2021). Among its four staff, one member is responsible for immigrant affairs and other related activities. The immigrant-related activities include naturalization, international training, and English language teaching and translation assistance provision, support for refugees and so on (Interview with Tulsa City Official, February 9, 2021). Overall, the City of Tulsa strives to improve life-quality, health, security and all other aspect of well-being for its residents. At the same time, when facing issues of racial equity amidst national anti-immigration rhetoric, in order "to better serve Tulsans' needs in a more equitable and resilient manner" (2018 Office of the Mayor Annual Report), Tulsa's city government also provides equal protections for disadvantaged or vulnerable groups such as minorities, immigrants, and women, racial groups such as African Americans, American Indians, Hispanics or groups like LGBTQ (City of Tulsa 2021).

### Local Needs Influence on Local Engagement

Tulsa has a total population of 394,574. The ACS Survey 2013-2017 (U.S. Census Bureau 2020) revealed Tulsa's nonwhite population percentage of 36% and an immigrant percentage of 11% out of the city's total population. In 2019, the population increased to 401,190 with 99% of its citizens living in urban areas and 1% residing in rural regions. Its non-white populace reached to 45.7% in 2019, while its immigrant proportion remains the same (City-Data.com 2021). In order to better understand immigrants' needs and to better inform their decision-making on immigrants, Tulsa City government makes full efforts for this purpose. During my interview of a Tulsa city government official, I learned of the various ways the city obtains the information on its immigrant population's needs, especially through the channels of community partner, citizen participation, non-profit partnerships, surveys, interviews and other means. The city official I interviewed explained the value of such relationships with immigrant organizations, stating, "We reach out to immigrant organizations or non-profits and collaborate with them, because they are the ones immigrants may have easier accessibility to. We can have more information about our immigrants through working with them." (Interview with Tulsa City government official, February 9, 2021).

Through these channels, the city government makes efforts to hear the needs of its immigrants, again, driven by the purpose of "better serve(ing) Tulsans' needs in a more equitable and resilient manner" (2018 Office of the Mayor Annual Report). Among them, it prioritizes establishing and maintaining collaborative relationships with non-profit organizations who provide services for immigrants. For example, the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) Tulsa is an influential organization that focuses on eliminating barriers and promoting success for "women, girls and people of color" (YWCA Tulsa 2021). It provides legal services

and other assistance to help immigrants and refugees in their legal lawsuits and resettlement. It does so to help “newcomers to America find their way in a bewildering new culture, and provided a variety of opportunities to help the young, the old and the physically disadvantaged reach their full potential” (YWCA Tulsa 2021). Tulsa’s city government works closely with YWCA Tulsa to learn more about immigrants and new-comers’ needs to provide more services for these people. This local needs factor and the public-nonprofit channel are very important for assisting immigrants and minority groups, supporting H1a and H1b.

### *Economic Factor*

The comprehensive model I provided in my quantitative analysis shows the economic factor’s statistical significance on local governments’ engagement with their immigrants. The economic situations of the two cities are different, but they demonstrate a similar degree of city government’ engagement, which seems to weaken the effect of this factor. However, Tulsa maintains its fiscal robustness for services and programs for their residents, including their engagement with their disadvantaged groups such as immigrants. The Tulsa City government official shared with me during our interview MORE’s resources that provide for their services and programs; MORE relies on a few foundations and philanthropic donations from wealthy residents and companies (Interview with Tulsa City Official, February 9, 2021). The interview also revealed that their engagement with immigrants is motivated by its mission statement to build economic prosperity and improve the quality of life and health for its community and all Tulsans, including its vulnerable groups such as immigrants, women and LGBTQ (Interview with Tulsa City Official, February 9, 2021; City of Tulsa 2021). My analysis provides no evidence that the overall economic situation measured by per-capita income and the

unemployment rate influence Tulsa city government's engagement with immigrants, but the fiscal health of Tulsa City government does influence this engagement.

### Political Factor

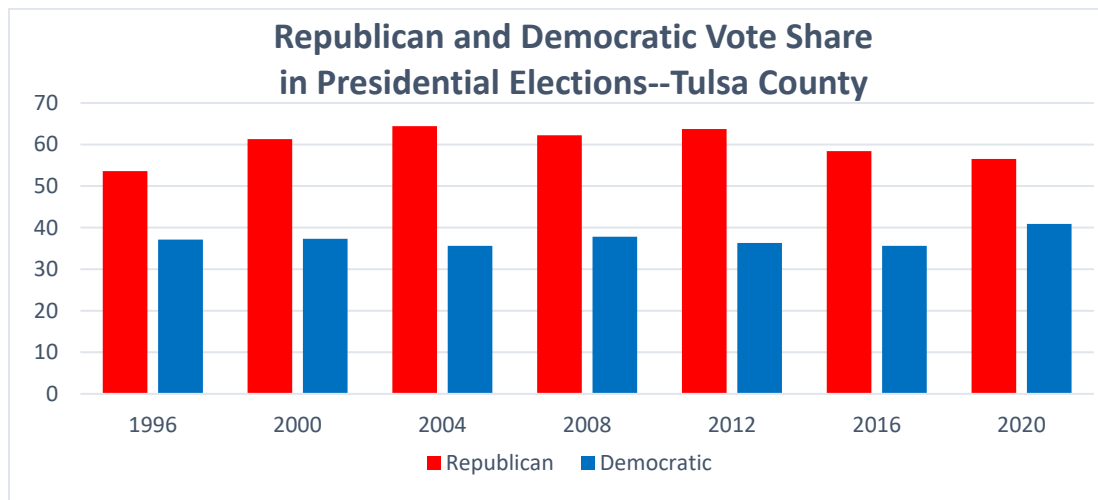
Political Culture. This project uses state political culture to explain political culture's effect on local governments' engagements with immigrants. Based on Elazar's theory of threefold political culture, the state of Oklahoma demonstrates a traditionalistic political culture, which means that the dominant culture of the state embraces an elitist and paternalistic idea of the commonwealth, and it reflects a hierarchical society and tries to maintain it. A closer examination of Tulsa on the political culture map shows that Tulsa' culture is TI, which means a mixture/synthesis of traditionalistic and individualistic cultures, or the two subcultures coexist in this city (Elazar 1984). Clynn (1972) stated that political culture has correlations with regions, and even within the same state, political cultures are different based on the urbanism and personal income. Generally, more urban areas may be more likely to show individualistic or more moralistic political culture than urban areas. Tulsa, as the second largest city in Oklahoma (Whereig.com 2021), compared with rural areas in Oklahoma, shows a political culture closer to individualistic and moralistic. The City of Tulsa has the highest degree of engagement with their immigrants and engage much to these populations. In Tulsa's engagement section and local needs section, how Tulsa city government engage with their immigrant populations was discussed in great detail.

Voters' Partisan Preferences. Political factor means local policy-makers will also take their constituents' political preferences into their consideration in their policymaking for their reelection. In other words, residents/voters' political or partisan preferences also influence local

governments' policymaking. In the past five decades from 1968 to 2020, the majority of voters in Oklahoma vote for the Republican Party candidates in presidential elections (270 to Win 2021), which means it generally embraces the Republican as their artisan affiliation/identity or as their preferred party. Tulsa County, where the city of Tulsa is located, reflects the same state leanings. The graph below illustrates changes in political ideology reflected in Tulsa County's presidential election results from 1996-2020.

Likewise, over the years, the overall ideologies reflected in Tulsa County's presidential election results also lean to the Republican Party; however, from 2012 to 2020, though Republican votes still dominated the Democratic vote in presidential elections, the distance between the two has gradually narrowed. Over this eight-year span, there has been an increasingly large share of Democratic votes with a concomitant decreasing Republican share. In Tulsa County, though the Republican vote share is still the majority, this dynamic appears to be changing. The following graph shows this trend:

**Figure 5.2: Vote Share in Presidential Elections 1996-2020 (Tulsa County)**



\* The graph above is from City-Data.com (2021).

The bar graph (Figure 5.2) above shows the gradual yet dynamic partisan affiliation or preferred party shift in Tulsa County. Though city's voters' partisan affiliation or preferences may be influenced by state and country political cultures, state or county majority voters' party affiliation cannot accurately capture or reflect city partisan affiliation or preferences due to the differences between the urban and rural areas in education, income and others. It is possible that Tulsa's partisan affiliation or preferences is different from those of the county and state where it is located; even if it is the same as those of the county and the state, it is also possible that in spite of the majority's voting for the republican candidates, Tulsa city government attaches importance to equity and inclusion for all residents. The interview with Tulsa City government official revealed that the city's engagement with immigrants is not heavily influenced by political factor or ideological patterns of the county or the state, but simply by its mission statement to build economic prosperity and improve the quality of life and health for the community and all its residents (Interview with Tulsa City Official, February 9, 2021). One explanation for Tulsa's higher engagement with its immigrants, despite Oklahoma and Tulsa county's majority voters' Republican Party affiliation or preferences, may be that people's views are changing gradually, as evidenced by the presidential election bar graph. If allowing a larger time frame into the future, it may change to a Democratic affiliation or preference for the majority. Another explanation could be that, despite the state and county's Republican Party affiliation or preference, the city government, with an open mind/spirit, global vision and far-sightedness, values inclusivity, and equity for all.

### *Institutional Professionalism and Capacity*

Tulsa City government, with a mayor-council institutional structure, has a far-sighted, vibrant and innovative leadership team. Under the leadership of the Mayor's office, which works closely with the City Council, the city government strives for the economic prosperity and improved quality of life for all Tulsans. The government also pays significant attention to the support and well-being of disadvantaged groups such as immigrants, minorities, women and others. The interview with the city official shows how significant the leadership team is in implementing policies; the official stated that they are lucky to have a leadership team led by the Mayor's office with a good vision and make decisions within their discretion based on data for all of the residents living in Tulsa (Interview with Tulsa City Official, February 9, 2021). The leadership team's open-mindedness and inclusiveness are supported by a study's findings that the executive personality can be influenced by the multi-cultural environment he works in, and a personality that includes characteristics such as openness and empathy can be developed to fit with the requirement of their intercultural working environment; these conclusions come from a sample of 137 participants who "were clients of intercultural business improvement, an intercultural training and consultancy company" (Van der Zee and Brinkmann 2004: 286; Van Woerkom and De Reuver 2009). The case of Tulsa shows that a city manager- city council institutional structure does not influence local engagement with immigrants, but a leadership team with an open, innovative and inclusive spirit can strongly influence the City's engagement with all its residents, including its vulnerable groups such as immigrants.

### Geographical Proximity to Port of Entry

It is only seven to eight miles from the middle point of Tulsa City to its closest port of entry, Tulsa International Airport. Tulsa International Airport has developed a strategy to incorporate Tulsa's local culture and displays it at the airport, which also serves to promote the city; there is no direct evidence that Tulsa's geographical proximity to its closest port of entry influences its city government's engagement with its immigrants.

### Summary of City of Tulsa

To sum up, the City of Tulsa has the highest level of engagement with its immigrants. The discussion and analysis throughout this chapter reveals that local needs and economic factors are significant to Tulsa's immigrant engagement, but I have no evidence that political factors, institutional structure and geographical proximity to ports of entry significantly influence Tulsa City's engagement with immigrants.

### ***Further Comparison of the Factors Influencing Cambridge and Tulsa's Engagement***

#### The Common Factors

Local Needs. Based on the qualitative analysis, the common primary driving factor for both Cambridge, Massachusetts and Tulsa, Oklahoma, is local needs. Cambridge has a high immigrant proportion of 28% (U.S. Census Bureau 2020), which is more than one fourth of its population. It also has a high percentage of non-white people of 33% (U.S. Census Bureau 2020). Tulsa, Oklahoma, though its immigrant percentage (11%) is lower than that of Cambridge, has a littler larger non-white population percentage at 36% (U.S. Census Bureau

2020). This high, non-white percentage, signifying a diverse racial composition, necessitates corresponding services from their respective city governments.

Furthermore, in order for the two city governments to have more accurate knowledge of the local needs of immigrants, both cities use data-based information collection. The common ways in which both cities collect data include focus groups, interviews, surveys, or residents' participation in community activities, archival data, and other methods.

Existing scholarship, such as Feiock and West (1993)'s study about waste recycling, illustrate the significant impact of local needs on the formation of local policy. Further research by Pare et al (2004) show how the local needs of marginal groups influenced the programs and services locality provided. Finally, Hur and Strickland (2012) demonstrated how a local minority populations' needs, coupled with a local government's concern, shaped the government's diversity practices. I drew upon these studies, plus Cambridge's and Tulsa's collected information related to their immigrants' needs, and I determined both cities conduct needs assessments before they make policy decisions or launch programs or services designed to respond to local needs.

Governments' Institutional Structure and Capacity. In Chapter Two, I shared contradictory scholarship. Feiock and Clingermyer (1986) showed the impact of local government institutional structure on local economic development policies, yet other studies, such as Morgan and Pelissero's (1980) or Hang and Liu's (2016) did not show the effects of local government's institutional structure. In the case of Cambridge and Tulsa, though the two cities have different institutional structures, both have the highest level of engagement with immigrants. This shows that institutional professional structure may not impact local engagement with immigrants. Both cities have big government capacity through their large populations,

Cambridge's at 118,977, and Tulsa's at 394,574 (U.S. Census Bureau. 2020). Their large populations determine their overall needs, which in turn enhance the capacities of the governments; the cities benefit from city employee numbers, professional trainings, cultural competency or international training, greater numbers of departments and offices, and the number of programs, projects and services etc. However, I cannot find direct substantive evidence to support the claim that government capacity shapes local governments' immigrant decisions.

### *The Uniqueness of the Two Cities*

Though they share some general common factors shaping their local engagement with immigrants, Cambridge and Tulsa also have unique features that shape their governments' engagement with immigrants. These qualities are discussed below.

*Economic Factor.* In the case of Cambridge, though the per-capita income is high, I did not find how the economic factor significantly influences local immigrant decisions. In Tulsa's case, I also did not find the general local economy, as measured by per-capita income and unemployment rate, to be significant. However, I did find that local government's fiscal robustness or its possession of sufficient resources for the services and programs it implements are important. Tulsa's case is significant because of where the funding for the programs and services come from: philanthropic foundations and donations from companies or individuals (Interview with Tulsa City Official, February 9, 2021).

*Institutional Structure.* The two city governments have different institutional structures. Cambridge has a city council-manager structure, while Tulsa has a Mayor-City Council structure. This difference does not affect the degree of their engagement with their immigrants.

Each has their strengths: Cambridge has a city manager who leads all departments, and who works closely with the city council. Meanwhile in Tulsa, the Mayor is the leader of all departments and offices, and collaborates closely with the City Council. My interview with a Tulsa City official indicates that the Mayor and his team are innovative and their policies are based on data (Interview with Tulsa City Official, February 9, 2021). Tulsa's example shows that immigrant-friendly policies do not rely on trained managers. Both trained managers and elected officials, by closely working with the City Council, can be very supportive in their engagement with immigrants. The large capacity of their governments through a large population, though without sufficient direct evidence, may also positively influence local engagement with their immigrants.

*Political Culture.* According to Elazar (1984)'s threefold category of political culture (Elazar, 1984), Cambridge, Massachusetts has an individualistic political culture, and general Democratic ideologies, as reflected in recent presidential election results. However, Tulsa has a traditionalistic political culture, which generally embraces more Republican ideologies, as reflected in recent presidential election results. However, two points must be noted. One is that though it may be influential, state culture cannot accurately capture city political culture, and it cannot distinguish between different political cultures of different cities in the same state. This is an opportunity for future researchers to explore: are there better ways to measure political culture? Finding city-level data for determining political culture would be the ideal way to address this question. If its' true that state culture cannot accurately capture city political culture, then it is reasonable to conclude Tulsa has a different culture towards welcoming immigrants, embracing diversity, and being more inclusive, as a result of acknowledging and correcting its racial history. Evidence for this deduction comes from the statement made during my interview

with a Tulsa official, that residents are very supportive of the governments' policies, programs and services, including the services for disadvantaged groups such as immigrants and racial minorities (Interview with Tulsa City Official, February 9, 2021). It is notable since the County of Tulsa's political culture seems to be changing and breaking from the rest of the state, as indicated in the Democratic and Republican voting shifts during the presidential elections of the past eight years.

### Unexpected Findings

While conducting this research, I discovered some unexpected results with regard to local government networks, immigrant organizations, and the leadership teams in local governments. I explain the significance of these discoveries in the following sections.

Local Government Networks. My first unexpected discovery is the significance of local governments' networks with other local governments regarding immigrant decisions or policies. Provan and Milward (2001) studied networks in the public sector "at three levels of analysis: community, network, and organization/participant levels" (2001: 414) and argue that each level has its own criteria for determining its effectiveness. They also discussed the extent to which integration across the three levels can be achieved, and the problems that may arise while collaborating with each level. Furthermore, they discussed the evaluation of the effectiveness of networks, organizations and communities, and stated that evaluating a network is difficult because it usually does not have external stakeholders such as an individual organization has (Provan and Milward 2001). However, what is important to note here is how the networks, with local government as their centers, shape or benefit those governments' immigrant decisions. The Tulsa case highlights the benefit of networks on their policy-making decisions for different

issues (in this case, for immigrants); one local government established relationships with other local governments, exchanged information, and shared experiences, stories, perceptions, views, decisions, and policies related to immigrants (Interview of Tulsa City Official, February 9, 2021). The Tulsa government official I interviewed emphasized that networking with other cities and personnel in similar positions in other cities is very important for the policies Tulsa writes and the services it provides. (Interview of Tulsa City Official, February 9, 2021). This information exchange may be conducted through official collaborative channels or through established personal friendships. This communication positively influences local governments' engagement with their immigrants.

*Immigrant Organizations.* Another unexpected finding is the channel role of non-profit immigrant organizations. The importance of immigrant organizations is discussed in my earlier chapter where I discussed the scholarship around the political factor. However, I had not included immigrant organizations in my hypothesis because I could locate no data to use for quantitative analysis. However, in this qualitative analysis of the two cities as case studies, I discovered that immigrant organizations are very important in assisting local governments in making decisions regarding immigrants. As I discussed in Chapter Two's literature review, Steil and Vasi (2014) found that pro-immigrant organizations' mobilization in actions such as protests positively influence the local governments' adoption of pro-immigrant ordinances. Tseng (2005)'s study found that community-based ethnic organizations that serve minority immigrants as their mission are significantly important in facilitating and strengthening immigrant services. My qualitative study of Cambridge and Tulsa also found that immigrant organizations positively influence local governments' decisions regarding immigrants. For example, this role of

immigrant organizations is reflected in City of Tulsa's working with the YWCA (Interview with Tulsa Government Official, February 9, 2021).

Another example is Cambridge's coverage on its official website of immigrant organizations that can provide legal services for immigrants. Those listed organizations include the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy (MIRA) Coalition, the American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts, and the National Immigration Law Center. My interview with Tulsa city government official reveals that the city pays a great deal of attention to this network and its collaborators. The city's interaction with community and immigrant organizations such as the YWCA serve as a means for the government to learn about their immigrants so it can provide better services for them (Interview with Tulsa City Official, February 9, 2021).

*Leadership Team.* The final discovery I learned from the qualitative studies of the two cities is how important a leadership team is in local governments. The Tulsa case epitomizes this discovery. When the leadership team is open, innovative and inclusive, it can positively influence decisions to support local immigrants. Though Tulsa's structure is not a manager-council one, under the leadership of the Mayor's office, which closely works with the City Council, Tulsa exhibits features of openness and innovation (Interview with Tulsa City Official, February 9, 2021).

### ***Summary of Comparison of the Two Cities***

Comparing Cambridge, Massachusetts and Tulsa, Oklahoma, we see some common factors that significantly influence the cities' engagement with their immigrants. The commonalities are, first, local needs from the stakeholder groups such as immigrants or other relevant groups like non-whites. The second common factor driving how local governments'

engagement with immigrants are unexpected findings: networks with other local governments, non-profit immigrant organizations, and the openness, inclusiveness and the innovation of their leadership teams.

Unique factors also influence how the two cities engage with their immigrants. In Tulsa's case, for example, fiscal health or funding resources are significant factors, while political culture is not a significant factor influencing the city in its local immigrant engagement.

For the purpose of this research study, I also chose two counties to investigate their governments' engagement with their immigrant populations. This will be discussed in next chapter.

## **Chapter 6: Los Angeles County and San Mateo County, California**

This chapter continues to answer the second research question and explores why the governments of Los Angeles (LA) County and San Mateo County engage much with their immigrants, tests whether the variables identified in the quantitative section significantly influence local engagement with their immigrants in this qualitative section and determines how those variables influence that engagement. First, I explain how I selected the two counties and provide basic information about each. Then I discuss how each county's local government engages with its immigrants. Finally, I analyze the factors' influences in turn to test why and to what degree they impact the local immigrant engagement. During that process, I examine the impact of the local needs factor on the county's engagement. I also discuss another unexpected finding: the intergovernmental drive/factor. From there, I analyze the economic factor, institutional structure, political factor, and geographical proximity's influences. Next, I compare the two counties in terms of the common themes and differences in the factors influencing the engagement. Finally, a summary of the discussion and analysis of the two counties will follow. The next paragraph presents a quick glimpse of the two counties.

Los Angeles County and San Mateo County are both located in California, and they are similar in terms of their immigrants and non-white percentage, political culture, government structure, and proximity to closest ports of entry. They differ in terms of economic industries and total population. Los Angeles County has a large population of 10,105,518 and San Mateo has a population of 769,545 (U.S. Census Bureau 2020). L.A. County is well-known for its advanced transportation, aerospace and high-tech industry. It has the largest manufacturing base and "international trade industry" in the United States (LAEDC 2021). In San Mateo County, the

main industries are computer software, bioscience, green technology, and financial management, among others (County of San Mateo<sup>5</sup> 2021).

### ***Why I Selected These Two Counties***

Like Cambridge, Massachusetts and Tulsa, Oklahoma, Los Angeles County and San Mateo County, California both have the highest level of engagement with their immigrants among all the 1,020 samples in the dataset. As I explained in my earlier chapter, there are eight governments with the highest levels of engagement with their immigrants- four cities and four counties. The four counties are: Hawaii County, Hawaii, Los Angeles County and San Mateo County, California, County of Gunnison, Colorado. Of these, I dropped the county of Gunnison, Colorado because it has a very small population of 17,246, which may limit the capacity of its local government and, accordingly, the richness of data I require. I had selected Hawaii County at first, but I dropped it later because, like Gunnison, its population and data were too limited. Thus, the only two counties left for me to use for my research were Los Angeles County and San Mateo County, California, both of which have rich data for discussion and analysis.

### ***Los Angeles County, California***

#### **Basic Information on Los Angeles County**

Los Angeles (LA) County, located in the state of California, has the largest population among all U.S. counties (Murphy 2019), with a recent count of 10,105,518 (U.S. Census Bureau 2020). It has a government structure of Chief Executive Officer (CEO)-Board of Supervisors, with the CEO carrying out the policies passed by the Board of Supervisors.

With high proportions of non-white people (48.7%) (DATAUSA<sup>1</sup> 2021) and immigrants (34%) (U.S. Census Bureau 2020), LA County has the highest level of engagement with its

immigrants. It has a per-capita income of \$30, 798, and an unemployment rate of 8% (U.S. Census Bureau 2020). LA County, as “one of the most dynamic economies in the world” (LAEDC 2021), has fast-growing, high-tech industries and extraordinary strength in advanced transportation and in aerospace. It is famous for innovation and new business concepts, and, therefore, becomes the nation’s creative capitol (LAEDC 2021). All these advantages attract not only domestic but also international capital to make investments in this county. The Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) was established in 1981 to lead and build economic development with a mission of attracting, retaining and growing business and employment for Los Angeles County. LACDC promotes equity, resilience, sustainability, and widely shared prosperity (LAEDC 2021).

#### *Los Angeles County’s Engagement with Immigrants*

Based on the ICMA 2018 survey, Los Angeles County has the highest degree of engagement with their immigrants, which means that they have a local government office solely for immigrant affairs, the city’s regular outreach to immigrants, a full-time coordinator in charge of immigrant affairs, and a task force partly or entirely devoted to immigrant affairs (ICMA 2018).

With the mission of advancing the wellbeing of immigrants in LA County and providing support services for them in all aspects of life (LAC4you<sup>5</sup> 2021), the Office of Immigrant Affairs (OIA) was established in 2017 after the approval of the Board of Supervisors of LA County to “address the growing needs of the immigrant community in the county” and “help immigrants receive county assistance” (CAIR California 2017). During the Trump administration’s national anti-immigrant atmosphere, immigrants faced threats of discrimination, or/and deportation

(CAIR California 2017). In response to this challenge, “the Board of Supervisors has taken a concrete step toward protecting the immigrant population of Los Angeles County from threats of mass deportation and racial and religious discrimination” by establishing OIA and having the “civilian oversight commission oversee the Sheriff’s Department’s interactions with immigrants and make sure the department is adhering to its own immigrant-friendly policies” (CAIR California 2017). OIA provides accommodations for their immigrants through speaking immigrants’ languages, understanding their cultures, knowing their concerns, and safeguarding their information (LAC4you<sup>1</sup> 2021). The services they provide are:

- “COVID-19 vaccinations, testing, treatment
- Landlord/tenant disputes and foreclosure prevention
- Medical and mental health care
- Wage disputes and small business support
- Food security and nutrition
- Immigration legal representation and public charge concerns
- Consumer fraud and disputes” (LAC4you<sup>1</sup> 2021)

The OIA provides for their immigrants information about their rights, legal resources, fraud on immigration, employment and business opportunities, the naturalization process, and important notices and news (LAC4you<sup>1</sup> 2021). It introduces detailed information regarding green card eligibility- and its application process, the citizenship application process, business opportunities and entrepreneurial information, Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) for immigrants, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and similar topics (LAC4you<sup>1</sup> 2021). More importantly, the information they provide their immigrants also includes a list of 23 non-profit organizations in Los Angeles that can also provide services for immigrants, organizations such as Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Los Angeles, Building Skills Partnership, Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc, and Chinatown Service Center. In addition to the routine services mentioned above, LA County also has assisted the families and

children who were separated at U.S. southern border. The assistance included resources such as health, mental health and legal services (LAC4you<sup>2</sup> 2021).

The county government provides the state's Covid-19 relief of \$500 for immigrants who meet the eligibility requirements of undocumented adults experiencing a hardship due to the pandemic, but who are not eligible for federal assistance related to Covid-19 (LAC4you<sup>3</sup> 2021). The county's engagement also includes continual support for DACA recipients regardless of the anti-immigrant rhetoric created by the former administration at the federal level (County of Los Angeles 2021). This support includes the Board of Supervisors' one-year ban of most county officials traveling to the nine states that threatened to end DACA permanently (County of Los Angeles 2021). The motion issued by the City government that advocated continuing DACA stated the harm of ending it, noting the loss in the "\$460.3 billion in GDP and decrease (in) Social Security and Medicare contributions by \$24.6 billion over the next decade", meaning the repercussions of a DACA ban would be felt by all U.S. states (County of Los Angeles 2021).

In order to support their immigrants, the Board of Supervisors also directed the Education Office to provide bilingual information on services, resources, and rights that can be enjoyed by immigrant students to obtain a free and quality education, regardless of the status of their immigration (CAIR California 2017).

LA County also administers federal established programs such as Medi-Cal and In-home Supportive Services (IHSS) and a state established program called Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI), which I discuss later in this chapter in the section addressing intergovernmental drive.

The county government's efforts to support immigrants also includes culture competency trainings for heads of departments and other employees in leadership roles or in frequent interactions with disadvantaged groups such as immigrants, women and other minorities. The Board of Supervisors, through the adoption of Initiative on Women and Girls (WGI), calls for equity on gender and other bases and for attention to cultural awareness to prevent systemic implicit biases in areas including recruitment, retention, testing, and promotion (Chief Executive Officer Memo 2018).

#### *Local Needs' Influence on Local Engagement with Immigrants*

Los Angeles County has a population of 10.1 million (U.S. Census Bureau 2020), with a high non-white percentage of 48.7% (DATAUSA<sup>1</sup> 2021). This means that almost half of the residents in the county are non-white. Among these, 20.2% are (non-white) Hispanics, 14.6 (non-Hispanic) Asians, and 7.76% (non-Hispanic) Black or African Americans (DATAUSA<sup>1</sup> 2021). LA County has an immigrant proportion of 34% (U.S. Census Bureau 2020), which means that one third of the people living in the county are immigrants. Among the total population in the county, 56.9% speak another language other than English (DATAUSA<sup>1</sup> 2021).

In order to serve its people effectively (Los Angeles County 2015-16 Annual Report) and improve people's standard of living and quality of life, Los Angeles County makes efforts to gain information about its' residents' needs in order to provide services accordingly and more effectively (Los Angeles County 2015-16 Annual Report). Immigrants, first of all, face language barriers when they need to access services, and their limited English proficiency reduces their access to welfare and benefits. Based on Health Interview Surveys in California in 2001 and 2003, Ponce et al (2006) described how language barriers prevented Medicare seniors with poor

English proficiency from using usual care sources such as cancer screening tests, perhaps because physicians who provide Medicare-only are not required to provide free language assistance. Another immigrant need is for food. Walsemann et al (2017) used the California Health Interview Survey from 2001 to 2011, with a sample of 245,679, and found that food insecurity is related to ethnicity and immigration status. Their findings showed that Latinos and Asian immigrants have bigger food insecurity than native whites. Non-naturalized Latinos felt greater food insecurity than naturalized Latinos. As mentioned earlier, LA County government spares no efforts in gaining knowledge about its residents' needs in order to provide necessary services efficiently (Los Angeles County 2015-16 Annual Report). Therefore, they tried to gather a comprehensive picture of these needs for their decision making regarding which services to provide.

Facing residents' need for information, the County government collaborates with California state government and Los Angeles City government to provide comprehensive information for its residents living in the County, including its immigrants. For example, many Chinese speakers received scam phone calls claiming to be from the Chinese Consulate, warning the immigrants that their passports were becoming invalid. The scam callers stated that in order for the immigrants to address this, they had to call a certain number and report their basic and bank card information. Some recipients of the call searched for the Chinese consulate telephone number on the Internet to ask if the statement about the passports was true; The Consulate told them that it was a scam. The Chinese Consulate of Los Angeles reported this nation-wide scam to the city government. Upon discovering that many Chinese language speakers were cheated and lost money, the County government provided a warning about the scam on its OIA website (LAC4you<sup>4</sup> 2021). The county government provides these services because it believes that

serving its residents is the primary responsibility of government, adding that it “is charged with providing numerous services that affect the lives of all residents” (County of Los Angeles<sup>4</sup> 2021).

In addition to complying with federal, state or local laws, immigrants also need to know about immigrant-specific regulations and policies. As the county government stated in its Annual Report, it tries to anticipate residents’ needs (Los Angeles County 2015-16 Annual Report) through collaborating with organizations and using their immigrant data (Interview with LA County Government Official, April 6, 2021) to make decisions or provide services. In order to provide immigrants with the information they need concerning their legal status (Los Angeles County 2015-16 Annual Report), Los Angeles County shares the services, new rules or regulations from the federal government such as updates regarding DACA, refugees, online immigration requests and so on through its website. For example, it informs its residents on its OIA website that the mail delivery delay of the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) has affected some DACA renewal requests so that those who are affected are informed of this situation (LAC4you<sup>4</sup> 2021).

Los Angeles County government provides their immigrants all kinds of relevant information, and language choices on its OIA website. However, the county also realizes that its direct contact with and support for immigrants is limited due to constraints of linguistic and cultural differences (Lee 2019). Immigrant non-profit organizations, however, can provide these kinds of linguistic and cultural tailored services. In accordance with its stated goal to meet immigrant needs (Los Angeles County 2015-16 Annual Report), County government officials and planners, therefore, cooperate with immigrant non-profits to know about the needs of the immigrants in their jurisdiction, and to provide services (Lee 2019) based on that information.

Through interactions such as frequent outreach and communication, expanding engagement spaces, and pushing for policy change for inclusiveness, county government officials improve their ability to meet residents' needs and constituent representation (Lee 2019). My interview with an LA County official also confirmed the significant role of immigrant organizations on the government's engagement with its immigrants. "We do have collaboration with some immigrant organizations, because our resources are not unlimited and we need more help and support from some immigrant organizations to know and serve our immigrants better," the official reported to me. "We cooperate with some organizations which actively interact with us" (Interview with LA County Official, April 6, 2021).

The foregoing analysis shows that the local needs factor heavily influences Los Angeles County government's immigrant engagement, which supports the quantitative results related to local needs factor and H1a and H1b on local needs.

#### *Intergovernmental Drive/Factor*

Based on my interview with the Los Angeles County government official, many, if not all, programs related to immigrants, "were established by the federal government based on needs, and administered at the state and local governments. Some programs were also set up by the state level based on needs, our California state: such as healthcare, personnel care, cash aid, and food-insecurity. We mainly follow the lead of the federal and state government, and administer the policies set by them" (Interview with Los Angeles County official, April 6, 2021). Three programs relevant-here are the Medi-Cal program, In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) and Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI). Medi-Cal and IHSS are programs established

by the federal government, and CAPI was established by the State of California (Interview with Los Angeles County official, April 6, 2021).

Medi-Cal is an important program in Los Angeles County because it “provides comprehensive health coverage for children and families. Free or low-cost Medi-Cal can be available depending on income and family size,” reports the LA County government official who received the interview (Interview with Los Angeles County Official, April 6, 2021). The eligibility for low-cost or free Medi-Cal is that individuals’ income must be “within the federal poverty levels (FPL)” (Interview with Los Angeles County Official, April 6, 2021). Medi-Cal is also available for those with income exceeding the FPL. These programs include coverage plans with a sharing cost. Citizens or residents with “satisfactory immigration status may be eligible to full-scope Medi-Cal benefits. Individuals without satisfactory immigration status who meet all other eligibility requirements, may be eligible to restricted-scope Medi-Cal (limited service)” (Interview with Los Angeles County Official, April 6, 2021). Children and adults who are under 26 years old are eligible for full-scope Medi-Cal services no matter what immigration status they have, if they have met all other requirements (Interview with Los Angeles County Official, April 6, 2021).

In-home Supportive Services (IHSS) began in 1993. People who are eligible to join this program must be “65 years old or older, or blind, or disabled population. They receive personal care or assistance services such as cooking, grooming, and cleaning for them so that they can stay safely at home instead of being sent to the nursing home or board and care facility” (Interview with Los Angeles County Official, April 6, 2021). Most recipients of this program must be Medi-Cal eligible to join this program. Overall, “participants of this program must have satisfactory immigration status” (Interview with Los Angeles County Official, April 6, 2021).

However, like Medi-Cal participants, recently, changed state laws have begun to allow undocumented individuals under 26 years old to receive full-scope benefits of this program. Policy language has been included in the Governor's 2021-2022 Budget that allows individuals 64 and older to enjoy full-scope Medi-Cal, which also means that they are eligible to IHSS (Interview with Los Angeles County Official, April 6, 2021).

Finally, the Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI)/Cash-Aid "was established by the State of California, and the CAPI provides cash to aged, blind, and disabled legal non-citizens ineligible for State and federally-funded supplemental Security Income/ State Supplemental Payment due to their immigration status" (Interview with Los Angeles County Official, April 6, 2021).

The finding of the higher government influence is unexpected, which was not originally listed in the hypothesis. Indeed, the cooperative relationship between the different levels of government is very important for services and programs provided to residents. Federally- funded programs are vital for vulnerable people such as women, immigrants, children, and seniors. These categorical grants from the federal government with specific regulations or guidelines for local administration and implementation are also a main driver of a local government's engagement with its immigrants.

### *Economic Factor*

As an ideal location for international trade, LA County has two large ports that handle about half of inbound U.S. freight in containers, busy rail lines, warehousing and logistics to serve the vast western U.S. (LAEDC 2021). The leading industry clusters in LA County include trade, distribution and electronic commerce, business services, entertainment, video production

and distribution, hospitality and tourism, education and knowledge creation, fashion, marketing, design and publishing, aerospace vehicles and defense, financial services, transportation and logistics, food processing and manufacturing, performing arts, information technology and analytical instruments, insurance services, metalworking technology, water transportation, production technology and heavy machinery, and apparel (2016/2017 Business Incentives and Resources Guide 2021). However, I did not find a direct causal link between the county's economic factor and local government decisions regarding immigrants.

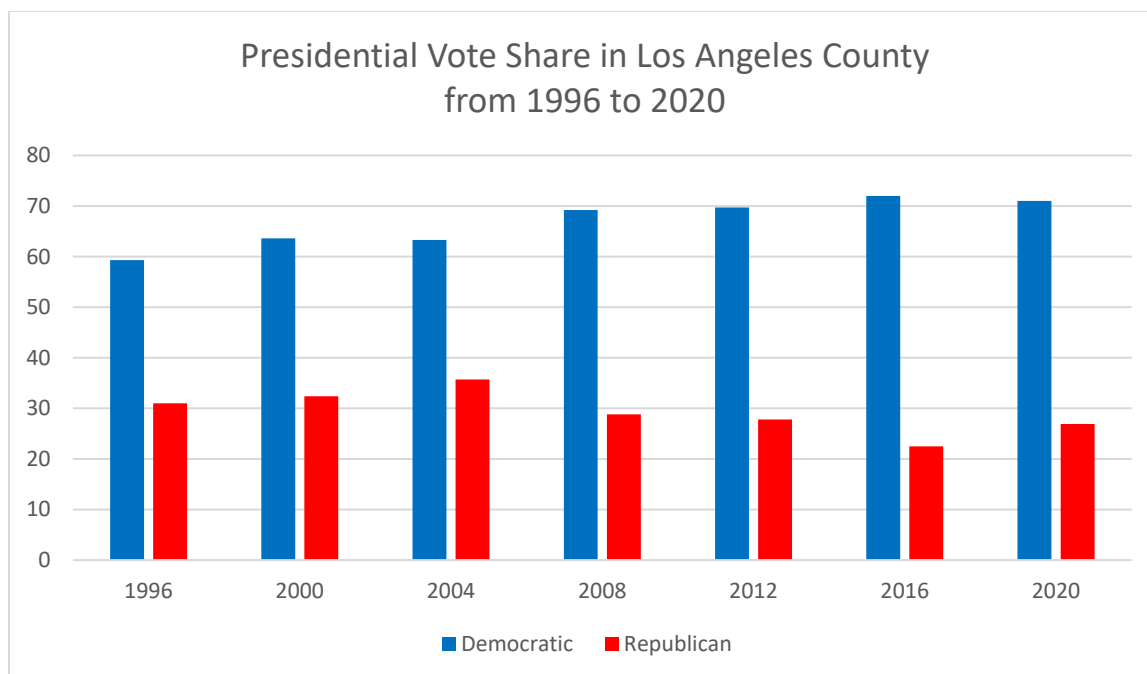
### Political Factor

Political Culture. Based on Elazar (1984)'s threefold categorization of political culture, California's political culture is moralistic, which means that it embraces the commonwealth conception and strives for the betterment of the whole society. This betterment includes everyone, including immigrants and other disadvantaged groups. A close examination of Los Angeles County on the map of political culture shows that it has a MI culture, which means that it either has a mixture of both the subcultures of moralistic and individualistic or it has the coexistence of the individualistic and moralistic cultures separately. LA County government must embrace more moralistic culture rather than individualistic one, considering the nature of the county government to serve all its residents and improve the life quality for all in their jurisdiction. The qualitative analysis of the political culture is consistent with the quantitative findings, and together supporting H3a: If a community is located in a state with a moralistic political culture, its local government tends to engage more with their immigrant populations.

Voters' Partisan Affiliation or Preferences. Over the past four to five years, California was influenced by stricter national immigrant rhetoric, which was promoted at the federal level;

the state denied benefits to undocumented illegal immigrants through California's Proposition 187. Despite this, California has been a state with the majority embracing or voting for the Democratic Party in presidential elections since 1992 (270TOWIN 2021). Below is a graph showing the presidential vote share in Los Angeles County from 1996 to 2020; it shows a dynamic picture showing the majority vote for the Democratic Party candidate in presidential elections in LA County from 1996 to 2020, with a general trend of slight increase in the support of the Democratic Party over the years.

**Figure 6.1: Presidential Vote Share in LA County (1996-2020)**

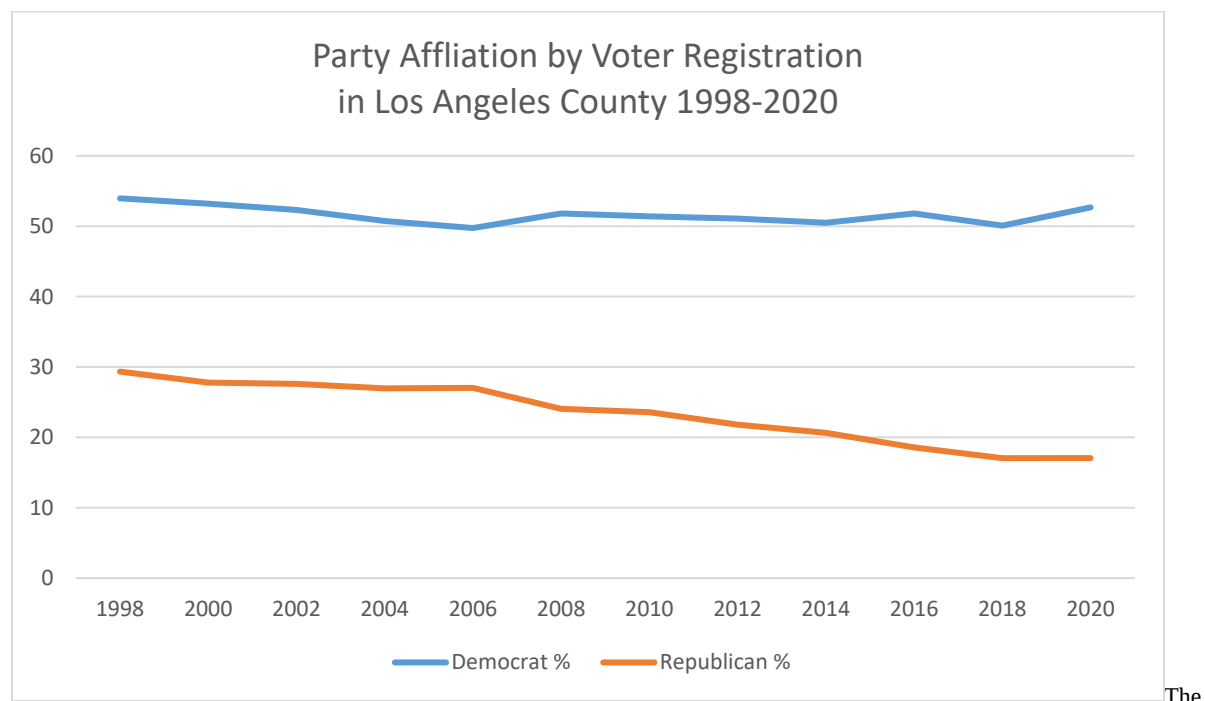


This graph is from citi-data.com (2021)

Figure 6.1 above shows that over the past two decades, Los Angeles County has been generally more supportive of the Democratic Party. This party's platform includes paying attention to minority rights, inclusiveness, and diversity. Constituents' support for the Democratic Party has even increased over the last 20 years, which presents a temporal and

dynamic picture of the county's partisan ideology. Another predictor of party affiliation of the public in Los Angeles County is voter registration. In 2020, according to voter registration rolls, the largest political party in LA County is the Democrats, accounting for 52.7% of the total, followed by no party affiliation at 24.8%, and then finally the Republican Party enrollment at 17.1% (Los Angeles Almanac 2021). The following graph shows the change in party affiliation in LA County from 1998 to 2020.

**Figure 6.2: Party Affiliation by Voter Registration in LA County (1998-2020)**



graph is self-drawn based on the information from Los Angeles Almanac (2021)

As Figure 6.2 indicates, the number and percentage of registered Democrats are almost double that of Republicans. What is more, the Democrats' proportion slightly increased during the last two years, but Republican proportion has been in steady decline during the whole two decades except for a slight fluctuation in 2006.

Democrats' immigration attitude and advocacy has been clear in the past three decades; it's based on an understanding of U.S. history that it is a country of immigrants. The party intends to honor "our fundamental values by treating all people who come to the United States with dignity and respect, and we always seek to embrace-not to attack-immigrants" (Democratic National Committee 2021). One example of this support is President Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) which allowed "hundreds of thousands of DREAMers" to temporarily stay to work, study, pay taxes and also contribute to their communities where they grew up (Democratic National Committee 2021). Democrats prefer to target criminals rather than immigrants who work or study with dignity and contribution (Democratic National Committee 2021).

My interview with an LA County official also confirmed the political factor in influencing local governmental engagement with immigrants. "Political factor does have an influence because policies may change based on who is in charge at that time," the official stated. "For example, the federal rule for public charge was revised based on the former president in charge at that time. Under the current president, the change was revoked. This has a direct influence on the policies in California and Los Angeles County" (Interview with Los Angeles County Official, April 6, 2021).

This explains how the political factor shapes county governments' support for all their residents, including immigrants and other minority groups. This supports my hypothesis H3b that the political partisan affiliation factor significantly influences local governments' engagement with their immigrants.

### *Institutional Professionalism/ Capacity*

Los Angeles County's government structure is Chief Executive Officer (CEO)-Board of Supervisors, with the Board of Supervisors making policies and decisions, and the chief executive officer executing the policies. The organizational chart of Los Angeles County does not show a county manager position or office. Instead, the CEO is in charge of administrative offices. The CEO is appointed by the Board of Supervisors (Interview with Los Angeles County Official, April 6, 2021). Los Angeles County is home to citizens residing in 88 cities in LA County, and it continues to grow as both an industrial and financial giant (County of Los Angeles 2021<sup>3</sup>). A huge total population may indirectly influence local governmental engagement with its immigrants because a large population generates greater revenue and may require a larger local government with a greater capacity. However, I found no direct evidence to show the effect of the population on local engagement with immigrants. Regarding the government structure/professionalism factor, the County government official I interviewed also confirms that the government institutional structure where the Chief Executive Officer or Mayor is in charge of implementation does not seem to have a significant impact on the County's engagement with its immigrant populations (Interview with Los Angeles County Official, April 6, 2021).

### *Geographic Proximity to Airports*

Los Angeles County has the largest population among all U.S. counties (County of Los Angeles<sup>2</sup> 2021). The closest port of entry to Los Angeles County is Los Angeles International Airport, which is 17.91 miles from the county center. LA County attracts 50 million visitors every year, and these visitors spend billions, which makes tourism and hospitality the heart of the

Los Angeles County's economy (LAEDC<sup>2</sup> 2021). Tourism generated \$36.6 billion for Los Angeles' economy thanks to the efforts of LA's official tourism marketing agency (LA Tourism 2019). Regardless of the economic profits which tourism can bring, however, I can find no direct evidence that LA County's geographical location influences its engagement with its immigrant populations. My interview with a Los Angeles County official also confirms that geographical proximity to the closest airport does not seem to have a significant impact on LA County's engagement with its immigrants. "Our programs are here for those who are in need and qualify for the benefits and services," the official said, "The proximity to LAX does not influence the benefits and services offered" (Interview with Los Angeles County official, April 6, 2021).

### ***San Mateo County, California***

#### **Basic County Information**

San Mateo County is another well-known county located in California. It is very close to San Francisco International Airport. It has a higher per-capita and household income than the average California income, and a lower unemployment rate than the California average. The County government has a County Manager-Board of Supervisors institutional structure. The Board of Supervisors sets its mission statement, visions, policies, and resolutions regarding all aspects of San Mateo County, and the County Manager's role is to manage daily routine operations of the county government and implement the policies passed by the Board of Supervisors (County of San Mateo-County Manager's Office 2021).

San Mateo County has a large population of 769,545 residents. Among the 58 California counties, San Mateo ranks 14<sup>th</sup> in terms of population size (California Demographics by Cubit 2021). San Mateo County has a high non-white percentage of 48% and an immigrant percentage

of 35% (U.S. Census Bureau 2020). Its median household income is \$138,500 and the unemployment rate is 5.1% (City-data.com 2021). As noted earlier, San Mateo County's primary industries revolve around computer software, bioscience, technology, health care and transportation (County of San Mateo<sup>5</sup> 2021). The County takes pride in how these industries foster the county's commitment to protect and enhance the community's safety, health, welfare and natural environment (County of San Mateo<sup>5</sup> 2021).

### *San Mateo County's Engagement with Immigrants*

Based on the ICMA 2018 survey, San Mateo County has the highest degree of engagement with their immigrants, which means that it has a local government office for immigrant affairs, a city's regular outreach to its immigrants, a full-time coordinator in charge of immigrant affairs, and a task force partly or entirely devoted to immigrant affairs (ICMA 2018). San Mateo County has an Office of Community Affairs (OCA), which oversees immigrant services. These include legal services, community resources provision, and community engagement efforts (County of San Mateo<sup>1</sup> 2021). Community resources provide assistance or information on health care, education, job searching and more (County of San Mateo 2021<sup>2</sup>). Immigrant forum meetings are held regularly to address immigrant-related issues, and county language services are provided to assist immigrants who have zero or low English language proficiency (County of San Mateo<sup>3</sup> 2021).

Regarding legal services, through its website, the county government provides information (County of San Mateo<sup>1</sup> 2021) about community and immigrant organizations that work with the County government to assist them when they need attorneys. The most well-known are [immigrationLawHelp.org](http://immigrationLawHelp.org), African Advocacy Network, Asian Pacific Islander Legal

Outreach, Bay Area Legal Aid, Catholic Charities Refugee and Immigrant Services, Central American Resource Center, Coastside Hope, and Community Legal Services of East Palo Alto, among others. These offices provide legal services for immigrants who are obtaining visas, renewing DACA, seeking asylum, or applying for citizenship or permanent residency under the Violence against Women Act. San Mateo County government works with the immigrant organizations, and the county government website provides the organizations' contact information so that immigrants can turn to them through calling, emailing or walking in (County of San Mateo<sup>1</sup> 2021). These organizations provide services for free or at a very low cost (County of San Mateo<sup>1</sup> 2021). Another service provided by San Mateo County and its OCA is community resources. They provide information about all the resources, services and programs available to immigrants. The county makes community engagement efforts, which encourage immigrants to participate in events and activities organized by the local government or their community where they express their needs, views and wishes so that their voices can be heard (County of San Mateo<sup>1</sup> 2021).

The county government also provides Language Access Services to all County staff and residents who need it. Since 46% of the County population speaks a non-English language as their primary language, and more than 100 languages are spoken in the County, it provides interpretation services for all County staff on more than 200 unique languages. Residents visiting any department therefore can get the assisted service in their chosen language (County of San Mateo<sup>2</sup> 2021).

### *Local Needs' Influence on Local Engagement with Immigrants*

As earlier data indicated, almost half of San Mateo County residents are non-white and more than one-third of them are immigrants. The County government actively collects information about those residents in need in order to provide them with assistance (City of San Mateo 2021). In fact, the San Mateo County Health System conducted such a needs assessment in order to have a better understanding of what those needs are. Healthy Community Collaborative of San Mateo County is a cooperative effort joining Stanford Health Care with a number of health organizations and systems such as the County of San Mateo Human Services Agency, Dignity Health Sequoia Hospital, Hospital Consortium of San Mateo County, and others. They collected their data through interviews, focus groups and surveys, and then they prioritized those needs to provide the necessary services (Stanford Health Care 2019). The needs assessment revealed five social and five health-related issues. The five social needs are food security, “healthcare access and delivery, housing and (care for) homelessness, neighborhood and built environment, and (a healthy) social and community context (to reduce or eliminate poverty, health disparities, discrimination, and community connectedness)” (San Mateo County 2019). The five health related needs are addressing behavioral health and well-being, addressing chronic disease, encouraging healthy lifestyles, dealing with infectious diseases and keeping oral health (San Mateo County 2019).

In order to better understand immigrant needs, the Silicon Valley Community Foundation (2013) conducted an 18-month study from 2011-2012 on immigrants in San Mateo County. Researchers interviewed 126 immigrants and organized 26 focus groups, and they also distributed a written survey to 108 immigrants recruited from the focus groups for more-depth

information on their perceptions and experiences. The survey found that, among all California counties, San Mateo County experienced the fastest influx of immigrants from 2000 to 2010. The four countries where the greatest number of immigrants came from were Mexico, the Philippines, China (excluding Taiwan and Hong Kong) and El Salvador (Silicon Valley Community Foundation 2013). The findings also show that immigrants in San Mateo County face all kinds of difficulties to meet their needs, and their economic hardships also make it difficult for them to make ends meet. Immigrant students also face many challenges at school, such as a lack of teachers' attention due to large classroom sizes or their parents' non-involvement due to their low English proficiency and knowledge of the American educational system. Immigrants face serious health concerns such as breast cancer, mental health issues, diabetes or obesity. Though many more immigrants benefitted from the Affordable Care Act (also known as Obamacare) in 2014, undocumented immigrants are excluded from this program. It is common for immigrants to experience depression, isolation, and racial discrimination (Silicon Valley Community Foundation 2013).

Like other local governments in the U.S., San Mateo County government's main job is to serve its people in all aspects of life. The county government intends to improve people's living standard and quality of life so that the county can serve their communities more effectively (Los Angeles County 2015-16 Annual Report). In order to better serve its people, including the vulnerable and needy, San Mateo County government's engagement with immigrants covers four aspects: immigration legal services, community resources, community engagement efforts, and gateway for growth (County of San Mateo<sup>1</sup> 2021). Its immigration legal services includes immigrant attorneys, translation services on legal affairs, and housing legal services (County of San Mateo<sup>1</sup> 2021). The community resources it provides include resources or information on

education, health care, job seeking, food banks, shelters and similar services (County of San Mateo<sup>3</sup> 2021). Its community engagement efforts offer more information and opportunities for immigrants to participate in new projects, collaborative efforts and local cultural events (County of San Mateo<sup>1</sup> 2021). Finally, through its gateways for growth, the county invites immigrants and residents to join the county government to make it more inclusive and welcoming for all (County of San Mateo<sup>1</sup> 2021).

The county government has also provided a rapid response hotline for immigrants in need (Citizen and Immigration Services in San Mateo County 2019). In order to meet the needs of immigrant families and students for education and other resources to develop themselves, the Office of Education of San Mateo County provides them legal services, information on public charge, DACA assistance, and other community resources such as language services (San Mateo County Office of Education 2021).

Furthermore, San Mateo County holds Immigrant forum meetings regularly to address their concerns, and it provides language services to assist immigrants with little to no English language proficiency (County of San Mateo<sup>4</sup> 2021). The analysis above shows that local needs factor significantly influences San Mateo County's engagement with immigrants, which supports H1a and H1b.

#### *Economic Influence on County Government's Engagement*

The median household income in 2019, the unemployment rate in 2020 and the percentage of those in poverty of San Mateo County in 2019 are compared with those of the average of the state of California (City-Data.com 2021) in the table below.

***Table 6.1: Comparison of San Mateo County and the State of California on Economic Predictors***

|                     | Median household income | Unemployment rate | % in poverty |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| San Mateo County    | \$138,500               | 5.1%              | 6.0%         |
| State of California | \$80,440                | 7.9%              | 11.8%        |
| Year                | 2019                    | 2020              | 2019         |

The data in the table is from City-Data.com 2021.

Based on Table 6.1 above, it is clear that San Mateo County, on average, has stronger economic predictors than that of the state of California as a whole.

Immigrants work in a range of industries, but the top industries for immigrants in San Mateo County are restaurants, construction, hospitals and computer systems design (George Mason University Institute for Immigration Research ND). Though the economic affluence of San Mateo County can be seen better in relative to the California state average, I nonetheless can find no direct evidence that its economy affects the County government's engagement with its immigrants. Therefore, it does not support H2a and H2b.

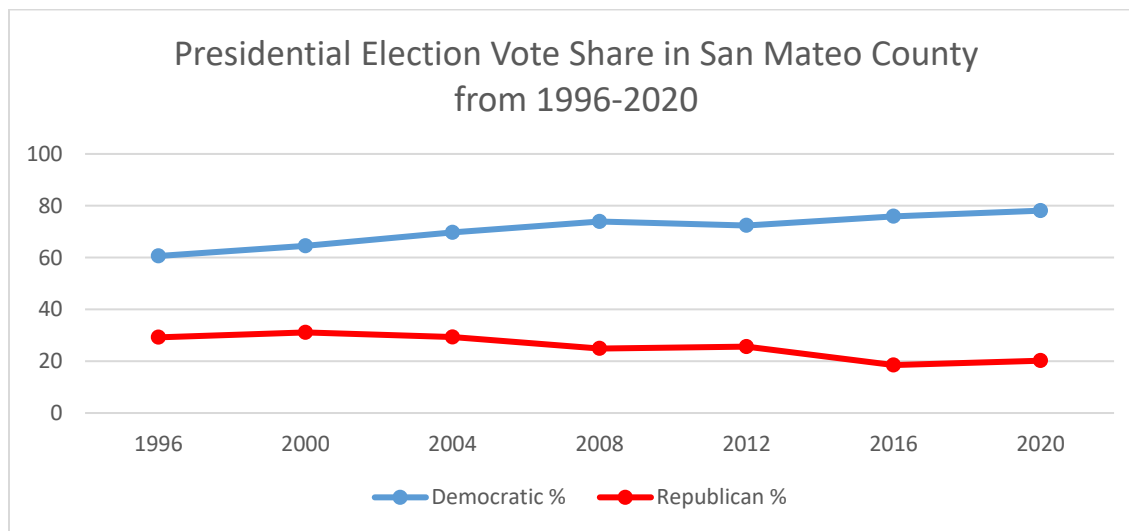
### *Political Factor's Influence*

*Political Culture.* Based on Elazar's threefold political culture, the political culture of California where San Mateo County is located is a moralistic one, which means the state culture embraces the concept of commonwealth and public interests, and striving for the betterment of the whole society (Elazar 1984). San Mateo County's political culture is MI, which means that

there is a mixture of the two subcultures of moralistic and individualistic cultures in the county, or there is a coexistence of the two separate subcultures. San Mateo County government, among the two subcultures of moralistic and individualistic ones, must be closer to the Moralistic one due to the nature of the county government to serve all its residents within its jurisdiction borders. In the county government's engagement section and the local needs section, I have described and discussed in great detail why and how San Mateo County government engage much with their immigrants. The qualitative analysis of the political culture support H3a: If a community is located in a state with a moralistic political culture, its local government tends to engage more with its immigrant populations.

*Voters' Partisan Affiliation or Preferences.* Regarding political party affiliation, the majority of voters in the state of California voted for the Democratic candidates in presidential elections since 1992 (TOWIN 2021), which indicates that the general pattern of California residents' support for the Democratic Party's position on the major issue of immigrants: welcoming family-based and employment-based immigration and expecting that good-standing undocumented immigrants will become legal, can pay taxes, pay fines and learn English (Reeves and Johnson 2020), while embracing diversity and inclusiveness with an emphasis on racial equity (Barbour and Wright 2017). San Mateo County residents' political affiliation or preferences are also reflected in presidential election results from 1996-2020.

**Figure 6.3: Vote Share in Presidential Elections in San Mateo County (1996-2020)**



The graph above is self-drawn based on the information from city-data.com (2021)

Figure 6.3 above illustrates a dynamic picture of salient political party affiliations for San Mateo County. The percentage of the Democratic voters or voters who favor/support the Democratic candidate has increased from 1996 to 2020 except for a slight drop in 2012. Accordingly, the percentage of the electorate who voted for the Republican candidate has decreased from 1996 to 2020 except for occasional slight increases in 2000 and 2012. This graph shows that about 70% of voters in San Mateo County are Democrats or lean to Democratic Party. In 2020, the percentage of Democrat-leaning voters reached about 80% while about 20% voted for the Republican Party in the Presidential election. Republican-leaning communities are more likely to implement restrictive immigrant policies, and communities leaning to the Democratic Party are more likely to accommodate immigrants, though “partisan divides are not entirely determinative of responses or views on the local level” as other factors such as national civil rights policies, which also affect this response and give local officials incentives to accommodate immigrants (Williamson 2018: 272-274). In a community where the majority of residents are affiliated with or support the Democratic Party, constituents’ tolerance for and welcome to

immigrants also influence local government officials' engagement with their immigrant populations. This explains San Mateo County's engagement with their immigrants from the political partisan affiliation or preference perspective and supports my hypothesis H3b: If the majority of the voters in the community are democrats or the Democratic Party supporters, its local government tends to engage more with its immigrants.

#### *Institutional Structure/Capacity*

San Mateo County's large population may increase the capacity of the county government through more departments, more city employees, more programs and services to meet its needs relative to counties with smaller populations. With a larger population, the County government can generate more revenues through taxes, traffic fines, court fines, medical billings, private defender fees, probation fines, and the like. (County of San Mateo Revenue Services 2021).

Therefore, although I do not have direct evidence, it seems likely that with more revenues, the County government could assist its vulnerable, disadvantaged groups- such as immigrants- through programs and services.

#### *Geographical Proximity to Closest Port of Entry*

San Mateo County "is part of the San Francisco Bay Area" and it "covers most of the San Francisco Peninsula" (California MAP 2021). The closest airport to San Mateo County is San Francisco International Airport (SFO), which is 11.8 miles (self-collected data) from the county's center. As the fifth busiest airport in the U.S., San Francisco International Airport is the biggest employer for San Mateo County, providing 30,000 airport jobs for the county, and

serving as an important driver of the county’s economy (Blackwood 1994). Though the airport is a very important employer for the county, I have no direct evidence showing the county’s geographical proximity (to SFO) influences its engagement with its immigrant populations.

### ***Further Comparison of the Influencing Factors on the Two Counties’ Engagement***

#### ***The Common Factors***

Local Needs. The common primary driver for both counties--Los Angeles and San Mateo --is local needs. Both counties have high proportions of non-whites and immigrants. The table below provides a visual representation of the proportion of non-white and immigrants and the non-English-speaking people who live in each area.

***Table 6.2: Comparison of LA County and San Mateo County on Demographics***

|                    | Total Population | Non-white% | Immigrant% | Non-English Speakers |
|--------------------|------------------|------------|------------|----------------------|
| Los Angeles County | 10,105,518       | 48.7%      | 34%        | 56.9%                |
| San Mateo County   | 769,545          | 48%        | 35%        | 45.8%                |

Note: Data in the table from U.S. Census Bureau. 2020, DATAUSA<sup>1</sup> 2021, and DATAUSA<sup>2</sup> 2021

Table 6.2 above shows that in both counties, the proportions of non-whites in both counties are very close to half of their total population (U.S. Census Bureau. 2020). The immigrant percentage in both counties are similar, with 34% for Los Angeles County and 35% for San Mateo County (DATAUSA<sup>2</sup> 2021). Overall, in Los Angeles County, 56.9% of the total population are non-English speakers (DATAUSA<sup>1</sup> 2021), while 45.8% of San Mateo County’s total population are non-English speakers (DATAUSA<sup>2</sup> 2021). Such a great number and proportion of immigrants and non-English speakers correlate to a great need for language, legal, health care, education, and other services. Organizations and researchers in both counties have

gathered data using surveys, interviews, and focus groups to collect information, and they have found that in both counties, immigrants face problems such as food insecurity, language barriers, lack of health care access, discrimination and more. While both counties record the same problems in general, the urgency of the issues in each region causes them to prioritize their services differently. Since one half to one third of their residents have these needs, both counties established programs for their immigrants, providing, for example, comprehensive information, language assistance or translation services, information regarding the naturalization process and federal government funded programs such as Medi-Cal and IHSS, or state-government funded programs such as CAPI (Cash Aid).

Through my research, I have discovered that local needs' influence on local governments' engagement with their immigrants is consistent with extant scholarship regarding the local needs factor, that local needs drive local governments' decisions or policies on the adoption of solid waste recycling (Feiock and West 1993), on provision of services and programs beneficial for needy groups (Pare et al 2004), and on "local governments' adoption of diversity management and practices such as recruiting a diverse workforce in terms of "race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, disability, and sexual orientation" and retaining them (Hur and Strickland 2012: 381). My findings regarding local needs support my Hypotheses 1a and 1b, as put forward in Chapter 2.

*Political Factor.* Based on Elazar (1984)'s classification of political culture, California where both LA County and San Mateo County are located, has a moralistic political culture which embrace the commonwealth conception and striving for public good and the betterment of the whole society (Elazar, 1984). Based on the political culture map (Elazar 1984: 135), both LA County and San Mateo County have the MI culture, which is a mixture of the two subcultures of

moralistic and individualistic or the coexistence of the separate two subcultures. However, the two county governments should be closer to the moralistic political culture due to their inherent nature of the governments' mission to serve all their residents and to enhance the life quality for all in their jurisdictions.

The other measure of the political factor is voters' partisan affiliation or preferences. Based on presidential election returns from 1996 to 2020 (citi-data.com 2021), most voters in both Los Angeles and San Mateo counties vote for the Democratic Party candidates over the years, which show that they are either affiliated with the Democratic Party or the Party supporters. The Democratic Party tends to support and value diversity and emphasize racial equity, and welcoming immigrants of all races (Barbour and Wright 2017). The presidential election returns from 1996 to 2020 show the counties' general political inclination--both counties reveal gradual increases in votes for the Democratic Party. My analysis of the two counties, together with the information I received during my interview with the LA County official, reveal that the political factor is a significant one in influencing local governments' engagement with their immigrant populations.

These findings are consistent with those in other scholarship that show that local governments consider the preferences of their community majority when making policy (Butler 2012); citizens partisan preferences are, indeed, an important force driving local government expenditure decisions (Choi et al 2010; Hajnal and Trounstein 2010). The findings of this project regarding the importance of the political factor therefore support my corresponding hypotheses H3a and H3b.

### Unexpected Findings

Upon my analysis of these two counties, I made some unexpected findings on the significant impacts the following three aspects have on the two local governments' engagement with their immigrants. The three aspects are higher government's influence (or intergovernmental relations), immigrant organizations, and the Board of Supervisors.

Higher Government Influence /Intergovernmental Relations. I discovered how influential higher government or intergovernmental relations can be. My interview with an LA County official shows that higher government influence is an important driving force in the services and programs local governments provide, because many programs, such as Medi-Cal and IHSS, were established by the federal government, while other programs, such as Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI), were established by the state government. These programs subsequently were administered at the local level, following the higher government's guidelines and eligibility standards (Interview with Los Angeles County official, April 6, 2021). Thus, it becomes apparent that a higher government is influential in how a local government treats its citizens since the higher governments fund programs implemented by lower-level governing bodies. This finding is generalizable and applies to (all states and) all local governments. The following data support this statement, to wit: federal grants make up one-third of the total funding of state governments, and more than 50% of state funding is for public assistance and health care (Congressional Research Service 2019). As one earlier report specified, "The federal government is expected to provide state and local governments about \$750 billion in federal grants in FY 2019, funding a wide range of public policies, such as health care, transportation, income security, education, job training, social services, community development, and environmental

protection” (Congressional Research Service 2019, Summary section). With programs of this kind- that is, established by higher governments and administered at the local level- local governments have some discretion as to which organizations to work with to administer the programs and better serve their residents. However, that discretion is limited in that they still must follow the guidelines and eligibility requirements set by the higher governments.

*Immigrant Organizations.* As I discovered with the two cities discussed in Chapter 5, I found that the two counties highly interacted with immigrant organizations, especially with non-profit immigrant organizations. Both county governments collaborate with non-profit immigrant organizations to better understand their immigrants’ needs and provide improved services for them. Both LA County and San Mateo County have immigrant organizations on their official websites to inform their immigrant residents where they can get assistance on legal matters, language services, housing, job-searching, healthcare, and more. Some of these organizations actively interact with the local governments and cooperate with them, sharing information and data about immigrants to assist those local governments as they design policy. The organizations are critical because they can provide services for immigrants that local governments do not have the capacity to do. The LA County official I interviewed stated that because their resources are not bottomless, they collaborate with some immigrant organizations to better serve their residents (Interview with Los Angeles County Official, April 6, 2021).

Lee (2019) pointed out that immigrant non-profits can provide linguistic and culturally tailored services for immigrants based on data they collected from these populations. Lee (2019) also stated that only through the incorporation of measures such as outreach, communication and participation, could local governments improve their ability to meet their residents’ needs. Tseng (2005)’s study showed that ethnic organizations with the mission of serving minority immigrants

are significantly important in the process of facilitating and strengthening services for immigrants. My research here falls in line with what these scholars elsewhere have determined, indicating to local governments how important immigrant organizations are as channels to obtain information on immigrants for decision-making.

*Team of Policymakers.* My final unexpected finding is the importance of policy makers to local governments. This finding is supplemented and emphasized by the information from my interview with the LA County government. I asked this official which factor was not covered in the interview but is considered important in influencing local engagement with immigrants. The interview showed that though the county must follow federal or state guidelines when administering the programs established by those higher forms of government(s), the Board of Supervisors, who can decide which organizations, agencies or companies they can work with, still has some decision-making power. As the official explained, "...there is still some discretion for the Board of Supervisors to shape what we do and how we do it, such as which agencies or organizations can work with us regarding immigrants' issues" (Interview with Los Angeles County Official, April 6, 2021). The policy-making factor is also common and more likely to be generalized to other local governments, because of the interest groups' lobbying activity and the relationships they have with various government entities. "Just like with the federal government, state governments, and other local governments, organizations and agencies contact and lobby our Board of Supervisors to provide them recommendations/suggestions," the administrator I spoke to reiterated (Interview with Los Angeles County Official, April 6, 2021).

### ***Summary of the Two Counties***

To conclude, local needs as measured by an area's non-white and immigrant proportion are important determinants that shape the County governments' engagement with their immigrant populations; this conclusion supports my earlier hypothesis, H1. The political factor is also a significant one influencing this engagement. The partisan or ideological inclinations of the majority of residents in a community can shape a local government's engagement with its immigrants, just as I hypothesized in H3. I did not find direct evidence to support the other factors as significantly affecting a local government's the engagement with its immigrant population; those factors were the economic factor, institutional professionalism/capacity, and geographical proximity to closest port of entry.

However, I made three unexpected findings: higher governmental influence (or intergovernmental relations), immigrant organizations, and a Board of Supervisors also significantly impact local governments' engagement with their immigrants. Despite the fact that many programs are established by higher levels of governments but administered at the local level, local government nonetheless have some limited discretionary choices. Immigrant organizations are also an important determinant in shaping local governments' engagement with their immigrants. The relationships between the two are mutually beneficial as the organizations obtain promotion via local governmental websites, and local governments obtain useful data and information from the organizations so they can provide better immigrant services. A team of policymakers, that is, a Board of Supervisors, can also influence local governments' engagement with immigrants, because they make decisions about which organizations and companies they

will collaborate with to provide necessary services; these choices are based on the interaction between organizations and local governments.

## **Chapter 7: Conclusions**

This project identifies the factors that influence local governments' staffing and facility engagement with their immigrants, and it explores why and how those factors do so. To accomplish these goals, I employed a mixed methodology approach, using both quantitative statistical analysis and qualitative case studies to answer my research questions. During the quantitative portion of my study, I identified those influential variables of statistical significance, tested their effects on local governments' engagement with their immigrants using process-tracing analysis by applying qualitative data. As a result, I can present a dynamic picture of local governmental engagement.

### ***Findings***

The descriptive statistics show that local governments' engagement with their immigrants are low overall. In general, the results from quantitative and qualitative studies demonstrate that local needs and political factors most strongly influence local governments' human resource and facility engagement with their immigrant populations; these findings support my original hypotheses, identified earlier as H1 and H3. Other factors (i.e., economic factors, institutional professionalism/capacity, and geographical proximity to ports) also are influential, and this claim is supported by quantitative analysis in the comprehensive model I provide. The exceptions here are the variable of per-capita income in the economic factor and total population in the institutional structure/capacity factor in the comprehensive model using the index DV. However, none of the other factors are fully supported by the qualitative data analysis.

### Findings from Quantitative Data Analysis

When the four aspects of government engagement with immigrants are viewed separately as dependent variables, the dependent variables, the independent variables and their individual statistical significance are reported in the following table:

**Table 7.1: Quantitative Results When Four Aspects of Engagement Viewed Separately as D.V.**

|                                           | Influencing Factors |             |                   |                   |            |                   |            |                               |                  |
|-------------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
|                                           | Local Needs         |             | Economic Factor   |                   |            | Political Culture |            | Government Prof./Capacity     |                  |
|                                           | Immigrant %         | Non-white % | Per-capita Income | Unemployment Rate | Gini-index | Individualistic   | Moralistic | Institutional Professionalism | Total Population |
| <b>Model A</b><br>(A formal Office)       |                     |             |                   |                   |            |                   |            |                               | +                |
| <b>Model B</b><br>(Service Outreach)      | +                   | +           | +                 | -                 | +          | +                 | +          | +                             | +                |
| <b>Model C</b><br>(Full-time Coordinator) | +                   | +           |                   |                   | +          | +                 | +          | +                             | +                |
| <b>Model D</b><br>(A Task Force)          |                     | +           |                   |                   | +          | +                 | +          | +                             | +                |

Note: Estimates are from Logistic Regression models with four different dependent variables: local governments' assignment of a formal office solely for immigrant affairs, local service outreach to immigrants, designing a community engagement coordinator focusing on immigrants, and creating or participating a local task force for immigrants. The dependent variable is dichotomous with the value of 0 or 1.

+ Positive relationship; - negative relationship

\*= $p \leq .05$

Table 7.1 shows that, for Model A, total population is the only variable to have statistical significance on local governments' maintaining a formal office for immigrant affairs; this supports my hypothesis H4b, and the direction of the relationship is positive. For Model B, all variables show statistical significance on local governments' service outreach to their immigrants, but only per-capita income and unemployment have a negative relationship with this

outreach. This means that when per-capita income increases, local governments tend to have less service outreach to their immigrants; and when the unemployment rate is higher, local governments tend to have less service outreach to their immigrants. My findings in Model B supports my hypotheses identified as H1, 2, 3 and 4. Regarding Model C, all variables except per-capita income and the unemployment rate have significant positive impact on the assignment of a full-time coordinator, which supports hypotheses H1, 3 and 4. Regarding Model D, all variables, except immigrant percentage, per-capita income and unemployment, have shown significant positive impact on the assignment of a task force for immigrants, which supports my predictions as iterated in hypotheses H1b, H3, and H4.

The next step is to treat the index/sum of the four aspects of local immigrant engagements as a single dependent variable, and I analyzed six models and compared them. Among the first five models (Model 1 to 5), each includes one factor. In each model, all the variables in that model shows statistical significance except per-capita income and the unemployment rate in the economic model, and individualistic political culture in the political model. These findings also suggest that when comparing Models 1 to 5 with the comprehensive Model 6- which includes all of the factors, Model 6 can best account for the local governments' engagement with their immigrants. In Model 6, all variables included in it showed their significance, except per-capita income and total population. This comprehensive model supports my hypotheses identified as H1a, H1b, H2b, H3a, H4a, and H5.

#### Findings from Qualitative Data Analysis

I selected four local governments to conduct qualitative case studies; I wanted to investigate more profoundly which factors influence local governments' immigrant decisions. I

selected these four cases from the local governments with the highest degree of immigrant engagement (of all the observations) out of the consideration of data availability.

The two cities I chose are Cambridge, Massachusetts and Tulsa, Oklahoma, and the two counties are Los Angeles County and San Mateo County, California. During my case studies of the four local governments, I found a common theme: local immigrant needs shape local governments' immigrant decisions, supporting H1. Thus, immigrant needs become the main motivation for local governments to provide services and programs that meet those needs. Cambridge has an immigrant proportion of 28%, and Tulsa has an immigrant population of 11%, but with a high percentage of 36% non-white people (U.S. Census Bureau 2020). The immigrant proportions in Los Angeles County and San Mateo Count are 34% and 35% respectively (U.S. Census Bureau 2020), a little more than one third of their total populations.

In these selected jurisdictions, the governments use various channels such as through non-profit immigrant organizations, private organizations, community offices, and scientific data-collection methods to gain knowledge about immigrants' needs, and then they provide services or launch programs accordingly based on these needs. The data-collection methods the four local governments use include surveys, interviews, focus groups and other means. The services and programs provided by local governments, based on the needs expressed by immigrants, include naturalization processes/ceremonies, legal services, housing services, medical insurance, cash assistance programs, English classes and translators, refugee settlement assistance, employment training, job-seeking help, and mental health counselling, to name a few. Through the channels of various non-profits and private organizations, local governments can have deeper and more comprehensive information that provides a solid scientific base for shaping their immigrant-related policies or services.

The economic factor, although only partly by way of the unemployment rate, showed its statistical significance on local immigrant decisions in the comprehensive model in the quantitative study. However, it did not show any substantive influence on local governments' engagement with their immigrants in the qualitative analysis. The Tulsa official I spoke to during an interview revealed the city's constrained resources during the 2020-2021 coronavirus pandemic. The official mentioned the city received funds for its programs from philanthropic sources such as rich individuals, companies and corporations. Though each city or county has its main industries and unique advantages, I found little direct evidence that the economic factor shapes much of a local governments' decisions regarding immigrants. One possible explanation may be that this engagement does not require a large amount of expenditure or resources. Therefore, the economic predictors do not seem to influence these decisions much.

The political factor is an important influence on the cities or counties' immigrants' service provision, supporting H3. Since I could not obtain political culture data at the municipal level, I only used state-level political culture. The political culture of the states where the selected four cities and counties are located cover all the three categories (of the political culture discussed by Elazar (1984)). California, where Los Angeles County and San Mateo County are located, have moralistic political culture; Massachusetts, where Cambridge is, has an individualistic political culture; and Oklahoma, where Tulsa is located, has a traditionalistic political culture. Though my interview with the City of Tulsa official shows that their decision-making on immigrant services is not particularly influenced by politics or external political culture, the positive role of the Mayor's office and his leadership team in the engagement with their immigrants (Interview with Tulsa City official, February 9, 2021) does matter and hence actually belongs to the political category. My interview with an LA County government official

demonstrated that political factor influences their engagement with immigrants (Interview with Los Angeles County government official, April 6, 2021). Therefore, the qualitative case study I conducted supports my results from the quantitative study regarding the significant impact of the political culture (H3a). Using state political culture to measure cities or counties' political culture has its limitations which will be discussed more fully in this chapter in the "Limitations" section.

Apart from my findings from the quantitative regression results, my qualitative case studies did not find government professionalism/capacity and geographical proximity to closest port of entry have any significant impact on local immigrant decisions, based on the interviews I had with LA County and Tulsa City government officials (2021). In other words, the qualitative analysis findings do not support my earlier hypotheses, identified as H4a and H5.

#### Comparison of Findings from Quantitative and Qualitative Results

To better answer the research question of why local governments differ in their facility and staffing engagement with their immigrants, the following table shows the agreement and disagreement of hypotheses testing between the quantitative and qualitative studies. To simplify the process, only the comprehensive model of the aggregate DV which stands for the general engagement is compared with the qualitative results.

**Table 7.2: Comparison of Hypotheses Testing Results of Quantitative and Qualitative Studies**

| Factor                 | Hypothesis                        | Common/Agreement<br>for Quan and Qual                                                   | Disagreement                                                                              |             |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
|                        |                                   |                                                                                         | Quantitative                                                                              | Qualitative |
| <b>Local Needs</b>     | <b>H1a</b><br>(Immi.%)            | Yes  |                                                                                           |             |
|                        | <b>H1b</b><br>(Non-white%)        | Yes  |                                                                                           |             |
| <b>Economic Factor</b> | <b>H2a</b><br>(Per-capita income) | No                                                                                      |                                                                                           |             |
|                        | <b>H2b</b>                        |                                                                                         | Yes  | No          |

|                            |                                   |                                                                                       |                                                                                         |                                                                                         |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                            | (Unemp. rate)                     |                                                                                       |                                                                                         |                                                                                         |
| <b>Political Factor</b>    | <b>H3a</b><br>(Political culture) | Yes  |                                                                                         |                                                                                         |
|                            | <b>H3b</b><br>(Party affiliation) |                                                                                       | X<br>(Not included)                                                                     | Yes  |
| <b>Structure/ Capacity</b> | <b>H4a</b><br>(Manager struc.)    |                                                                                       | Yes  | No                                                                                      |
|                            | <b>H4b</b><br>(Total pop.)        | No                                                                                    |                                                                                         |                                                                                         |
| <b>Geographical</b>        | <b>H5</b><br>(Distance to port)   |                                                                                       | Yes  | No                                                                                      |

Note: Yes: Hypothesis supported; No: Hypothesis rejected; Arrows: directions of relationship

Table 7.2 above shows the agreement and disagreement between the results of the quantitative and qualitative studies. Findings from both the two studies support my hypotheses on the local needs factor: H1a (immigrant population) and H1b (non-white population) with positive directions. It means that both of my quantitative and qualitative studies find that the two variables in the local needs factor- immigrant population and non-white population both positively influence local governments' general engagement with their immigrants. The commonly agreed hypothesis testing result is also reflected in political culture. It means that H3a- the political culture hypothesis is also supported by both the quantitative and qualitative results. The results of both of my quantitative and qualitative studies reject H2a (per-capita income) and H4b (total population).

The disagreement parts between the two studies are reflected in the rest of the variables. The results of the quantitative regressions of the comprehensive model which uses the aggregate DV support H2b (unemployment rate), H4a (manager structure) and H5 (distance to closest port), with H2b and H5 having negative relationships with the general engagement, while the results of quantitative studies reject these three variables. The results of the Qualitative studies support H3b (party affiliation) with a positive direction, which means that voters' party

affiliation has a significant positive impact on local governments' general engagement with their immigrants. The comprehensive model which uses the aggregate DV in the quantitative study, however, did not include this voters' party affiliation variable due to its high correlation with the variable of non-white population.

To sum up, results from both the quantitative and qualitative studies support H1a, H1b and H3a. It means that both my quantitative and qualitative studies show immigrant population and non-white population (both in the local needs factor), and the political culture variable (in political factor) all positively influence local government general engagement with their immigrants.

#### *Unexpected Findings from the Qualitative Analysis*

Some unexpected findings arose from my qualitative case studies, especially from the interviews with local government officials. I discovered that higher governmental influences/intergovernmental relations are an important factor influencing local governments' engagement with their immigrants. Many programs such as Medi-Cal, and IHSS were established by the federal government, and CAPI was established by the California state government, but all are administered by local governments at the local level. These kinds of programs are common at the local government level because almost one third of state funding comes from the federal government, and more than half of state funding is for public healthcare and public assistance (Congressional Research Service 2019). Likewise, most of a local governments' programs' funding also comes from federal or state sources.

Another unexpected finding from my qualitative analysis is how important non-profit immigrant organizations is. The significant role of the organizations exists in all local

governments I studied, and it is very likely to exist widely across the U.S. in all local governments. The relationships between local governments and immigrant organizations can also be incorporated as part of the political factor since it emphasizes the interaction between organizations and local governments. The good relationships between them benefit local governments when the agencies contribute their expertise about immigrants to inform policymaking, and it also benefits the organizations when the local governments choose to work with them and promote them on local governments' websites.

One more finding which unexpectedly came from the qualitative analysis is the importance of inter-governmental networking. Though this data is unilateral and is based only on the interview I had with a Tulsa city government official, it may be able to generalize to other local governments, because each local government has its own networks with surrounding institutions. They exchange information on immigration policies and share their experiences, views and decisions through official channels or personal relationships. This localized, intergovernmental collaboration can be an informative basis for immigrant-related policies and services.

One final unexpected finding is the influence of policymakers and leadership teams. My interview with an LA County official reveals how important policymakers are in local immigrant decisions. This can be an important revelation for other local governments, since policymakers interact with interest groups and non-profit organizations. My interview with the Tulsa administrator indicates that a leadership team's openness and innovative immigrant policymaking also matters. Therefore, we see that administrative leaders can also shape a community's governing body's culture of openness, inclusiveness, science and data-driven decision making, which may influence local immigrant policymaking.

### ***Contributions to Theory***

This project has produced findings which can offer new insights on how local governments can engage with their immigrants.

Previous scholarship highlighted the importance of local needs (Feiock and West 1993; Pare et al 2004; Hur and Strickland 2012) and political factor (Butler 2012; Choi et al 2010; Hajnal and Trounstone 2010) on local governments' policies; this project has confirmed those findings through both quantitative analysis based on a large sample and qualitative study based on case studies and interviews.

Furthermore, this project has also refined and enriched what local needs means through incorporating the role of immigrant organizations as a channel of communicating immigrant needs to local governments. Therefore, I argue that immigrant organizations is a valuable finding for its influence on local governments' immigrant-related decisions, which can be under the umbrella of local needs, though it is also closely related to the political factor. Immigrant organizations who lobby policymakers often initiate the relationships (Board of Supervisors or City Councils). It takes various forms such as local governments' promoting these organizations on their websites while immigrants' sharing information to local governments through these organizations. The services these agencies provide take a great deal of resource pressure off burdened local governments.

The next contribution to the discipline is my inclusion of the geographical factor (proximity to closest ports of entry) in the variable list. I conducted the data-collection, and the results from the quantitative study show that it has statistical significance on a local government's engagement with its immigrants. Though the qualitative data analysis do not

support either my relevant hypothesis or any quantitative significance, my use of this factor in this context offers a new, valuable perspective which may shape how local governments make decisions in the future.

Another contribution of this dissertation to the discipline also lies in my discovery that higher governments (or vertical intergovernmental relations) can influence local governments' engagement with their immigrants. I made this discovery during my qualitative data analysis, namely, through my interview with an LA County official. Many programs, particularly those targeting immigrants, were established by the federal government and state governments based on the general or broader needs of the target group. These programs are administered at local levels, and local governments must follow the guidelines and eligibility requirements established by the higher level of government. This left limited leeway for the local governments, though they still can determine with whom they collaborate to serve their immigrants better. The finding that vertical governmental relations, together with the horizontal local government network, form an all-around network to shape local immigrant decisions, could be critical to future immigrant services. Moreover, it adds a new element to the existing public policy and administration literature. By considering vertical governmental structure, I argue that not only local needs, but also general needs as identified by the federal or state governments can influence local policymaking on immigrant services.

One final, but equally important, theoretical contribution is the influence of policymakers and administration leadership teams in local immigrant decisions. The interviews and qualitative data analysis I conducted indicate that policy-making teams in local governments are critical for immigrant-related decisions. This point is heavily related to the communicative role of immigrant organizations, which again is a form of political interaction. Lobbying efforts by

interest groups to government representatives is a feature of American politics. By interacting with some immigrant organizations, policymakers (such as Boards of Supervisors or city councils) can determine which organizations they will collaborate with to provide better immigrant services and make better immigrant-related decisions. The interviews I conducted also reveal that an administration leadership team can create an open, inclusive and innovative governmental culture/atmosphere, influencing which services the institution will provide its residents, including its immigrants.

### ***Implications for Practitioners***

With my findings, practitioners in local governments or relevant organizations have better knowledge about the factors influencing their engagement with immigrants, assisting them in their policy making. Local government officials will have deeper insights into the factors that significantly influence their engagement with their immigrants. Local needs, political factor, immigrant organizations, networks with other local governments, higher government influence, administration leadership teams and policy-maker teams are all factors they need to consider and invest their energy in before making immigrant-related decisions. With this information in mind, practitioners will be able to prioritize their immigrant-related agendas and provide services and programs accordingly and more effectively. My conclusion that local needs are the main determinant of local immigrant decisions can motivate policy makers to attach more importance to meeting their residents' needs, specifically, to meeting their immigrants' needs. Government leaders can use my research to strengthen the role of government, but with the reminder that the government's purpose is to serve their residents and meet their needs.

Practitioners can attach more importance to immigrant organizations in light of my results. If they intend to better provide services for their immigrants and meet their needs, they

first need to know more about those needs. Practitioners can find out that immigrant needs can be communicated to local governments through immigrant organizations. Immigrant organizations' roles of serving and assisting immigrants in many ways can be helpful to relieve pressure of tight municipal budgets. Their role of communicating immigrant needs through ways such as sharing their data with local governments are important for local decision-making on immigrants.

One of the unexpected findings from the case studies and the interviews is the importance of the vision, openness and innovation of leadership teams and intergovernmental relations on local immigrant decisions. This is also an attainable goal that practitioners working in local governments can reach through their efforts. Undoubtedly, a positive leadership team such as that displayed in Tulsa can shape local decisions on serving its residents, including its immigrants. Any local government entity could follow Tulsa's example through training and education.

Good governmental relations, no matter a vertical one across different levels or a horizontal one between local governments, can be achieved through communication and relationship building. Building vertical and horizontal networks is something practitioners definitely should strive for because one local government is like a lonely island if it doesn't establish good relationships with other governments. Vertically, a local government can collaborate with the federal and its state entities, and therefore could obtain funding, resources, and support from these upper institutions. Horizontally, local governments can share experiences and information with other municipalities to provide improved services and policies.

### ***Limitations and Future Directions***

As there is no perfect study, this project also has its limitations. In this case, I was limited in determining the local political cultures and had to apply state political culture to the local governmental institutions, because there is no data on political cultures available. I analyzed that State political culture may influence the local political atmosphere, but applying state political culture in local policy analysis may not be able to capture or accurately reflect the variations in political culture of different cities in the same state. Tulsa is an excellent example of this. Oklahoma has a traditionalistic political culture (Elazar 1984), and it is also a “red” state with respect to political ideologies reflected in recent presidential elections results. However, its traditionalistic political culture does not prevent its cities, such as Tulsa, from having the highest level of engagement with their immigrants. Future studies can find and utilize data on political ideologies or culture that can reflect variations at municipal level.

The second weakness lies in the limitation of ICMA data, which has a certain degree of skewness. However, considering the difficulty of obtaining local government data and the large sample, it is still a very valuable data which was used for this research.

The third weakness in my study is how I selected locations to use for case study. In addition to the selection of governments with the highest degree of immigrant engagement (with the score of 4), it would have been good to also choose local governments with lowest or lower immigrant engagements (with the score of 0 or 1) in order to show the contrast with those with high engagements. In this way, the causal factors would be clearer through the discussion of differences in their independent variable factors. However, a lack of data on immigrant affairs in these governments with low scores of immigrant engagements prevents this effort. The last

weakness worth mentioning is that both studies selected for the county analysis ended up being in the same state. Ideally, I would have preferred it if the two counties selected for case studies could have been from two different states, especially states in different U.S. regions such as one in the north and the other in the south, or one in the west and the other in the east. I feel such a difference would better reflect the geographical representation and analyses of counties. However, again, a lack of county data limited my pool of local governments with the highest engagement score, leaving me no other choice but to select the two counties from California.

Finally, future research can study the factors which influence the treatment of immigrants in the process of administering programs/services or of maintaining public security, such as police' treatment of immigrants. Another research direction is to explore the public's attitudes towards immigrants in the post-Trump era, and study how local governments balance immigrant and non-immigrant needs in order to gain support for all residents.

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## Appendices

### *Appendix A*

#### **Interview Recruitment Email Script**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is Xiaofeng Chen, a PhD candidate from the Department of Political Science at Auburn University. I would like to invite you to participate in my dissertation research about American local governments' engagement in their immigrant communities. You may participate if you are or above 19 years old.

As a participant, you will be asked to participate in an interview which will be about 40-50 minutes to share the experiences of your local government's engagement with your immigrant populations.

The only risk is potential confidentiality loss. To minimize the risk, I will not record your name except on the consent form. Though no personal information, the main information of your local government's engagement with immigrants may appear in my dissertation and future potential article for case studies. The consent form and obtained information from the interview will be stored separately in two locked cabinets in my locked office. Audio recording will only be used for the convenience of transcription when you agree, and identifying information will be kept separately from non-identifying data. Only hand written notes will be used if you do not agree to be audio-recorded.

|                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Allow Space for the AU<br/>IRB Stamp</b></p> |
|----------------------------------------------------|

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1 out of 2

There is no direct benefit for your participation in this study. The benefit for the researcher is that it will help to produce my dissertation findings, which will benefit local decision-makers as well.

If you would like to participate in my study, please email back to me with a signed consent form which I have attached in this email. If you accept this telephone interview, please let me know when a convenient time is for you and how to conduct it.

If there are any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me through my email at [xzc0032@auburn.edu](mailto:xzc0032@auburn.edu) or phone at 334-546-9102 or my advisor Dr. Jonathan M. Fisk at [jmf0055@auburn.edu](mailto:jmf0055@auburn.edu).

Thank you very much for your consideration. I look forward to your reply.

Best regards

Xiaofeng Chen

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2 out of 2

## ***Appendix B***

### **Further Confirmation Email (after Initial Recruitment)**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you very much for your reply to show your willingness to participate in my research about local governments' engagement with immigrants. Thank you for your signed consent form.

Based on your replied email, you agree to be interviewed at \_\_\_\_ (exact time) on \_\_\_\_ (month) \_\_\_\_ (date) \_\_\_\_ (year). I will call the number you gave me in your replied email. If you want to make changes to the time, please let me know at your earliest convenience and we can make another telephone interview appointment.

Thank you very much for your great support; I look forward to speaking with you in the interview.

Best regards,

Xiaofeng Chen

PhD Candidate

Department of Political Science

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Phone: 334-546-9102

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## ***Appendix C***

### **Interview Instrument**

#### Interview Introduction:

Thank you very much for being willing to spend some time with me to share your knowledge and experiences. Your participation will contribute much to my study in exploring what factors influence local governments' staffing and facility engagement in immigrants and also why and how the factors influence it. You are very welcome to share additional information which are beyond the guiding questions below. This interview may take 40 to 50 minutes.

Please be aware that I will not record and reveal your names. I will only describe why and how the factors influence local governments' engagement in general and may use a few local governments as case studies. Do you have any questions before we begin the interview? Okay we will begin now.

#### Guiding Questions:

1. What are your roles as the \_\_\_\_ (position) in \_\_\_\_ (name of city) government?
2. What are your routine jobs and what are the programs you are in charge? How many people are you supervising and to whom or which office do you report to?
3. Do you think the immigrants in your city/town/county have more needs or concerns which may need your government's special help? If there are, what are they?
4. What do you think your office or government's efforts in the engagement in immigrants? Is it enough or you still need to invest more in it? Why?
5. What do you think determine the level of your local government's engagement in immigration?
6. What are immigrants' needs and how do they factor in how you engage immigrants?

7. Are there any other political factors which contribute to your engagement such as electorates' demands or partisan affiliation since your community currently seems like a democratic/republican city/county/town? Do you think the political culture of your state influence your government's engagement level with immigrants as well? Why (or why not)?
8. Do you think the partisan affiliation of government officials also influence this engagement decision? Or do the government officials just basically respect and respond to the residents' needs?
9. Do you think the immigrant organizations in your city/town/county influence your government's engagement in immigrants? If yes, how? If no, why?
10. Do you think the economic situation of your community influenced your government's decision of investing or engaging in immigrants? If yes, how?
11. Does the form of your government or the professionalism of your government influence your government's decision of engaging in immigrants? If yes, how?
12. Do you think the geographical location of your community and its distance to its closest port of entry influence your government's engagement in immigrants? Why?
13. Do the public in your community support your efforts to engage with the immigrant community? Why so?
14. Are there any other factors which I have not mentioned you think are influencing your local government's staffing and facility engagement in immigrants? If there are, what are they? Why?

## ***Appendix D***

### **Original Coding of the Structure of Local Governments:**

1=Mayor-Council

2=Council-Manager

3=Commission

4=Town Meeting

5=Representative Town Meeting

6= County Commission

7=County Council-Manager/Administrator

8= County Council-Elected Executive

## **Appendix E**

### **Conditional Means for the Models Using the Index/Aggregate DV - for Justification of Using Negative Binomial Regression Models (NBRM) Rather Than Poisson Regression Models (PRM)**

Summary for the general engagement (Index DV) by the category of political culture

| <b>Political Culture</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Variance</b> | <b>N</b> |
|--------------------------|-------------|-----------------|----------|
| Traditionalistic         | .3217391    | .5676946        | 345      |
| Individualistic          | .4303797    | .7792646        | 316      |
| Moralistic               | .5431755    | .9359798        | 359      |
| <b>Total</b>             | .4333333    | .7698397        | 1020     |

Summary for the general engagement (Index DV) by the category of institutional structure  
(Council-Manager structure or not)

| <b>Institutional Structure</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Variance</b> | <b>N</b> |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|----------|
| Council-Manager Structure      | .560778     | .9187838        | 617      |
| Other Structures               | .2382134    | .4804267        | 403      |
| <b>Total</b>                   | .4333333    | .7698397        | 1020     |

The differences between the conditional means and the variances in the two tables above suggest that there is over-dispersion and therefore using NBRMs would be appropriate.