I. Introduction

Community gardens have been popularly regarded as a solution to many social issues. However, while community gardens effectively address some issues, they fall in other regards; community gardens may be powerful tools in addressing social issues in ways that are currently underutilized. It is, thus, imperative to have a realistic view of the capabilities of urban community gardens. In doing so, community organizers and local politicians may allocate resources and distribute funding more effectively in community gardens, resulting in more effective and sustainable efforts in urban development strategies.

Nairn and Vitiello’s Past Research

- Observations of community gardens in Philadelphia, PA; Camden, NJ; and Trenton, NJ
- 3 Part Procedure: 1) Site Surveys, 2) Weighing of Harvests, and 3) On-site Interviews
- Past methods, analysis, and conclusion inform the ways in which our study is currently conducted

Research Question

- What are the social impacts of urban gardens in Philadelphia, PA and Camden, NJ?

II. Social Impacts

Migrant Communities
A reflection of home to migrant communities

Networks of Social Support & Mutual Aid
The exchange of information and resources

Community Healing & Harm Reduction
Mental health benefits and recovery

Aging & Generational Succession
A culture space and place for low-impact exercise

III. Research Design

Location Choice: Philadelphia, PA & Camden, NJ

Six Gardens of Interest: 1) 64th & Market Garden, 2) Eastwick/Airport Garden, 3) Growing Home Garden, 4) Peace Hermitage, 5) 58th Street Buddhist temple garden, and 6) New Jerusalem Laura Recovery Community Garden

- Research interest in migrant communities of low-socioeconomic wealth; these communities are present in both cities’ gardens

Density of Households by Race

Household Income

IV. An Analysis of 2014/2015 Interviews

64th & Market Garden: A 2014 Interview with Ms. Park

Ms. Park immigrated from the slums of Seoul, South Korea to Philadelphia 30 years prior to her interview. Once in Philadelphia, Ms. Park worked in a sewing factory; though she did not work in Korea, her living conditions were better upon arrival to the U.S.

58th Street Buddhist temple garden

- Ms. Pradhan and Ms. Sharma learned in Philadelphia.
- While most of the interviewees came to Philadelphia in 2010, Ms. Pradhan reports arriving as late as 2012.
- Mr. Hemlal and Mr. Rai come from farming backgrounds in Bhutan, whereas Ms. Pradhan and Ms. Sharma learned in Philadelphia.

HIAS Garden: 2015 Interviews with Bhutanese Immigrants

Mr. Hemlal, Mr. Rai, Ms. Pradhan, and Ms. Sharma are part of the group of Bhutanese immigrants that arrived in the United States from the same village in Bhutan and garden at HIAS garden. While most of the interviewees came to Philadelphia in 2010, Ms. Pradhan reports arriving as late as 2012. Mr. Hemlal and Mr. Rai come from farming backgrounds in Bhutan, whereas Ms. Pradhan and Ms. Sharma learned in Philadelphia.

V. Implications for Data Collection

64th and Market Garden
- Issues of water shortage, generational succession, and language differences should be particularly noted since they will have existed as barriers within the garden for up to eight years.
- Interview notes leave the social dynamic between the older Korean community and other ethnic groups largely unexplained: can gardens develop into a space not only to perform cultural agrarian practices but also to share in cross-cultural educational opportunities?

Boat People SOS Garden
- Demonstrate how organizational support and collaboration may help facilitate social benefits, such as education, mental and physical health, cross-generational interaction, and cross-racial interaction

HIAS Garden
- Is the social impact of a garden dampened when the garden is in its initial stages of growth or within the context of heavy oversight?

VI. Key References

6. Ms. Park. 2014. 64th and Market Garden Transcription.
7. Ms. Phung, Mr. Nam, and Mr. Trong. 2015. Vietnamese_ManyamNancy December2010 Transcription.