

Examining the Learner Perspective in US Immigrant Adults: Socioeconomic Status and the Mission to Successfully Integrate

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how immigrant perspectives on learning formats affect their integration into US society, using Knowles' (1974) theory of Andragogy. It reviews literature on non-credit courses for immigrant adults, considering their SES, linguistic, and occupational skill levels. A quantitative design with four instruments assessed relationships between learning formats, self-directed learning, English skills acquisition, and integration in a sample of 107 participants. Results show significant correlations between perspectives on learning formats, self-directed learning, motivation, English skills acquisition, and integration (e.g., TOT and IPL, $r=0.801$, $r=0.801$), and multiple regression analysis showed that these perspectives and self-directed learning strategies strongly predict integration outcomes ($R^2=0.728$, $R^2=0.728$). Positive perspectives on learning formats help distinguish between poor and optimal integration. Study results can guide governmental, state, nonprofit, and community advocacy programs in aligning instructional goals with immigrant needs and enhancing understanding of self-directed learning and integration strategies. Recommendations include promoting integration through community services, education programs, skills development, and policy changes.

Keywords: Immigrant Integration, Learning Formats, Self-Directed Learning, English Skills Acquisition, Motivation, Andragogy

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1. Introduction

Successful integration efforts serve to build the capacity of communities, organizations, and other stakeholders to support the civic, linguistic, and economic integration of immigrants (U.S. Department of Education, 2023). For immigrants, the United States (US) provides a place to settle and pursue opportunities that enhance their well-being and socioeconomic status (SES) without any restrictions on returning to their native country (Hill et al., 2017).

Socioeconomic status (SES) measures an individual's economic and social position based on income, education, and occupation. Differences in SES significantly impact adult immigrants' education, employment, and well-being. Many adult immigrants have low educational attainment, with 10.8 million lacking a high school diploma, and 20.4 million having limited English skills, which affects their access to higher-wage jobs and societal integration. Consequently, immigrants often face employment disparities, with 58% working in low-wage service or production jobs, earning less than \$35,000 annually. These SES gaps contribute to societal disadvantages and hinder successful integration.

Integration policies are intended to strengthen social cohesion in immigrant adult populations across the United States. Prior to arrival, immigrants are extrinsically motivated to come and pursue better opportunities that are found in the US. Extrinsic motivation refers to the external forces that drive human behavior. Many adult immigrants find the idea of settling into the US rewarding, yet government estimates of net immigration differ. Of the 1.5 million estimated figure of adults who

immigrated to the US between 2020 and 2021, 42% arrived for work, 32% for school with 23% for family, 2% seeking safety, and approximately 0.9% were admitted on diversity immigrant visas (USA Facts, 2024). KFF/LA Time 2023 survey of immigration reported similar findings to include statistics from respondents who arrive seeking a better future for their children (Schumacher et al., 2023).

Integration involves interactions between immigrant newcomers and host communities, producing measurable economic, political, and social patterns (Waters & Pineau, 2015). It considers progress in socioeconomic attainment, political involvement, and social interactions. English language acquisition and living among diverse ethnic groups are among the top key aspects (Waters & Pineau, 2015). Political integration includes legal status, citizenship, and political participation. Social processes also play a role, with belonging in US society reducing the impact of ethno-racial and national origin. Today's immigrants are often unauthorized (Passel & Krogstad, 2024). Many settle in states like California, New York, Texas, Florida, and Illinois (Hahn & Medina, 2024; Passel & Krogstad, 2024). Their skills and financial resources, along with US economic opportunities, shape their socioeconomic status. Political participation is influenced by their experiences and laws from their countries of origin (Gabielli et al., 2017). While English proficiency remains crucial for full participation and integration (McHugh & Doxee, 2018).

Significant challenges to successful integration exist. US polls report a large proportion of American native respondents believe today's immigrants are not as willing to integrate as immigrants of the past (Jiménez, 2011). Despite this, education plays a critical role particularly within the systematic approaches currently in place to support integration in immigrant adults. Self-direction implies an individual manages and directs activities themselves. Key factors in adult integration are identified to include whether emphasis is placed on cultivating cultural experiences, personal goals and growth that allows immigrant adults to make informed decision about their learning paths.

Census Bureau data from 2017 examined the use rates, means-tested welfare and entitlement programs for the US. Results indicated immigrant adults are more likely to use SNAP and Medicaid benefits than native-born adults and equally as likely to use cash assistance. Illegal immigrants are ineligible for entitlement and means-tested welfare programs apart from emergency medical care (Fortuny & Chaundry, 2012). Adult immigrants are more likely to lack a high school degree and hold incomes below the poverty line than the native-born.

Empirical studies identify major issues for adult immigrants, including linguistic and cultural disconnects and unequal access to resources, which hinder social mobility. Modern educational initiatives like the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) and the Family Literacy Act program (AEFLA) under WIOA focus on English literacy, civic responsibilities, and rights awareness with a 52% success rate for fiscal year 2018-2019 (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). Despite these efforts, policy and program aid often fail to address the diverse needs of immigrant populations, leading to inequitable services. The US lacks a transparent integration policy, and literature does not adequately explore adult immigrant perspectives on education and social welfare dependency. Additionally, unauthorized status affects nearly one-third of the foreign-born population, impeding lawful integration. The state of adult immigrant education and socioeconomic status improvement are significant concerns for successful integration.

1.1. Overview on Adult Immigrants Status

The Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) defines an immigrant as “every alien” except those in specific nonimmigrant classes (Immigration and Nationality Act, 2024). This includes those who intend to live permanently in the US. Research estimates that immigrants make up 16% of the US population, with 46 million currently residing in the country (Schumacher et al., 2023). Progress among immigrant groups is uneven, leading to challenges such as language barriers and accessing services (Hill et al., 2017). These challenges are often more pronounced among immigrants from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, who may lack the resources and support systems necessary for successful integration. Higher socioeconomic families value education, while lower socioeconomic status often prioritizes basic needs (Esquivel et al., n.d.). Subject matter experts suggest the skill level of immigrants significantly impacts their economic integration, influencing their integration speed and

success (Blau & Mackie, 2017; Migration Policy Institute, 2015). Other experts note, financial stability, along with health, safety, employment, and immigration status are of primary concern (Schumacher et al., 2023).

1.2. Education and Occupation Trends in Integration

Trends in immigrant skills relative to native-born workers help determine barriers to economic incorporation and their impact on the labor market. The U.S. Department of Education supports immigrant integration through civic, economic, and linguistic initiatives. These initiatives aim to bridge the gap between immigrant and native-born workers by providing targeted educational and vocational training programs (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). Research shows male immigrants often use basic skills and personal contacts to transition from low-wage jobs to better-paying positions, with 60% reporting job growth and 25% moving into higher-wage fields like construction and automotive repair (Hagan, 2016). Female immigrants, often with low education levels, typically work in service and hospitality industries, which offer limited upward mobility.

1.3. Adult Immigrant Educational Instructions and Integration

California's Adult Education Program (CAEP) serves 340,000 English language learners annually, focusing on language skills, GED attainment, career skills, and personal goals. The program aims to increase immigrants' likelihood of voting through ESL courses. Research supports student-centered learning and community integration in ESOL programs to enhance immigrant education and integration. Lindeman (1926) and Knowles (1980, 1984) emphasize using learner experiences for better cognition. Modern approaches, like those by Akintolu & Letseka (2021), highlight engaging activities for adult learners. Historical methods identified by Cartor (1990) include group discussions, problem-solving, and joint goal setting. ESOL and ESL courses are highly regarded for immigrant integration nationwide. These programs not only improve language proficiency but also foster a sense of community and belonging among immigrant learners (McHugh & Doxee, 2018).

1.4. Motivation and Adult Integration

Research on immigrant motivation often uses surveys to gather insights on experiences. Immigrant motivation is influenced by attitude and worldview, with many immigrants valuing credentials and individual liberty. Adult learning theories suggest that motivation becomes internal as adults mature, driving them to achieve higher social and economic status. Instructors should be culturally aware and tailor lessons accordingly. Higher literacy skills indicate positive learning experiences and readiness for further learning (Sahoo et al., 2020). Educators and community organizations should consider literacy levels and cultural sensitivity to promote lifelong learning. Dornyei's "L2 Motivation Self System" suggests that adult immigrants are motivated to close gaps between their current state and ideal future self. Motivation in adult immigrants is multidimensional. Understanding these motivational factors is crucial for developing effective educational programs that address the specific needs and aspirations of immigrant learners (Hudson, 2017).

1.5. Successful Adult Integration

Legal citizenship involves membership in a geographic and political community, crucial for immigrant integration. This study distinguishes between migrants, asylum seekers, undocumented immigrants, and refugees. Research shows naturalization enhances social and political integration, with naturalized immigrants achieving similar political knowledge and voting behaviors to natives after 15 years (Hainmueller et al., 2015). US integration depends on individual actions, education, English proficiency, and time in the US (Waters & Pineau, 2015). The presence of undocumented immigrants complicates understanding integration, highlighting tensions between political participation and legal status (Bloemraad et al., 2009). Addressing these legal and social barriers is essential for fostering a more inclusive and integrated society (Gabielli et al., 2017).

1.6. Social Programs and Adult Immigrant Integration

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (welfare) created two categories for immigrant benefits eligibility: qualified and not qualified (Broder & Lessard, 2024). According to Broder & Lessard (2024) the law prohibits unqualified immigrants from enrolling in most federal public benefit programs. Federal benefit programs are listed in the Table 1.

Table 1. US Federal Public benefit programs for Immigrants

US Federal Public benefit programs for immigrants

1. Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits
2. Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
3. Medicaid health insurance for people with income below federal poverty standards and aging adults
4. Supplemental Security Income (SSI) financial assistance to low-income individuals who are aged, blind, or disabled
5. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) assistance to low-income individuals and families
6. Child's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) coverage for children in low-income families
7. Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) assistance to low-income families
8. Cash Assistance programs for immigrants (CAPI) assistance for aged, blind, or disabled non citizens who do not qualify for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) solely due to their immigration status.

Note: US Federal Public benefit programs for immigrants

1.7. Summary

Many U.S. states and counties now provide health coverage to various groups regardless of immigration status, and some states offer cash assistance to certain immigrant seniors and people with disabilities. Research in Europe shows higher welfare dependency among immigrants compared to natives, influenced by factors like age, gender, family size, and education. In Sweden, providing equal access to employment, housing, social care, and education positively impacts immigrant integration (Borevi, 2014). Gaps in services for adult immigrants hinder their integration, which is best achieved through progress in linguistic, economic, and social aspects. The ALLIES initiative in California highlights the benefits of collaborative, innovative service delivery focused on student needs, influencing public adult education reform. The Immigrant Integration Framework project emphasizes proactive support for successful integration. These initiatives demonstrate the importance of comprehensive support systems in facilitating the integration process and reducing dependency on social welfare programs (Borevi, 2014).

2. Problem Statement

Difficulties in socioeconomic (SES) and social advancements, language barriers, low skill levels and adult instructions present challenges for immigrant adults that influence their successful integration. This calls to question if any of these challenges among economic disadvantages immigrants increases their dependence on social welfare programs that inadvertently impact integration.

3. Research Objectives

1. To investigate the relationship between adult learner perspectives on learning formats and their integration into US society.
2. To examine how self-directed learning and motivation influence English skills acquisition and integration.
3. To assess the impact of different instructional formats on the integration outcomes of immigrant adults.
4. To provide recommendations for governmental, state, nonprofit, and community programs to better align instructional goals with the needs of immigrant learners.

4. Research Questions

1. Do adult instructions, linguistics skills and individual motivation among economic disadvantaged immigrants increase their dependency on social net programs causing slow integration?
2. Do adult instructions and self-directed learning influence integration?
3. Do adult instruction and self-directed learning influence linguistic skills development?

5. Literature Review

5.1. Andragogy

Modern educational research distinguishes between andragogy and pedagogy. Andragogy, from the Greek "andr" (adult male) and "agogus" (leading), refers to the art and science of adult education (Loeng, 2018). Popularized in the 1960s, it emphasizes that adults learn differently from children, being more autonomous and self-directed (Knowles, 1980; MacDougall, 2012). Knowles (1968) identified six characteristics of adult learners: needing to know the purpose of learning, self-direction, bringing more experience, readiness to learn valuable things, task-orientation, and motivation by life factors (Knowles et al., 2005). Despite evolving views, andragogy remains a respected approach in adult education (Binder, 2023).

Non-Western societies value both formal and informal adult learning (Merriam, 2017). Globalization has influenced cultural views on learning, with adult learning theory helping optimize instruction (Taylor & Kroth, 2009). Effective instruction includes recognizing cultural backgrounds, using diverse teaching strategies, engaging with culturally relevant materials, and discussing social justice issues (Connelly, 2024). Educators manage the learning process, helping learners identify needs and objectives (Merriam, 2017; Moore, 2010). In Mongolia, facilitators focus on teaching, with adults clear about their learning outcomes (Zagir & Dorner, 2021). Globally, support for diverse instructional practices is growing, guided by adult learning theory.

Scholars argue that self-directed learning (SDL) is effective due to its "external control features" (Linkous, 2020). Knowles (1975) defined SDL as diagnosing learning needs, setting goals, identifying resources, choosing strategies, and evaluating outcomes. SDL combines self-efficacy and motivation (Brockett & Hiemstra, 1991), with self-discipline and curiosity being crucial (Guglielmino, 2013). High SDL capacity involves setting objectives, plans, and motivational techniques (Du Toit-Brits & Van Zyl, 2017). SDL emphasizes planning and decision-making in adulthood (Tough, 1979). Self-directed learners identify needs, set goals, gather information, practice skills, and evaluate progress (Moore, 1980). SDL is linked to internal locus control, motivation, and performance (Boyer et al., 2013).

Historically, SDL competence is key for adapting to societal changes, with proactive behavior being critical for success (Thomas et al., 2022). The International Society for Self-Directed Learning (ISSDL) defines SDL as an intentional process created and evaluated by the learner. This approach allows international students and immigrants to design educational programs based on specific needs, learn at their own pace, and take responsibility for the impact of new knowledge on their performance. Studies show that adult immigrants and international students can adopt SDL skills, leveraging personal experiences and problem-centered activities to enhance learning (Orozco, 2022). Despite its benefits, SDL is often misunderstood, posing challenges in theoretical and practical applications. Tools like the Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale help assess SDL readiness, confirming its validity and reliability. Scholars emphasize the importance of instructional methods that incorporate problem-solving and scaffolding techniques to foster progress and achievement.

5.2. Learning Environments in Integration

Learning environments, whether physical or virtual, are crucial for the learning process, including types like learner-centered, knowledge-centered, assessment-centered, community-centered, and online spaces (Fraser & Wubbels, 1995; Psychology for Mental Health, 2024). In the US, adult immigrants have various educational options, such as federally funded programs, non-profits, community colleges, adult learning centers, workforce development programs, online platforms, and public libraries. Literature indicates that assistance is available at the government and state level. Those interested in educational opportunities are encouraged to contact local community colleges, libraries, nonprofit organizations or adult education centers in the area (Education Foundation, 2024). The USCIS homepage also provides helpful resource that will connect adult learners (immigrants, asylees, migrant workers and refugees) to community help for guidance and direction. In addition, the U.S. Department of Education provides information on resources available through institutions and colleges for those seeking educational opportunities. The extent of immigrant learning environments can span beyond the spaces mentioned in this section. More resources are available at the respective US Embassy website, offices and religious institutions.

5.3. Language Learning in Integration

The evolving changes in adult education in the US have created challenges for new immigrants. Knowles (1984) emphasized that adults should guide their own learning activities. Existing English skills development programs include ESOL, ESL courses, and local community and nonprofit programs. Literature supports learner-centered approaches in English language courses, highlighting the benefits of self-directed and lifelong education. Studies show mixed results on teacher-centered versus student-centered approaches, but many educators argue that collaborative and interactive environments benefit adult learners. Research on cultural dimensions of individualism and collectivism suggests that culturally sensitive instruction is crucial. Despite the importance of adult immigrant education, detailed course instructions and techniques are rarely reported at local levels, even though they are recognized as valuable for societal development.

5.4. Learning and Instruction Formats in Integration

Learning theory and instructional approaches, though distinct, are combined to deliver effective instruction (Schunk, 2004). Instructional approaches are often categorized as teacher-centered or learner-centered, but many instructors use elements of both (Yoshida et al., 2023). Teacher-centered approaches position the teacher as the expert, while learner-centered approaches personalize instruction to enhance learner understanding and self-awareness. Adult learners benefit from integrating need assessment, communication, and motivation into professional development programs to improve completion rates and participation. Studies emphasize the importance of culturally relevant materials and teaching strategies to address the diverse needs of adult learners, particularly immigrants, and enhance their learning experiences (Kamisi, 2023; Muneja, 2021).

5.5. Motivation in Integration

Motivation for immigrants involves rejecting criticism and developing communication skills, understanding governmental infrastructure, and adopting native-born peers' ideals to foster a better life. Motivation can be internal (intrinsic) or external (extrinsic). Internal motivation includes gaining English fluency, settling in multiracial neighborhoods, and increasing socioeconomic status. Research shows low motivation among adult immigrants is often due to a lack of English proficiency and culturally appropriate learning opportunities. Hudson (2017) found that immigrants are motivated to communicate better, be accepted, and be respected by English-speaking society. Western societies tend to be individually motivated, while other societies support collectivist orientations. Educators can foster immigrant motivation through cultural diversity preparation, autonomy-driven content, and providing resources. Critics argue that the immigrant dream is challenging due to systemic barriers,

but personal desires and social connections are crucial for integration. Successful integration requires additional governmental support and firm policies (Hofstetter & McHuge, 2023).

6. Method Design

Using a quantitative approach, this study involved sampling, permissions, data selection, and administration. Research on adult immigrant learner perspectives and their impact on integration is limited. A correlation design with four self-report questionnaires was used to understand these perspectives (Creswell & Clark, 2007). The study administered a teacher evaluation survey to volunteer participants to test self-directed learning strategies and integration outcomes. Data was collected via two laptops linking to survey websites. This design allows participants to report anonymously, reducing social bias, but self-reporting can introduce vulnerabilities like response bias and reactivity.

6.1. Limitations

Quantitative designs have weaknesses, such as oversimplification and reliance on predetermined categories, which can affect accuracy. This study aimed to identify adult perspectives on instruction, self-directed learning strategies, and English skills acquisition in integration, rather than generating a definitive list of curricula. It did not investigate whether specific self-directed learning strategies are necessary for integration, though it provides an opportunity to explore this area. The study also does not examine the need for certain adult instructional environments in relation to self-directed learning and integration outcomes. Participants were volunteers, conveniently sampled, and assumed to provide accurate self-reported responses.

6.2. Weighting

Weighting in quantitative research is used to compute statistics from the data representation of the population. It allows for control in under or over-representation of the sample and address potential bias from sampling methods or the selection process. In survey sampling, each unit of the selected sample was weighed to obtain estimates of population parameters of interest in this study. Following weighing, a power analysis using G Power ensured the sample size was appropriate to reduce the risk of Type I and Type II errors.

6.3. Hypotheses

Questionnaires from four separate instruments were used to collect quantitative data for this study. The hypotheses guiding the research were: *H1: Adult learning theory explains the relationship between adult immigrant learner perspectives on instructions and formats, self-directed learning, and English language skills acquisition* and *H2: Adult immigrant learner perspectives on instructions and self-directed learning affect integration*. Quantitative research methods were chosen for their ability to summarize large amounts of data and explore these hypotheses.

The null hypotheses tested were: *Ho1: There is no relationship between learner perspectives on instruction, self-directed learning, English skills acquisition, and integration*, *Ho2: Learner perspectives on instructions have no effect on integration*, and *Ho3: Self-directed learning strategies do not affect integration*. The first null hypothesis applies to *H1*, while the second and third apply to *H2*.

6.4. Independent Variable, Dependent Variables and Timing

Learner perspectives on instruction and formats and self-directed learning are the independent variables in this study. English language skills acquisition and integration are the dependent variables in this study. The timing of quantitative data collection phases took place concurrently. The data analysis phase revealed the impact of adult immigrant learning perspectives, formats, and self-

directed learning strategies on English skills acquisition and integration. In addition, analyses will provide clarity on the extent learner perspectives of instructions and self-directed learning strategies predict integration.

6.5. Population

Federal policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, known as the Common Rule (45 CFR 46), applies to research on human subjects. Private citizens researching teaching methods and learner experiences with adults typically do not need a full IRB review but must submit an exemption form to the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP). This study obtained the required exemption from the TIER IRB board. The study population consisted of adult immigrants in the US receiving community-based education, church, or immigration assistance. For fiscal year 2022-2023, an estimated 16 million adult immigrants were in the US, with 3.2 million receiving services from WIOA-funded programs. Programs like California's CAEP and Ohio's ABLE offer free classes, though exact enrollment figures are unclear. A priori power analysis indicated 107 subjects were needed for this study. Volunteer participants were recruited from Columbus, Ohio. The sample represented adult immigrant learners and met criteria for a quantitative approach using adult learning theory. Participants were 18 or older, had received non-credit adult education in the past two years, and participation was voluntary. Surveys were completed anonymously, and once submitted, responses could not be withdrawn.

7. Procedure

The learning environment includes factors like the instructor, content, and setting (Kamisli, 2023). For convenience, the study was posted on LinkedIn and made available for participant access during data collection. Five local community centers in Columbus, Ohio, including the Columbus Metropolitan Library's north and east branches, an internet café, and two eastside community centers, were selected as data collection venues. Participants were provided with consent forms to understand the study before agreeing to participate. Adult immigrant learners accessed the TOT, LPA, LEAP-Q, and IPL instruments via LinkedIn. They reported their perspectives on learning instructions through the instructor evaluation assessment. All surveys were completed anonymously, covering 85 items related to learner perspectives on instructions and format, self-directed learning, language skills acquisition, and integration.

7.1. Questionnaire 1

In planning, a researcher must determine clearly and definitively the nature of the measurement instruments used for a study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). The Cognia Teacher Observation Tool (TOT) was administered to evaluate adult immigrant perspectives of learning instruction and formats. These types of summative evaluations are generally utilized to ensure the educator's accountability and quality of a program (Sewall & Sangata, 1986). Most if not all instructor evaluation surveys are bipolar or unipolar scales which are used to gather responses to answer either extremely positive or negative opinions.

The TOT development team reviewed academic research and literature centered around central topics, such as teacher effectiveness, characteristics of effective instruction, healthy instructional environments, observation protocols, and methods of teacher assessment to determine latent constructs for the tool. TOT arrived at five dimensions and 23 items through factor analysis. High reliability with α ranging from 0.81 to 0.86 by domain, 0.96 overall; and test-retest ranging from 0.82 to 0.88 by domain (0.98 overall) was given (Cognia, 2023). The items associated with factors of the TOT are scored on a 4-point scale; not evident, somewhat evident, evident and very evident. Scores from each of the items are taken and used to evaluate three key factors: implementation of practices, authenticity of practices and effect on learners. A cumulative score is calculated to rate the teacher's learner-centered instructions.

7.2. Questionnaire 2

SPSS 29.0 was used to analyze the Self-directed Learning Readiness Scale (SDLRS), also known as the Learning Preference Assessment (LPA). This scale measures eight factors: openness to learning, self-concept, responsibility for learning, initiative, basic study and problem-solving skills, future orientation, creativity, and love for learning. The SDLRS developed by Lucy Guglielmino (1977) and revised in 1989, has shown high reliability, with initial reliability coefficients of .87 and consistent internal reliability coefficients ranging from .72 to .96. Test-retest reliability scores were .82 and .79, demonstrating robust Cronbach's alphas above .70. Participants responded to 34 items on a 5-point scale, with scores reflecting their readiness for self-directed learning. The LPA also identifies internal and external motivators for learning.

7.3. Questionnaire 3

Participants completed items from six subscales of the self-report Language Experience and Proficiency Questionnaire (LEAP-Q), which assesses bilingual language skills with predictable relationships between self-reported and behavioral measures. The LEAP-Q evaluates language competence, age and mode of language acquisition, prior language exposure, and current language use, with items coded from 0 to 100. Factor analyses identified constructs such as language one competence, late language two learning, and language two competence. The initial pilot with 52 multilingual individuals (29 women, 23 men) showed Cronbach alphas of .85, <.01, .92, .80, .30, .75, .24, and .27 (Marian et al., 2007). Internal reliability was confirmed with a different sample, and factor analyses yielded consistent structures with high eigenvalues. Correlation analyses demonstrated high construct validity, with R values above .7 and $p < .001$. The LEAP-Q is a valid and reliable tool for assessing bilingual language status, providing detailed insights into individual language experience and proficiency.

7.4. Questionnaire 4

The Immigration Policy Lab (IPL) of Stanford University and ETH Zurich developed a survey tool to measure immigrant integration, involving 200 questions from 4,000 interviews. The IPL identified six dimensions of integration: psychological, economic, political, social, linguistic, and navigational. The survey went through six major revisions and eight pilot surveys, resulting in two versions: IPL-12 and IPL-24. Cronbach's alphas for the IPL-24 dimensions ranged from 0.60 to 0.96, indicating high reliability. Scores range from 1 to 5 points per question, with maximum scores of 60 for IPL-12 and 120 for IPL-24 (Harder et al., 2018). The IPL validated its construct by correlating survey scores with predictors like residency, education, and immigration status, showing significant correlations and confirming the tool's validity.

8. Research Authorization and Participant Recruitment

A summary of the study proposal was initially submitted to TIER IRB (The Institute for Evaluation and Research LLC), an independent institutional review board requesting exemption of IRB review of the research. The TIER IRB board determined the study eligible for exemption and permission was given to conduct the research on the participant pool, assigning protocol ID number 12411101 to the project. Adult volunteers were invited to take part in this research investigation that was designed to determine the relationship that exists between adult learner perspectives on instructions and formats, SDL strategies, LEAP-Q in integration. A brief study description, duration of assessment and the researcher's contact information was provided. All demographic information supplied by participants was assumed to be accurate. Informed consent was required from all participants (see Appendix A).

9. Data Analyses

9.1. Multiple Correlation Analyses

Yule (1897) introduced multiple correlation analysis as an extension of bivariate regression to assess linear relations involving several independent variables. This test was used to examine the correlation between independent variables adult immigrant learner perspectives of instructions and formats and self-directed learning strategies and the dependent variables language acquisition and integration. To determine the levels of learner perspective the mean scores on each item of TOT were calculated and compared to the mean scores of the overall sample. To determine the level of SDL strategies, the mean scores on each subscale of the SDL-ABE/LPA were calculated and compared to the mean scores of the sample. Mean scores for each of the subscales of the LEAP-Q and the IPL were calculated and compared to the mean scores of the samples accordingly. Following all procedures' mean scores on each subscale of the TOT, SDL-ABE, LEAP-Q and IPL were calculated and compared to the means of the normative sample.

9.2. Discriminant Analysis

A Discriminant analysis predicted membership in two or more mutually exclusive groups. Although this procedure is preferred when investigating the relationship between several independent variables and a single dependent variable, a major focus of this study was to examine the relationship between adult immigrant perspectives of instructions and integration. Due to the different constructs (e. g., perspectives are a process of forming an understanding of instructions whereas integration is a behavioral outcome), the relationship between perspectives of instructions and formats that adult immigrants may form, and the behavioral outcome warrants examination. The criterion variables in this procedure were integration and the grouping variable was levels of positive adult immigrant perspectives of instructions and formats.

9.3. Multiple Linear Regression

Multiple linear regression allows analysis of multiple predictor variables in a regression model (George & Mallery, 2010). The strategy here is to apply the multiple linear regression including all predictors based on theoretical or empirical justification which will ensure the model aligns with research on adult immigrant perspectives of instructions, self-directed learning, and integration. The multiple linear regression model included both independent variables and R was calculated for each of the participant scores to determine if adult immigrant perspectives and self-directed learning strategies are predictors of integration.

9.4. Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA)

The objective of this study was to identify the perspective instructions, self-directed learning, and language skills acquisition in integration through the lens of the adult learning theoretical perspective Andragogy, a theory which argues adults must be actively involved in the formation, delivery, and assessment of their own learning programs (Knowles, 1984). Multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) is conducted when the researcher examines whether there is significance between the study's sample groups distribution of means and (b) there are two or more dependent variables that cannot be combined (George & Mallery, 2010). The MANOVA was applied to explore how independent variables (adult immigrant perspectives of instructions and formats and self-directed learning influence the dependent variables (language skills acquisition and integration).

9.5. Protection of Participants Rights

Informed consent (Appendix A) was obtained from the participants who decided to take part in the study and assurance is understood that there is no penalty for withdrawal. Participant confidentiality was assured, and all the information provided was kept anonymous. The results of this study do not

reflect individual responses. The researcher did not use subject information for any purposes outside of this research study. One year after completion of the study, all records will be destroyed. Risk is minimal in taking part in this investigation and questions or concerns regarding this study can be directed to the researcher. No ethical issues were anticipated.

10. Results

10.1. Data Collection Procedures

The respective surveys' instruments were constructed over Surveyplanet.com. The quantitative questionnaires were then posted on the LinkedIn platform online and made available for participant access at the time of research data recruitment for a period of 3 months. Results were downloadable directly through the survey websites. Scheduled systematic downloads were performed every Sunday to log the date and time of the data collection through completion of the sample size. Participants made no mention of any conditions that influenced voluntary responses to the Likert style study assessment. All downloads were saved onto the investigator's computer hard drive as a means for storing the data. Student survey responses were entered into the *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)* software and data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

10.2. Demographic Characteristics of Adult Immigrant Participants

The study had 107 participants, all of whom completed the questionnaires, resulting in a 100% response rate. Demographic characteristics included country of origin, native language, immigration status, high school graduate status, employment status, gender, age, marital status, occupation status, courses taken this year, hours per week (4 or more), location, and government social program usage. Participants' ages ranged from 22 to 75, with an average age of 43 years. The sample was 73% male and 27% female, with 42% married and 68% holding a high school diploma or equivalent.

Adult immigrant education courses included English skills (16%), occupational skills (53%), English/vocational/skills development combined (28%), and other (3%). Non-credit instruction/enrollment by location was community-based/nonprofit (22%), web-based (30%), state (17%), and government (31%). Social program usage was 41%. The questionnaires measured perspectives on instructions and formats, self-directed learning strategies, English language skills acquisition, and integration. Descriptive statistics identified the most important perspectives on instructions and formats.

11. Quantitative Results

This section addresses the research questions on whether adult instructions, English skills, and motivation among economically disadvantaged immigrants affect their dependency on social programs and integration. It also examines if adult instructions and self-directed learning strategies influence integration and linguistic skills development. The hypotheses suggest that adult learning theory explains the relationship between immigrant perspectives on instructions, self-directed learning, and English skills acquisition, and that these perspectives affect integration. Multiple correlational analyses (George & Mallery, 2010) showed strong relationships between perspectives on instructions, self-directed learning strategies, English skills development, and integration (e.g., TOT and IPL, $r = .801$). Internal reliability of the TOT, LPA, LEAP-Q, and IPL tests was confirmed with Cronbach's alphas above 0.7. Discriminant analysis indicated that positive perspectives significantly differentiate between weak and optimal integration ($p < .05$). The findings highlight the importance of positive perspectives in predicting successful integration in the US.

Table 2. Summary of Discriminant Analysis

Function	Eig. Val	% of Var.	Cum%	Canon. Corr.	Test of func.	Wilk's	χ^2	df.	Sig
1	6.297	100.0	100.0	.929	1	.137	185.82	23	.000

Hypothesis one proposes that adult learning theory explains the relationship between adult immigrant learner perspectives on instructions and formats and self-directed learning strategies. Hypothesis two suggests that these learner perspectives and self-directed learning strategies impact integration. A multiple linear regression analysis was performed to determine which aspects of perspectives on instructions and formats, as well as SDL strategies, predict integration in the US. The findings revealed that adult immigrant perspectives on instructions and formats, along with SDL strategies, strongly predicted integration outcomes. See Table 3 below for the regression analysis summary.

Table 3. Summary of Regression Analysis

Constant	R squared	Adjusted R Square
TOT and LPA	0.728	0.722

A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to explore the relationship between adult immigrant perspectives on instructions and formats, self-directed learning (SDL) strategies, English skills acquisition, and integration. The analysis tested the adult learning theory, which posits that adults are self-directed, bring their own experiences to the learning process, are ready to learn when they see a need, and are motivated by internal factors (Knowles, 1970). Significant effects were found across all variables ($p < .05$), indicating a strong relationship. Findings (See table 4) reveal that immigrant perspectives on instructions and formats, combined with SDL strategies, influence integration. LEAP-Q was excluded from the MANOVA output due to its low impact. The study found strong correlations between adult immigrant perspectives on instructions, self-directed learning strategies, English language skills, and integration. Multiple regression and MANOVA results confirmed these factors as strong predictors of integration outcomes ($p < .05$). LEAP-Q was excluded from some analyses due to low impact, emphasizing the importance of adult immigrant perspectives and self-directed learning in successful integration.

Table 4. MANOVA

Multivariate Test			
<i>Effect</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Error df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Perspectives	7.66	66.00	.000
SDL	4.65	66.00	.000
Perspectives * SDL	4.20	66.00	.000

Note: Significance ($p < .05$) for perspectives of instructions and formats, self-directed learning and integration

12. Data Triangulation and Inter-rater Reliability

To enhance validity and reliability, triangulation was used by integrating multiple methods and data sources, including Pearson's r correlations, multiple linear regression analysis, and MANOVA. These techniques explored relationships between adult immigrant perspectives on instructions, self-directed learning strategies, English language skills development, and integration. Excluding LEAP-Q from certain analyses ensured results accurately reflected significant factors influencing integration. Inter-rater reliability was maintained by collecting complete scores from TOT, LPA, LEAP-Q, and IPL, ensuring consistency in data collection. Surveys were structured via Survey Sparrow and made accessible on LinkedIn. The researcher- maintained objectivity, avoiding bias, and rigorously examined the quality of collected data. Responses were recorded weekly and verified for accuracy throughout the five-month study to ensure reliability.

13. Study Limitations and Personal Bias

The research study has several limitations. Volunteer participants may have higher motivation and less variability, and the sample may not represent all adult immigrants practicing self-directed learning for integration. Second, the reliance on self-reported measures introduces response bias. Additionally, the employment status of 35% of participants suggests economic and social cohesion may not be a primary priority for all immigrants. Creswell (1998) noted that the researcher's role can introduce bias. To mitigate

this, the researcher-maintained self-awareness and used triangulation to ensure data consistency and validity. Quantitative data from various sources and demographic information provided a comprehensive understanding of the relationships between adult immigrant perspectives, self-directed learning strategies, English skills acquisition, and integration.

14. Explanation of Findings and Recommendations

The study (n=107) found that adult immigrants' perspectives on learning formats, self-directed learning, motivation, and English skills acquisition significantly influence integration. Strong correlations were observed: TOT-IPL ($r = .80$), LPA-IPL ($r = .76$), and LEAP-Q-IPL ($r = .71$). Positive perspectives on learning formats distinguished between poor and optimal integration scores, explaining 100% of the variance with a canonical correlation of .929. The Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale (SDLRS/LPA) assessed readiness for self-directed learning, focusing on motivation. High composite scores (139-165) indicated strong motivation. Multiple linear regression confirmed that perspectives on instructions and SDL strategies predict integration outcomes. MANOVA results showed significant effects across all variables ($p < .05$).

Further investigation is needed to understand the role of language skills development in integration. Andragogical approaches lead to higher knowledge retention rates but may overlook cultural and situational factors. Three null hypotheses were rejected, indicating significant relationships between learner perspectives, self-directed learning, English skills acquisition, and integration. Findings support the association between adult immigrant learners' perspectives on learning formats and SDL strategies with their learning and integration. Further analysis reveals that the relationship between self-directed learning and integration is particularly strong among immigrants with higher initial levels of English proficiency.

This suggests that while self-directed learning is beneficial, its effectiveness is amplified when learners already possess a certain level of language skills. Additionally, the study found that motivation plays a crucial role in the integration process, with intrinsically motivated learners showing better integration outcomes compared to those who are extrinsically motivated. This highlights the importance of fostering intrinsic motivation through educational programs tailored to the interests and goals of immigrant learners.

Practical implications of these findings include the need for educational programs to adopt a more personalized approach, considering the individual learning preferences and motivational factors of immigrant learners. Programs should focus on enhancing self-directed learning skills and providing support for English language acquisition, particularly for those with lower initial proficiency. Furthermore, community-based initiatives that promote social interaction and cultural exchange can help build a supportive environment conducive to integration.

15. Conclusion

Social welfare programs provide resources to disadvantaged communities but do not specifically aid reestablishment, leading to dependency, slow integration, and low confidence among adult immigrants. This reliance can hinder productivity and social cohesion. There is a lack of learner-centered strategies and standard protocols for measuring instructions at the community level. Research must continue to explore adult immigrant perspectives on instructions and self-directed learning strategies to improve integration. Study results can help refine learning delivery to better align with immigrant needs and enhance understanding of self-directed learning principles. Motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic, is crucial for

integration, but barriers like low income and lack of transportation can hinder it (Kamisli, 2023). Government policies play a vital role in successful integration but barriers such as lack of English proficiency and culturally appropriate learning environments can reduce motivation (Sahoo et al., 2020).

Immigrants with lower English skills may have lower motivation to learn, affecting lifelong learning participation. Currently, there are no standardized teacher evaluations for adult immigrants beyond ESOL or ESL guidelines. Limited research exists on the relationship between learner-centered instructional practices and self-directed learning strategies. More research is needed to examine these factors and their impact on integration. Addressing these challenges can enhance educational experiences and integration outcomes for adult immigrants, fostering more inclusive and productive societies. To enhance the paper's contribution to the field, future research should explore the long-term impact of different instructional formats on integration outcomes.

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Appendix A: Consent form

Consent Form

You are invited to take part in this research study to determine the relationship between adult immigrant perspectives of instructional formats, self-directed learning and English skills development in adult immigrant integration. Participation in this study is currently open to all adult immigrants in the surrounding Columbus Ohio district. As a member of this community, you have been invited for participation in this study as you have identified yourself as an individual age 18 years or older and currently enrolled in some form of learning and skills development courses. This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study before deciding to participate. This research study is for educational purposes only. If you would like to participate, you will be asked to complete items from (1) an instructor course evaluation survey, (2) the Self-Directed learning assessment SDLRS-ABE (Guglielmino, 1977), (3) the Language Experience and Proficiency LEAP-Q (Marian, Blumenfeld & Kaushanskaya, 2007) and the Integration Policy Lab survey IPL (Harder, Figueroa & Gillum et al., 2018). The 23-question instructor evaluation survey and the 34 item SDLRS-ABE are designed to capture students' perspectives of course instruction formats and self-directed learning strategies, which describes the adult process of taking initiative to set goal for learning, monitoring, activities and behaviors with or without the assistance of the instructor. The 16 question LEAP-Q is designed to assess English language skills acquisition and the 12 question IPL is designed to evaluate dimensions of integration. You will answer a total of 85 items for the four questionnaires combined.

Approximately 107 voluntary participants are needed to complete four anonymous quantitative questionnaires designed to collect information on adult immigrant learner perspectives of instructional formats, self-directed learning (learner motivation) strategies, English skills development, and effective integration. Completion of the four quantitative procedures should require approximately 20-35 minutes.

Background Information:

Individuals often develop perspective of learning acquisition in response to the instructional formats. This perspective can potentially affect aspects of learner strategies, language skills acquisition and integration. The purpose of this study is to understand the importance adult learning perspectives of instructional formats and self-directed learning strategies have on adult learners' integration.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Your participation in this study is voluntary. This means that everyone will respect your decision of whether you want to be in the study. You will not be treated differently if you decide not to participate. If you decide to join the study now, you can change your mind and withdraw at any time; however, incomplete surveys will not be included in the data set. Should you feel stressed during the study, you may stop at any time. Please be aware, once the survey is submitted, withdrawal will not be available.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

The risks for participating in this study are perceived to be minimal. Though not anticipated, a few people may experience mild stress completing the demographic information. Should you

experience any discomfort due to study participation, feel free to exit the study.

The potential benefits to participating in this study are: (a) assessing adult immigrants' perspectives of instruction formats and self-direct learning strategies that may help to improve integration and (b) the knowledge could lead to a better understanding of the impact adult perspective of instructions have on economic and social cohesion in the US.

Compensation:

There is no compensation for participating in this study.

Confidentiality:

Any information you provide will be kept anonymous. Information on personal identity will not be collected and the results of this study will not reflect your individual responses. The researcher will not use your information for any purposes outside of this research study.

Contacts for Questions/Concerns:

Should you have general questions or concerns, you may contact the researcher.

Statement of Consent:

After you have read the above information and feel that you can comfortably participate in the study described, please begin by moving to the next page. By completing the surveys, you are agreeing to participation in this research. Please feel free to print a copy of this form for your own records.